TO THE MONTANA DISTRICTING AND APPORTIONMENT COMMISSION
P.O. BOX 201706 HELENA, MT 59620-1706
districting@mt.gov FAX 406-444-3036

Dear Commissioners,

As a resident of Jefferson County, I am totally opposed to having Jefferson County split up for the benefit of Butte/Silver Bow County. Each of the four plans submitted by the Montana Districting and Apportionment Commission and the plan submitted by the Democrats on the Commission all put some portion of Jefferson County into Butte/Silver Bow County. This is simply unacceptable.

If you are going to consider the three discretionary criteria you set up at the beginning of this process, you will understand why none of these proposals make any sense.

1.) Following the lines of political units. Jefferson County is about 1,500 people over the ideal district size. Since our existing district is most of Jefferson County, we should start there and make every effort to keep Jefferson County as whole as possible, the remain population staying with its Community of Interest in Madison County .

2.) Following geographic boundaries. The Continental Divide separates Jefferson and Butte/Silver Bow Counties. That is a very distinct geographic boundary between our counties that should be respected.

3.) Keeping communities of interest intact. Many people live in Jefferson County because they don't want the impacts and influences of urban areas. Most of Jefferson County should be one district, with an area of the county South of Interstate 90 remaining as part of the district that represents Madison County. The Whitehall Elementary and Whitehall High School District both include portions of Madison County. The Jefferson Valley Rural Fire District also extends into Madison County. Kids from Jefferson County participate in 4-H and the Madison County Fair in Twin Bridges. Jefferson and Madison Counties share an MSU Extension Agent. In short, Southern Jefferson County and Northern Madison County are clearly a "Community of Interest", and should remain together.

Jefferson County is located between three large urban counties, Lewis and Clark, Butte/Silver Bow, and Gallatin. It is important that we keep our own district so that we can maintain our proud identity. Please keep Jefferson County as whole as possible and allow a portion of Southern Jefferson County to remain with their "Community of Interest" in Northern Madison County.

Thank you for your consideration.

Name Douglas E. Salsbury dba Tomahawk Ranch

Address P.O. Box 627, Whitehall, mt. 59759

Sidney Area Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture

Montana's Sunrise City

909 South Central Avenue • Sidney, Montana 59270 • Phone 406-433-1916 • Fax 406-433-1127

• Email: schamber@midrivers.com • www.sidneymt.com

July 12, 2012

Mr. Jim Regnier, Presiding Officer
Montana Districting Commission
P.O. Box 299
Lakeside, MT 59922

Dear Commissioner Regnier,

The Sidney Area Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture realizes you have a big job of drawing the new lines for legislative districts in Montana. The Sidney Chamber believes that the Urban-Rural Plan is the best option for Montana, and the Sidney/Richland County area.

State wide this plan will keep similar areas together by geography and type of commerce or agriculture. It is important that each diverse area has representation for their unique needs. We also see this as the easiest plan for county election officials to manage when planning for elections and everything involved in this process.

Sidney and Richland County are a distinct area with its extensive irrigated farming on both major rivers, and the location of federal and state agriculture research centers. It is also the heart of the Bakken oil formation in Eastern Montana, and is thus a major energy county in the State. This makes it imperative that we have representation from our immediate area for communicating to the state the needs and impacts of the oil and gas industry.

The Sidney Area Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture also views this as the most politically neutral plan, with the interests of individual Montanan's coming first.

Thank you for your service to Montana in this capacity, and please submit the Urban-Rural Plan to the next Legislature.

Sincerely,

Wade S. VanEvery
Executive Director

Cami Skinner
Chamber President

Sidney's Got It

MISSION STATEMENT
To provide leadership by fostering a progressive economic environment in support and promotion of the business and agriculture community.

August 4, 2012

Dear Districting and Apportionment Commission:

I am a resident of Jefferson County. I want to comment on the redistricting proposals that the Commission is considering.

First, I understand that no county gets to drawn their legislative lines without any consideration for how it will affect surrounding counties. There is a ripple effect to any district that is drawn, and I'm sure that when one county gets exactly what they want, it likely results in a nearby county getting split in a way they do not agree with. Because no statewide plan can create an ideal district for everyone, I look at the plans in terms of what makes sense for Jefferson County and what doesn't.

Of the five statewide plans, the Communities Plan makes the most sense for Jefferson County. Two of the plans, the Deviation Plan and the Existing Plan, split Jefferson County into four districts so no district would have a Jefferson County majority. Another plan, the Subdivision Plan, is supposed to keep political subdivisions intact, but it splits Clancy and Jefferson City in half using the interstate. The Urban-Rural Plan has a Jefferson County majority district and doesn't look like it breaks up small towns, but it includes most of Jefferson County in a district that cuts through Broadwater County to grab the town of Three Forks.

As a resident of Boulder, I spend quite a bit of time in Butte and I work every day in Helena. I spend much less time in Three Forks. I'm sure the people of Clancy and Montana City also spend more time in and around Helena than they do in Three Forks.

The Communities Plan makes sense for Jefferson County. We will have three representatives listening to the needs of Jefferson County, and one of those districts will be a Jefferson County majority district. Northern Jefferson County shares common interests with other Helena commuters, whereas people from southern Jefferson County spend more time and have more in common with Butte. Jefferson County and Butte share a strong mining heritage and support for mining.

If redistricting wasn't a statewide project, those of us in Jefferson County might choose to draw districts differently. Because the Districting Commission must come up with a statewide map, I think it is important that we work with the counties around us and look at the consequences to districts outside of Jefferson County. The Communities Plan works for Jefferson County and I think it would provide residents with good representation for the next ten years.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Terry Lynn Minow, 502 Lower Valley Road, Boulder, MT 59632

Weiss, Rachel

From: Diane Grey <cr@co.powell.mt.us>
Sent: Monday, August 06, 2012 9:52 AM
To: Redistricting
Subject: Redistsricting

As the Powell County Clerk and Recorder/Election Administrator, I would like to strongly support the subdivision plan that has only one house district (#85) for Powell County. As it stands now, I have three house districts (one with only five people in it). This does not work well for the secrecy of one's ballot. Also, Granite County and Powell County are so similar in our economic and social values, that it only makes sense for us to have a representative that understands our needs. Thank you for your consideration to this matter. Sincerely,

Diane S. Grey
Powell County Clerk and Recorder/Assessor
409 Missouri Avenue, Suite 203
Deer Lodge, MT 59722
406-846-9723
cr@co.powell.mt.us

Weiss, Rachel

From: Pat Bradley <randpat@3rivers.net>
Sent: Monday, August 06, 2012 10:23 AM
To: Redistricting
Subject: Redistricting must serve us all

I live in HD71, Madison County. As I see it, all but one plan, the exisiting map, completely breaks up our western part of Madison County and separates Twin Bridges and Sheridan from it rural community. This is very harmful to us. Our school districts surround both our towns and are traditional voting areas. Any split of our state voting places would throw us into chaos. Please maintain our existing community boundaries, with slight adjustments to make the populations equal. Please leave politics out of it! Thanks for your good work. Patricia Bradley, Box 272, Twin Bridges 59754 406-684-5259.

Weiss, Rachel

From: Dave Pippin <dpippin@valleycountymt.net>
Sent: Monday, August 06, 2012 2:20 PM
To: Redistricting
Cc: Peterson, Bruce; david reinhardt
Subject: Please Keep Glasgow intact and use Milk River as the boundary line

Montana Districting and Apportionment Commission,

Please keep Glasgow intact on the districts to avoid districts that are very hard to understand and by splitting up a major city in the county you will deny the people here the ability to vote in the same district and will lose the ability to vote unified.

Should you have any questions on the importance of this issue please contact the Valley County Commissioners for additional information.

Sincerely,

Valley County Commissioners

CITY OF BILLINGS

THOMAS W. HANEL, MAYOR

P.O. BOX 1178
BILLINGS, MONTANA 59103
(406) 657-8296
FAX (406) 657-8390

August 7, 2012

Montana Districting and Apportionment Commission
PO Box 201706
Helena MT 59620-1706

Dear Justice Regnier and Commission Members:

Thank you for the 14 public hearings that you conducted around the state and the other opportunities that you have provided for public input. It was a demanding task and schedule, but the outcome will be better and more broadly accepted because you listened to the many people who care deeply about the work that you're doing.

At the Billings session, the Mayor and City Administrator provided verbal testimony. With the unanimous support of the Billings City Council, they supported the Legislative Services prepared "Urban-Rural" Plan because it most closely resembles the Yellowstone County-Billings proposal that the city submitted to you in 2011. Yellowstone County and the City of Laurel added their support for this proposal. Billings believes that this plan respects the community's neighborhoods, reflected by elementary school attendance areas and neighborhood planning areas, while using many of the natural and man-made geographic features as dividing lines between proposed House districts. This letter is a follow-up to the previous testimony and it will address some issues that have not been widely discussed.

The city believes that three (3) plans that the Commission brought to the public hearings meet the mandatory districting criteria. Unfortunately, the "existing" and the "communities" plans do not meet the mandatory criterion "compact and contiguous districts". The proposed Yellowstone County House districts are not compact and they ignore school and neighborhood boundaries. For example, in the proposed "communities" plan, proposed District #52 extends from the downtown to 32nd Street West, a distance of over four (4) miles and encompassing several neighborhoods and school attendance areas. Likewise, proposed District #45 would stretch from the south side's State Avenue to Lake Elmo, which is six (6) miles away. These are not compact districts.

These two (2) plans do not meet Montana statutory requirements. 5-1-115 (2) (d) MCA states that districts should be nearly equal length and width and the average length may not be more than three (3) times the average width. In the two (2) examples used above, their length is eight (8) times and four (4) times their width.

The remaining three (3) plans meet the mandatory criteria, but the "Urban-Rural" Plan best supports the discretionary criteria; keeping communities of interest intact and following political unit and geographic boundaries. Yellowstone County's population is nearly perfect for establishing 15 House districts within its boundary. In the "Urban-Rural" Plan, 14 proposed districts are contained entirely within the County and only Treasure County needs to be added to rural parts of Yellowstone County to complete the 15 districts. The Billings and Laurel city limits and their planning areas are contained within and almost entirely intact in the proposed districts. Ten (10) proposed House Districts are populated with a majority of city residents. With slight over 100,000 residents, Billings has nearly the ideal population for these ten (10) districts. Arterial streets, highways, railroads and the Yellowstone River are consistently used as district boundaries. The surrounding counties are treated similarly by keeping them nearly intact. Carbon, Golden Valley, Musselshell, Stillwater and Treasure Counties are completely intact within districts. Big Horn County is split between two (2) districts in order to assure minority voting rights.

We recognize that the Commission will not adopt any of the five (5) proposed plans in their entirely. You will probably use the best features from each proposed plan in the final statewide plan. The City of Billings urges you to adopt the "Urban-Rural" Plan for this region's portion of the statewide plan.

Sincerely,

Thomas W. Hanel

Thomas W. Hanel
Mayor

cc: Ed Bartlett
Mayor Ken Olson, City of Laurel
Commissioner Jim Reno, Yellowstone County
Commissioner John Ostlund, Yellowstone County
Commissioner Bill Kennedy, Yellowstone County

Yellowstone County

COMMISSIONERS
(406) 256-2701
(406) 256-2777 (FAX)

P.O. Box 35000
Billings, MT 59107-5000
commission@co.yellowstone.mt.gov

August 7, 2012

Mr. Jim Regnier, Presiding Officer
Districting and Apportionment Commission
P.O. Box 201706
Helena, MT 59620-1706

Dear Mr. Regnier and members of the Districting and Apportionment Commission:

Yellowstone County would like to once again voice support for the Urban/Rural plan put forth by the Districting and Apportionment Commission. The districting plan includes the recommendations approved by the Billings City Council, the Yellowstone County Board of County Commissioners, the City of Laurel, as well as other community organizations. The plan conforms to the mandatory and discretionary criteria set forth by the commission and we feel that it would best represent the population of Yellowstone County for the following reasons:

Mandatory Criteria -
Population equality is met.
It does not dilute minority voting rights.
Districts are as compact and contiguous as possible.

Discretionary Criteria -
The boundaries of Yellowstone County, cities, towns, school districts, and the Crow Indian Reservation were used as district lines whenever possible.
The geographic boundaries of Yellowstone County are used.
The traditional communities of interest are kept intact, especially when falling within the boundaries of political subdivisions that exceed the ideal population (i.e. Billings).

It is also important to note that the plan also conforms to MCA 5-1-115. The Yellowstone County/City of Billings plan submitted by Mayor Tom Hanel on December 20, 2011 and implemented into the Urban/Rural Plan was created in way that not only meets the criteria of the statute but also follows the order of importance without artificially creating competitive districts or favoring either party.

With the Urban/Rural Plan having a low population deviation and using existing political subdivisions, it becomes clear that this plan best meets the needs of the population of Yellowstone County. We hope that you seriously consider implementing at least the Yellowstone County portion of the Urban/Rural Plan into your final product as you move forward.

Sincerely,

John Ostlund, Chair
Yellowstone County Commissioners

c: Tom Hanel, City of Billings Mayor, PO Box 1178, Billings, MT 59103-1178
John Brewer, Billings Area Chamber of Commerce President, PO Box 31177, Billings, MT 59107

PARK COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

414 E. Callender, Livingston, MT 59047 • Ph. 406-222-4106, Fax 406-222-4160
www.parkcounty.org • Email: commissioners@parkcounty.org

August 7, 2012

Districting and Apportionment Commission
Legislative Services Division
PO Box 201706
Helena, MT 59620-1706

Commissioners:

The Park County Commission has selected the Rural-Urban redistricting proposal as defined in the maps prepared by the Commission. This version insures that all of Livingston is in one district and the entire County is within the boundaries of the proposed rural district.

Sincerely,

Randy Taylor, R.S.
County Commissioner

Marty Malone
County Commissioner

James Durgan
County Commissioner

PHILLIPS COUNTY

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
TROY BLUNT
RICHARD DUNBAR
LESLEY ROBINSON

Clerk & Recorder
MARIAN S. EREAUX

Treasurer/Assessor
JEAN MAVENCAMP

Sheriff/Coroner
SCOTT MORAN

Clerk of Court
IRIS ROBINSON

Superintendent of Schools
VIVIAN TAYLOR

County Attorney
EDWARD A. AMESTOY

Justice of Peace
GARY A. TAYLOR

District Judge
JOHN C. McKEON

PO BOX 360, MALTA, MONTANA 59538

August 9, 2012

Dear Mr. Regneir,

It is our understanding that the Montana Districting and Apportionment Commission is scheduled to meet in Helena August 13th - 17th to craft a redistricting plan for Montana's 100 house districts and 50 senate districts. Several draft redistricting plans, including regional maps, were released this spring and have been reviewed by the Phillips County Commission.

Having reviewed these plans the counties in northeast Montana would prefer a redistricting plan that allows redistricting boundaries to run north/south instead of east/west. The five plans currently under consideration have districts running from east/west. In 2000, there was a draft plan for the northeast region on the table showing districts running north/south. This plan is ideal for northeast Montana.

It is essential for citizens in Malta and Phillips County communities to be included in a district with which they share common interests and goals for the future. The 2000 Northeast Region draft plan accomplishes this goal. We would like to see an additional plan under consideration with redistricting boundaries running north/south instead of east/west. Barring this, we would like to see the City of Malta included in the northern district in which it currently sits.

According to the Montana Constitution and state law, the Districting and Apportionment Commission is required to submit a redistricting plan to the 2013 legislature. Please consider this feedback when drafting this plan.

Sincerely,

Richard Dunbar

Richard Dunbar
Phillips County Commissioner
Chair of District 1 Phillips, Valley, Roosevelt, Daniels, and Sheridan

I support the Communities Plan because it:

- Guarantees our constitutional right of one person, one vote,
- Respects existing communities across Montana, including small towns, rural communities, cities, and suburban areas,
- Keeps intact more small towns than any other proposed plan,
- Provides strong protection of minority voting rights, so American Indian citizens can fully participate in our political process, and
- Creates a fair balance so that no one political party gains monopoly control of the Legislature.

Halvdan Broten
Name

1315 Garrison
Address

Helena, MT 59601
City State Zip

Districting & Apportionment Commission
Legislative Services Division
PO Box 201706
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