

# COLUMBIA COUNTY

## Board of Commissioners Office



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Re: Redistricting

House and Senate Redistricting Committees:

We strongly encourage you to create an independent redistricting commission, made up of citizens across Oregon who represent different political, socioeconomic, geographic and demographic backgrounds and who do not possess the conflicts of interest that legislators may have with picking and choosing their own voters. We believe that this approach would result in more impartial outcomes for representation and greater confidence in equity by the electorate.

Columbia County continues to enjoy a reasonably rural lifestyle. We are strategically located so residents have access to a variety of opportunities including coastal shores, urban activities and mountain escapes. Our landscape, our employment and our way of life demand different requirements for travel, workforce, and public services than a highly populated area. We encourage the redistricting process to insure that Columbia County retains its rural representation, does not become part of the Metro Counties and become subject to rules, regulations and requirements that do not meet the needs of our residents.

Relying on an independent redistricting commission will ensure that voices of all Oregonians are fairly represented, urban and rural; that communities of common interest are not unduly divided; that the process is free from partisan and self-interested politics; and that fairness, transparency and public involvement are paramount.

Sincerely,

  
Margaret Magruder, Chair

  
Casey Garrett, Commissioner

  
Henry Helmuller, Commissioner