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MONTANA DISTRICTING AND APPORTIONMENT COMMISSION
67th Montana Legislature

COMMISSION MEMBERS

Commissioner Sheila Stearns – Presiding Officer
Commissioner Jeff Essmann
Commissioner Joe Lamson
Commissioner Kendra Miller
Commissioner Dan Stusek

COMMITTEE STAFF

Rachel Weiss - Research Analyst
Joe Kolman - Research Analyst
K.V. Aldrich - Attorney
Laura Sherley - Secretary

MINUTES LOG

August 4, 2020
8:30 AM

Video Conference Meeting

Please note: This document is a Minutes Log and provides annotation of the time elapsed between the beginning of the meeting and the time at which the item was presented or discussed, a motion was made, or a vote was taken. The narrative presented here is provided only as a guide to the audio or video recording of the meeting. The official discussion, motion, or vote is available on the audio or video archive of this meeting. The Legislature does not prepare a transcript of the meeting activities. The time designation may be used to locate the referenced discussion on the audio or video recording of this meeting.

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ROLL CALL

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:

Commissioner Sheila Stearns – Presiding Officer
Commissioner Jeff Essmann
Commissioner Joe Lamson
Commissioner Kendra Miller
Commissioner Dan Stusek

Staff Present:

Rachel Weiss, Research Analyst
Joe Kolman, Research Analyst
K.V. Aldrich, Attorney
Laura Sherley, Secretary

COMMITTEE BUSINESS SUMMARY

The commission voted to send a letter to the Montana congressional delegation regarding the census reporting deadline.

CENSUS OPERATIONS UPDATE

08:36:55 Mary Craigle, Bureau Chief and Census Manager, Research and Information Services, Montana Department of Commerce ([Exhibit 1](#))

Commission questions

08:55:30 Commissioner Stearns asked what a Be Counted location is.

08:57:23 Commissioner Stearns asked for clarification between a tract and a census block.

09:00:25 Commissioner Essmann asked if there is any means for a census response after September 31, 2020.

09:02:15 Commissioner Stearns asked Ms. Craigle to comment on a possible census date extension.

09:05:05 Commissioner Essmann asked if there is a way to measure the live progress of census responses.

09:09:45 Commissioner Miller asked Ms. Craigle to comment on the shortening of census deadlines and what the commission might still be able to do.

09:18:35 Commissioner Essmann asked what the strategy from the three census partners is to make sure the count is completed.

09:25:10 Commissioner Lamson commented on gathering census information from hard to reach populations.

09:32:50 Commissioner Essmann asked Ms. Craigle to comment on the response logistics of the three census partners.

09:37:42 Commissioner Stusek commented the importance of the census data and working with federal partners.

09:40:15 Commissioner Stearns commented on Ms. Craigle's presentation and asked for clarification on the census reporting deadline date.

Commission discussion

09:42:15 Commissioner Miller commented on the census reporting timeline and what the commission can do to fix the issue.

09:51:25 Commissioner Stearns asked the commission if the census reporting deadline needs to be changed by congress before they recess.

09:56:27 Commissioner Stearns commented on writing a letter to the congressional delegation regarding the census reporting deadline date.

09:57:52 Commission discussion on potential census reporting deadline letter.

10:04:00 Commissioner Stearns directed staff to draft a letter on her behalf to the congressional delegation regarding the census reporting deadline date.

BREAK

Motion:

10:13:10 Commissioner Stusek moved to authorize the presiding officer to draft a letter on behalf of the commission to the congressional delegation regarding the census reporting deadline date.

Discussion on the motion:

10:14:10 Commissioner Stearns

Public comment on the motion:

10:15:52 Nancy Leifer, Montana League of Women Voters

Vote:

10:16:50 Carried unanimously by voice vote.

10:17:10 Commissioner Essmann asked the staff to obtain contracts from Ms. Craige on the three census partners.

A CONVERSATION WITH MONTANA POLITICAL SCIENTISTS AND PUBLIC POLICY SPECIALISTS

10:20:30 Dr. David Parker, Professor, Montana State University

10:26:41 Dr. Jeremy Johnson, Associate Professor, Carroll College

10:36:07 Anthony Johnstone, Professor, University of Montana School of Law

10:51:14 Dr. Sara Rinfret, Professor, University of Montana

Commission questions

10:58:25 Commissioner Essmann asked Mr. Johnstone for a list of the law review articles mentioned in his presentation.

11:00:20 Commissioner Stearns asked Dr. Parker to comment on the value of maximizing marginality.

11:05:15 Commissioner Lamson commented on the presentation from the panel and the bipartisan historical work of the commission. Dr. Parker responded to Commissioner Lamson's comments.

11:10:40 Commissioner Miller asked if an efficiency gap measure has been done on the state and how fair has it been.

11:15:50 Commissioner Essmann commented on the efficiency gap and an analysis of the 2000 and 2010 commission's work.

11:17:23 Commissioner Stearns asked Dr. Parker to comment on the book he mentioned in his presentation and asked Ms. Weiss to order copies of the book for the commission.

11:21:25 Commissioner Stearns asked Dr. Parker to comment on social cohesion and its relationship to communities of interest.

11:25:55 Commissioner Lamson commented on the availability of mapping and census data.

- 11:29:55 Commissioner Stusek asked Mr. Johnstone to comment on what kind of impacts the potential addition of a congressional seat would have on the state. ([Exhibit 2](#))
- 11:36:22 Commissioner Stearns asked Dr. Parker if undocumented residents of the state need to be included in apportionment numbers ([Exhibit 3](#)).
- 11:40:59 Commissioner Miller asked Dr. Rinfret to discuss how redistricting can impact racism.
- 11:44:25 Commissioners' closing statements
- 11:48:27 Panelists' closing statements

PUBLIC COMMENT ON ANY ITEM WITHIN THE JURISDICTION OF THE COMMISSION

- 11:52:32 Nancy Leifer, League of Women Voters

ADMINISTRATIVE TOPICS

- 11:56:50 Commissioner Stearns commented on the commission's calendar and asked Ms. Weiss if there are any changes to the schedule.
- 11:59:55 Commissioner Essmann asked Ms. Weiss for clarification on when the 90-day window starts to draw the congressional maps.
- 12:02:27 Commissioner Stearns asked Ms. Weiss for an updated draft calendar.
- 12:05:35 Commissioner Lamson commented on the current commission schedule.

ADJOURNMENT

12:06:44

Letters to congressional delegation:

- [Representative Greg Gianforte](#)
- [Senator Steve Daines](#)
- [Senator Jon Tester](#)