

# Opinions

## Alaska is underrepresented

By Leo Chappelle

By the logic of the Police Jury and its reapportionment consultant, Strategic Demographics, the state of Alaska is woefully underrepresented in the Congress of the United States. With a mere 733,391 citizens but a total land and water area of 665,588 square miles, Alaska has but one representative in the Congress of the United States.

Rhode Island on the other hand, with a population of 1,097,379, and only 1,544.5 square miles of territory, has two representatives in Congress. Rhode Island has a Congressional Representative for every 772.25 square miles, whereas poor Alaska has only one for 665,588 square miles. Where is the justice in that? Alaska should have at least 862 representatives in Congress to be equal to Rhode Island. That's according to Police jury and its consultant's thinking.

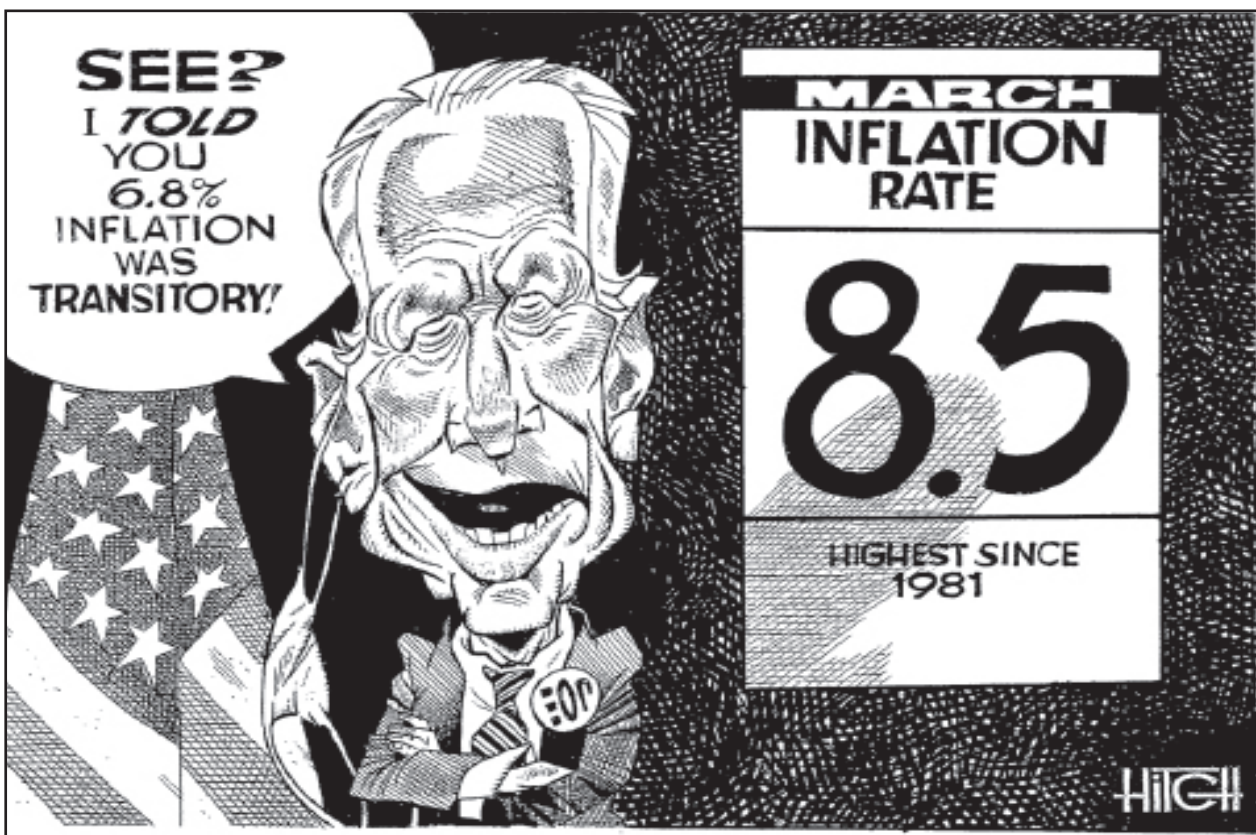
The Police Jury should maintain its present size because the area of Catahoula Parish is the same as it was, though the population is only 8,447 people now, down almost 19% from 2010 when the population was 10,407 people. Yet, thankfully, we still have the same 739 square miles of land area. So, that gives not only every 940 of us who are not incarcerated a Police Jury person, but, more importantly according to Police Jury thinking, it gives every 82 square miles of land in the parish its own representative. It's just like in 2000 when there were still 10,920 of us. Or 1980 when the census counted 12,287 people here. Did I mention that there are only 8,447 now? Yeah, I thought so. And by the way, that means fewer tax payers to support local government functions. But we still have the same number of people in government. And the

same land area. So, it's all good. Right?

There were only about a half dozen or so attendees at the Police Jury meeting and consequently the public hearing concerning the reapportionment of the parish's nine wards. This was about three times as many people as usually attend these things and it's difficult to be critical of that because, for some, it's a bit of a trip and not too much happens as a rule.

Every now and then, however, it's important because if the Police Jury thinks you don't care, it may become easy for them to think that what they do doesn't matter. Despite my frequent criticisms, one may be surprised to learn that I find it difficult to blame the Police Jury for all of our situation. We are all human and when we do not get a response to the actions we take, it can appear to us that there is little need to concern ourselves with taking risks or making changes.

We all want the good. But we also may need help to determine what that good is and how to achieve it. And there is a powerful tendency to favor what one perceives to be safe. That is understandable. So, if you, the voting public, want something different, it will be you, not the Police Jury, who provides the courage to accomplish it. Even if our only real option were "managed decline" (though we certainly hope not), it would be managed most prudently if the decision makers knew someone were watching.



**Editors Note:** The opinions, beliefs and viewpoints expressed by various authors do not necessarily reflect the opinions, beliefs and viewpoints of the Catahoula News Booster or any employee thereof. The Catahoula News Booster is not responsible for accuracy or completeness, and will not be liable for any errors, or omissions. All opinions are provided on an as-is basis and have not been edited in any way.

## THE RICH LOWRY COLUMN

### In defense of Elon Musk

A year after being named Time magazine's person of the year, Elon Musk is attempting to acquire Twitter.

To listen to Musk's critics, you'd believe it's an act almost on par with Hitler invading Poland not long after being named Time's man of the year in 1938.

A writer for the left-wing website Salon worried that a Musk takeover of Twitter would enable fascism in America. A New York University journalism professor lamented that posting on Twitter with the threat of Musk looming feels like partying at a Berlin nightclub "at the twilight of Weimar Germany." Former Labor secretary Robert Reich warned, "This is what oligarchy looks like." And so on.

A report for the news site Axios compared Musk to "a movie super-villain," and related -- accurately -- that journalists who break news and opine on Twitter "really don't want to be working in Elon Musk's private playpen."

No, they much prefer to be working in a playpen whose ever-shifting rules -- constantly changing to keep up with the latest progressive priorities -- are written by the kind of people who thought the story of Hunter Biden's laptop should have been suppressed.

In their eyes, Elon Musk is guilty of a thought crime -- namely, believing that thought should be free, and should be freely expressed on a social media platform with outsize influence on the nation's public life.

Not too long ago, this would have been considered a core American belief, especially welcome to journalists whose work depends on the First Amendment. That was before content moderation, weaponized against one side of the political spectrum, supposedly became the thin line protecting American democracy from the onset of misinformation-driven dictatorship.

Who knew that so much could depend on policing what pronouns apply to trans people or cracking down on users who believed in the lab-leak theory early in the pandemic?

Musk presents a clear and present danger to the use of Twitter as a one-sided instrument to impose progressive rules on the public debate.

From one point of view, Twitter should be beneath him. In contrast to many other Silicon

Valley giants, Musk has focused on creating revolutionary physical products in the real world, whether electric cars or rockets. Transforming the American space program makes figuring out a better way for people to share their opinions 280 characters at a time seem quite puny in comparison.

Musk is firmly in the tradition of great American entrepreneurs whose audacious vision, business acumen, and showmanship have made them larger-than-life celebrities. Think Thomas Edison.

They have usually been willing to think for themselves, a quality now in short supply.

In today's America, world famous entrepreneurs and the companies that they've created, which are supposed to be all about innovation and disruption, happily let themselves get pulled along in the slipstream of progressive group think.

Companies built on great risks are deathly afraid that they might have to weather a critical hashtag or a tantrum by their woke millennial employees.

People who would presumably object to the government telling them what to say and think are too willing to let free-floating social media mobs effectively dictate to them.

Musk, a kind of libertarian who has a puckish sense of humor and willingness to defy authority (just ask the SEC), rejects this thoughtless and often cowardly conformity.

Like podcaster Joe Rogan, another recent target of progressive ire, his fundamental offense is being uncategorizable and willing to question conventional wisdom. Like Dave Chapelle and J.K. Rowling, he is too rich and famous to be canceled or cowed -- to be more precise, he's the richest man in the world who enjoys a public fight and genuinely disdains the censors and scolds.

All of this makes him a very dangerous man indeed, and perhaps just the guy to make the statement against intimidation and in favor of free speech that this moment so desperately needs.

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review.  
(c) 2020 by King Features Synd., Inc.

## Catahoula News Booster

The Catahoula News Booster is the Official Journal of the Town of Jonesville, Village of Harrisonburg, Village of Sicily Island, Catahoula Parish School Board, Catahoula Parish Police Jury, and Tensas Basin Levee Board. POSTMASTER: Send form 3579 to Box 188, Jonesville, Louisiana, 71343. Periodical class postage paid at Jonesville, Louisiana. Kim Cloessner, Publisher Identification Number is SECDUSPS556-720. Published every Wednesday. Subscription rates: By mail in Catahoula Parish-\$35.00 annually, elsewhere in Louisiana-\$45.00 annually, out-of-state-\$55.00 annually Catahoula News-Booster, 103 3rd Street, P.O. BOX 188, Jonesville, LA 71343. 318-339-7242

### Late Legal

#### TOWN OF JONESVILLE REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATION STATEMENTS FOR ENGINEERING SERVICES

The Town of Jonesville (TOWN) is seeking assistance for engineering services related to the TOWN's proposed "Love Louisiana Outdoors (LLO)" project. Funded with Community Development Block Grant-CV (CDBG-CV) funds from the CARES Act. Jonesville may need to provide additional funding through other available Federal, State or local Funds to complete the project. When leveraging funds, the selected firm will be required to provide engineering services in accordance with rules and regulations associated with all funding programs related to this project. Jonesville is soliciting qualifications statements for engineering services to assist with preliminary engineering, design engineering, and construction related series. The intent of the TOWN is to award a cost reimbursement contract with payment terms to be negotiated with selected firms based on funding programs allowable engineering fees.

The selected engineer will be required to work in conjunction with the Town's planning facilitator for the Love Louisiana Outdoors Park Grant project.

All responses will be evaluated in accordance with the selection criteria identified in the Request for Qualifications Packet. The Town of Jonesville will begin contract negotiations immediately following selection of successful respondent.

Interested parties are invited to secure a Request for Qualifications Packet from the Town of Jonesville, Attn: Anlynn Gardner, Municipal Clerk, 104 Lilly Street, Jonesville, LA 71343 during their operating hours: Monday - Friday, 8:00 A.M to 4:00P.M. Packets maybe obtained upon request beginning May 3, 2022.

Responses to this Request must be hand delivered or mailed to the Town of Jonesville at the above named address in such a manner that it is received no later than 3:00 P.M. on May 11, 2022 with contact person being Anlynn Gardner, Municipal Clerk.

All small and minority-owned firms and women's business enterprises are encouraged to apply.

"The Town of Jonesville is an Equal Opportunity Employer & Provider"