

To the Committee on Redistricting

I write to defend Columbia County's representation in the state government. In the redistricting process, please do not further dilute our district with metro-Portland population. Rural and small-town communities have different issues and seek different solutions from than the city. We are not the Portland Metro area, and we need leadership that understands us, our needs and concerns.

The 2020 voting record of Columbia County in local and county elections shows a clear pattern that is different from metro-Portland. However, the slices of Multnomah and Washington Counties now included in the district with Columbia County swing election outcomes for state races. The voice of Columbia County is drowned out.

Many Columbia County residents will interpret the addition of more metro-Portland neighborhoods into Columbia County's district as further gerrymandering to favor one party. Such a change to our district will polarize the state even more than now, stoking cynicism of the prevailing government.

I hope we all can agree redistricting should create a government more representative of the people, not adjusted to amplify some voices by diminishing others.

Thank you.

Regards,
Rebecca Fowler
53039 NW EJ Smith Rd
Scappoose OR 97056

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Rebecca Fowler | 503 444 1296 (USA) | rebeccafowler74@gmail.com