

Public Comments

Montana Districting and Apportionment Commission
Comments received between September 17 and 5 p.m. on October 2, 2021

Distributed electronically October 2, 2021

Sherley, Laura

From: Gail Asbury <asburyfamily5@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, September 24, 2021 12:27 PM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Districting

I would prefer to have the western boundary to include Kalispell and go down to Bozeman (Bozeman split in 1/2, one going to western district and the other included in the eastern district. In that diagonal line, each separated by county lines except for Bozeman. This is how it has been done in the past and I don't see any reason to change it.

Sincerely,
Gail Asbury
Helena

From: [T Baer](#)
To: [Districting](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Redistricting of Montana
Date: Friday, October 1, 2021 11:38:24 PM

I know that my voice is not heard and my concerns are never going to matter to any of you but I am going to have my say anyway. I am a marginalized citizen. I have not been represented in good faith by any of my representatives who profess to have good faith. I would want to see the fairest split of our state to be honestly represented. It should be an east west split with the line drawn down the center of Montana north to south. This is the most fair and it should be equal for all. We know the gerrymandering is what always is adopted for nefarious purposes. We all see it and yet no one can stop it because there are no longer people of principle in our government. We are seeing the slow creep of authoritarianism done by gerrymandering and manipulation of all state and federal officials. My ancestors died for nothing fighting for our country if this is allowed carte blanche because of those evil in intent. I want to live free in a republic that is not manipulated in every fashion against me. We should all be able to live in the truest of fairness and if we dont adopt the east west split then we are absolutely being lied to about fairness. Which in my opinion has already been proven to be the case. Prove me wrong by adopting the fairest split as I have stated the line drawn north and south splitting the state into east and west.

Sincerely a common citizen of Montana
Tammi Baer

From: [T Baer](#)
To: [Districting](#); Maylinn.Smith@mtleg.gov; Jeff.Essmann@mtleg.gov; Joe.Lamson@mtleg.gov;
Dan.Stusek@mtleg.gov; Kendra.Miller@mtleg.gov
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Congressional redistricting maps
Date: Friday, October 1, 2021 11:48:30 PM

To the State of Montana;

I know that my voice is not heard and my concerns are never going to matter to any of you but I am going to have my say anyway. I am a marginalized citizen. I have not been represented in good faith by any of my representatives who profess to have good faith. I would want to see the fairest split of our state to be honestly represented. It should be an east west split with the line drawn down the center of Montana north to south. This is the most fair and it should be equal for all. We know the gerrymandering is what always is adopted for nefarious purposes. We all see it and yet no one can stop it because there are no longer people of principle in our government. We are seeing the slow creep of authoritarianism done by gerrymandering and manipulation of all state and federal officials. My ancestors died for nothing fighting for our country if this is allowed carte blanche because of those evil in intent. I want to live free in a republic that is not manipulated in every fashion against me. We should all be able to live in the truest of fairness and if we dont adopt the east west split then we are absolutely being lied to about fairness. Which in my opinion has already been proven to be the case. Prove me wrong by adopting the fairest split as I have stated the line drawn north and south splitting the state into east and west.

Sincerely a common citizen of Montana
Tammi Baer

From: [MDAC](#)
To: [Districting](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] MDAC Comment from: Tammi Baer
Date: Friday, October 1, 2021 11:49:59 PM

From: Tammi Baer
Residence: Ronan

Message:

To the State of Montana and all concerned,

I know that my voice is not heard and my concerns are never going to matter to any of you but I am going to have my say anyway. I am a marginalized citizen. I have not been represented in good faith by any of my representatives who profess to have good faith. I would want to see the fairest split of our state to be honestly represented. It should be an east west split with the line drawn down the center of Montana north to south. This is the most fair and it should be equal for all. We know the gerrymandering is what always is adopted for nefarious purposes. We all see it and yet no one can stop it because there are no longer people of principle in our government. We are seeing the slow creep of authoritarianism done by gerrymandering and manipulation of all state and federal officials. My ancestors died for nothing fighting for our country if this is allowed carte blanche because of those evil in intent. I want to live free in a republic that is not manipulated in every fashion against me. We should all be able to live in the truest of fairness and if we dont adopt the east west split then we are absolutely being lied to about fairness. Which in my opinion has already been proven to be the case. Prove me wrong by adopting the fairest split as I have stated the line drawn north and south splitting the state into east and west.

Sincerely a common citizen of Montana
Tammi Baer

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

Sherley, Laura

From: URI BARNEA <u_barnea@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, September 27, 2021 11:07 AM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Congressional map

Dear Commission members:

I believe that the best congressional map for Montana should meet the following criteria:

- Maintain the natural boundaries of our cities, Tribal communities, and counties.
- Is as equal in population as possible.
- Is competitive, when possible, to ensure that no party is unduly favored.
- Incarcerated persons are counted in the district of their home address

Thank you for your kind attention,

Uri Barnea
Billings, MT

Sherley, Laura

From: Jack Batsel <physicspreacher1@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, October 1, 2021 7:55 AM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Congressional Map

To Montana Districting Commission members

I am writing to request that the new district map of Montana follows the following criteria:

That it maintains the boundaries of our cities, counties, and Tribal communities,

That it divides our state population in as equal portions as possible and

That it does not favor any particular party and fosters competition in our elections.

Let Montana be an example for the rest of the country in creating a map that is free from gerrymandering and promotes free and fair elections.

Thank you,

John Batsel, Jr.

Butte, MT

Sherley, Laura

From: Karen Buley <buleykm@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 27, 2021 9:09 PM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Congressional map

Dear Commissioners:

Please consider the following as you draw a pair of U.S. House districts-

1. Keep the populations as equal as possible.
2. Preserve the natural boundaries of our counties, cities, and tribal communities.
3. Protect the fairness of each district so that no party is unduly favored.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Karen Buley

Sherley, Laura

From: MDAC <donotreply@mtredistricting.gov>
Sent: Friday, October 1, 2021 11:16 AM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] MDAC Comment from: Maureen Byrne

From: Maureen Byrne
Residence: Livingston, MT

Message:

Thank you this difficult work.

I believe it is important to call the districts by numbers (1 & 2) instead of geographical designation; doing so will eliminate the tendency to lump Montana's into a East vs West or North vs South.

Secondly, I think it is important for Park County to be in the same district as Gallatin County because of the interconnectedness of our economies, recreation, and tourism.

Again, thank you for the important work you are doing as Montana experiences so much change and growth.

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

Sherley, Laura

From: huskers@3rivers.net
Sent: Friday, October 1, 2021 7:02 AM
To: Districting; Maylinn.Smith@mtleg.gov; Kendra.Miller@mtleg.gov; Dan.Stusek@mtleg.gov; Dan.Stusek@mtleg.gov; Jeff.Essmann@mtleg.gov; Joe.Lamson@mtleg.gov
Subject: [EXTERNAL] New Congressional District
Attachments: East West Continental splitting Gallatin.pdf

Chair Smith,

Committee members,

Thanks you for your time and service to draw the in Montana for the new congressional district. Exciting times here in this great state. I want to encourage you as you take all points under consideration, that first and foremost the oath you each took to uphold the constitution. It is laid out in a simple fashion on how district line should be done. Population dividing as evenly as as can be. Nothing about having competitive districts. If one was to be able to have competitive districts, then what about independents and maybe Green Party, not just Republican and Democrat. So in closing just the facts, population split as evenly as possible.

Thank you for your consideration.

Justin W. Cleveland
Box 232
Fairfield, Mt 59436
huskers@3rivers.net

Sherley, Laura

From: Andie Creel <andie.creel@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, September 24, 2021 6:34 AM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] House districting

To whom it concerns,

Please keep Bozeman and Missoula in the same congressional district! It is clear that the two towns have a shared community due to the importance of higher education and its relevance to the two places' community and economy. Both towns contain flagship universities and thus have a common policy and economic development interest. Ensuring the same house member represents both college towns is important to make sure that incredible state schools have another advocate in the halls of congress.

As an MSU alumn with a UM alumn for a sister, I've seen how similar policy decisions are for the two towns. Please consider this when selecting finalist maps.

Thank you so much for your time,

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Andie Creel
She/Her/Hers
C: 406 580 1596
Address: 1430 Cherry Dr, Bozeman, MT 59715

Sherley, Laura

From: Louise Davis <louisedavis53@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, September 24, 2021 9:53 AM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comments on redistricting

Dear Commission,

I strongly believe the best congressional map for Montana keeps Bozeman and Missoula whole and within the same district, keeping our shared community of interest intact. These two communities have strongly shared interests in higher education and should be kept together to maintain an important voice for Montana's higher education and economic goals & policies.

**Thank you for your consideration,
Louise**

Louise Davis
9443 Cottonwood Rd
Bozeman, MT 59718
louisedavis53@gmail.com
406-581-3073

Sherley, Laura

From: MDAC <donotreply@mtredistricting.gov>
Sent: Monday, September 27, 2021 11:32 AM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] MDAC Comment from: Tracy Donaldson

From: Tracy Donaldson
Residence: Helena, MT

Message:

Regarding the redistricting effort for 2 U.S. Congressional districts due to the gain of an additional Representative for Montana as a result of 2020 Census population counts –

I believe it is imperative that ALL Montanans have the opportunity to be fairly represented in Congress, specifically in BOTH houses of Congress. Unfortunately, this is not currently the case since we only have one Representative for the entire state. I am thrilled that Montana has regained a second seat and will now be sending two individuals to represent our state in Congress.

That being said, my main concern is that those two individuals represent their constituents, who are split between two major political parties. I think it would be extremely unfair and detrimental to the people of Montana for both of those Representatives to be of the same political party since that would mean that around half of the people of this state would not have a representative of their viewpoints and beliefs, taking their concerns and needs into account with their vote in Congress. A representative democracy does NOT mean that the majority party (with between 51 and 60 percent of the vote) would hold 100% of the seats in Congress; because that would mean that 40-49 percent (nearly HALF) of the people of Montana would not have their interests represented. That is a fact, it is common sense, and it would be very wrong.

Secondly, as far as how to split Montana into two Congressional Districts, I believe the state is naturally divided in its character based on its geography (eastern Montana's rural plains vs. western Montana's mountainous, timbered areas); so it makes sense to divide the state into an East District and a West District (recognizing that the line between the two districts runs more NW to SE than it does directly N to S). I also think that urban/suburban areas have very different interests than rural and remote areas. The difficulty arises in that while the eastern/plains areas are much larger geographically, these areas have a much smaller population overall; so splitting the state into two districts based solely on this geographical divide would result in rather unequal populations for each "half". This is a difficult issue to resolve, and in making two districts with near-equal populations that are compact and contiguous it is inevitable that at least one county will need to be split between the two districts. While that is unfortunate, splitting a county is much less a problem than splitting an urban area would be; and it would at least be reasonable to split one or more counties with their urban/suburban areas in one district and rural areas in the other.

In summary, and based on these issues and concerns which I've stated, my preference for two Congressional Districts would be:

1. generally Western MT – including Missoula, Helena, Butte, Bozeman, Belgrade, Hamilton, Deer Lodge, Anaconda, Dillon... (and possibly Polson, Kalispell, Whitefish, Livingston depending on population totals)
- &
2. generally Eastern MT – including Great Falls, Billings, Laurel, Lewistown, Havre, Shelby, Cut Bank, Miles City, Glasgow, Glendive, Sidney, Hardin..

* The dividing line between the 2 Districts would run generally from Glacier National Park to Yellowstone National Park, with Helena and Bozeman definitely included in the Western District.

Thank you for your consideration.

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

Sherley, Laura

From: MDAC <donotreply@mtredistricting.gov>
Sent: Friday, October 1, 2021 2:50 PM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] MDAC Comment from: Patrick Dougherty

From: Patrick Dougherty Residence: Helena, MT

Message:

After reviewing the consolidated maps, I still believe my map (C50) is the only map that does not violate Section 2 of the Voter Rights act. Because of this, my map should be put forth as one of the finalists for consideration on Oct. 19th.

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

Sherley, Laura

From: Hilary Eisen <hilary.eisen@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 29, 2021 12:00 PM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comments on proposed maps

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed legislative maps. I live in Bozeman, grew up in Billings, and have lived in several communities across the state. From a community perspective I feel there is a fairly distinct difference depending on which side of the continental divide one is on, but this should not be the most heavily-weighted factor in determining district boundaries. However, some sort of east/west split makes more sense to me than north/south. And, the maps with districts that aren't contiguous make no sense at all and should be eliminated from consideration. The same is true for maps such as #8, where the boundaries seem to selectively include certain counties. Furthermore, I think it is important to keep towns, and counties within the same District (for example, I don't agree with the map that splits Frenchtown from the rest of Missoula county), to keep the populations even between districts, and to ensure that the Districts don't split the Native vote. I also think it is important to account for projected future growth of each district in some way. This can likely be achieved by ensuring Montana's urban areas are evenly divided between the two districts.

Thank you,
Hilary Eisen

Sherley, Laura

From: MDAC <donotreply@mtredistricting.gov>
Sent: Friday, September 24, 2021 8:35 AM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] MDAC Comment from: Gale Eversole

From: Gale Eversole
Residence: Bigfork

Message:

I support PM-42 because keeping CKST and Blackfoot tribes together in a competitive district ensures indigenous peoples right to vote and be counted.

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

Sherley, Laura

From: Gale Eversole <galeeversole@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, September 24, 2021 9:31 AM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PM-42

To whom it concerns;

I am writing you to urge all members to adopt Public Map 42 in the upcoming 10 year redistricting. It is essential and in the best interest of Montana indigenous people that CKST and Blackfeet people are kept together in competitive districts to ensure their right to vote and be counted. Thank you.

From: [MDAC](#)
To: [Districting](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] MDAC Comment from: Kevin gillaspie
Date: Saturday, October 2, 2021 11:08:20 AM

From: Kevin gillaspie
Residence: Great falls montana

Message:

Suggested Comments (feel free to use your own words):

Commissioners and Chair Smith,

Please consider the following when selecting Congressional maps:

1. The Montana Constitution requires Compact Districts. Montana Statute 5-1-115 further defines the Criteria: "compactness of a district is greatest when the length of the district and the width of a district are equal."
2. A district may not be drawn for the purposes of favoring a political party.
3. Competitiveness is only a goal and is at odds with the Statute on not favoring a political party. If competitiveness is used, both districts should be equally competitive. Also if previous election results are used, again against Statute, they must be in statewide races won by Democrats as well as Republicans going back several years and not just the anomaly of the 2020 mail-in only ballot election.
4. Districts should follow historic East-West precedent to best accomplish compactness.

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



Sept 18-21

Dear Commissioners,

I don't want you
to cut Flathead County
in half.

Go back to the old
plan, you had when
you had two
representatives.

yours truly
Frances K Hagen

100 Badger Ct
Bigfork, MT
59911

Sherley, Laura

From: Elizabeth Hale <ehcelestine@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, October 1, 2021 1:37 PM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Congressional Redistricting Map

October 1, 2021

Dear Chair and Commissioners,

It is most important that we honor the tenants of the Montana Constutution:

Districts must:

Not be configured for political reasons

Be compact

Keep communities whole

THANK YOU FOR ABIDING BY THESE TENANTS

It makes sense to follow the East-West precedent.

Yours truly,

Elizabeth Hale
PO Box 126
Helena 59624

Elizabeth

Sherley, Laura

From: MDAC <donotreply@mtredistricting.gov>
Sent: Friday, October 1, 2021 12:12 PM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] MDAC Comment from: Jeanette Hall

From: Jeanette Hall
Residence: Bozeman

Message:

I have lived in Bozeman for over 36 years. I've seen this city, county and state change in many different ways including the change from two Representative districts to one and now back to two. Let's get this right and allow voters to be fairly represented by their vote.

Splitting Gallatin County would dilute our voting power. We're the second largest county in Montana and our county needs to be an anchor for our congressional district. One of the goals of redistricting is to keep communities and counties together. Gallatin county should be kept intact.

Thank you for your consideration.

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

Sherley, Laura

From: Catherine Haug <cmhaug44@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 27, 2021 1:39 PM
To: Districting
Cc: Catherine Haug
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Redistricting : Montana's new congressional map

I request that the new congressional map for Montana meet the following criteria:

- Maintains the natural boundaries of our cities, Tribal communities, and counties.
- Is as equal in population as possible.
- Is competitive, when possible, to ensure that no party is unduly favored.

In other words, "No Gerrymandering."

Sincerely,
Catherine Haug
145 Bay Drive
PO Box 1693
Bigfork MT 59911

Sherley, Laura

From: Stacey Lynne <patsy59715@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 27, 2021 4:18 PM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] MT's districts

Dear Commission,

Thank you for taking on this task.

Montana needs districts that maintain the natural boundaries of our cities, tribal communities, and counties.

Our districts also need to be as equal in population as possible and as competitive as possible.

Thanks for doing this work,

Stacey Haugland

508 North Third Ave.

Bozeman, MT 59715

Sherley, Laura

From: Dennis Heizing <dheizing@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 27, 2021 5:50 PM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Congressional Map

To the Montana Districting Commission,

I am writing to respectfully request that you consider the following criteria in drawing the best congressional map for us all here in MT:

- Maintains the natural boundaries of our cities, Tribal communities, and counties.
- Is as equal in population as possible.
- Is competitive, when possible, to ensure that no party is unduly favored.

Thank you for considering my position.

Regards,

Dennis Heizing
Whitefish, MT

Sherley, Laura

From: Patricia Hogan <reckless50@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 28, 2021 9:23 PM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL]

Good day, dear fellow Montanans on the Districting Commission -
- Thank you for acting to ensure that incarcerated Montanans are counted in the voting district of their home address, and not in that of the prison or jail where they reside.

I ask that you please further ensure that the congressional map for Montana maintains the natural boundaries of our cities, tribal communities, and counties; is equal in population; and is as competitive as possible, so that no political party is unfairly favored.

And I thank you for your service.

Patricia A. Hogan | 1650 South 12th West | Missoula MT 59801
406.543.5509 -h | reckless50@gmail.com

"Time flies like an arrow. Fruit flies like a banana."

Sherley, Laura

From: Allison Howe <allisonjhowe@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 28, 2021 9:23 AM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Congressional Map

Hi there,

I am emailing to voice my opinion on the drawing of districts for Montana's new congressional map. In order to represent the residents of Montana most accurately, it is imperative that the new districts prioritize the following:

- Maintain the natural boundaries of our cities, Tribal communities, and counties.
- Create districts that are as equal in population as possible.
- Create competitive districts, when possible, to ensure that no party is unduly favored.

Thank you for your consideration,

Allison Howe

Sherley, Laura

From: m hutchins . art director-musician <artdogz@msn.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 30, 2021 9:15 AM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Montana Districting Commission: congressional map

districting@mt.gov [shoutout.wix.com]

Montana Districting Commission,

I have been following your work, and am writing to share my input regarding Montana's new map. I feel that the best congressional map for Montana meets the following criteria:

- Maintains the natural boundaries of our cities, Tribal communities, and counties.
- Is as equal in population as possible.
- Is competitive, when possible, to ensure that no party is unduly favored.

Thank you for your attention and your work,

Marlene Hutchins

—*voter registered in Montana*

Sherley, Laura

From: MDAC <donotreply@mtredistricting.gov>
Sent: Friday, October 1, 2021 9:18 AM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] MDAC Comment from: David A. Johnson

From: David A. Johnson
Residence: Bigfork MT

Message:

Commissioners and Chair Smith,

Please consider the following when selecting Congressional maps:

1. The Montana Constitution requires Compact Districts. Montana Statute 5-1-115 further defines the Criteria: "compactness of a district is greatest when the length of the district and the width of a district are equal."
2. A district may not be drawn for the purposes of favoring a political party.
3. Competitiveness is only a goal and is at odds with the Statute on not favoring a political party. If competitiveness is used, both districts should be equally competitive. Also if previous election results are used, again against Statute, they must be in statewide races won by Democrats as well as Republicans going back several years and not just the anomaly of the 2020 mail-in only ballot election.
4. Districts should follow historic East-West precedent to best accomplish compactness.

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

Sherley, Laura

From: Jasen and Sandy Johnson <jsjohnson93@charter.net>
Sent: Monday, September 27, 2021 11:26 AM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] redistricting MT

The best congressional map for Montana needs to meet the following criteria to ensure fairness for ALL Montanans:

- Maintain the natural boundaries of our cities, Tribal communities, and counties.
- Be as equal in population as possible.
- Be competitive, when possible, to ensure that no party is unduly favored.

Do the right thing - be fair and impartial, not partisan. The tides of partisanship can shift drastically, but the parameters of your actions will be long lasting!

Thank you,

Sandy Johnson
Billings, MT

Sherley, Laura

From: Gil Jordan <ontherun@aboutmontana.net>
Sent: Monday, September 27, 2021 1:28 PM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Redistricting map

Please assure the best congressional map for Montana. The map should meet the following criteria:

Maintains the natural boundaries of our cities, Tribal communities, and counties.

Is as equal in population as possible.

Is competitive, when possible, to ensure that no party is unduly favored.

Thank you,

Gil Jordan & Kimberly Pinter
Coram, MT 59913

Sherley, Laura

From: Ann Karp <ann@sidewaysgaze.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 29, 2021 8:21 AM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Input on new voting maps

Districting Commission members,

I'm concerned about the partisan nature of redistricting happening across the country. It's antidemocratic, and not in alignment with Montana's longstanding tradition of independent thinking - not to mention, it's not in alignment with the intentions of our founding fathers!

I urge any maps put forward in Montana to:

- Maintain the natural boundaries of our cities, Tribal communities, and counties.
- Be as equal in population as possible.
- Be competitive, when possible, to ensure that no party is unduly favored.

Thank you for your time. Yours is a very challenging job and you'll not be able to please everyone. But your actions guide the future of our democracy - or could possibly end it. You must act with nonpartisan integrity and keep in mind the society our children will inherit. Free and fair elections are essential, otherwise we will become increasingly ruled by a few, without room for dissent.

Thank you,

Ann Karp
117 Tremont St
Missoula MT 59801

Sherley, Laura

From: Mark Korwald <korwald.mark@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 27, 2021 11:34 AM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Redistricting

Dear Commissioners,

Redistricting is essential to the health of our democracy. Please keep the following ideas in mind, the districts must:

- Maintain the natural boundaries of our cities, Tribal communities, and counties.
- Be as equal in population as possible.
- Be competitive, when possible, to ensure that no party is unduly favored.

Mark
(650) 533-4974

From: [Nancy Leifer](#)
To: [Districting](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public Comment for October 5th Commission meeting
Date: Saturday, October 2, 2021 3:35:28 PM
Attachments: [LWV Public Comment for October 5 .docx](#)

Dear Sirs:

Public Comment from the League of Women Voters Montana for the October 5th Districting and Apportionment Commission is attached.

Sincerely,
Nancy Leifer

Nancy Leifer
President, League of Women Voters Montana
Pronouns: She/Her/Hers
C: 406-207-9114
E: nancleifer@gmail.com

Public Comment for October 5, 2021 Montana Districting and Apportionment Commission
From Nancy Leifer
On behalf of the League of Women Voters of Montana

The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan, non-profit member organization. In the 2019 Supreme Court decision *Rucho v Common Cause* and *Lamone v Benisek*, the League was involved on the side of the plaintiffs in both suits, in one case on the side of the Republicans and in the other on the side of the Democrats. In the area of redistricting, the League supports maps that comply with mandatory criteria, are free of partisan bias, support competitive districts where possible, and recognize concerns of communities of interest.

A report by The American Center for Progress from 2016 noted that “Members of the U.S. House of Representatives are re-elected 97 percent of the time. And in the 2016 election, only 10 percent of the 435 House seats were considered competitive.” Elections in which politicians are guaranteed to win reduces responsiveness to constituents, and thereby also reduces accountability.

Montana can improve this situation by creating one Congressional district that is competitive. Political competitiveness requires assessing the political implications of maps. Maps that are not assessed for political impact will have a political impact, nonetheless.

The League favors maps that have assessed the political impact and have created one district that is competitive. If both districts have the same partisan distribution as is true statewide, one party will be precluded from having the opportunity to elect the candidate of their choice because their voters are too thinly spread between the two districts. Concentrating voters of the minority party in one district to achieve an equal balance with the majority party creates a district that is competitive and offers equal opportunity.

Sherley, Laura

From: Nicholas Maya <nicktmaya@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 27, 2021 11:20 AM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Fair Districting Maps

Hello,

As a resident of Montana I want to make sure that Districting Commission creates the best and fair congressional map and SHOULD meet the following criteria:

- Maintains the natural boundaries of our cities, Tribal communities, and counties.
- Is as equal in population as possible.
- Is competitive, when possible, to ensure that no party is unduly favored.

Thank you,

Nicholas Maya (Missoula, MT)

Sherley, Laura

From: Jack Meyer <skeemeyer@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 27, 2021 6:16 PM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] New Congressional Maps for Montana

The best congressional map for Montana must meet these criteria:

- Maintains the natural boundaries of our cities, Tribal communities, and counties.
- Is as equal in population as possible.
- Is competitive, when possible, to ensure that no party is unduly favored.

Sincerely,
Shelly Meyer (retired nurse)
330 S 1st St W, Apt B
Missoula, MT 59801
(406) 251-5339

Sent from [Mail \[go.microsoft.com\]](mailto:go.microsoft.com) for Windows

Sherley, Laura

From: Twila Moon <twila.moon@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 27, 2021 9:01 PM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Fair redistricting required

Dear Montana Districting Commission -

As a Montanan, I am very excited that we will be gaining back a second Representative to Congress. It's critical that our new congressional map is fair and does not allow gerrymandering to continue to rip apart our national democracy. As you determine the final maps for consideration, please ensure that they:

- Use the natural boundaries of our counties, Tribal communities, and cities.
- Are as equal in population as possible.
- Are politically competitive and ensure that no party is unduly favored.

This is our democratic duty and I am looking to you to make sure Montana is a leader in fair elections.

Thank you,
Twila Moon
1527 Tania Circle
Billings, MT 59105
406-579-3088

From: [MDAC](#)
To: [Districting](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] MDAC Comment from: Elizabeth Newsom
Date: Friday, October 1, 2021 8:15:32 PM

From: Elizabeth Newsom
Residence: Missoula, MT

Message:

Please consider the following when selecting Congressional maps: (1) The Montana Constitution requires Compact Districts. Montana Statute 5-1-115 further defines the Criteria “compactness of a district is greatest when the length of the district and the width of a district are equal.” (2) A district may not be drawn for the purposes of favoring a political party. (3) Competitiveness is only a goal and is at odds with the Statute on not favoring a political party. If competitiveness is used, both districts should be equally competitive. Also if previous election results are used, again against Statute, they must be in statewide races won by Democrats as well as Republicans going back several years and not just the anomaly of the 2020 mail-in only ballot election. (4) Districts should follow historic East-West precedent to best accomplish compactness. Thank you.

--

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

From: [Elizabeth Newsom](#)
To: [Districting](#)
Cc: Maylinn.Smith@mtleg.gov; Jeff.Essmann@mtleg.gov; Dan.Stusek@mtleg.gov; Kendra.Miller@mtleg.gov
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: Congressional Redistricting Maps
Date: Friday, October 1, 2021 8:26:45 PM

Commissioners and Chair Smith:

Please consider the following when selecting Congressional maps:

1. The Montana Constitution requires Compact Districts. Montana Statute 5-1-115 further defines the Criteria “compactness of a district is greatest when the length of the district and the width of a district are equal.”
2. A district may not be drawn for the purposes of favoring a political party.
3. Competitiveness is only a goal and is at odds with the Statute on not favoring a political party. If competitiveness is used, both districts should be equally competitive. Also if previous election results are used, again against Statute, they must be in statewide races won by Democrats as well as Republicans going back several years and not just the anomaly of the 2020 mail-in only ballot election.
4. Districts should follow historic East-West precedent to best accomplish compactness.

Thank you,
Elizabeth Newsom
Missoula MT 59808
wijim.7@juno.com

Sent from [Mail \[go.microsoft.com\]](mailto:Mail[go.microsoft.com]) for Windows

From: [MDAC](#)
To: [Districting](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] MDAC Comment from: Wendy Pierce
Date: Saturday, October 2, 2021 8:53:23 AM

From: Wendy Pierce
Residence: Bozeman, MT

Message:

I would like to see Bozeman included in Western Montana along with Missoula, Butte and Helena. The state should basically be divided into western and eastern areas. Western and Eastern Montana have very different priorities and Bozeman's interest is more align with the western portion of the state- more recreation and technology versus farming and ranching.

--

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

Sherley, Laura

From: MDAC <donotreply@mtredistricting.gov>
Sent: Friday, October 1, 2021 12:03 PM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] MDAC Comment from: Rose Quinn

From: Rose Quinn
Residence: Bozeman

Message:

Please do not split up Gallatin County during redistributing. Gallatin County is a rapidly growing part of Western Montana that deserves to be kept whole and not have its voice diluted. Gallatin County is now the second largest county in the state, and just like Yellowstone County, should anchor its own congressional district.

Gallatin County is the most beautiful place Ive ever lived and Im happy to be raising children here. However we need to think progressively and make sure the future is positive. Please realize Gallatin Countys voice should not be diluted in the interest of partisan politics.

I have been a resident of Gallatin County for well over a decade and it is an important Montana community that should be kept while in regards to the congressional district.

Thank you for your consideration.

--

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

Sherley, Laura

From: Alzada Roche <alzadaroch@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, September 24, 2021 9:38 AM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Redistricting maps

Dear commission members,

My name is Alzada Roche and I live at 621 S Grand in Bozeman. As you choose the final maps for redistricting, I would like to comment that **the best congressional map for Montana keeps Bozeman and Missoula whole and within the same district, keeping our shared community of interest intact.** This is vital for the following reasons:

- Bozeman and Missoula have a clear community and shared interests related to the importance of higher education in their communities and economies.
- Splitting the two largest college campuses in Montana apart dilutes the votes of students and faculty across our state.
- As flagship universities, UM and MSU share common policy interests and are vital economic engines for their communities.

Thank you,

Alzada Roche
(406) 270-1576

Sherley, Laura

From: Penny Ronning <pennyronning@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 27, 2021 12:26 PM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Montana's New Congressional Map

Dear Montana Districting Commission,

I am writing today to encourage three points to be prioritized, followed, and met in your decision to create the new congressional boundaries for our state. The three points for creating the best congressional map for Montana, I believe, must meet the following criteria:

- Maintains the natural boundaries of our cities, Tribal communities, and counties.
- Is as equal in population and urban vs. rural as possible.
- Is competitive to ensure that no party is unduly favored.

Thank you for your service and consideration.

Sincerely,
Penny Ronning
3014 Glacier Dr.
Billings, MT 59102

"Compelling testimony is inspired by love and guided by knowledge. Speaking out to our community is where power is built." ~ Alexis Bonogofsky

CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE: This message is only intended for the addressed recipient and may contain confidential information. If you are not the intended recipient or their representative, any form of disclosure, archiving or distribution of this communication is strictly prohibited. Please notify the sender of the error and delete all copies and attachments from your system.

From: [MDAC](#)
To: [Districting](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] MDAC Comment from: Rebecca Schaer
Date: Friday, October 1, 2021 10:35:02 PM

From: Rebecca Schaer
Residence: whitefish, MT

Message:

Commissioners and Chair Smith,

Please consider the following when selecting Congressional maps:

#1. The Montana Constitution requires "Compact Districts." Montana Statute 5-1-115 further defines the Criteria in that "the compactness of a district is greatest when the length of the district and the width of a district are equal."

2. A district may not be drawn for the purposes of favoring a political party.

3. Competitiveness is only a goal and is at odds with the Statute on not favoring a political party. If competitiveness is used, both districts should be equally competitive. This seems logical.

Also if previous election results are used, again against Statute, they must be in statewide races won by Democrats as well as Republicans going back several years and not just the anomaly of the 2020 mail-in only ballot election.

4. I believe that Districts must follow historic East-West precedent to best accomplish compactness.

--

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

From: [Becky Schaer](#)
To: [Districting](#); Maylinn.Smith@mtleg.gov; Jeff.Essmann@mtleg.gov; Joe.Lamson@mtleg.gov;
Dan.Stusek@mtleg.gov; Kendra.Miller@mtleg.gov
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Congressional redistricting maps
Date: Friday, October 1, 2021 10:42:18 PM

Dear Commissioners and Chairperson:

Please consider the following when selecting Congressional maps:

1. The Montana Constitution requires "Compact Districts." Montana Statute 5-1-115 further defines the Criteria: "compactness of a district is greatest when the length of the district and the width of a district are equal."
2. A district may Not be drawn for the purposes of favoring a political party.
3. Competitiveness is only a goal and is at odds with the Statute on not favoring a political party. If competitiveness is used, both districts should be equally competitive. Also if previous election results are used, again against Statute, they must be in statewide races won by Democrats as well as Republicans going back several years and not just the anomaly of the 2020 mail-in only ballot election.
4. I believe that Districts should follow historic East-West precedent to best accomplish compactness as required by Statute 5-1-115.

Thank you for your consideration.

Rebecca Schaer
Russell Kingman

Sherley, Laura

From: mschauf51@gmail.com
Sent: Friday, October 1, 2021 9:44 AM
To: Districting
Cc: Maylinn.Smith@mtleg.gov; Jeff.Essmann@mtleg.gov; Joe.Lamson@mtleg.gov;
Dan.Stusek@mtleg.gov; Kendra.Miller@mtleg.gov
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Montana Congressional Redistricting
Importance: High

Chair Smith and fellow Commissioners:

Please consider the following when selecting Congressional maps:

- The Montana Constitution requires Compact Districts. Montana Statute 5-1-115 further defines the Criteria: "compactness of a district is greatest when the length of the district and the width of a district are equal."
- A district may not be drawn for the purposes of favoring a political party, an important consideration.
- Competitiveness is only a goal and is at odds with the Statute on not favoring a political party. If competitiveness is used, both districts should be equally competitive. Also if previous election results are used, which would again be against the State Statute, they must be in statewide races won by Democrats as well as Republicans going back several years and not just the anomaly of the 2020 mail-in only ballot election.
- Districts should follow historic East-West precedent to best accomplish compactness

Thank you all for your important work on this project and for your consideration of my input.

Respectfully,

Mike Schauf
Missoula, Montana

“The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.”
Edmond Burke



Mike Schauf
406-274-1911

From: [MDAC](#)
To: [Districting](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] MDAC Comment from: Melisa Bunderson Schelvan
Date: Friday, October 1, 2021 3:52:31 PM

From: Melisa Bunderson Schelvan
Residence: Missoula, MT

Message:

Please consider the following when selecting Congressional maps:

1. The Montana Constitution requires Compact Districts. Montana Statute 5-1-115 further defines the criteria: "compactness of a district is greatest when the length of the district and the width of a district are equal."
2. A district may not be drawn for the purposes of favoring a political party.
3. Competitiveness is only a goal and is at odds with the Statute on not favoring a political party. If competitiveness is used, both districts should be equally competitive. Also if previous election results are used, again against Statute, they must be in statewide races won by Democrats as well as Republicans going back several years and not just the anomaly of the 2020 mail-in only ballot election.
4. Districts should follow historic East-West precedent to best accomplish compactness.

--

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

Sherley, Laura

From: Carolyn Sevier <carolyn.sevier@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 27, 2021 11:56 AM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] In support of election map fairness

To the Districting Commission-

I am writing in support of ensuring basic fairness in Montana's redistricting process. The following criteria for selecting our congressional map will set up Montana's congressional representation to carry the best, most representative voice to Washington.

- 1) Keep the natural boundaries of cities, tribal communities, and counties. So much of our political and regulatory activity already is dependent on these boundaries. Following them in congressional districts just makes sense.
- 2) Keep as equal a population as possible.
- 3) Assuming the above two are true, districts should be politically competitive. While political preferences shift over time, the re-calibration at any moment in time to existing election maps helps to keep politicians accountable to the widest breadth of voters and helps to minimize polarization.

As a 23-year resident of Montana and currently in Billings, I appreciate the work you are doing!

Carolyn Sevier

--

Carolyn Sevier

Sherley, Laura

From: Dorothy Starshine <starshine1200@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 27, 2021 1:59 PM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] District Map

I trust the final map will have these boundaries:

-
- Maintains the natural boundaries of our cities, Tribal communities, and counties.
- Is as equal in population as possible.
- Is competitive, when possible, to ensure that no party is unduly favored.

Starshine

1200 32nd St. S. #23

Great Falls, MT

starshine1200@gmail.com

406-788-2299

--

Love is all there is.

Sherley, Laura

From: Cathy Stewart <mtstew54@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, September 27, 2021 11:00 AM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Maps

Hello - I want to make sure the process of drawing is not driven by partisan politics.

Please use process that maintains the natural boundaries of our cities, Tribal communities, and counties. And is as equal in population as possible and it is competitive.

Thank you.
Catherine Stewart
1215 Powell St
Missoula, MT. 59802

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android \[go.onelink.me\]](#)

Sherley, Laura

From: Sarah Stewart <sarahbstewart@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, September 27, 2021 6:48 PM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comment on drawing fair congressional map in MT

Dear Montana Districting Commission,

We are writing to ask that you draw congressional map for Montana that maintains the natural boundaries of our cities, counties, and tribal communities, is as equal in population as possible, and is competitive when possible so that no party is favored. This seems the fairest and truest and most democratic way to redistrict and create a new congressional map for our great state of Montana.

Thank you for your attention to this.

Sincerely, The Stewart Family, Gardiner, Montana

Sherley, Laura

From: Jessie Tuberty <jptube@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 28, 2021 8:42 PM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Map

Please keep Missoula and Bozeman together and whole when considering the new congressional district map. These two cities and their University campuses are economic engines with shared policy priorities. Thank you, Jessie and Pete Tuberty

Sent from my iPhone

Sherley, Laura

From: Michael Wood <mwood3211@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 27, 2021 11:32 AM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Fair Congressional Map

Hello,

I am a constituent of Montana and I am writing to express my view regarding Congressional districting in our state. Please ensure to that districting:

- Maintains the natural boundaries of our cities, Tribal communities, and counties.
- Is as equal in population as possible.
- Is competitive, when possible, to ensure that no party is unduly favored.

Thank you for taking my interests into consideration.

Sincerely,

Mike

--

Mike Wood (he, him, his)
(928) 607-6356

Sherley, Laura

From: Bella Wright <bellamwright@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, September 24, 2021 7:21 PM
To: Districting
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Redistricting Montana

Hello,

My name is Bella and I'm 18 years old. I'm very concerned about a fair and just redistricting for future Montanan voters!

That's why I'm urging you to keep Bozeman and Missoula in the same district as we share very similar values, families, University faculties and more. I have researched through the Forward Montana Foundation and beyond and believe this would be in the best interest of Montana.

Thank you for hearing and acknowledging what's best for our community,

Bella Wright

Sherley, Laura

From: Weiss, Rachel
Sent: Monday, September 27, 2021 8:45 AM
To: Districting
Subject: FW: East-West Map with Blackfeet and Flathead in West

From: j w <jwright68@hotmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, September 25, 2021 11:04 AM
To: Weiss, Rachel <RWeiss@mt.gov>; Joe Lamson <Joe.Lamson@mtleg.gov>; maylinn.smith@mtleg.gov; kendra.miller@mtleg.gov; jeff.essmann@mtleg.gov; dan.stusek@mtleg.gov
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: East-West Map with Blackfeet and Flathead in West

Hello Presiding Officer and Commissioners,

I will not be able to participate in the October 5th meeting so I am providing my additional thoughts on the East-West III or PM 238 Map.

1. It was based on testimony that wanted the Flathead and Blackfeet Reservations to be in the same district.
2. It keeps every county intact with the exception of Pondera which was broken up to ensure the Blackfeet Reservation remained whole. Pondera County is frequently broken up for Montana Legislative races.
3. Lewis and Clark County remains in the same district as Jefferson County since they share economic interests. Travel to the west of Helena is more difficult because of McDonald Pass, especially in the winter months. This also provides more diversity for the Eastern District both economically and politically.
4. There is no cracking or packing of voters since Kalispell and Bozeman remain in the Western District, and the counties remain whole with the exception of Pondera.
5. Park County (Livingston) was put in the Eastern District because of population deviation factors and the difficulty of travel to Bozeman during the winter months. There are gates on I-90 near Livingston because of frequently poor road conditions during the winter. It also allows the Western District to be more compact.
6. The 2020 Senate race should be most considered because the former Governor turned out to be the strongest Democratic candidate during the 2020 election. The proposed Western District was under 51% Republican in a +10 GOP election for U.S. Senate. This makes the Western district a naturally competitive district with no cracking or packing needed.
7. This map was created with bipartisanship in mind.
8. The total deviation is only 0.07% with the reason for the deviation not being 0% is the counties are not broken up, with the exception of Pondera because of the Blackfeet Reservation, to ensure communities of interest remains intact.

Thank you for your time and consideration and feel free to email me questions

John Wright
Westby, MT

Sent from [Mail \[go.microsoft.com\]](mailto:jwright68@hotmail.com) for Windows

From: j w
Sent: Sunday, September 19, 2021 8:29 AM

To: [Joe Lamson](mailto:Joe.Lamson); maylinn.smith@mtleg.gov; kendra.miller@mtleg.gov; jeff.essmann@mtleg.gov; dan.stusek@mtleg.gov; rweiss@mt.gov

Subject: East-West Map with Blackfeet and Flathead in West

Hello Presiding Officer and Commissioners,

This is my third East-West Map (East-West Map III) that has the Blackfeet and Flathead reservations in the West while placing Park County in the East to achieve a low deviation of 0.07%. The justification for the slight deviation from 0% is getting the Blackfeet and Flathead reservations in the same district and the mountain pass between Livingston and Bozeman making travel difficult in the winter months. Park County being placed in the East makes the West District more compact in area as well.

This map allows both Bozeman and Kalispell to remain in the West so the gerrymandering accusations are negated on both sides.

East-West Map III:

<https://districtr.org/plan/49176> [districtr.org] (Maximum deviation 0.07%)

Thank you for your time and consideration and feel free to email me questions

John Wright
Westby, MT

Sent from [Mail \[go.microsoft.com\]](mailto:John.Wright@mt.gov) for Windows