

I'm taking a friend to get his 2nd shot this morning and will therefore be unable to speak in person. However, I wanted to submit a brief statement instead.

Chair and Members of the Committee: As a retired educator who has taught American History to both 8th and 11th graders, I have always been and encouraged others to be involved citizens. In recent decades, I have watched redistricting instead become a tool for partisan division rather than its intended purpose. I call for an independent redistricting committee so that we can have competitive elections where candidates must appeal to a range of voters in that district.

According to the FivethirtyEightProject.com, nationally we only have 72 districts that are considered "Competitive". If we changed the algorithm to reflect the desired highly competitive districts we'd like, we could have 242 Competitive districts instead. Obviously, to me, this would be preferable.

Because Oregon has fewer districts than more populous states, this may be seen as an unnecessary step to take here. However, if we can WAIT for the 2020 US Census to be finalized, we will gain a district and the accompanying extra seat. Let's at least make our few districts as competitive as possible to stem the ever increasing polarization in our state.

Thank you for your efforts on our behalf and your consideration of the opinion I offer.

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