

## **Testimony on Legislative and Congressional Redistricting**

My name is Robert Close. I live in Congressional District 3. I am a member of the statewide group “Oregon Open Primaries”, and my testimony is on behalf of non-affiliated voters who comprise 33% of registered voters.

ORS 188.010 states that “no district shall be drawn for the purpose of favoring any political party...” In addition to requiring that one political party should not be favored over another, this also means that political parties as a group should not be favored relative to party non-members. Oregon's partisan election nomination process is already biased against non-affiliated voters, and redistricting should not exaggerate this bias.

Specifically, Oregon's closed primary system blocks non-affiliated voters from influencing which candidates appear on general election ballots, and non-affiliated candidates face prohibitive filing requirements that are not required of party nominees. Hence the interests of non-affiliated voters are subordinate to the interests of political parties.

The fewer political party members there are in a district, the more unfair is the closed primary process for nominating candidates. The redistricting process should therefore strive to ensure that no district has an excessively large number of non-affiliated voters who have no voice in the election nomination process. This can be accomplished by modifying ESRI software to use voter registration data, rather than election results, for evaluating preferential treatment of political parties.

Thank you for your consideration.

- Robert Close