



# News From The Capitol

**Representative Don Hineman**

**July 28, 2012**

## Redistricting Brings Many Surprises

Every ten years the population data from the U.S. Census is released. That sets in motion the process of redistricting. The state legislatures are charged with redrawing the boundaries of congressional, state senate, state house, and state board of education district boundaries to insure equal representation for all citizens.

Politics unfortunately reared its ugly head very early, and the Kansas legislature failed in its duty to draw new district boundaries. I choose not to place blame. It is enough to say that collectively we failed. The task then fell to federal district court, and the panel of three judges released the new districts on June 7. This was only four days before the June 11 filing deadline for state senate, house, or board of education seats. Practically everyone had expected the judges to use the maps that the Kansas legislature had been working on as a starting point. They did not. Instead, they drew new maps that looked totally different. It appears their only criteria were to achieve the requirement of equal representation, and to preserve "communities of interest" within single districts. They totally ignored where incumbents resided, and the resulting maps created districts with two or even three incumbents pitted against each other, and many other districts with no incumbent. That created a mad scramble on the part of many, as they adjusted to the new

reality in time to file for office or in some cases, even move to a new district!

I was fortunate that no other incumbent was "moved" into the 118th district, although the [district changed substantially](#). My district no longer includes Wallace, Ness, or Rush Counties. I regret that, as I have made many good friends in those three counties. To those of you living in those counties, thank you for allowing me the privilege of representing you in Topeka these past four years. Though I will no longer be your official representative once the new legislature is seated in January, please continue to consider me a friend and ally. Feel free to call on me with input or issues you may have with Kansas legislative matters. I will leave your name on my email mailing list unless you contact me and request to be deleted.

The 118th district now includes all of Wichita, Scott, Lane, Logan, Gove, Trego, and Sheridan counties, as well as 2/3 of Thomas County and nearly all of Graham County except the city of Hill City. Scott, Thomas, Sheridan, and Graham Counties are new to the district, and I look forward to representing the folks in those counties. I do not have any opposition in the election this year, but I would appreciate and be honored to receive your vote. Because I have no opposition I have not been actively campaigning this summer, except for attending the county fair parades. I will be spending time this fall in all four of the new counties, getting acquainted with folks and learning about your concerns and priorities before I head back to Topeka in January.

To those of you in Scott, Thomas, Sheridan, and Graham Counties, I ask for your help. I would like to build my mailing list of email addresses in those new counties, so any help you can give would be appreciated. Also, please let me know of any community events you feel I should attend. I want to get to know you before January.

## Endorsement

Many are saying that the 2012 elections are historic in regard to the changes they could bring to Kansas. I agree entirely. Well-funded special interest groups have become involved in Kansas politics to an extent we have never witnessed before. They are attempting to confuse the voters with trumped-up attacks filled with vicious lies or at best, twisted facts. Their objective is to secure victory for candidates who will take their marching orders from the special interests rather than focusing on what is best for the citizens of their legislative district. This is a very **real** and very **dangerous** threat, and the future of Kansas is at stake.

Those of you who reside in Scott, Lane, Ness and Rush Counties are now in the [Senate district](#) of incumbent Senator Ruth Teichman of Stafford. Here is the endorsement letter that I placed in last Wednesday's Dighton Herald:

On Tuesday, August 7, the Republican voters in Lane County and throughout the 33rd Kansas Senatorial District have a very important and clear-cut choice to make. The choice is whether to elect an independent-thinking, responsible individual whose sole objective is to represent the best interests of the citizens of the 33rd District, or to elect an individual who draws much of his support from, and usually votes with, well-funded special interest groups with headquarters in Wichita, Topeka and Washington D.C.

My vote will be for Senator Ruth Teichman, a 12-year veteran in the Kansas Senate. A partner with her

husband on their Stafford County farm, Ruth is director of a rural bank and has a long record of service on her local school board. As a member of the Kansas House of Representatives, I have worked with Ruth on issues affecting her district as well as mine. Ruth impresses me with her grasp of the subject matter, her instinct for pursuing the best possible outcome, and most importantly, her steadfast devotion to achieving what is best for Western Kansas. She understands production agriculture; she understands the economy of Western Kansas, and she understands the needs of public education in rural Kansas.

Senator Ruth Teichman will never be an automatic vote for any special interest group; she won't try to hijack an election with outlandish, misleading postcard messages. Neither will she be a rubberstamp for anyone's agenda when she perceives that it conflicts with what's best for the folks and the economy of the 33rd District.

The special interest groups are working hard to commandeer this election by confusing voters. You're likely to receive more attack mail with ridiculous claims. When you do, I encourage you to ask yourself **who sent** the postcard and **why** that group is so interested in our Western Kansas Senate race. Then, instead of buying in to what the special interest group is selling, call Senator Teichman at 620-234-5159 or call me. We can put the misinformation and half-truths in perspective. We can tell you the whole story.

**Kansas Primary Election August 7**

The 2012 Kansas elections will be historic, and there is much at stake. I urge each of you to participate and make sure your vote is counted. The primary election is Tuesday, August 7, only ten days away!

Two options are available for early voting. If you have requested a mail ballot, you can fill it out and return. If not, you can now walk into your local voting headquarters and vote early in person. I urge you to take advantage of this option! You can vote at a time that fits your own schedule, and you avoid the possibility that unforeseen circumstances may prevent you from voting on election day, August 7.

Whichever option you may choose, I encourage you to get it done! It is not an exaggeration to say that the future of Kansas may well hang in the balance!

### **How Dry Is It?**



In my last newsletter I reprinted William Lindsay White's wonderful prayer for rain. Unfortunately that plea and the prayers of many others have not yet had much effect.

As many of you know, the Western Kansas Weather Modification Program has been around since 1975. It exists to seed potential rainclouds for the dual purpose of hail suppression and rainfall augmentation over the target counties in southwest and west central Kansas. They only send up the cloud seeding planes when there is a storm system moving into the target area which holds potential for rainfall and/or threat of hail. Here is what program meteorologist Walt Geiger wrote in the

program newsletter in early July. His words illustrate how historic this current drought has become:

"June of 2012 will be remembered for many records this year. Along with temperature records shattered for many locations across the area and probably a few records for least amount of precipitation, our program has also broke a record for least amount of seeding days for any June in our history going back to the first year of operations in 1975. This year, storm episodes have been extremely infrequent since around early April. May 2012 tied the record for least number of seeding days for that month with only three. As for this June, breaking the record for least number of days is a shocking reality. Periods of tranquil weather are not all that uncommon during the first half of June but the almost complete lack of significant storms during the second half of the month is very rare! There were only five days of seeding operations for June. Four of those days came prior to June 17th. The previous record for least number of days was set back in 1977 with six days. The drought has a stranglehold on our area that is worse at present than it was at this time last year!"

Here is a [map](#) illustrating how the drought is currently affecting Kansas. And of course Kansas is not alone. Here is a national perspective on the [historic drought](#).

Following Governor Brownback's drought tour this past week he [announced](#) that he was opening up Kansas fishing lakes and certain Corps of Engineers reservoirs for emergency domestic and livestock water use.

## Words to Live By

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**Cowboy Logic:** A loud mouth and a shallow mind go well together.

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**Quote of the Week:** •"Many a good argument is ruined by some fool who knows what he's talking about." - Marshall McLuhan

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**Sermon in a Sentence:** The best way to keep your word is to not give it foolishly.

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