

Redistricting Testimony - Kevin Hoar 2021-09-08 8am

Chair Taylor, Co-Chairs Boshart-Davis and Salinas, members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide input today. My name is Kevin Hoar and my family and I have lived in Oregon for 20 years, 16 in Cedar Mill in Washington Co, and 2 in Multnomah County Portland, Senate District 17, House District 33, 1st Congressional District.

County Boundaries are historically the most important political boundaries to respect in redistricting, however the current Congressional District Maps and the Plan B Proposed Map respects 32 out of 36 county boundaries, Plan A fails to do this, unnecessarily divides counties for partisan political gain in my view. That is the definition of "gerrymandering" - plain and simple. Plan A would, for the first time, split **Washington County** into two different Congressional Districts. **Washington Co.** is equal to 7/8ths of a CD => Plan A (Dem) Maps have influence 2 Congressional Districts anyway. The only explanation for this to improve political chances of one party in the new Congressional District 6. The current Congressional Districts and the Republican Plan B Proposed Map does not unnecessarily divide counties and cities for partisan political gain.

Plan A proposes Oregon's Congressional Districts so that the Portland area will be firmly in control of electing 67% of our state's congressional delegation despite representing approximately 40% of the state's overall population. **Multnomah Co** is equal to 1.25 Congressional Districts, yet Plan A (Dem) Maps have this county influencing 4 Congressional Districts what could only be for partisan political gain, which fails the test of making sure that no district is drawn for the purposes of favoring any political party. Likewise, 30% of the members of the Oregon House represent at least some portion of the City of Portland while the City of Portland represents only 15% of the total population of the state of Oregon. Portland, to put it mildly, has issues. During recent years, Portland has dominated the news headlines for all the wrong reasons. WW recently warned "Get ready for some gerrymandering". Unfortunately Plan A maps brings an inordinate amount of the Portland Metro area in to our rural communities. The Plan A maps promise to marginalize these diverse voices, ignoring them in favor amplifying the voice of one city.

Our statewide government has been dominated by elected officials from the Portland Metro Area, but our legislative districts should represent the truly diverse geographic, economic, and communities of interest of our state that don't have anything in common with the city of Portland. Portland is a unique, distinct community of interest and deserves its own Congressional District. About 7 years ago that I learned that our rural communities are more than just a nice, pretty place to visit and that I didn't know anything about the Oregonians who live in rural areas who have very different needs and concerns than the urban centers and deserve representation and political boundaries that do not include urban areas. What could be making this more apparent than the policy debates in Salem and D.C. regarding energy, natural resources, agriculture, forest management, and, given the events of one year ago today, wildfire prevention that seem to have forgotten the livelihoods and economic wellbeing of huge swaths of our state's population. The Plan A proposes to combine extremely different communities of interest of rural, coastal, and timber-based counties of **Columbia**, **Clatsop**, and *Tillamook* leaving their voices

marginalized and diluted by their Plan A maps by combining them in the same district very different urban/suburban high tech, manufacturing, & service-based cities in **Washington and Multnomah Counties**. Plan B gives these marginalized communities a voice that they currently lack.

The House and Senate Minority Congressional Plan B proposal resolves many of these concerns by keeping communities of interest together, respecting common geographies, and giving voice to many forgotten and disenfranchised Oregonians whose economic and social interests are similar. Oregonians want to see more balance and fairness, not more of the same political blind eye to so many of the state's residents.

I support Congressional map B, Oregon Senate map B and Oregon House map B. These maps do a far better job of respecting political boundaries and keeps communities of interest intact and providing a fairer representation to the citizens my community and the diverse and valued, and often forgotten citizens of Oregon from across our state to be best represented in the years to come.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to testify today.