

Regarding: Oregon Redistricting, Public Hearing, District 4 – March 16, 2021

Submitted by: Diana Wales, Roseburg, Oregon

Responsibility for redistricting should be vested in an independent special commission, with membership that includes citizens at large, representatives of public interest groups, and members of minority groups. Redistricting plans should be developed independently of the Legislature.

The delayed US Census presents a challenge. I am glad the Legislature is seeking legal authority to delay redistricting to allow Census data to be received and utilized. Using any other data source will likely lead to successful court challenges. However, the Legislature can move ahead with setting up an independent commission along the lines of that proposed by People Not Politicians (PNP) in 2020 (IP 57) so that things can move swiftly once the Census data is received.

I am also intrigued by the potential for computerized software as a potent tool to assist in redistricting. An independent commission could use the time between now and receipt of the data to review the various software programs available and the parameters that should be considered.

Currently, Roseburg is divided among state House Districts 1, 2, and 7; and between Senate Districts 1 & 4. This makes it very challenging for people to know who their state legislators are, and for a unified voice from Roseburg to be reflected in the legislature. We are not the only community similarly divided among several districts. This problem needs to be addressed in redistricting.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on Oregon's 2021 redistricting process.

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