

Public Comments

Montana Districting and Apportionment Commission
Comments received between by 5 p.m. on August 27, 2022, and 11:59 p.m. on
August 29, 2022.

Distributed electronically August 30, 2022

Sherley, Laura

From: MDAC <contact@mtredistricting.gov>
Sent: Monday, August 29, 2022 6:57 AM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] MDAC Comment from: Winona Bateman

From: Winona Bateman winonas@gmail.com
Residence: Missoula, MT

Message:
Please support fair maps!

There are four maps before the commission.

Maps 1 and 4 pay no attention to the goals and directives of the commission beyond looking even to the eye and communities of interest. They eliminate Native American majority districts and are gerrymandered to create scenarios where it is likely that 70/100 legislative seats will be Republican, even though the commission-agreed-on-data says that Montanans vote about 57% Republican and 43% Democrat. These maps would create a super majority in our legislature that would not need to build bridges or compromise on legislation for the common good of Montana. Additionally, this super majority would be in effect for the next 10 years, or 5 legislative cycles.

Maps 2 and 3 meet all the criteria the commission has set for itself and are politically fair. Statistically, they would elect approximately 57 Republicans and 43 Democrats to the legislature, which would fairly represent the citizens of Montana. This also leads to important civic conversation and debate to get things done we can hopefully agree on. Very importantly, maps 2 and 3 maintain a likely fair representation of 7-8% Indigenous legislators to the capital, which is proportionate to their population in the state.

Thank you.
Winona Bateman

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Sherley, Laura

From: MDAC <contact@mtredistricting.gov>
Sent: Monday, August 29, 2022 8:54 AM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] MDAC Comment from: william berthoud

From: william berthoud wberthoud@msn.com
Residence: Roundup

Message:
Stop commie gerrymandering!! We have a constitution, use it.

--

This e-mail was sent from a contact form on MDAC (<https://mtredistricting.gov> [mtredistricting.gov])

From: [MDAC](#)
To: [Districting](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] MDAC Comment from: william berthoud
Date: Sunday, August 28, 2022 9:56:17 AM

From: william berthoud wberthoud@msn.comdearest
Residence: Roundup

Message:

Dearest commie cancels democrats,
Stop cheating. The people of Montana are fed up with your crap.
Love, Bill

--

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[\[mtredistricting.gov\]](https://mtredistricting.gov))

Sherley, Laura

From: MDAC <contact@mtredistricting.gov>
Sent: Sunday, August 28, 2022 2:51 PM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] MDAC Comment from: Elizabeth Bird

From: Elizabeth Bird eabird@bresnan.net
Residence: Bozeman, MT

Message:

Please adopt map HDP2 or HDP3 that are consistent with Montana's distributions of Republicans and Democrats. It's entirely inappropriate to "fix" the votes in the legislature by adopting either HDP1 or HDP4. I consider those choices corrupt and hope you will do the right thing in rejecting them.

Thank you.

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This e-mail was sent from a contact form on MDAC (<https://mtredistricting.gov> [mtredistricting.gov])

Sherley, Laura

From: MDAC <contact@mtredistricting.gov>
Sent: Sunday, August 28, 2022 11:38 PM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] MDAC Comment from: Jake dushane

From: Jake dushane jake.dushane@hotmail.com
Residence: Bozeman Montana

Message:
Use the GOP map

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This e-mail was sent from a contact form on MDAC (<https://mtredistricting.gov> [mtredistricting.gov])

Sherley, Laura

From: MDAC <contact@mtredistricting.gov>
Sent: Monday, August 29, 2022 7:18 AM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] MDAC Comment from: Lincoln Erickson

From: Lincoln Erickson lincolnerickson@gmail.com
Residence: Bozeman, MT

Message:

The maps of Jeff Essmann and Dan Stusek don't seem to follow the rules of keeping communities together. You can't just cut a district off right at the edge of a city. Many people who would consider themselves citizens of a city don't live neatly within its boundaries. They commute in from some distance away.

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Sherley, Laura

From: MDAC <contact@mtredistricting.gov>
Sent: Monday, August 29, 2022 9:22 PM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] MDAC Comment from: Denise Fisher

From: Denise Fisher adfisher486@gmail.com
Residence: Livingston

Message:

I believe in fair elections and fair redistricting to accommodate fair elections. Without this there is no more democracy. We have rules laid out to accomplish fair redistricting and I hope this committee will follow them. Creating maps that favor republicans that will result in a 70 % rule by republicans in the state is not reflective of what the state represents. If either party is to win, they have to be able to sell their products to the citizens of this state but in a fair manner that will represent ALL citizens and not favor one party over another. I hope this commission will take this role seriously and do the job in an equal and fair manner. The republican maps do not follow the rules set and and should be made to start over before even beginning to compromise. Thank you.

Denise Fisher

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This e-mail was sent from a contact form on MDAC (<https://mtredistricting.gov> [mtredistricting.gov])

From: [MDAC](#)
To: [Districting](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] MDAC Comment from: Doug FRANSEN
Date: Sunday, August 28, 2022 1:04:50 PM

From: Doug FRANSEN dougfrandsen@yahoo.com
Residence: Missoula Montana

Message:

I think the criteria for drawing the maps is biased for the Republicans. Maps should reflect the racial background and political background of the state. And I support them up two and three. Maps one and four favor the Republicans clearly and eliminates Native American possibilities for serving in the legislature. The criteria for compactness is reasonable within the understanding that it does not discriminate against Native Americans and Democrats. Compactness should be subservient to fairness.

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This e-mail was sent from a contact form on MDAC (<https://mtredistricting.gov> [mtredistricting.gov])

Sherley, Laura

From: MDAC <contact@mtredistricting.gov>
Sent: Sunday, August 28, 2022 11:59 PM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] MDAC Comment from: Madeline Grace

From: Madeline Grace maddiegrace11@gmail.com
Residence: Bozeman Montana

Message:

I'm not in support of the republican redistricting maps. They show obvious signs of gerrymandering. I can't and won't support the maps provided by Essman and Stuesk. I ONLY and fully support the maps provided by Miller and Lamson. The republican maps are unbelievably unfair and don't accurately represent our state districts.

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This e-mail was sent from a contact form on MDAC (<https://mtredistricting.gov> [mtredistricting.gov])

Sherley, Laura

From: Robin Houston <houston.robin@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, August 29, 2022 10:50 AM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] redistricting maps

Hello commissioners,

I'm a 30 yr Montana resident, and want Montana to continue to provide districting that ensures that all votes count equally. The national trend toward gerrymandering is bad for our democracy, and Montana should hold the high ground and provide re-districting that continues to make all Montana votes count equally. The current maps HDP2 & HDP3 provide that assurance.

Thank you

Robin Houston
9455 Big Gulch
Bozeman

PLEASE NOTE NEW CONTACT INFO

Robin Houston
houston.robin@gmail.com
Mobile: 406-580-7350

Sherley, Laura

From: MDAC <contact@mtredistricting.gov>
Sent: Monday, August 29, 2022 10:30 AM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] MDAC Comment from: John

From: John john@gmail.com
Residence: Bozeman, MT

Message:

I am extremely worried about the obvious gerrymandering on the republican maps. These maps will give the GOP a advantage over their counterparts that spits in the face of our republic and great state.

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This e-mail was sent from a contact form on MDAC (<https://mtredistricting.gov> [mtredistricting.gov])

Sherley, Laura

From: Ita Killeen <ikilleen@bridgergeoplan.com>
Sent: Sunday, August 28, 2022 7:28 PM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] redistricting public comment, NO to HDP 1& 4

Dear Commissioners,

I feel grateful that Montana has a bipartisan commission determining new district maps to allow a fair process.

However, I see that HDP 1 & 4 will lessen the number of competitive districts where lawmakers need to consider the views of all their constituents. These maps will also undermine the voice of tribal communities.

Please say NO to HDP 1 & 4.

Thank you,

Ita

Sherley, Laura

From: MDAC <contact@mtredistricting.gov>
Sent: Sunday, August 28, 2022 9:15 PM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] MDAC Comment from: Lana Larson

From: Lana Larson lanabjornson@gmail.com
Residence: Bozeman, MT

Message:

I support the Democratic Maps. All citizens should be voting for their electorates. The districts should reflect who actually lives there and the votes should be fair. Gerrymandering is cheating.

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This e-mail was sent from a contact form on MDAC (<https://mtredistricting.gov> [mtredistricting.gov])

Sherley, Laura

From: MDAC <contact@mtredistricting.gov>
Sent: Sunday, August 28, 2022 8:52 PM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] MDAC Comment from: Kristofer lasko

From: Kristofer lasko laskokris@gmail.com
Residence: Bozeman, MT

Message:

I support the two maps which accurately delineate communities in Montana and would enable fair representation and are not gerrymandered. Please select either of the democratic drawn maps.

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This e-mail was sent from a contact form on MDAC (<https://mtredistricting.gov> [mtredistricting.gov])

Sherley, Laura

From: MDAC <contact@mtredistricting.gov>
Sent: Sunday, August 28, 2022 9:22 PM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] MDAC Comment from: Richard D Liebert

From: Richard D Liebert wwranch@3rivers.net
Residence: GREAT FALLS

Message:

Democracy demands a fair playing field, not designed to keep one party or another in power for generations. It's accepted fact that Great Falls and Cascade County have lost a legislative seat because of populations changes and increases, BUT let's not destroy the character of the community and radically alter it. HDP2 are HDP3 are the best, and HDP1 utterly destroys the community character of Great Falls and our values.

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This e-mail was sent from a contact form on MDAC (<https://mtredistricting.gov> [mtredistricting.gov])

Sherley, Laura

From: MDAC <contact@mtredistricting.gov>
Sent: Sunday, August 28, 2022 9:16 PM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] MDAC Comment from: Richard D Liebert

From: Richard D Liebert wwranch@3rivers.net
Residence: GREAT FALLS

Message:

HDP3 is the second best option behind HDP2 and this option still retains the character of our community, which is vital.

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This e-mail was sent from a contact form on MDAC (<https://mtredistricting.gov> [mtredistricting.gov])

Sherley, Laura

From: Cynthia Marble <cynthiamarble@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, August 29, 2022 9:05 PM
To: maylinn.smith@mtleg.gov; jeff.essmann@mtleg.gov; Joe.Lamson@mtleg.gov; dan.stusek@mtleg.gov; kendra.miller@mtleg.gov; Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] MAP COMMENTS

Dear Montana Redistricting Committee Members,
Please choose map #1. It provides compactness of districts and keeps communities together.
Reject Maps #2 and #3. Living in Red Lodge, it is obviously ridiculous to include Red Lodge, Gardiner and Big Sky in the same district. This is Definitely NOT a compact district. It also does NOT keep communities intact, putting our County Seat in a different district than the rest of Carbon County. Also, the long and narrow district running east to west in the Fort Peck area is an obvious gerrymander, not having any semblance of compactness.
Map #4 is my second choice; it also provides compactness and keeps communities together.

Thankyou,
Cynthia Marble
Red Lodge

From: [MDAC](#)
To: [Districting](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] MDAC Comment from: Jack McCormick
Date: Sunday, August 28, 2022 12:03:11 PM

From: Jack McCormick norts3045@yahoo.com
Residence: Butte, MT

Message:

The Republican submissions are terrible. They do not represent a fair and equitable system of election for our representatives of government. For most of my life, Montana has been a fairly balanced state. Only in these last years has it been more red than blue. We should consider the history of Montana and not just recent elections. Trying to make districts only red or blue defeats the purpose of fair elections. They should not even be considered.

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This e-mail was sent from a contact form on MDAC (<https://mtredistricting.gov> [mtredistricting.gov])

From: [Laura Reynolds](#)
To: [Districting](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Maps
Date: Saturday, August 27, 2022 7:43:14 PM

Hi there,
I am writing to comment on redistricting maps. I feel that maps 2 and 3 improve competitiveness which is important to voters. Maps 1 and 4 for seem to favor only one party which is not good.
Laura Reynolds

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Sherley, Laura

From: MDAC <contact@mtredistricting.gov>
Sent: Monday, August 29, 2022 7:14 PM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] MDAC Comment from: ELAINE ROBINSON

From: ELAINE ROBINSON elainesgardenparty@gmail.com
Residence: SUPERIOR

Message:

I feel very strongly about redistricting Mineral County back to the way it was districting in 1990's, which would include Huson and Frenchtown. Mineral County is linked with Huson and Frenchtown due to the I-90 Corridors and issues that arise from this Highway. Whereas Sanders County should be considered with Flathead and with the tribal issues that they have to deal with. Please do not split our county.

Elaine Robinson

--

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Sherley, Laura

From: MDAC <contact@mtredistricting.gov>
Sent: Monday, August 29, 2022 5:05 PM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] MDAC Comment from: Mary E Sedwick

From: Mary E Sedwick onetallredhead@msn.com
Residence: Ennis, MT

Message:

Please make the redistricting maps FAIR! Our democracy depends on it. The Democrats followed the rules, the GOP did not.

Remember, FAIR!

--

This e-mail was sent from a contact form on MDAC (<https://mtredistricting.gov> [mtredistricting.gov])

Sherley, Laura

From: MDAC <contact@mtredistricting.gov>
Sent: Sunday, August 28, 2022 3:38 PM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] MDAC Comment from: David A. Severson

From: David A. Severson versever55@gmail.com
Residence: Missoula, MT

Message:

I gave this public comment at the Friday hearing in Missoula. But here it is for the record.

—

Thank you!

My name is Dave Severson and I've lived in Missoula over 50 years. The majority of my career was teaching high school, both journalism, and government.

I'm interested in these redistricting maps because I recently ran for the legislature here in Missoula, and am well acquainted with the composition of the neighborhoods when it comes to the income levels, and political views of many of the people who live in Missoula's various neighborhoods. I've also closely followed Montana politics all my life, and have studied these maps carefully.

I would urge the Commission to adopt Map 2 or 3 as the most fair composition for a representative democracy for this community and the Montana Legislature. Adopting the other maps will give an extreme advantage to one party, resulting in a super majority. That is gerrymandering, and not democracy.

Please be true to your own criteria and goals and not giving an extreme advantage one party.

Republicans may say they find the shapes of the districts in their maps as pleasing and compact, but they will insure Democrats are segregated off into small, packed districts.

Maps HDP2 and HDP3, are proportionally fair, competitive, and likely to elect a legislature that reflects how Montanans vote. When I ran for the legislature, I wanted to be a representative for the whole district and listen to a wide variety of interests and viewpoints. Maps 2 and 3 DO that, as they cut across areas of Missoula that represent high, middle and lower income folks, family homes and renters, and yes, Republican areas AND Democratic areas of Missoula. I believe it is better to have a state representative who serves all constituents, as that will make representative democracy better.

Maps 1 and 4, are extreme gerrymanders, creating over 70 districts where Republican candidates will always win—which is not fair, and additionally, statewide, maps 1 and 4 violate the Voting Rights Act by diluting Native voting power where there are Native populations, and thereby decreasing the ability of Native voters to elect representative candidates.

I believe most voters want an end to extremist politics in this country. Representatives need to work for all everyone to create good government. Some would call that idealistic, but I want districts like maps 2 or 3 to represent all voters, because that is what democracy looks like.

Please adopt map 2 or 3, or something like them, as they are most true to insuring a representative democracy in Montana.

Thank you so much for your service on the Commission. It is a difficult job to satisfy everyone, and I really appreciate all of you and all of your work!

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This e-mail was sent from a contact form on MDAC (<https://mtredistricting.gov> [mtredistricting.gov])

Sherley, Laura

From: MDAC <contact@mtredistricting.gov>
Sent: Monday, August 29, 2022 1:04 PM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] MDAC Comment from: Micah Sewell

From: Micah Sewell micah.g.sewell@gmail.com
Residence: Missoula, MT

Message:

Hello! After reviewing the 4 proposed maps for redistricting Montana's state legislative districts, I want to voice my support for Maps 2 and 3. These maps come the closest in creating competitive districts and creating opportunities for the legislature to reflect the diversity of voices, cultures, and opinions that make up our great state. Thank you –

Micah

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This e-mail was sent from a contact form on MDAC (<https://mtredistricting.gov> [mtredistricting.gov])

Sherley, Laura

From: MDAC <contact@mtredistricting.gov>
Sent: Monday, August 29, 2022 9:46 AM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] MDAC Comment from: Elaine Snyder

From: Elaine Snyder elaine.buckskin@gmail.com
Residence: Kalispell Montana 59901-2182,

Message:

I am fully SUPPORT the HDP-2 and HDP-3 maps. They are fair for each district. They will allow Democrats to elect their candidates of choice especially in our native communities.. while maintaining a diversity of interests in major communities. The Flathead Valley is a tourist mecca. We need to maintain the balance of economic and social interests here.

I DO NOT SUPPORT HDP-1 and HDP-3 maps because they greatly gerrymander for more Republican seats. The 57%-43% split must remain. This Committee has agreed to it, but not yet done it.

Please do the voting right thing and pick maps 2 & 3. Thank you. Elaine Snyder

--

This e-mail was sent from a contact form on MDAC (<https://mtredistricting.gov> [mtredistricting.gov])

Sherley, Laura

From: MDAC <contact@mtredistricting.gov>
Sent: Sunday, August 28, 2022 8:04 PM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] MDAC Comment from: Eric Story

From: Eric Story erichstory@gmail.com
Residence: Bozeman, MT

Message:

I am strongly opposed to the Republican redistricting of our state legislature. I support the Democratic proposal. Thanks

--

This e-mail was sent from a contact form on MDAC (<https://mtredistricting.gov> [mtredistricting.gov])

Sherley, Laura

From: MDAC <contact@mtredistricting.gov>
Sent: Monday, August 29, 2022 10:51 AM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] MDAC Comment from: Peter W Talbot

From: Peter W Talbot petetalbot@montana.com
Residence: Missoula, MT

Message:

Montana is a mix of urban, rural, and suburban. All three interact with each other. Montanans will be best represented in the legislature if districts include these three areas. Representing broader constituencies would lead to more compromise and less divisiveness. Business would get done.

This is why I support Maps 2 or 3.

While maps 1 and 4 look nice in their compact, neatly down lines, they do not represent the voting population of Montana. They are compartmentalized to reduce competitiveness and they don't represent how this state votes. Legislative districts should reflect the overall voting patterns of Montanans and should represent the diversity of voters that Montana is known for.

Maps 2 or 3 will produce a more balanced legislature that will respond better to the wants and needs of all Montanans. It's about fairness, letting folks feel like the vote they cast matters and having a more representative legislature.

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This e-mail was sent from a contact form on MDAC (<https://mtredistricting.gov> [mtredistricting.gov])

Sherley, Laura

From: MDAC <contact@mtredistricting.gov>
Sent: Monday, August 29, 2022 2:01 AM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] MDAC Comment from: David Wahlstrom

From: David Wahlstrom david.wahlstrom@gmail.com
Residence: White Sulphur Springs

Message:

I support the Miller's redistricting map. Clearly, the maps proposed by Essman and Stuesk are gerrymandering the districts. These unfair practices are not the way our systems are intended to work in a fair democracy and will cause future damages to our lands, environment, and squelch the voice of native Americans in Montana.

For these reasons, I support Miller's redistricting map.

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