

Public Comments

Montana Districting and Apportionment Commission
Comments received between November 1 and 5 p.m. on November 7, 2022

Distributed electronically November 9, 2022

William F Amrine
33675 Mission Dam Rd
St Ignatius, MT 59865

November 5, 2022

Chairman Smith and Commissioners:

General comments:

Redistricting based on political leveling premises does not serve the voting population. Giving preference to a specific party by adjusting the established community demographics as espoused is a disservice to the people in the locations being altered by the commission.

Utilizing the 57% to 43% average party narrative as the pattern for the state districts would force an artificial structure not standing for the common interests of the state and breaches the commission set up mandatory criteria rules of equal population, compactness, continuity and voting rights.

The districts should reflect the community in a compact and contiguous representations that reveal the values of the population living within that area, under the committee criteria and goals. Time and changes in attitudes and quality office seekers will reflect the politics, be them conservative or liberal. To force any political preference or leveling of attitudes is exerting government preference and is an overreaching manipulation of freedom therefore dictating a noncompatible community. The districts need to reflect the neighborhoods not the desires of political operatives.

Specific comments:

I support MAP 4 because northern legislators cannot stand for Lake County given the following reasons.

- The areas are economically and uniquely divergent and separated by the Bob Marshal Wilderness area.
- Multiple hour drive times on sometimes treacherous roads, limit efficient and affective travel, as well as communications between district voters.
- The expanse of the joined areas place Lake County voters in weaken position which potentially denies knowledgeable and reasoned representation by northern elected legislators or vice versa.
- Each area has different environment, different interests and different concerns and problems.
- Because of the compactness issues expose the ability to meet and discuss concerns with legislators, meetings are not convenient nor practical and spontaneous without extensive scheduling. You cannot just make contact and engage in a conversation over a cup of coffee.
- I have voted in St Ignatius for 8 years and have only seen my senate legislator one time and that was this year at a redistricting meeting in Pablo.

For the reasons expressed, I reject the presentation of Maps 1,2,3, and support Map 4 for it is compactness and preservation of community interests.

Bill Amrine

St Ignatius, MT

billamrine@gmail.com

Sherley, Laura

From: MDAC <contact@mtredistricting.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, November 1, 2022 6:10 AM
To: Districting
Subject: MDAC Comment from: Fidel Archibeque

From: Fidel Archibeque archibequejoe10@gmail.com
Residence: Polson

Message:
Chairman Smith and Commissioners:

I support MAP 4. House District 15 is a gerrymandered district that has long ensured that the people of Lake County within HD 15 are not represented in the Montana House of Representatives. This includes members of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CSKT) whom we should not assume will vote in harmony with the Blackfeet simply because they are tribal. If the other Maps 1, 2 and 3 stand, it will ensure that Lake County HD 15 residents will once more have no legislator that understands the issues of Lake County or even bothers to come down to the area to campaign. In fact, as many Lake County voters can attest, the HD 15 Representative does not respond to calls, letters, or emails from those who should be considered valued constituents. HD 15 is solely determined by the voters in Glacier County.

Glacier County (Browning) legislators cannot and do not represent Lake County for the following reasons.

- The district is separated by the Bob Marshall Wilderness and the extreme terrain of the Rocky Mountains; it is by no means contiguous.
- Extensive drive times on treacherous roads during winter make efficient, effective travel and communications between the geographically split district's inhabitants near impossible.
- A wall of terrain and weather leave voters at the mercy of Browning-elected legislators who are unaware of Lake County issues and in no position to provide reasoned, informed representation.
- While the CSKT and Blackfoot tribes will put on a good face to, in effect, secure HD 15 for Browning, it should not be assumed they vote monolithically. Since the CSKT is a minority in Lake County, it is the duty of this commission to consider all the voters in HD 15—not just special interest groups.
- Even at a glance, it is obvious that Lake County and Glacier County are economically and uniquely divergent; the economies and interests have no commonality other than the fact a tribe resides in each county. The similarities end there.

While one might use the Voters Rights Act to justify this gerrymandered district, the people of Lake County are disenfranchised by the construct of this district. It must be changed.

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

Sherley, Laura

From: MDAC <contact@mtredistricting.gov>
Sent: Monday, November 7, 2022 11:47 AM
To: Districting
Subject: MDAC Comment from: Thomas Berkley

From: Thomas Berkley tomberkley74@gmail.com
Residence: Bigfork, MT

Message:

I believe that MAP 11 best for the redistricting of Montana

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

Sherley, Laura

From: MDAC <contact@mtredistricting.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, November 1, 2022 2:50 PM
To: Districting
Subject: MDAC Comment from: Betty Carter

From: Betty Carter bloucarter7@gmail.com
Residence: Polson

Message:
Chairman Smith and Commissioners:

I support MAP 4. House District 15 is a gerrymandered district that has long ensured that the people of Lake County within HD 15 are not represented in the Montana House of Representatives. This includes members of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CSKT) whom we should not assume will vote in harmony with the Blackfeet simply because they are tribal. If the other Maps 1, 2 and 3 stand, it will ensure that Lake County HD 15 residents will once more have no legislator that understands the issues of Lake County or even bothers to come down to the area to campaign. In fact, as many Lake County voters can attest, the HD 15 Representative does not respond to calls, letters, or emails from those who should be considered valued constituents. HD 15 is solely determined by the voters in Glacier County.

Glacier County (Browning) legislators cannot and do not represent Lake County for the following reasons.

- The district is separated by the Bob Marshall Wilderness and the extreme terrain of the Rocky Mountains; it is by no means contiguous.
- Extensive drive times on treacherous roads during winter make efficient, effective travel and communications between the geographically split district's inhabitants near impossible.
- A wall of terrain and weather leave voters at the mercy of Browning-elected legislators who are unaware of Lake County issues and in no position to provide reasoned, informed representation.
- While the CSKT and Blackfoot tribes will put on a good face to, in effect, secure HD 15 for Browning, it should not be assumed they vote monolithically. Since the CSKT is a minority in Lake County, it is the duty of this commission to consider all the voters in HD 15—not just special interest groups.
- Even at a glance, it is obvious that Lake County and Glacier County are economically and uniquely divergent; the economies and interests have no commonality other than the fact a tribe resides in each county. The similarities end there.

While one might use the Voters Rights Act to justify this gerrymandered district, the people of Lake County are disenfranchised by the construct of this district. It must be changed.

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

Sherley, Laura

From: MDAC <contact@mtredistricting.gov>
Sent: Thursday, November 3, 2022 12:22 PM
To: Districting
Subject: MDAC Comment from: Sandra Hammer

From: Sandra Hammer sandie@sandiehammer.com
Residence: Polson, MT

Message:

To Chairman Smith & Commissioners, I support MAP 4! HD15 is a very gerrymandered district has has ensured Lake County residents within HD15 is not represented in the MT House of Representatives! The CSKT & Blackfoot tribes do not always agree & could cause more problems. If the other maps stand, Lake County will not have any representation that understand our issues. HD15 is solely determined by voters in Glacier County (Browning). The district is not contiguous, divided by Bob Marshall. Terrible drives by weather & time. Glacier does not understand the issues of Lake County so how could they fairly represent us? We are different in interests and economies that do not converge. We each have a tribe, but that is all. This is so unfair and the powers making decisions are from highly unionized areas and it deeply hurts Lake County. We have been hurt enough and struggle as it is. Please consider Map 4. We are the majority in Lake County but are always treated as a minority. Please stop the bias in this decision.

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

Sherley, Laura

From: MDAC <contact@mtredistricting.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, November 1, 2022 2:50 PM
To: Districting
Subject: MDAC Comment from: SUSAN MCNATT

From: SUSAN MCNATT susie.mcnatt@gmail.com
Residence: POLSON, MT

Message:

Chairman Smith and Commissioners:

I support MAP 4. House District 15 is a messing with the district that has long ensured that the people of Lake County within HD 15 are NOT represented in the Montana House of Representatives. The members of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CSKT) won't necessarily vote in harmony with the Blackfeet simply because they are tribal. If the other Maps 1, 2 and 3 stand, it will ensure that Lake County HD 15 residents will once more have NO legislator that understands the issues of Lake County or even bothers to come down to the area to campaign. In fact, as many Lake County voters can attest, the HD 15 Representative does not respond to calls, letters, or emails from those who should be considered valued constituents. Therefore, HD 15 is solely determined by the voters in Glacier County.

Glacier County (Browning) legislators cannot and do not represent Lake County for the following reasons.

- It is by no means contiguous with Browning (Glacier County) as the district is separated by the Bob Marshall Wilderness and the extreme terrain of the Rocky Mountains;
- The treacherous roads during winter make efficient, effective travel and communications between the geographically split district's inhabitants near impossible, not to mention the time.
- Browning-elected legislators who are unaware of Lake County issues and in no position to provide reasoned, informed representation. We are at the mercy of the Browning elected legislators
- The CSKT is a minority in Lake County, therefore, it is the duty of this commission to consider
- it is obvious that Lake County and Glacier County are economically and uniquely divergent; the economies and interests have no commonality other than the fact a tribe resides in each county. The similarities end there. While one might use the Voters Rights Act to justify this gerrymandered district, the people of Lake County are disenfranchised by the construct of this district. It must be changed.

Sincerely,

Susan McNatt

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

Sherley, Laura

From: MDAC <contact@mtredistricting.gov>
Sent: Friday, November 4, 2022 4:19 PM
To: Districting
Subject: MDAC Comment from: Micah Robertson

From: Micah Robertson cofcoflakecounty@gmail.com
Residence: Ronan

Message:

Chairman Smith and Comissioners,

I live in Ronan MT, and I support MAP 4. House district 15 is a gerrymandered district that has long ensured that the people of Lake County within HD 15 are not represented in the Montana House of Representatives. This includes the members of CSKT whom we should not assume will vote in harmony with the Blackfeet simply because they are both tribal. If the other MAPs 1, 2, and 3 stand, it will ensure that Lake County HD 15 resident will once more have no legislator that understands the issues of Lake County or even bothers to come down to the area to campaign. In fact, as many Lake County voters can attest, the HD 15 Representative does not answer calls, letters, or emails from those who should be considered valued constituents. HD 15 is solely determined by voters in Glacier County. Glacier County (Browning) legislators cannot and do not represent Lake County for the following reasons.

- A. The district is seperated by the Bob Marshall Wilderness and the extreme terrain of the Rocky Mountains. And is by no means contiguous.
- B. Extensive drive times on treacherous roads during winter make efficient, effective travel, and communications between the geographically split district's inhabitants nearly impossible.
- C. A wall of terrain and weather leave voters at the mercy of Browning elected legislators who are unaware of Lake County issues and in no position to provide reasoned, informed representation.
- D. While the CSKT and Blackfeet tribes will put on a good face to, in effect, secure HD 15 for Browning, it should not be assumed they vote monolithically. Since the CSKT is a minority in Lake County, it is the duty of this commission to consider all the voters of HD 15. And not just a special interest group.
- E. Even at a glance, it is obvious that Lake County and Glacier County are economically and uniquely divergent; the economies and interests have no commonality other than the fact a tribe resides in each county. The similarities end there.

While one might use the Voters Rights Act to justify this gerrymandered district, the people of Lake County are disenfranchised by the construct of this district. It must be changed.

Thank you and God bless America.

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