

## CD2 Testimony on Redistricting

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony regarding the concerns of voters about Oregon's redistricting process.

I live in rural Wallowa County in NE Oregon, currently located within Congressional District 2, Oregon House District 58, and Oregon Senate District 29.

Oregon state law (ORS 188.010) requires that "no district shall be drawn for the purpose of favoring any political party, incumbent legislator, or other person." And yet, according to several independent, nonpartisan organizations who have analyzed the proposed Redistricting Maps, the maps proposed by the Democratic caucus are biased in favor of Democrats maintaining power; and the maps proposed by the Republican caucus are biased in favor of Republicans gaining additional power.

I am testifying on behalf of Non-Affiliated Voters (NAVs), whose interests are not being considered in the current redistricting process. Because NAV-registered voters in Congressional District 2 outnumber both Democratic and Republican-registered voters, by not considering the impacts of redistricting map proposals on NAVs, the redistricting process gives preferential treatment to the major parties to the detriment of NAV-registered voters – which is prohibited by Oregon law.

I appeal to the members of the Joint Committee to direct your staff to **input voter registration data into ESRI's Redistricting Software Application**, and not simply the data from recent election results, so that members of the public, as well as the Joint Committee, are able to analyze the impacts of proposed maps on NAV-registered voters, in addition to the impacts on Democratic and Republican-registered voters. Such an analysis is required to fulfill your legislative mandate to not favor any political party in the redistricting process.

According to data from the Secretary of State's Office, as of July 2021, in Congressional District 2, Non-Affiliated-registered voters, or NAVs, comprise 34.2% of registered voters. NAVs outnumber Republican-registered voters, which comprise 33.6% of registered voters; as well as Democratic-registered voters, which comprise 25.1% of registered voters.

Furthermore, **statewide since July 2016, NAV-registered voters have increased by +39.5%**; while Republican-registered voters have only increased by +2.7% and Democratic-registered voters have increased by +5.0%.

Data from the Cooperative Congressional Election Study indicates that voters of color, as well as veterans, are registered as Non-Affiliated Voters at higher rates than White voters. Consequently, unless NAV-registered voters are considered on an equal basis with major party registered voters, the interests of many voters of color and veterans will be dismissed by the current redistricting process.

It is important to point out as well, that with Oregon's "closed primary" system, NAV-registered voters are disenfranchised from participating on an equal basis with Republican and Democratic-registered voters in choosing the candidates who will be listed on final general election ballots.

**Inequities in Oregon's election system should not be compounded by a redistricting process that ignores the large and growing share of NAV-registered voters.** Unless NAV-registered voters are

considered on an equal basis with other voters when developing redistricting maps, the interests of this plurality of Oregon voters will be further marginalized, while perpetuating partisan bias.

Thank you for fulfilling your mandate to conduct a fair and equitable redistricting process that does not favor any political party by considering the interests of Non-Affiliated-registered voters.

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