

March 2, 2021

TO: Senate & House Committees on Redistricting
FR: Charlie Fisher, State Director, Oregon State Public Interest Research Group (OSPIRG)
RE: Support of Independent Redistricting Commission

OSPIRG is a statewide, citizen-based public interest group that represents thousands of Oregonians.

OSPIRG Supports an Independent Redistricting Commission.

Oregon has a long history of being on the forefront of pro-democracy reforms like automatic voter registration and vote-by-mail. OSPIRG supported these and other reforms based on the basic principle that every Oregonian deserves to be represented and every vote should count equally.

That's why we support putting the power of drawing legislative and congressional districts in the hands of regular people, not the legislature. Around the country, there are numerous examples of legislatures controlled by Democrats and Republicans alike that have drawn districts for partisan advantage and to benefit incumbents over challengers. This runs counter to fair play and accountable government by and for the people.

Oregon voters should be able to decide their representatives, not the other way around. Putting redistricting in the hands of the public is also broadly supported. Recent polling shows that more than 60% of Democrats, Republicans, and Independents support creating independent redistricting commissions.¹

We urge you to take redistricting out of the hands of the legislature and support the creation of an independent redistricting commission.

¹ Bipartisan Poll Shows Strong Support for Redistricting Reform, Jan 2019, Campaign Legal Center:
<https://campaignlegal.org/update/bipartisan-poll-shows-strong-support-redistricting-reform>