

Dear Members of the Redistricting Committee,

I live in Congressional District 5 in Tillamook county. In my line of work as executive director of CARE, the local community action affiliated agency, I work with individuals in poverty around the county which includes Congressional district 1.

I implore you to eliminate Senate Plan C. It is not a good plan and seeks to unseat Senator Johnson who has a strong base here. It is tantamount to gerrymandering, and flies in the face of the tenants if redistricting.

House Plan C would also be terrible for Tillamook County. House plan C trisects Tillamook County into three districts, splitting it from North to South along Highway 101, separating the coastline from the inland and lopping off North Tillamook County. Again, it seems that Tillamook is being gerrymandered yet again and it flies in the face of the following redistricting guidelines:

To utilize existing geographic or political boundaries Not to divide communities of common interest Not to divide communities connected by transportation links

The proposed new Eastern district, largely forested, would cross the coast range, (our existing geographic boundary), into the Willamette Valley to Eastern Polk County to the City of Dallas. This doesn't make any sense. The needs, issues and industries of our coastal communities are very different from those of our neighbors in Polk County.

Rural coastal communities have very specific common interests including our natural resource based industries of dairy farming, timber and fishing, and our growing tourism industry. We have emergency preparedness in common, as Tillamook has the dubious distinction of having more declared disasters than any other Oregon County, most often floods and wind storms. We have preparedness for a Cascadia earthquake and subsequent tsunami in common. We have clean water, fish health and forest management issues in common. We have aging infrastructure with an emphasis on bridges, culverts and tide gates. We have strong community pride and community values that bond us as a county.

Tillamook County has a transportation district which serves all of Tillamook County. Moreover, Tillamook County has 27,000 citizens total. Why on earth would we need to be split into three districts?

Tillamook county is also a part of the regional community action affiliated agencies of Community Action Team, which has subcontracted agreements with CCA in Clatsop and CARE in Tillamook. This represents a community of common interest in the fight against poverty. Fractioning our region will only make services for poverty fighting more difficult.

I support Senate Plan A and House Plan B to maintain the integrity of our coastal representation. House Plan B closely resembles our current house districts, where we have strong bipartisan representation by Representative Weber in the North and Representative Gomberg in the South.

-Peter Starkey  
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