

**DISTRICTING & APPORTIONMENT
COMMISSION**

PUBLIC COMMENT

**MISSOULA HEARING
APRIL 12, 2010**

Weiss, Rachel

From: Gail Rader [rader@havremt.net]
Sent: Friday, April 09, 2010 9:37 AM
To: Weiss, Rachel
Subject: Redistricting

Hello --- I was present at the meeting last evening in Havre and can say unequivocally that Havre does NOT want to be split. I was born here and have lived here for some 70 years and believe me, this is the worst redistricting that I have ever seen. The message was loud and clear from nearly all speakers that the "neighborhood" concept and towns/communities want to be together. Please take this into consideration.
Gail Rader, 51 Saddle Butte Drive, Havre, MT 59501.

Weiss, Rachel

From: Lamson, Joe (D&A Commission)
Sent: Friday, April 09, 2010 12:12 PM
To: 'henry busey'
Cc: Weiss, Rachel
Subject: RE: MT. Redistricting Comment

Sara:

Thank you for your thoughtful comments. I am forwarding them to our staff person Rachel Weiss, so they will become part of the hearing record and shared with the other commissioners..

Joe Lamson

-----Original Message-----

From: henry busey [mailto:hw**busey@bresnan.net**]
Sent: Thursday, April 08, 2010 8:17 PM
To: Lamson, Joe (D&A Commission)
Subject: MT. Redistricting Comment

I am strongly in favor of drawing districts so minorities, such as Montana Native Americans, are in a majority of their district. They need to be represented in Montana's Legislature. But I also am strongly committed to districts that are balanced between both Democrats and Republicans. Unless a legislator's district contains strong numbers of both parties, he need not listen to opposing views nor be willing to compromise on key issues.

Currently this situation has led to extreme polarization with often the best for Montana as a whole is being ignored.

Sara Busey
75 Brookside
Missoula, MT 59802

Weiss, Rachel

From: Kristin Hansen [hansenforhouse@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, April 09, 2010 2:20 PM
To: Weiss, Rachel
Subject: redistricting

Dear Rachel,

Please get this into the hands of the commission.

My concern is primarily for the deviation. I believe a +/- 5 deviation is entirely too large. The Great Falls concerns from the meeting last night are correct. If we start with a +/-5, in 10 years, it'll be +/-10 or more because of growth and population shifts. It also simply isn't necessary to have such a big range. Technology can get us much closer than that and should be used as a legitimate tool to draw the lines.

Any formula plugged into the technology, however, should not have a variable of "democrat/republican." Party should not figure in to the equation. Neighborhoods cross party lines and people don't live their lives and form their beliefs and values because of a political party.

Finally, I disagree with Mr. Lamson's statement last night that Havre was begging to be split. The minutes from the last redistricting seem to indicate a 2-1 against split. And at this point, it is not exactly relevant. If Havre did want split 10 years ago, we don't anymore, as the testimony last night overwhelmingly indicated.

Thank you.
Kristin Hansen
Havre

Weiss, Rachel

From: Representative Wendy Warburton, MT HD 34 [wendywarburton@gmail.com]
Sent: Saturday, April 10, 2010 7:04 PM
To: Weiss, Rachel
Subject: Havre and redistricting

Hello,

I have been informed that certain individuals are claiming that in past redistricting efforts Havre has "begged" to be split. I find that rather preposterous. I represent the east portions of Havre. Havre is one small city. Havre has a great deal of community pride and cohesiveness. Our town is ONE community. Our longstanding motto is "Havre has it."

The current zigzag split through Havre that divides House Dist. 34 from House Dist. 33 makes no sense whatsoever to a person who is a resident of this town or the Hi-Line in general. It doesn't even follow a main arterial street or logical neighborhood dividing lines.

In addition, it makes no sense whatsoever, as I alluded to during the April 8 redistricting hearing, to split the town of Havre in half - lumping the two portions of the town into two different districts that otherwise mainly contain dryland farming, irrigated farming, ranching and a smattering of very small, rural towns.

All the high school students of Havre go to ONE high school, whether they are in HD 34 or HD 33. Why the commission split up Havre Blue Pony families in order to lump some of them into a district with Chinook Sugarbeeters, Turner Tornados, and Harlem Wildcats 20 to 60 miles away is simply not logical.

Cordially,
Rep. Wendy Warburton

--

Representative Wendy Warburton
Montana House District 34
406-262-3185
wendywarburton@gmail.com

Weiss, Rachel

From: Edward Greef [slowpedalineddie@mac.com]
Sent: Sunday, April 11, 2010 5:30 PM
To: Weiss, Rachel
Subject: Redistricting Comments

Hi -- My name is Ed Greef, I am a candidate for HD-90 which is in the Bitterroot and is the House District for the north end of the valley.

I am strongly opposed to partainship reshaping as happened in a lot of districts last time because to maximize the 5% rule. I am strongly favor changing that to a maximum of plus or minus 1%.....

Thank You,

Ed Greef
PO Box 1327
Florence, Mt 59833

Weiss, Rachel

From: Lamson, Joe (D&A Commission)
Sent: Monday, April 12, 2010 8:15 AM
To: Weiss, Rachel
Subject: FW: voters rights

From: Ednor [mailto:ednor@ednor.com]
Sent: Monday, April 12, 2010 7:54 AM
To: Lamson, Joe (D&A Commission)
Subject: voters rights

Dear Redistricting Commission:

It is a fundamental tenet of our democracy that each Montanan be afforded an equally meaningful vote. With this in mind, please consider the following comments on the criteria the Commission should adopt when drawing the new legislative district maps.

First, it is critical that all criteria be consistent with both the letter and spirit of the Voting Rights Act. This means that the Commission must maintain the traditional plus or minus 5% population deviation for all districts, which encourages and improves minority participation in the democratic process. Some have recently suggested a 1% deviation, which will suppress minority participation. If a 1% deviation is adopted, the State of Montana would be forced to unsuccessfully defend this anti-democratic provision in what is sure to be a costly lawsuit.

Second, it is of utmost importance to the integrity and legitimacy of our representative democracy that the state-wide plan be drawn so that neither Republicans nor Democrats control either legislative chamber simply due to district boundaries. Districts should be as competitive as possible to provide voters with meaningful choices. Second, with the 2010 U.S. Census currently underway, it only makes sense to use current districts as starting points for redistricting. This provides transparency for voters and decreases the appearance of gerrymandering. Lastly, communities of interest should remain intact. We must not artificially divide and contort the political boundaries of our communities simply for partisan gain.

The importance of your task can not be overstated. Our very right to democratic self-governance depends on you.

Thanks,
Ednor Therriault

Weiss, Rachel

From: Lamson, Joe (D&A Commission)
Sent: Monday, April 12, 2010 8:15 AM
To: Weiss, Rachel
Subject: FW: districts

From: Lynn Redding [mailto:lredding@hotmail.com]
Sent: Monday, April 12, 2010 7:35 AM
To: Lamson, Joe (D&A Commission)
Subject: districts

Dear Commissioner Lamson:

Please accept this public comment and direct it appropriately....

Dear Redistricting Commission:

It is a fundamental tenet of our democracy that each Montanan be afforded an equally meaningful vote. With this in mind, please consider the following comments on the criteria the Commission should adopt when drawing the new legislative district maps.

First, it is critical that all criteria be consistent with both the letter and spirit of the Voting Rights Act. This means that the Commission must maintain the traditional plus or minus 5% population deviation for all districts, which encourages and improves minority participation in the democratic process. Some have recently suggested a 1% deviation, which will suppress minority participation. If a 1% deviation is adopted, the State of Montana would be forced to unsuccessfully defend this anti-democratic provision in what is sure to be a costly lawsuit.

Second, it is of utmost importance to the integrity and legitimacy of our representative democracy that the state-wide plan be drawn so that neither Republicans nor Democrats control either legislative chamber simply due to district boundaries. Districts should be as competitive as possible to provide voters with meaningful choices. Second, with the 2010 U.S. Census currently underway, it only makes sense to use current districts as starting points for redistricting. This provides transparency for voters and decreases the appearance of gerrymandering. Lastly, communities of interest should remain intact. We must not artificially divide and contort the political boundaries of our communities simply for partisan gain.

The importance of your task can not be overstated. Our very right to democratic self-governance depends on you.

Lynn Redding
Missoula, MT

Weiss, Rachel

From: Lamson, Joe (D&A Commission)
Sent: Monday, April 12, 2010 8:15 AM
To: Weiss, Rachel
Subject: FW: Re-Districting

From: Meredith Sheane [mailto:mbsheane@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, April 12, 2010 6:16 AM
To: Lamson, Joe (D&A Commission)
Subject: Re-Districting

Dear Redistricting Commission:

It is a fundamental tenet of our democracy that each Montanan be afforded an equally meaningful vote. With this in mind, please consider the following comments on the criteria the Commission should adopt when drawing the new legislative district maps.

First, it is critical that all criteria be consistent with both the letter and spirit of the Voting Rights Act. This means that the Commission must maintain the traditional plus or minus 5% population deviation for all districts, which encourages and improves minority participation in the democratic process. Some have recently suggested a 1% deviation, which will suppress minority participation. If a 1% deviation is adopted, the State of Montana would be forced to unsuccessfully defend this anti-democratic provision in what is sure to be a costly lawsuit.

Second, *it is of utmost importance to the integrity and legitimacy of our representative democracy that the state-wide plan be drawn so that neither Republicans nor Democrats control either legislative chamber simply due to district boundaries.* Districts should be as competitive as possible to provide voters with meaningful choices. With the 2010 U.S. Census currently underway, it only makes sense to use current districts as starting points for redistricting. This provides transparency for voters and decreases the appearance of gerrymandering. Lastly, communities of interest should remain intact. We must not artificially divide and contort the political boundaries of our communities simply for partisan gain.

The importance of your task can not be overstated. Our very right to democratic self-governance depends on you.

Thank you.

Meredith Sheane

Missoula

Weiss, Rachel

From: Lamson, Joe (D&A Commission)
Sent: Monday, April 12, 2010 8:16 AM
To: Weiss, Rachel
Subject: FW: redistricting

From: Judy Matson [mailto:judymatson@bresnan.net]
Sent: Monday, April 12, 2010 5:01 AM
To: Lamson, Joe (D&A Commission)
Subject: redistricting

Dear Redistricting Commission:

Each Montanan should have an equally meaningful vote. Please consider the following criteria the Commission should adopt when drawing the new legislative district maps.

First, be consistent with both the letter and spirit of the Voting Rights Act. Maintain the traditional plus or minus 5% population deviation for all districts, which encourages and improves minority participation in the democratic process.

Second, neither Republicans nor Democrats should control either legislative chamber simply due to district boundaries. Districts should be as competitive as possible to provide voters with meaningful choices.

You have great responsibility to protect our right to democratic self-governance.

Sincerely,

Judy Matson

Weiss, Rachel

From: Lamson, Joe (D&A Commission)
Sent: Monday, April 12, 2010 8:16 AM
To: Weiss, Rachel
Subject: FW: Redistricting in Montana

From: Lacey Wilkins [mailto:laceywilkins1@gmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, April 11, 2010 11:05 PM
To: Lamson, Joe (D&A Commission)
Subject: Redistricting in Montana

Dear Redistricting Commission:

It is a fundamental tenet of our democracy that each Montanan be afforded an equally meaningful vote. With this in mind, please consider the following comments on the criteria the Commission should adopt when drawing the new legislative district maps.

First, it is critical that all criteria be consistent with both the letter and spirit of the Voting Rights Act. This means that the Commission must maintain the traditional plus or minus 5% population deviation for all districts, which encourages and improves minority participation in the democratic process. Some have recently suggested a 1% deviation, which will suppress minority participation. How will shutting out minority voting be in any way beneficial to the people of Montana, let alone the democratic process as a whole? It will be a tremendous detriment to the voices of the people for whom the Voting Rights Act was created.

Second, it is of utmost importance to the integrity and legitimacy of our representative democracy that the state-wide plan be drawn so that neither Republicans nor Democrats control either legislative chamber simply due to district boundaries. Districts should be as competitive as possible to provide voters with meaningful choices. Second, with the 2010 U.S. Census currently underway, it only makes sense to use current districts as starting points for redistricting. This provides transparency for voters and decreases the appearance of gerrymandering. Lastly, communities of interest should remain intact. We must not artificially divide and contort the political boundaries of our communities simply for partisan gain.

The importance of your task can not be overstated. Our very right to democratic self-governance depends on you.

Sincerely,

Lacey Wilkins

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Lacey Wilkins, M.S.
406-207-3532
laceywilkins1@gmail.com

Weiss, Rachel

From: Lamson, Joe (D&A Commission)
Sent: Monday, April 12, 2010 8:16 AM
To: Weiss, Rachel
Subject: FW: Re Redistricting

From: GardenEarth@aol.com [mailto:GardenEarth@aol.com]
Sent: Sunday, April 11, 2010 10:26 PM
To: Lamson, Joe (D&A Commission)
Subject: Re Redistricting

Dear Commissioner Lamson,

As you know, yours and the rest of the Redistricting Commission's mission is essential to the maintenance of a vibrant, effective democracy in Montana.

Please ensure that the principles of competitive districting, equity and one person, one vote are reflected as the core values by which you direct the 2010 Montana Redistricting process.

Thank you for your attention and service,

Respectfully,

Steve Corrick, Realtor
Prudential Montana Real Estate
Missoula, MT 59801
Steve.Corrick@PruMT.com

Weiss, Rachel

From: Lamson, Joe (D&A Commission)
Sent: Monday, April 12, 2010 8:17 AM
To: Weiss, Rachel
Subject: FW: Districts

From: Adam & Cate [mailto:sunbel2@gmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, April 11, 2010 9:57 PM
To: Lamson, Joe (D&A Commission)
Subject: Districts

Dear Redistricting Commission:

It is a fundamental tenet of our democracy that each Montanan be afforded an equally meaningful vote. With this in mind, please consider the following comments on the criteria the Commission should adopt when drawing the new legislative district maps.

First, it is critical that all criteria be consistent with both the letter and spirit of the Voting Rights Act. This means that the Commission must maintain the traditional plus or minus 5% population deviation for all districts, which encourages and improves minority participation in the democratic process. Some have recently suggested a 1% deviation, which will suppress minority participation. If a 1% deviation is adopted, the State of Montana would be forced to unsuccessfully defend this anti-democratic provision in what is sure to be a costly lawsuit.

Second, it is of utmost importance to the integrity and legitimacy of our representative democracy that the state-wide plan be drawn so that neither Republicans nor Democrats control either legislative chamber simply due to district boundaries. Districts should be as competitive as possible to provide voters with meaningful choices. Second, with the 2010 U.S. Census currently underway, it only makes sense to use current districts as starting points for redistricting. This provides transparency for voters and decreases the appearance of gerrymandering. Lastly, communities of interest should remain intact. We must not artificially divide and contort the political boundaries of our communities simply for partisan gain.

The importance of your task can not be overstated. Our very right to democratic self-governance depends on you.

Thank you and sincerely,

Adam Hubel

Weiss, Rachel

From: Lamson, Joe (D&A Commission)
Sent: Monday, April 12, 2010 8:17 AM
To: Weiss, Rachel
Subject: FW: redistricting

From: Jan Newman M.D. [mailto:jnewman@whitehorseheaven.com]
Sent: Sunday, April 11, 2010 9:48 PM
To: Lamson, Joe (D&A Commission)
Subject: redistricting

Dear Redistricting Commission:

It is a fundamental tenet of our democracy that each Montanan be afforded an equally meaningful vote. With this in mind, please consider the following comments on the criteria the Commission should adopt when drawing the new legislative district maps.

First, it is critical that all criteria be consistent with both the letter and spirit of the Voting Rights Act. This means that the Commission must maintain the traditional plus or minus 5% population deviation for all districts, which encourages and improves minority participation in the democratic process. Some have recently suggested a 1% deviation, which will suppress minority participation. If a 1% deviation is adopted, the State of Montana would be forced to unsuccessfully defend this anti-democratic provision in what is sure to be a costly lawsuit.

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The importance of your task can not be overstated. Our very right to democratic self-governance depends on you.

Jan B. Newman M.D. M.A. FACS ABIHM
3436 Mountain Dr.
Clinton, MT 59825
jnewman@whitehorseheaven.com
Jan@sightsoflight.com
406-258-6284
406-544-0006 (cell)

Weiss, Rachel

From: Laura Fricke [frickelw@aol.com]
Sent: Monday, April 12, 2010 10:58 AM
To: Weiss, Rachel
Subject: Comment on Redistricting

TO THE REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE MEMBERS,

Thank you for your hard work in redistricting Montana. For the past 18 years I have been campaigning in several Districts.

1. Please keep the District in the same county.
2. Please keep the neighborhoods and towns together. Last time HD 91 was splintered with one precinct on Old Highway 93 near Florence and the rest of House District 91 was on Interstate 90 near Bonner, Clinton, and extending the District clear up to Seeley Lake. STRANGE!
Then HD 90 was in part of Stevensville, but not the whole town....the Lone Rock area which is north of Stevensville was split between HD 90 and HD 89 going clear to Victor which is South of Stevensville...not close to Lone Rock at all. STRANGE!
3. I suggest you allow local people to show you who are on the committee, the best way to draw the line in their area. I would like to help you with House District 90 and House District 89 in Ravalli County.

Thank you for you time. I hope to hear from you. Laura Fricke
273-2777 or 239-2738