

[Home](#) » [Media](#) » [Press Releases](#)

Congressman Cleaver's Statement Condemning Special Session to Begin Mid-Decade Redistricting Without a New Census

August 29, 2025 **Press Release**

(Kansas City, MO) – Today, U.S. Representative Emanuel Cleaver, II (D-MO) released the following statement after Governor Mike Kehoe announced a special session to redraw Missouri's congressional map mid-decade, an unprecedented step taken at the direction of the president.

"I have had the privilege and distinct honor of serving the people of Missouri's Fifth Congressional District. I have always understood one truth: this seat does not belong to me. It belongs to the people. And today, that truth is under assault.

"President Trump's unprecedented directive to redraw our maps in the middle of the decade and without an updated census is not an act of democracy – it is an unconstitutional attack against it. This attempt to gerrymander Missouri will not simply change district lines, it will silence voices. It will deny representation. It will tell the people of Missouri that their lawmakers no longer wish to earn their vote, that elections are predetermined by the power brokers in Washington, and that politicians – not the people – will decide the outcome.

"Roughly 40% of Missourians cast their ballots for Democratic candidates last year, and they deserve representation in the People's House just as much as our Republican neighbors. Yet, in attempting to dismantle the Fifth District, state lawmakers would be working to drown out Missouri voices in favor of a single man a thousand miles away. It is my sincere hope that they will not give in to this short-sighted and irresponsible demand.

"But let us be clear: Should this effort move forward, we will not concede.

"I will not surrender the voices of the people who entrusted me to fight for them. The people of the Fifth District and I will fight relentlessly to ensure Missouri never becomes an antidemocratic state, where politicians choose their voters instead of voters choosing their representatives. In the courts and at the ballot box, we will demand that the rule of law is upheld, our voices are heard, and democracy prevails.

"Our nation has endured wars, depressions, and great struggles for civil rights. And through it all, the principle that every vote counts has carried us forward. That principle is bigger than me, this seat, or any president looking to rig the rules for personal gain.

"This is the line we must not let them cross. This is the continuation of our unrelenting struggle for justice. I will fight with every ounce of strength I have to defend democracy – and practice prudence in the best interest of my constituents, Missouri, and the country we love."

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Emanuel Cleaver, II is the U.S. Representative for Missouri's Fifth Congressional District, which includes Kansas City, Independence, Lee's Summit, Raytown, Grandview, Sugar Creek, Greenwood, Blue Springs, North Kansas City, Gladstone, and Claycomo. He is a member of the exclusive House Financial Services Committee and Ranking Member of the House Subcommittee on Housing and Insurance.