

Chairman Regnier and members of the Redistricting Committee:

My name is Bridget Holland. I have lived in Helena since 1972.

map entitled
I find "the communities" ~~map submitted by the Democrats~~ *quite misleading.* quite misleading. It reflects everything except my understanding of a community. The combinations incorporated into quite distorted districts are far from any suggestion of unity, kinship, similarity or neighborhood.

I believe the 3 maps – Urban Rural, Subdivision, and Deviation produced by the non-partisan Legislative Services are far more representative of our individual neighborhoods where each of us choose to live with our own similarities and identity and consequently represented by a person closer to our ideas and values.

The population of the city of Helena would suggest 3 districts of a like minded group of people and in compliance with the ideal district.

East Helena is a neighborhood area unto itself with a unique identity and would also comply the correct apportionment.

The valley has its own identity and flavor representing the interests of the voters in this more rural area.

I hope you will take my suggestions into consideration. Thank you for your time this evening.

Bridget Holland
1801 Choteau
Helena, MT 59601
443-2218
bridgetholland@bresnan.net

My name is Jean Johnson and I have owned my home on Sierra Road East in the North Helena Valley for 24 years. I appreciate this opportunity to have my comments read to the commission as I am out of town and unable to attend this important hearing.

Five maps are before you for consideration. Four have been prepared by non-partisan staff at Legislative Services; one – the Communities plan - has been drawn by the Democratic Party. Legislative Services maps reflect the Constitutional mandate to create districts "as nearly equal in population as is practicable" plus certain requests from the commission: to hold deviations to 3%; to leave as many counties whole as possible; and to honor community and neighborhood interests to the extent possible.

The Communities plan is influenced by election results, which reflect a predominance of Democrat votes or a predominance of Republican votes. Lines are then drawn to enhance the opportunity to elect a majority of Democrat legislators. In decades past, Republican commissioners have exhibited the same intent. Perhaps now its time for a different focus.

This commission has perhaps the greatest potential in several decades to draw legislative district lines based on Constitutional mandate and commission decisions. Republicans on the commission have chosen to champion directives adopted by the commission as opposed to drawing a "Republican Plan" and I respect that. I urge the commission to reject adopting a plan drawn from vote totals and ballot history. Instead, commit to populations and cohesive county / community interests.

Regarding personal interests with respect to nearly a quarter of a century living in rural North Valley, I believe this area has the population to warrant our own representative and provide a second representative for the Valley east of HD

83 as well. While many Valley residents work in Helena, we choose to live in the more rural setting the Valley provides and subsequently have different interests and concerns.

Thank you again for this opportunity to comment. I appreciate your dedication and commitment to the reapportionment effort and wish you well in the months to come.

Jean D. Johnson
1890 Sierra Rd. East
Helena, MT 59602
458-6363
smolts@msn.com

To the members of the Redistricting Commission,

There are proposals before the commission for forming new legislative boundaries that used election results as a basis for drawing lines. This may be something that is common in other areas, but it is not the way we do things in Montana.

The city limits should be used as a boundary in the Helena area and the Valley should not be put into city districts. The Valley is a different community with a different set of interests from the city, and there ought to be one representative who looks after their needs. That also goes for other existing neighborhoods in Helena.

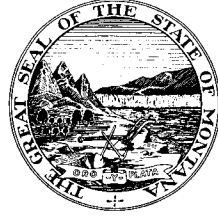
I strongly urge you to reject maps that use political data and election results in the development of district lines for the legislature. Political parties should not manipulate boundaries to maximize the number of seats they think they can win in elections. This defeats the purpose of redistricting, which is to equalize the number of people in districts, protect minority voting rights, and communities of interest.

Thank you,

Connie House
1217 Wilder Ave
Helena, MT 59601

The Subdivision Plan is a good place to start.

Montana State Senate



SENATOR DAVE LEWIS
SENATE DISTRICT 42

HELENA ADDRESS:
PO BOX 200500
HELENA, MONTANA 59620-0500
PHONE: (406) 444-4634

The Big Sky Country

COMMITTEES:
FINANCE AND CLAIMS - CHAIRMAN

HOME ADDRESS:
5871 COLLINS
HELENA, MT 59602
PHONE: (406) 459-9751
EMAIL: davelewisd@aol.com

Dear Chairman Regnier,

In the Helena area, I would encourage you to use city limits as a boundary, and not put parts of the valley into city districts. I represented House District 55 in 2000 and 2002. That House District had two precincts around Kessler School and the rest of the District was valley and rural. I won the two precincts in the city by just a handful of votes and got fifty to sixty per cent outside the city. The people in the city were represented by someone with more rural interests than they had. The major difference was on environmental issues, I would guess. Those people should be represented by a District within the city and not rolled in with the valley and rural areas. They deserve that.

I strongly urge you to reject maps that use political data and election results in the development of district lines for the legislature. Political parties should not manipulate boundaries to maximize the number of seats they think they can win in elections. That defeats the purpose of redistricting, which is to equalize the number of people in districts, protect minority voting rights, following existing political subdivisions and communities of interest.

The last map in Montana was developed through a heavy reliance on political data and election results. There is no other way to explain how many communities were divided, other than it served a political purpose for the Montana Democratic Party. The new map should have no resemblance to the current map, because it inconsistently ignores existing political subdivisions, communities of interest, lacks the compactness requirement and all of the other official redistricting criteria.

The commission should use the three maps developed by non-partisan legislative staff as starting points for the new map: the urban-rural, deviation and subdivision maps. The fourth map is just a slightly modified version of the map the Democrats put forward in 2000 using political data and election results. Many local communities are putting forward suggestions for their areas – please pay special attention to those.

Thank you for your work on building consensus throughout this process. We encourage you to reject partisan politics in the redistricting effort.

Sincerely,

NAME:

Senator Dave Lewis

Mont. Rep.

Gilda A. Clancy
4620 Independence Drive
Helena, MT 59602

March 23, 2012

To: Montana Re-apportionment Committee

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am unable to attend the March 28th meeting, therefore, am sending my concerns about the district lines.

I live in the Helena valley and understand we have enough residents for a representative of our own. The valley residents have different concerns and viewpoints than of the urban residents; such as infrastructure, agriculture property, and well water concerns, just to name a few.

We have not had a representative in the past eight years who is an adequate voice for the voters in the Helena valley.

I am respectfully asking your committee to create a Helena Valley district.

Sincerely,


Gilda Clancy

To the Members of the Districting and Apportionment Commission:

My name is Beth Ries and I reside in East Helena, in House District 78. I want to begin by saying that the Communities plan is anything but a plan that keeps communities together. I don't believe that partisan politics should be used to create the final map. The districts created to "represent" Helena divide the community.

The plan that I feel best represents the community of East Helena is the Subdivision Plan. I respect that it keeps counties and cities and values existing school districts, city wards, task forces together. I believe that it needs to be tweaked so that the Helena valley has its own district so that the folks out there get adequate representation without the influence of the city. The city of Helena should have no more than three representatives given its population divided by the ideal district size. East Helena should have its own district and should not include any portions of Helena nor Jefferson County. As a woman, it is really important that my neighbors have a legislator that represents their area.

Thank you for your time.



East Helena deserves its own district beginning at the viaduct to Spokane Creek road to York Road to Wylie Drive. This would ~~create a true~~ community. ~~be~~ contiguous and represent a true community. Comm. of interest

March 28, 2012

Montana Districting and Apportionment Commission
Attn: Chairman Regnier
P.O. Box 201706
Helena, MT 59620-1706

RE: Montana Redistricting

Dear Chairman Regnier,

I reside in Lewis and Clark County, the north Helena Valley. To understand my frustration, and for an egregious example of gerrymander district abuse, please observe Lewis and Clark County Commissioner's districts map (attached). As you can see, noting the non-contiguous design of District 2 in pink, urban Helena, and by consequence, the Democratic Party dominate and control L&C county government. As a result, I and my rural county neighbors have little to no real or meaningful representation on our County Commission.

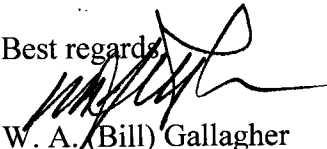
For this reason it is critical that your Commission recognize and protect the rural agrarian values and lifestyle from being likewise negated and dominated by urban and partisan interests at the state level. I urge the Commission to **eliminate from consideration** both the Democrat's proposed "Communities plan" and also, the proposed "Existing plan".

Both are patently and fatally flawed with an **intentional and substantial urban and partisan bias** as demonstrated by the repeated "wagon wheeling" of the state's various urban population centers. That "wagon wheeling" design has the singular purpose of benefiting one political party and over representing urban interests which is contrary to the stated objectives of the Redistricting Commission.

Of the three remaining maps prepared by the unbiased legislative services, I encourage the Commission to **give preference to the "Urban-Rural plan"** because it truly reflects very real, social, economic, political, and value differences that occur between Montana's urban and rural populations. In the end, the Urban-Rural plan would generate a composite legislative body that, irrespective of partisan make up, would accurately reflect Montana's true demographic character.

Thank you for your work and your consideration.

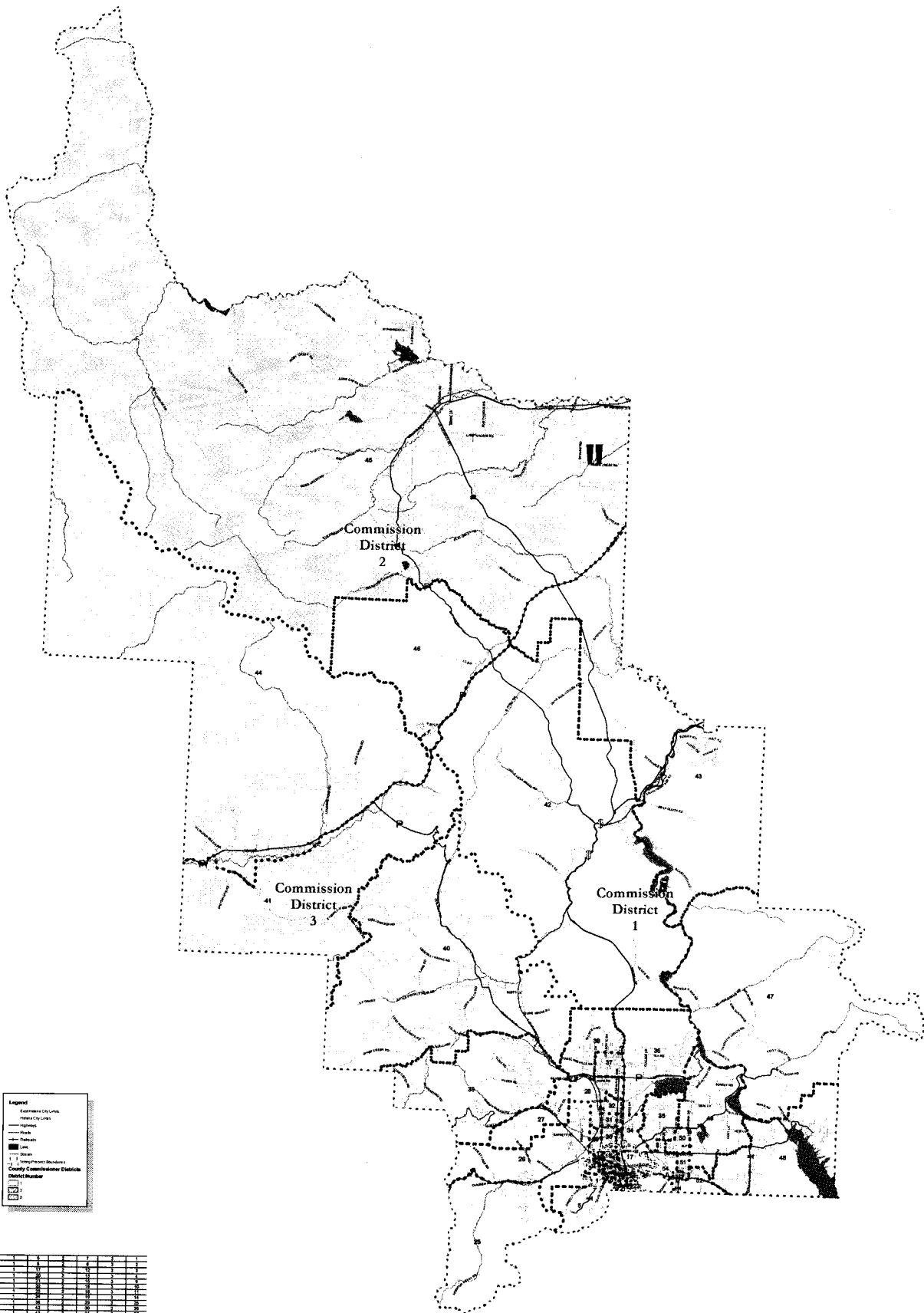
Best regards,



W. A. (Bill) Gallagher
Montana Public Service Commissioner
4855 N Montana Ave.
Helena, MT 59602
wagallagher@msn.com
406-442-5314

County Commission Districts

County Commission Districts (County Map)



Legend

- Existing City Lines
- Water City Lines
- Highways
- Roads
- Railroads
- Lines
- Water
- County Commission Districts
- County Commission Districts
- District Number

| District | City | Area (sq. miles) | Population (2000) | Population Density (per sq. mile) |
|----------|--------|------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 | Adrian | 1.2 | 1,200 | 1,000 |
| | Albion | 1.5 | 1,500 | 1,000 |
| | Albion | 1.5 | 1,500 | 1,000 |
| | Albion | 1.5 | 1,500 | 1,000 |
| | Albion | 1.5 | 1,500 | 1,000 |
| | Albion | 1.5 | 1,500 | 1,000 |
| | Albion | 1.5 | 1,500 | 1,000 |
| | Albion | 1.5 | 1,500 | 1,000 |
| | Albion | 1.5 | 1,500 | 1,000 |
| | Albion | 1.5 | 1,500 | 1,000 |
| 2 | Albion | 1.5 | 1,500 | 1,000 |
| | Albion | 1.5 | 1,500 | 1,000 |
| | Albion | 1.5 | 1,500 | 1,000 |
| | Albion | 1.5 | 1,500 | 1,000 |
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| | Albion | 1.5 | 1,500 | 1,000 |
| 3 | Albion | 1.5 | 1,500 | 1,000 |
| | Albion | 1.5 | 1,500 | 1,000 |
| | Albion | 1.5 | 1,500 | 1,000 |
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Scale: 1 inch = 1 mile

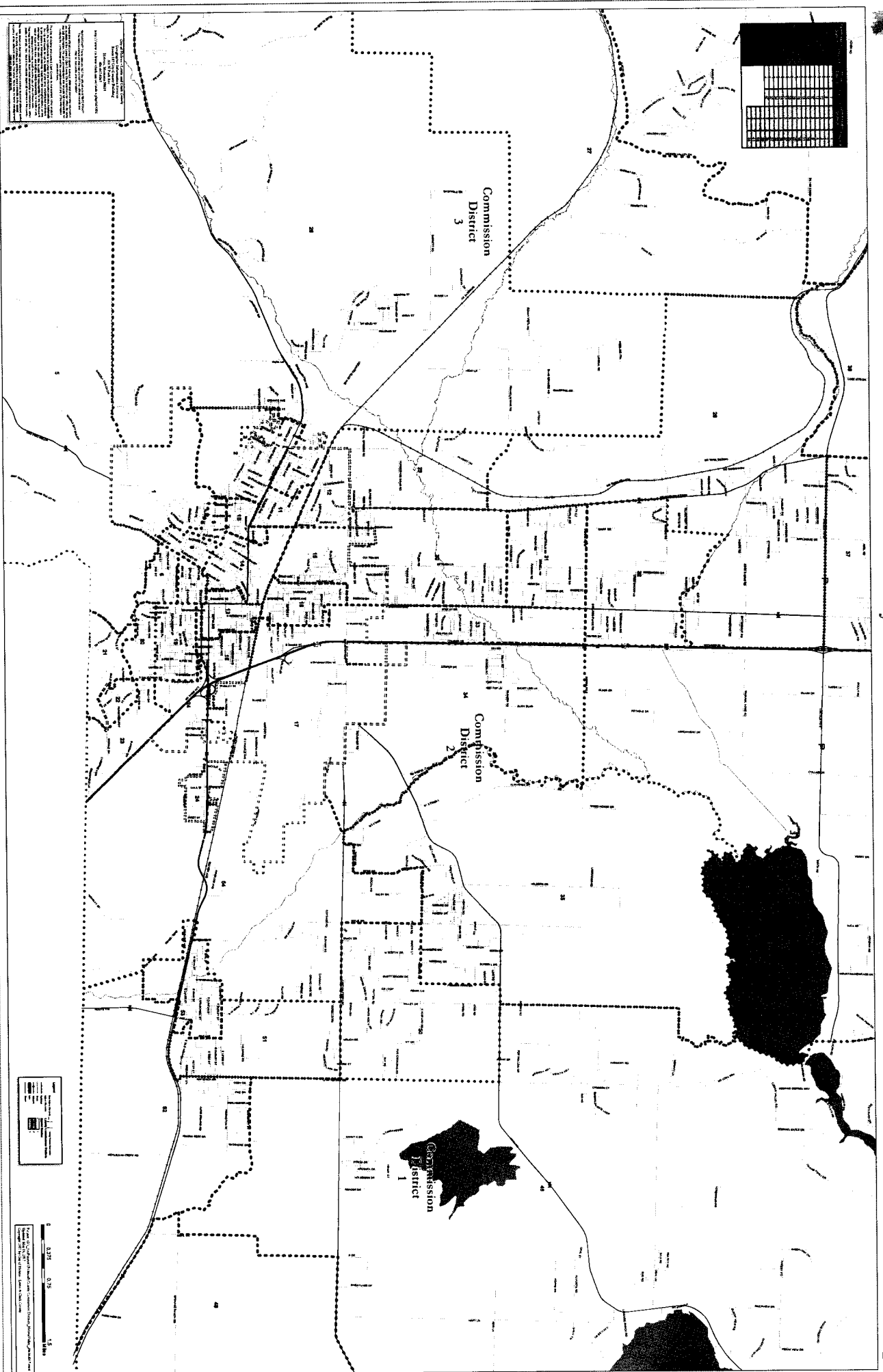
Map Date: 2000

Map Author: [Name]

Map Title: County Commission Districts

County Commission Districts

County Commission Districts (Helena Valley Map)



March 28, 2012

Montana Districting and Apportionment Commission
Attn: Chairman Regnier
P.O. Box 201706
Helena, MT 59620-1706

RE: Montana Redistricting

Dear Chairman Regnier,

I reside in Lewis and Clark County, the north Helena Valley. To understand my frustration, and for an egregious example of gerrymander district abuse, please observe Lewis and Clark County Commissioner's districts map (attached). As you can see, noting the non-contiguous design of District 2 in pink, urban Helena, and by consequence, the Democratic Party dominate and control L&C county government. As a result, I and my rural county neighbors have little to no real or meaningful representation on our County Commission.


For this reason it is critical that your Commission recognize and protect the rural agrarian values and lifestyle from being likewise negated and dominated by urban and partisan interests at the state level. I urge the Commission to **eliminate from consideration** both the Democrat's proposed "Communities plan" and also, the proposed "Existing plan".

Both are patently and fatally flawed with an **intentional and substantial urban and partisan bias** as demonstrated by the repeated "wagon wheeling" of the state's various urban population centers. That "wagon wheeling" design has the singular purpose of benefiting one political party and over representing urban interests which is contrary to the stated objectives of the Redistricting Commission.

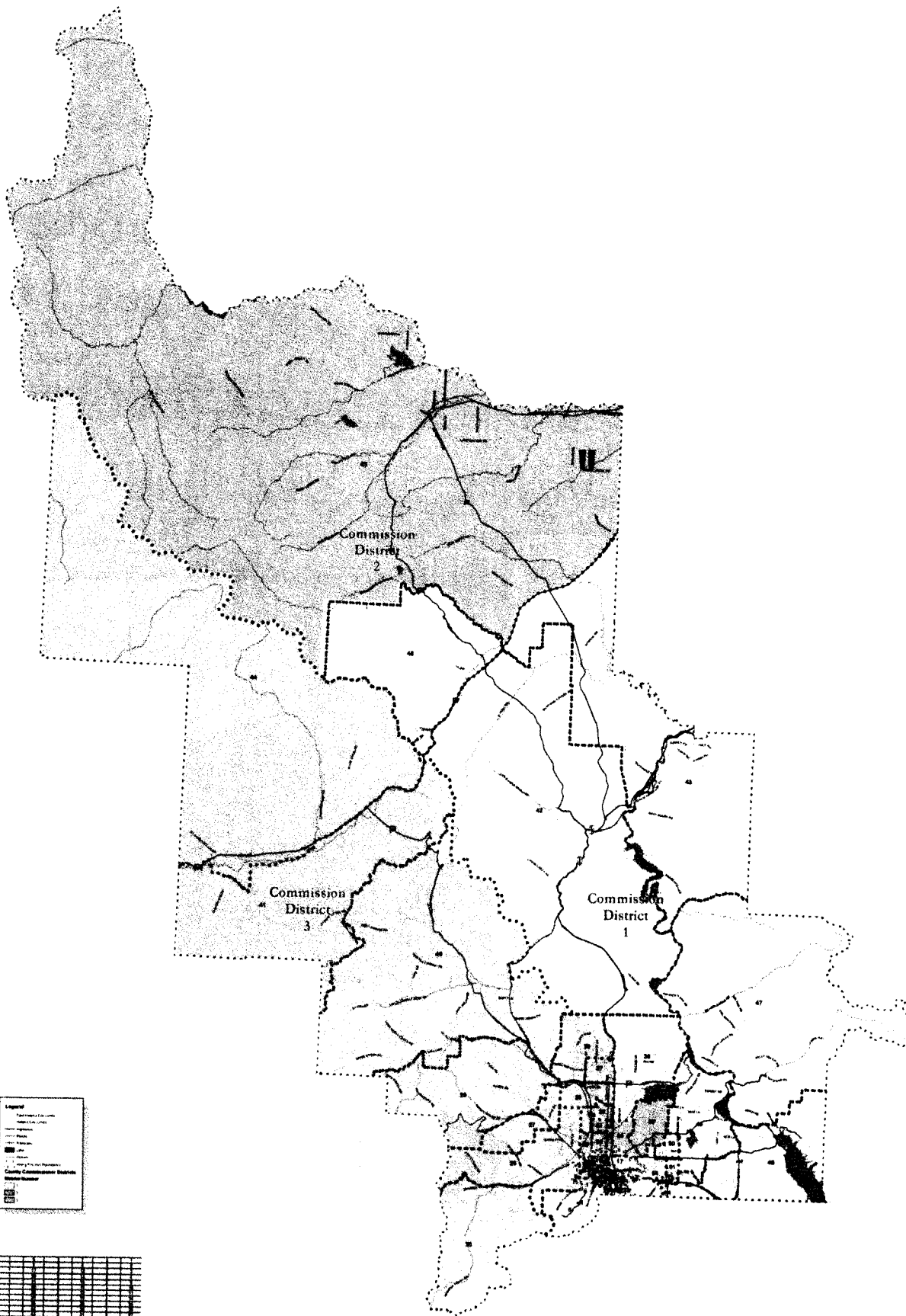
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Thank you for your work and your consideration.

Best regards,

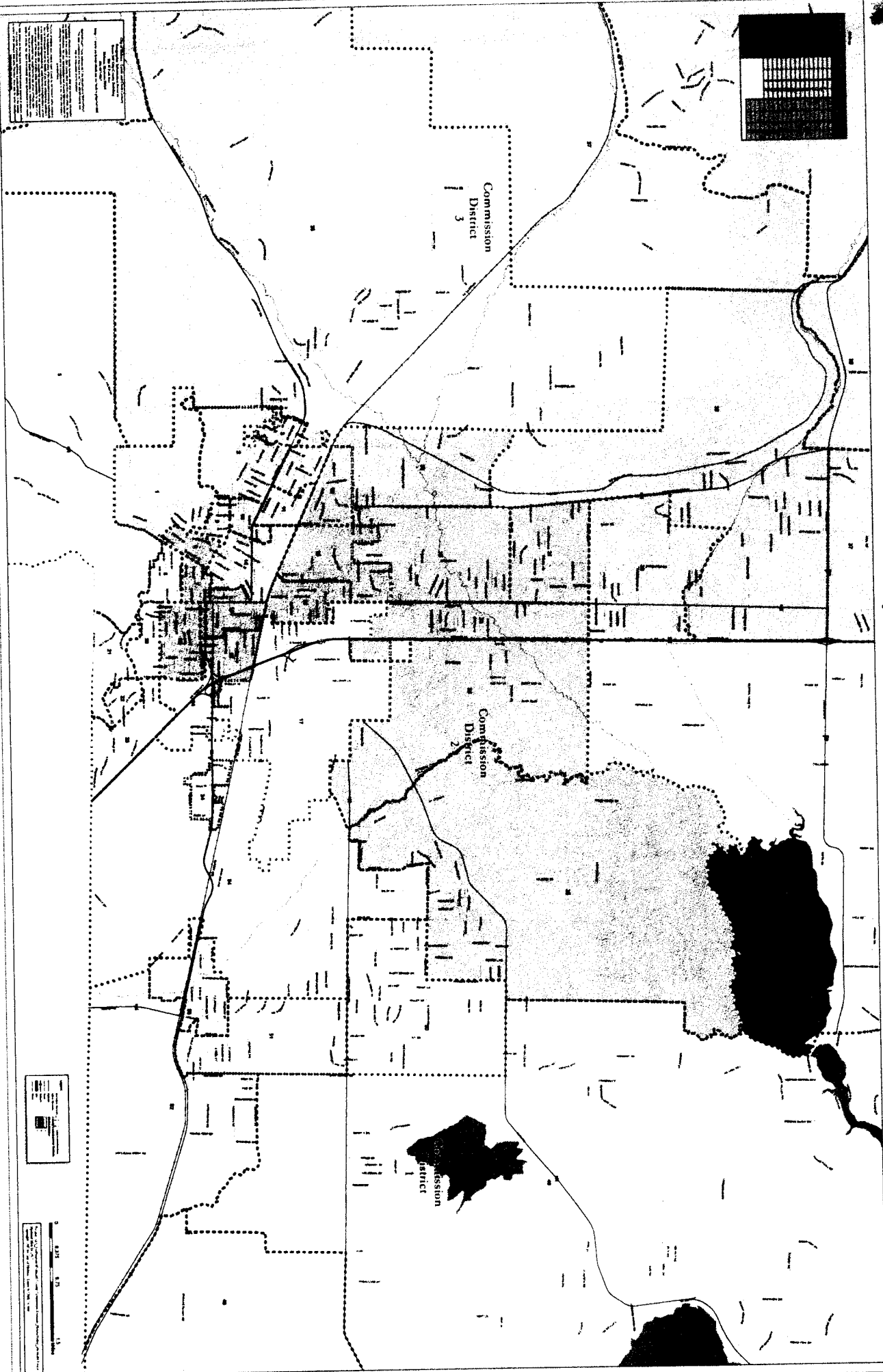


W. A. (Bill) Gallagher
Montana Public Service Commissioner
4855 N Montana Ave.
Helena, MT 59602
wagallagher@msn.com
406-442-5314



County Commission Districts

County Commission Districts (Helena Valley Map)



TO THE MONTANA DISTRICTING AND REAPPORTIONMENT COMMISSION:

MR. CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION. ONCE AGAIN I WANT TO THANK YOU FOR YOUR DEDICATION AND SERVICE IN UNDERTAKING THIS HUGE RESPONSIBILITY.

LAST NIGHT IN BUTTE, I PRESENTED YOU WITH COPIES OF JEFFERSON COUNTY'S PREFERRED LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT. I JUST WANT TO REITERATE THAT IT IS IMPERATIVE FOR JEFFERSON COUNTY TO PROTECT OUR UNIQUE IDENTITY AND NOT GET ABSORBED BY THE THREE LARGE URBAN AREAS SURROUNDING US. PEOPLE LIVE IN JEFFERSON COUNTY FOR A REASON OR SEVERAL REASONS. AS I SAID LAST NIGHT, WE HAVE HELD FOUR PUBLIC MEETINGS OVER THE PAST FEW WEEKS AND THERE IS OVERWHELMING SUPPORT TO KEEP JEFFERSON COUNTY AS WHOLE AS POSSIBLE AND TO BE REPRESENTED BY SOMEONE WHO LIVES IN AND UNDERSTANDS WHAT JEFFERSON COUNTY IS.

LAST NIGHT IN BUTTE, WE HEARD SEVERAL PEOPLE TALK ABOUT THE BENEFITS OF THE "COMMUNITY PLAN". AS YOU WILL RECALL, MOST OF THOSE COMMENTS WERE FROM BUTTE FOLKS INTENT ON PRESERVING BUTTE/SILVER BOW'S FOUR LEGISLATIVE SEATS, WITH LITTLE REGARD FOR HOW IT MIGHT IMPACT THEIR NEIGHBORS.

I HOPE YOU PAID PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO SEVERAL OF THE BUTTE LEGISLATORS AND A NUMBER OF CANDIDATES WHO WOULD BE REPRESENTING JEFFERSON COUNTY UNDER THE "COMMUNITY PLAN". IT WAS OBVIOUS FROM THEIR REMARKS THAT THEY HAD NO IDEA ABOUT ISSUES IN JEFFERSON COUNTY.

ONE OF THEM TALKED ABOUT DRIVING FROM BUTTE TO HELENA, THROUGH ELK PARK, BASIN, BOULDER, AND JEFFERSON CITY AND HOW ALL OF THAT MINING TIED IN WITH BUTTE/SILVER BOW. WE HAD A SENATOR WHO WOULD REPRESENT US UNDER THE "COMMUNITY PLAN" TALK ABOUT HOW THE REAL GEOGRAPHIC BOUNDARY WE SHOULD BE FOLLOWING IS A ROCK FORMATION CALLED THE BOULDER BATHOLITH BECAUSE THAT TIES ALL OF OUR MINING IN JEFFERSON COUNTY IN WITH BUTTE/SILVER BOW.

APPARENTLY NONE OF THESE POTENTIAL OR CURRENT LEGISLATORS HAD THE TIME OR MADE THE EFFORT TO DO ENOUGH RESEARCH TO UNDERSTAND JEFFERSON COUNTY AND THE ISSUES WE ARE FACING BEFORE THEY GOT UP LAST NIGHT TO SAY HOW MUCH THEY WANT TO REPRESENT US.

NOT ONE OF THESE PEOPLE MENTIONED THE ISSUES WE ARE HAVING WITH WOLVES IN JEFFERSON COUNTY; WOLVES THAT HAVE BROUGHT MANY OF

OUR LIVESTOCK PRODUCERS TO THE BOILING POINT, WHERE THEY ARE CONSIDERING ENDING BLOCK MANAGEMENT OR NOT ALLOWING HUNTING ON THEIR PROPERTY UNTIL FISH, WILDLIFE, AND PARKS CAN GET CONTROL OF WOLF MANAGEMENT.

NONE OF THESE LEGISLATORS OR POTENTIAL LEGISLATORS MENTIONED OUR PRIVATE PROPERTY RIGHTS BEING TRAMPLED ON BY THE PASSAGE OF H.B. 198 DURING THE LAST SESSION, WHICH GAVE THE RIGHT OF EMINENT DOMAIN TO ANY COMPANY, FOREIGN OR DOMESTIC, THAT CAN GET A CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE FROM DEQ. THEY DIDN'T TALK ABOUT THE PROSPECT OF EMINENT DOMAIN BEING USED TO FORCE A 500 KV POWER LINE ACROSS PRIVATE PROPERTY IN JEFFERSON COUNTY BY A FOR PROFIT COMPANY.

NOT ONE OF THEM MENTIONED THE BURDENSOME REGULATIONS FORCED ONTO OUR SMALL COMMUNITIES, LIKE BOULDER, WHITEHALL, AND CLANCY THAT CAUSE HUGE INCREASES IN WATER AND SEWER RATES. THEY DIDN'T TALK ABOUT A GOVERNOR WHO JUST SO HAPPENS TO LEAD THE PARTY THAT IS PROMOTING THE "COMMUNITY PLAN", WHO VETOED A BILL THAT WOULD HAVE ALLOWED GOLDEN SUNLIGHT MINE IN JEFFERSON COUNTY TO PROCESS THIRD PARTY ORE FROM OPEN PIT MINES AND EMPLOY MORE PEOPLE AND EXTEND THE LIFE OF THE MINE.

INSTEAD THEY TALKED ABOUT HOW MUCH WE ARE ALIKE BECAUSE OF A ROCK FORMATION AND MINING. JEFFERSON COUNTY'S POPULATION IS NEARLY 12,000 PEOPLE, AND YES MINING IS IMPORTANT TO US, BUT WE ONLY HAVE ABOUT 400 OF THOSE PEOPLE EMPLOYED IN THE MINING INDUSTRY. WHAT ABOUT THE OTHER 11,000 PLUS PEOPLE?

JEFFERSON COUNTY IS SO MUCH MORE THAN JUST A MINING COMMUNITY AND THAT IS WHY IT IS SO IMPORTANT TO KEEP OUR COUNTY AS WHOLE AS POSSIBLE AND KEEP US ALL WITH OUR "COMMUNITIES OF INTEREST".

**LEONARD WORTMAN
JEFFERSON COUNTY COMMISSION CHAIR**

March 28, 2012

Montana Districting and Apportionment Commission
Jim Regnier, Chair
Helena, Montana

Dear Chair Regnier and Members of the Commission:

As a former 4-term state legislator, my term spanned the last redistricting process. The architect of that plan deliberately moved the line ½ mile north of my house in Cardwell to attempt to force me into a primary race against another sitting Republican legislator. I foiled his plan when I moved 50 miles north to Clancy and successfully ran back in my district. I was one of a number of incumbent republicans that had the same thing happen to them. While I'm not here to belabor the last plan's woeful shortcomings, it should be instructive for us all in the current cycle about what not to do this time!

Last cycle, the controlling democrats used the 5% standard deviation to shamefully gerrymander districts for their political gain. Their current proposed map, known as the "Communities Map" also uses standard deviation for political gain, that is, they overpopulate known republican districts and underpopulate known democrat districts in order to construct more democrat districts, albeit at a smaller percentage amount than last time. They also disregarded the commission's requirement that *Each deviation will be accompanied by an explanation of the mandatory or discretionary criteria justifying such deviation.*

As a resident of Jefferson County, I also speak against the Communities Map that breaks up our county! As a county of nearly 12000 people that is growing faster than its surrounding three urban areas, we want one fully-contained district within the county. We shouldn't be swallowed up by adjacent counties, like Butte-Silver Bow in order to shore up their declining populations and give them more representatives than they rightly should have based on their population. We are distinctly different than Lewis & Clark County/Helena and Butte Silverbow and deserve one district that can be represented by someone without divided loyalty to other counties/cities.

As the one whom will cast the decisive vote, I wish to appeal you, Mr. Chair and your expressed sense of decency and fairness. You have an opportunity to return credibility and integrity to this process. As a republican, I'm not asking you to given the republicans an advantage. I am asking that you resist the incredible pressure that is being placed upon you to acquiesce to the democrats and put in place their map that cheats for political gain! For all of their rhetoric, we all can see clearly through it and know that the underlying primary criteria used by them in drawing up their "Communities Map" is political, that is, "*how can we maximize the number of safe democrat seats in the legislature*". This is not the Montana way. Montanan's have a keen sense of fairness and justice. They don't like cheating and gaming the system. The Communities Map does just that.

Finally, I want to appeal to the Chair's long-demonstrated appreciation for The Law and the consistent application of The Law. The Communities Map inconsistently applies the agreed-upon written criteria for this process. Instead it relies on the not-so-subtle underlying criteria of "maximizing democrat districts" as the primary criteria.

Sincerely,



Scott Mendenhall, 214 Solomon Mountain Road, Clancy, Montana 59634

Rep. Mike Miller, HD84
March 28, 2012
Redistricting Testimony, Helena

There are times when politics must take a back seat to what is right for the people. I believe that this is one of those times.

Currently, over 80% of the population of my House District 84 is in Lewis and Clark County. The remaining 20% is in Powell County where I live.

The proposed Subdivision Plan creates a vastly different House District that includes all of Powell and all of Granite Counties.

For me personally, losing the base of 80% of my constituents will be a handicap in the next election – but I feel it is in the best interest of the people of both Powell and Granite Counties to be combined into one house district.

My current constituents in Lewis and Clark County will be better served by the new proposed Helena area districts in the Subdivision Plan. Creating new districts in the Helena Valley and the rural parts of Lewis and Clark County that do not include the urban areas of Helena will allow them to be combined into compact and contiguous communities of interest and to be better represented by their elected officials.

I am in support of the Subdivision Plan for the Helena area and I strongly oppose the Communities Plan as it combines the rural and urban areas into districts that are not communities of like interests.

Mary Bryson
21 Crazy Mountain Road
Montana City, MT 59634

Chairman Regnier and members of the Redistricting and Reapportionment Committee, for the record my name is Mary Bryson and I am a resident of Jefferson County. First let me thank you for the opportunity to speak and for your hard work over the past several months.

As a resident of Jefferson County I want to voice my concerns over trend in the redistricting maps under consideration by the Committee. I have reviewed ~~at least four of the~~ ^{the five} maps being considered by the committee and believe that Jefferson County residents will not be adequately represented if the committee adopts any of those maps.

1. With ~ 11,500 people, Jefferson County clearly needs one fully contained district made up of most of the county (~ 10,000 people). I believe that would provide the county with representation that can be identified as 1 person with undivided loyalty. We should not be divided into three or four districts, none of which are fully Jefferson County. For example, the "Communities" map and the "Existing" map break up our county and enable larger communities (urban communities such as Butte and Helena) to "steal" our representation. Jefferson County residents would not be able to elect a representative as they are clearly in the minority in those districts.
2. Jefferson County continues to grow in population, while Butte is losing population. It is unfair to use up Jefferson County's population to firm up Butte's shrinking population and give them extra seats! I believe strongly that Jefferson County residents should not be swallowed up by adjacent counties and urban localities.
3. Using the criteria of "communities of interest": Jefferson County should not be lumped in with either Butte or Helena. I understand that proponents of the "Communities Map" like to say that Whitehall and Butte are similar due to Mining. Jefferson County, while having a strong pro-mining sentiment, is much, much more than that. It is very simplistic to lump us in with Butte because of that single issue.

Likewise, it is also wrong-minded to lump northern Jefferson County in with Helena. People live out in Jefferson County for a reason and don't consider themselves to be part of Helena. My family and I moved to north Jefferson County because we did not want to live in Helena – we wanted a different environment to raise our children. As part of the local school board we recently fought off an overt attempt by Helena to annex them in--even to the point of pursuing passage of legislation to protect against the city of Helena's annexing property in north Jefferson County. Helena represents an urban community, government-focused, and primarily liberal. This is not the case for northern Jefferson County people who are rural, conservative, and small-business oriented.

Jefferson County currently is home to 11,500 people and we deserve a representative from our county. I sincerely believe that when the committee applies the mandatory and discretionary criteria of the law there is a map that would allow the residents of Jefferson County to be fully represented in the legislature. I don't believe that employing tactics to undermine the process of redistricting to preserve "seats" is appropriate and I am sure the committee will consider that redistricting should establish districts that reflect a "community" of residents that live in one county and share common vision.

Thank you for the opportunity to present my point of view.

Kirk Wagoner
Montana City

465-8291

Chairman
Commissioners

I am opposed to the use by this commission of the map titled "Communities" proposed by Commissioners Lamson and Smith and the one based on "existing" drafted by legislative services for the following reasons.

This commission agreed to the several mandatory criteria one of which is "Compact and contiguous districts"

Compact according to every dictionary in my house means basically "to make as small as possible"

The Supreme Court support the compactness feature of redistricting and has provided some analysis of compactness based on irregular shapes.

The Supreme Court has also stated that political redistricting with the intent to continually disadvantage and to actually disadvantage a political group would be a violation of the "Equal Protection Clause"

Other court cases based on the several supreme court cases involving redistricting have shown or proven "Discriminatory Partison Gerrymandering" using

1. The shapes of districts
2. The ignoring of "traditional political subdivisions,"
3. and a "lack of fairness in the procedure
4. A lower court then found that the state failed to prove that the reapportionment was "supported by adequate neutral criteria,"

I submit that these two maps are gerrymandered for purely political purposes to a disproportioned advantage to the democrats as evidenced by these maps using the three main gerrymandering techniques, commonly known as "Packing", "Stacking" and "Dilution". And it is clearly shown in these maps.

All of the majority cities in montana have or are surrounded by districts that are STACKED and DILUTED, that means the democrats have created districts with the goal of always being able to win while also stretching that districting into areas to dilute their opposition from having any voter sway.

This is represented on the map by thin narrow or pie shaped districts that start in an urban area and the stretch into a nearby rural area.

The remaining districts are packed, that is they maximize the number of voters in districts they perceive they cannot win.

This reduces one one vote to one man .9 vote in packed districts if you are republican versus the stacked districts where you get 1 man 1.1 vote for democrats.

The "Communities " map proposed here gives the cities in Montana 14 more districts than they should have by using these gerrymandering techniques.

That could possibly and most likely will give the democrats 14 more representatives and 7 more senators than they should otherwise have.

At the same time reducing the fair/equal/proportional representation from republican voters.

This disproportional representation can be shown in our current districts by the fact that we have a 50/50 senate yet the republicans have roughly 40,000 more votes to get their 50 and this does not take into account the votes that were cast in those districts that are stacked and diluted.

Other evidence of gerrymandering for political purposes is when we look at eastern Montana there is very little in geographic terrain and you would expect the districts to be more squarish or rectangle-ish, but we have these crazy shapes. Crazy shapes with hooks or nooks and crannies are a sure sign of political gerrymandering, But I will caution myself and others to

take into consideration geography and political boundaries as the commission has listed as discretionary criteria.

Speaking of crazy shapes, geography, political redistricting and COMMUNITIES,

I am from Jefferson County a political unit.

It has the Elkhorn mountains on the east. Boulder mountains on the west. (Geographic Boundaries)

I-15 and/or I-90 runs through our county (Transportation network)

We are a rural county.

Our population is close the desired number.

So my Rhetorical question is why would a map called "communities" supposedly themed on "Integrate Montana communities of interests within multiple criteria".

1. Split a rural county into 3 districts?
2. Why are two of those based in Butte?
3. Why is the other district start at northwestern canyon ferry lake and includes small part of broadwater and lewis and clark county and go all the way to Cardwell yet excludes jefferson city and boulder?
4. Why is there not even a road to meet the contiguous spirit of redistricting.

To me and others it is clear that the democrats went to a lot of effort chop up a our community purely for political, partisan reasons to give themselves disproportional representation. The map is mixing urban or suburban with rural to a distinct and definable unfair disadvantage to the more populous rural communities.

I am sure you will hear from others on their local communities as well tonight.

In summary the Communities map, and the map based on Existing districts are text book examples of political gerrymandering to give a party an unfair, unearned and disproportionate number of house districts.

The districts that contain urban/suburban areas are No where near COMPACT.

The districts where created using political based data.

The Communities map routinely disregards communities and splits them up.

It even splits up the cities although to their advantage Missoula has 11 districts but based on its population it should only have 6 maybe 7 and the same goes for helena, billings, great falls, Bozeman but Kalispell at first glance looks reasonable to me but other from that area may disagree.

I hear that this map is being explained as providing communities with more representation for example jefferson county would now have 3 representative versus 1 or 2. When in fact, as shown by the last decade of elections the rural areas that are tied to Helena, Missoula etc, have no voice and no representation as evidence by the fact that no one from the rural area of those districts has been elected as far as I know. Be wary of salesman selling something you did not ask for.

I highly encourage the commission to REMOVE from consideration the communities plan and the existing plan. They are obviously gerrymandered and if they or similarly gerrymander maps are approved. Although I am not a lawyer There is now enough case precedence and supreme court rulings that this will be overturned and cause political chaos for the election cycle this will impact.

One term I want to reiterate "supported by adequate neutral criteria," that means you have to prove that you used non political data.

Such as the NCEC DPI and DPQ data that the democrats plan is based on.

These plans are blatant, obvious, political shenanigans and All Montanans should be ashamed that two members of our independent commission for apportionment and districting presented such a plan.

Remove them from consideration.

I do support the use of the legislative services Urban/Rural map as a starting point for districting.

Montanans, are your votes being stolen?

Is your vote worth the same as your neighbor's?

Montana's current house districts are a perfect example of gerrymandering; that is, they are deliberately drawn in a manner to give one political party an unfair advantage. This practice erodes the one person, one vote principle that Americans value. How do we know if the process for fair and equal redistricting is being subverted by gerrymandering? Look at the map of districts: Are any pie-shaped, long and narrow, or otherwise irregularly shaped (having weird hooks or curves)? Do they seem to completely disregard natural geographic or community boundaries? According to the experts, districts such as these are almost irrefutable evidence of gerrymandering.

I encourage everyone to go to the look at the draft maps on the state website, and look in particular at the draft maps that the Democrats proposed titled "Communities" and the one drafted based on the existing districts; they both have evidence of gerrymandering. It is quite clear that the maps are designed using political data to favor one party over the other. A brief study of the raw numbers indicates that Montana cities are getting a disproportionate number of districts as opposed to the rural areas, which lose representation almost completely. In fact, these maps give the cities roughly 14 more districts than they should have. These districts do not meet the mandatory criteria of "compact and contiguous," and it can be proven with a simple mathematical formula that is routinely used in redistricting testing. On the Democrats' draft map, Missoula has 11 districts when they should only have six or seven based on population. Six of the districts start within a single four-block area, and another district starts within eight blocks. All 11 of Missoula's districts begin within two miles of the middle of Missoula. The Missoula districts are four miles long and only one mile wide - long and narrow. They are using the population center of the city to nullify the rural voters. This is also reflected in the fact that almost no one from the rural areas in those Missoula districts gets elected.

When we look at larger districts on the Democrats' proposal, we see that they are irregularly shaped, especially in the eastern half of the state where we would expect more rectangle or square shaped districts. The county I live in gets butchered into three districts, which is odd since it is very close to the ideal district population size. Why would they go to great extents to split the county down the middle? Why is Clancy grouped with Whitehall but not Jefferson City and Boulder? Why did they then add in portions of both Lewis and Clark County and Broadwater County? The answer is gerrymandering! They call the map "Communities." That is a fitting name as it splits and dissects communities in an unethical and deliberate manner for political ends.

I would hope that the Democratic Party leadership would be ashamed to continue with such obvious gerrymandering of districts. The spirit of having a separate commission for redistricting is to remove the politics and thus the gerrymandering. It is the lack of ethics and willpower to do the right thing even if it is unpopular that has given the American people a distaste for the democratic process.

There have been several Supreme Court cases concerning gerrymandering of state districts. If our new districts look like the current districts or like the Democrats' draft map, our state will end up tied up in ligation, causing chaos for the 2014 election cycle. Both Republicans and Democrats across the country have illegally or unethically gerrymandered districts in the past. We are Montanans, and I believe we are better than that. The rules for our redistricting are goals to reach for, not obstacles to try and circumvent for personal or political reasons. The one person, one vote principle and representative government only work if people educate themselves and remain vigilant. Learn more and voice your concerns to the Montana State Legislative Districting and Apportioning committee at www.leg.mt.gov/css/Committees/interim/2011-2012/districting.

Kirk B. Wagoner

Montana City

465-8291

