



**TESTIMONY ON OREGON REDISTRICTING
SUBMITTED BY TILLAMOOK COUNTY CREAMERY ASSOCIATION
SENATE AND HOUSE REDISTRICTING COMMITTEES
MARCH 9, 2021**

Chair Taylor, Chair Salinas, Vice-Chair Knopp, Vice-Chair Boshart Davis, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity for the Tillamook County Creamery Association to share views on legislative and congressional redistricting this year.

This important civic responsibility is a cornerstone of our representative democracy. It should not be viewed as just a ministerial process that happens every ten years, nor should it be politicized. Redistricting must be a public and transparent endeavor that enhances the faith in how we run our government, and most importantly, ensures fair and equitable representation for all.

This is why Tillamook Creamery supported an effort in 2020 to put Oregon's redistricting process in the hands of an independent commission. We believe that it would result in more equitable outcomes for representation and greater confidence in equity by the electorate. COVID prevented Initiative Petition 57 from getting the ballot last year.

However, we continue to maintain that Oregon should join the more than 20 states - including our neighbors Washington and California - that have non-partisan, independent commissions or advisory groups that draw legislative districts.

We certainly are not alone. IP 57, promoted by People Not Politicians, had a diverse, bipartisan and broad group of supporters including Common Cause, NAACP, the League of Women's Voters and the national Farm Bureau Federation, just to name a few. Many more groups and businesses have concluded that redistricting is so important that a well-rounded and robust democracy requires a separation between



those that determine our representative districts and those whose electoral future may be influenced by how the lines are drawn.

The delayed US Census data has created challenges for how Oregon will redraw its districts by deadlines established in the law. We believe this also creates an opportunity for legislative leaders and Governor Brown to enact legislation very soon that puts in place an independent commission for redistricting.

It is through this independence that we as state can ensure that:

- Voices of all Oregonians are fairly represented, urban and rural;
- Communities of common interest are not unduly divided;
- The process is inoculated from partisan and self-interested politics; and,
- Fairness, transparency and public involvement remain paramount.

We hope you and our legislative leaders will see the value in pursuing this new process for redistricting that other states have adopted, and one that many important voices are now advocating.

We ask you to pass this legislation similar to IP 57 as quickly as possible so Oregon can set in motion a new redistricting process before the next election cycle. Again, thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony on behalf of family farmers members.

About [Tillamook County Creamery Association](#):

We are a 112-year-old farmer-owned, farmer-led cooperative, which is known for the quality of the products we produce and for our commitment to working collaboratively with a diverse set of stakeholders to solve complex problems. For generations, our farmers have worked to conserve air, land, and water as their livelihoods depend on it. We're dedicated to continually improving agricultural practices, leveraging everything from scientific and technological breakthroughs to our farmers intergenerational knowledge about the land. Our commitment to sustained natural resources extends from our farms to our facilities and throughout our supply chain. We work hard to be good neighbors and stewards of the land.