

Dear Chair Taylor, Co-Chair Salinas, and Co-Chair Boshart Davis, members of the Committee,

In 2019, your colleague Senator Michael Dembrow made the following remarks about a legislative walkout in opposition to Cap and Trade: “We know that the voters want us to be creating this program. Every legislator that was in a contested race in 2018 ran on this issue. The governor ran on this issue. We picked up seats in both chambers in part over this issue.” Let’s review the facts. In 2018, Democrats won 38 House seats and 11 Senate seats. In 40 House seats, Democrats had a voter registration advantage over Republicans at an average of 9,357.13, while Republicans had a voter registration advantage over Democrats in just 20 House seats at an average of 5,160.5. 14 House seats had a Democratic voter registration advantage greater than 10,000, versus just one House District with a Republican voter registration advantage that size. House District 43, the most gerrymandered in Oregon, had a Democratic voter registration advantage of around 31,000, which grew to almost 35,000 in 2020. Decades of partisan redistricting has resulted in a system where the majority party picks and chooses their voters. Speaker Kotek and President Courtney have both used the power of their office to deny the people the right to have a nonpartisan redistricting process implemented to ensure fair elections. We should have a system that provides equal footing for voters to choose the candidates who can best represent the issues they care about, instead of the current system where politicians with hyper partisan agendas choose the voters who will support them. Since the authority to draw District maps remains with the legislature, I urge all of you to look beyond your electoral interests and avoid favoring any political party in your deliberations. Communities should be grouped into Districts based on common interest and pre-existing geographic and political boundaries, not the maximum number of voters affiliated with the majority party. House and Congress Plans B best abide by existing mandates for redistricting, and I urge the Committees to forward these plans to their respective Chambers with a do-pass recommendation. This is the only road forward to unity and honest policymaking. I thank you for your efforts working on redistricting, and I will be praying for your wisdom in these deliberations.

Best regards,
Alex McHaddad
Chair, Union County Republicans