

House and Senate Interim Redistricting Committees,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed redistricting boundary maps. This is a complex task that has very large implications for our democracy and which, without guardrails, can be manipulated to cement or alter the balance of power. Oregon Revised Statutes 188.010 attempts to provide such guardrails by requiring districts, as nearly as practicable, to be contiguous, utilize existing geographic or political boundaries, not divide "communities of interest", and not be drawn for the purpose of 1) favoring any political party, incumbent legislator, or other person, or 2) diluting the voting strength of any language or ethnic minority group.

However, it is not surprising that congressional boundaries proposed by Democratic ("Plan A") and Republican ("Plan B") legislators each appear to significantly favor members of their own respective parties. In addition to the inherent conflict of interest all legislators have in this process with respect to ORS 188.010(2), these proposals provide some evidence that the requirement of ORS 188.010(2) is not being met. Yet intentionality is difficult to prove. <https://www.opb.org/article/2021/09/03/oregon-politics-redistricting-map-democratcs-republicans-debate-congressional-districts/>

Given the the above conflict of interest and the complexity of creating and reviewing such maps (which does not lend itself to very inclusive public engagement), **I respectfully request that your respective committees consider the following actions:**

- 1) Approve temporary redistricting maps that become void after new maps are adopted by an independent commission, and
- 2) Enact legislation that creates an **independent redistricting commission** (as is common in most of the states we border) that operates under the following criteria and which is sufficiently funded.
  - Commission members are selected via an independent process that screens applicants for conflicts of interest and also makes qualitative assessments of applicant fitness to perform the job duties. Collectively, commission members should be geographically, politically, and ethnically diverse. Legislators must have no role in the selection process;
  - A process that incentivizes compromise rather than tie-breaking (winner takes all); and
  - Requirements for transparency and public input.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Colton Bond  
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