Senate Joint Memorial 2

Sponsored by Senator LINTHICUM (Presession filed.)

SUMMARY

The following summary  is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure as introduced.

Requests discussion between Oregon and Idaho governments regarding the relocation of Oregon and Idaho border.

JOINT MEMORIAL

To the Governor of Idaho, and to the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Idaho Legislature, in legislative session assembled:

We, your memorialists, the Eighty-second Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon, in legislative session assembled, respectfully represent as follows:

Whereas voters of 11 counties of eastern Oregon have approved ballot measures regarding making eastern Oregon a part of Idaho, and Wallowa County will vote on this in May 2023, and these counties are four-fifths of the 15 counties of eastern Oregon that might vote on this issue; and

Whereas Article XVI of the Oregon Constitution provides for the relocation of state boundaries; and

Whereas the Washington/Oregon border was relocated slightly in 1958; and

Whereas state borders have been relocated many times in the history of the United States, most recently in 1999, by interstate compacts pursuant to Article I, section 10, of the United States Constitution; and

Whereas state border relocations have moved entire counties into the jurisdiction of another state, as in the case of Berkeley County and Jefferson County, which became a part of West Virginia in 1863—several months after West Virginia was admitted to the Union without those counties; and

Whereas an interstate compact could include provisions for financial transfers, provisions to smooth the transitions caused by moving a state boundary and provisions for a plebiscite to give eastern Oregon as a whole, excluding the City of Bend, an opportunity to approve or reject an interstate compact to move the Oregon/Idaho border; and

Whereas this Legislative Assembly values the principle of self-determination in general and therefore does not wish to retain by force communities that wish to separate themselves from Oregon; and

Whereas the voting patterns of eastern Oregon have for many decades resembled the voting patterns of Idaho but not of Oregon, indicating a desire for a different style of governance; and

Whereas eastern Oregonians have begun to see Oregon government as a threat to the livelihoods, liberties and values of their communities, as the preferences of the voters of northwestern Oregon appear at odds with the livelihoods and values of eastern Oregon communities; and

Whereas this Legislative Assembly considers the geographic extent of the state’s jurisdiction to be a secondary consideration, as the health of Oregon's state budget is primarily determined by

NOTE: Matter in boldfaced type in an amended section is new; matter [italic and bracketed] is existing law to be omitted. New sections are in boldfaced type.

LC 3179
average income per capita, not the extent of the state's territory; and

Whereas eastern Oregon, which has an average per capita personal income similar to Idaho's, but much lower than Oregon's, is better suited to contribute to Idaho's state budget than to Oregon's state budget, in which eastern Oregon receives more than it contributes; and

Whereas a January 2022 SurveyUSA poll showed that only three percent of the voters of northwestern Oregon would be willing to pay what it costs to have rural regions of Oregon treated equitably in the Oregon state budget; and

Whereas the eastern Oregon map proposed by Citizens for Greater Idaho would put only nine percent of the population of Oregon under Idaho's jurisdiction; and

Whereas if eastern Oregon became a part of Idaho, the Oregon Legislative Assembly could focus entirely on the needs of western Oregon and would become more politically homogeneous; and

Whereas the aforementioned SurveyUSA poll indicated that many conservative northwestern Oregon voters would welcome the opportunity to move to a state with a more conservative political orientation if it were within driving distance of their current community; now, therefore,

Be It Resolved by the Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon:

That we, the members of the Eighty-second Legislative Assembly stand ready to begin discussions regarding the potential to relocate the Oregon/Idaho border, and we invite the Idaho Legislature, the Governor of Idaho and the Governor of Oregon to begin talks on this topic with this Legislative Assembly; and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of this memorial shall be sent to the President Pro Tempore of the Idaho Senate, to the Speaker of the Idaho House of Representatives, to the Governor of Idaho and to the Governor of Oregon.