



A RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA PROVIDING RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE LEGISLATIVE REDISTRICTING PLAN TO THE MONTANA DISTRICTING AND APPORTIONMENT COMMISSION.

WHEREAS, the Montana Districting and Apportionment Commission submitted its legislative redistricting plan to the Legislature on January 8, 2013, as required by Article V, section 14, of the Montana Constitution; and

WHEREAS, the Commission adopted criteria to guide the drawing of district lines that preserve the principle of "one person, one vote"; and

WHEREAS, the Senate recognizes that the Commission established a maximum 3% population deviation, which surpasses the standard of a 5% population deviation, and commends the Commission for accomplishing a deviation of less than 1% for both House and Senate Districts; and

WHEREAS, the Commission formed districts that successfully comply with all requirements of the federal Voting Rights Act and that protect the voting rights of minority populations; and

WHEREAS, the Senate contends that criteria directing the creation of compact and contiguous districts that preserve communities of interest and, when possible, follow the lines of political and geographic boundaries have not been satisfactorily adhered to; and

WHEREAS, the Senate contends that pairings of House Districts made to form Senate Districts fracture communities of interest, particularly the assignments of House Districts 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, and 79 in Deer Lodge, Jefferson, and Silver Bow Counties; and

WHEREAS, pairing House Districts 75 and 78 results in a Senate District that is primarily rural in nature and pairing House Districts 73 and 76 and House Districts 74 and 77 results in two Senate Districts that are tied together by common interests, including the historical copper mining industry; and

WHEREAS, the Senate contends that the Commission split Lake County into four different Senate Districts, ignoring communities of interest and county political boundaries; and

WHEREAS, the Senate contends that holdover Senator Webb has been assigned to a Senate District predominantly composed of citizens who have never had the opportunity to vote for him, when it is possible to

assign him to a district that includes more than 80% of the population from his original Senate District; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature is required to return the plan to the Commission with its recommendations on or before February 7, 2013.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

That the Senate urges the passage of amendments necessary for the Legislative Redistricting Plan to conform to the Commission's established criteria. To this end, the Senate recommends that the Commission consider the following amendments:

(1) preserve both compactness and communities of interest by reassigning the following House Districts into Senate District pairings: House Districts 73 and 76, House Districts 74 and 77, and House Districts 75 and 78. The House District lines for Districts 74 and 77 should be moved together in order to meet the contiguous standard in the Commission's criteria.

(2) reassign Senator Webb from Senate District 23 to Senate District 22, which includes the communities from which he was originally elected.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be kept on file by the Secretary of State and that copies be sent by the Secretary of State to the presiding officer and each member of the Montana Districting and Apportionment Commission.

- END -

I hereby certify that the within resolution,
SR 0003, originated in the Senate.

Secretary of the Senate

President of the Senate

Signed this _____ day
of _____, 2013.

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 3
INTRODUCED BY J. ESSMANN

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