

To; Montana Districting and Apportionment Commission

From; Richland County Republican Central Committee

I am commenting on behalf of the Richland County Republican Central Committee. We have discussed redistricting at length and unanimously voted in favor of keeping Richland County Whole. It is the simplest and is fair to the constituents of eastern Montana. Please keep district lines on county lines as much as possible. Thank you for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott Staffanson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Scott" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Staffanson".

Scott Staffanson

Chairman

Richland County Republican Central Committee

May 1, 2012

Dear Members of the Montana Districting and Apportionment Commission:

As a citizen of Richland County, I strongly urge you to keep this county unified. Please do not divide it at all! It will just make things much more confusing, and there is no need for division.

Thank you!

Sincerely,

Mrs. June Backhaus

109 5<sup>th</sup> St. SE

Sidney, MT

406-488-7217

# Montana Districting and Apportionment Commission

We the undersigned, currently live in House District 32 (Blaine County south of Highway 2 and not in the Chinook City limits) and wish to be part of what is now House District 34. (Please Print)

Name	Address
1. <i>Robert Baker</i>	<i>42050 U.S Highway 2 Harlem, MT.</i>
2. <i>Carla Becker</i>	<i>42050 US Hwy 2, Harlem, MT 59526</i>
3. <i>Duane + Linda Tangen</i>	<i>2525 Merrill Rd. Harlem, MT 59526</i>
4. <i>Chuck Wasson</i>	<i>Box 1122 Harlem, MT 59526</i>
5. <i>Vicki Webb</i>	<i>20445 Barney Olson Rd Chinook</i>
6. <i>Arts Hefelt</i>	<i>" " " " "</i>
7. <i>Ann S. Davis</i>	<i>5985 Lloyd Rd, Chinook</i>
8. <i>Jack M. Davis</i>	<i>" " " "</i>
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# Montana Districting and Apportionment Commission

We the undersigned, currently live in House District 32 (Blaine County south of Highway 2 and not in the Chinook City limits) and wish to be part of what is now House District 34. (Please Print)

Name	Address
1. Dan Johnson	Chinook
2. Karen Pike	✓
3. Lachy Karbalt	Chinook
4. James Ryzette	Chinook
5. RT 32	Chinook
6. Ed Olie	Chinook
7. Margaret Schmitt	Chinook
8. Mick Thompson	"
9. Wm Gabriel Ober	Chinook
10. Robert D. Miller	Chinook
11. John Heasler Jr	Chinook
12. Angela M Hebbelmon	Chinook
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# Montana Districting and Apportionment Commission

We the undersigned, currently live in House District 32 (Blaine County south of Highway 2 and not in the Chinook City limits) and wish to be part of what is now House District 34. (Please Print)

Name	Address
1. Larry Kinsella	PO Box 1528 Haure
2. John schoen	2280 Hungry Hollow Rd Cloyd
3. TRAVIS Buck	2390 Stockyard Rd Chinook MT
4. Max Hofelett	3005 Hwy 240 Chinook MT
5. Fayfuale	1040 n. fork rd. Chinook
6. Scott Fringer	" "
7. Edward E Paulsen	13345 Clear Creek Rd Chinook
8. MARUSH GROSS	11440 Hwy. 2E HAURE
9. Ted Powell	Box 834 Chinook
10. Jenny Buck	2390 Stockyard Rd Chinook
11. David Miller	460 Stockyard Rd Chinook
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May 8, 2012

Montana Reapportionment Commission  
PO Box 201706  
Helena, MT 59620-1706

Chairman Regnier and members of the Commission:

Over the years, I have observed several reapportionment hearings in rural areas experiencing declining populations and have shared my neighbors' feelings of anxiety as the Commission has faced the unsatisfactory task of drawing new district boundaries in these regions. Under the best of circumstances, no reapportionment plan is perfect. In rural areas with declining populations, we are left with the unsavory choice of finding the least unsatisfactory plan. Ultimately, this will be the circumstance that always confronts us unless we find the key to revitalizing and rebuilding our rural populations.

I've always believed that it is a complete flight of dignity when incumbent and aspiring legislators appear before the Commission to plead that moving this or that line a little bit this way or that would be conducive to their future political success and that the Commission ought to take care of their concerns. Even though I am a Senate candidate in this year's election, I do not offer those kinds of arguments to the Commission. If my success in two successive campaigns for the Montana Public Service Commission is any indication, I believe I could fare well in any of the configurations of the plans you currently have before you. Therefore, I won't argue to the Commission that one plan is better than another for my future political aspirations.

Having succeeded in twice being elected to serve PSC District #1 and having completed two full terms on that body representing northeastern and north central Montana, I believe I gained a perspective on how all of these communities, representing 20% of Montana's population, relate to one another that few others can claim. My PSC service offered me a unique opportunity to gauge the economic, social and cultural ebb and flow between and among the communities throughout these regions.

Based on that experience, I believe that the "Communities Plan" is most respectful of communities of interest than the other plans you have under consideration. It retains the long-standing status of Blaine and Hill Counties as the northeastern anchor of the Golden Triangle region of Montana and, simultaneously, retains the regional identity of the greater northeastern Montana region.

In contrast, the other plans do violence to the notion that legislative districts should represent communities of interest. For example, the "Urban-Rural Plan" configures one house district to run from the Cottonwood-Simpson Prairie community northwest of Havre to the center of Glasgow, skirting around the north side of Havre. The logical or potential Senate District from that plan would run from just south of Medicine Hat, Alberta to just east of Medicine Lake, Montana. In the "Subdivision Plan," the house district also stretches from northwest of Havre to the center of Glasgow. In this plan, the Senate District must stretch from Hill County to the North Dakota border, due to forced senate pairings in eastern Montana south of the Missouri River. Good people, all, live throughout those districts. But beyond the commonality of agriculture as the largest industry, there is little economic, social or cultural interaction across the entire length of those districts. There is not a community of interest in that particular portion of the "Urban-Rural" and "Subdivision" Plans. I believe there are similar problems with the other plans you are considering except the "Communities" Plan.

I suspect the Commission is rarely subjected to any displays of bi-partisanship at these hearings around the State. But I'm going to offer you just such an occasion today. Recently, the Blaine County Republican Chairman, Richard Cronk, has published letters in local newspapers arguing that it would be a matter of justice to reunite the residents of Blaine County who live south of the boundaries of current House District 34 with their families and neighbors in HD 34. I agree with Mr. Cronk and must observe that the "Communities" Plan is most responsive of all five plans to Mr. Cronk's request.

Commissioners, yours is not an enviable task and I wish you well in your deliberations. Please take into account my belief that the "Communities" Plan is preferable among all the alternatives you have before you when it comes to the Hi Line.

Sincerely,



Greg Jergeson  
Box 1568  
Chinook, MT 59523

406-357-3483

Mr. Chairman and members of the Commission. My name is Bruce Surcloud am the Chairman of the Chippewa Cree Tribe of the Rocky Boy Reservation.

The Chippewa Cree Tribe testifies today in support of the Communities Plan. Our reservation was the last to be established in Montana, and we are the State's smallest Indian reservation, but our votes and our voice are as important as any other in Montana.

For most of Montana's history, it had no Indians in the Montana legislature. It had no Indian voice. It was not until 1924, 59 years after the Civil War was fought, that Congress enacted the Indians Citizens Act, granting Indians the right to vote in federal elections. However, it was not until 1992, another 68 years later, that our reservation was included in an Indian-majority district. So it has only been in the last 20 years that our voice has been heard in the Montana legislature.

Having your voice heard in the Montana Legislature may be something that a lot of people take for granted. We don't. We have fought for that right. And in Montana that has often required litigation under the Federal Voting Rights Act. All of Montana's Indian reservations have been involved in Federal Voting Rights Act litigation in one form or another since 1984.

Being a member of a tribe in Montana is not a racial issue. It's about sovereignty. It's a political distinction. The citizens of the Chippewa Cree Tribe are its enrolled members. When we talk about tribal self-determination, we are talking about our sovereign government, our nation, which is made up of our citizens. Each Indian tribe, like States, is unique, with its own history, culture and government.

A lot has changed since the reservations were established and the State of Montana was formed from what was all tribal aboriginal lands. Instead of being 100% of the population of the geography now known as Montana, Indians today constitute only about 7% of the State's population. That is why it is important for our voice to not be further diluted.

Indian communities have common interests, common issues, and common problems. No other cities or towns in Montana have to combat the level of poverty and unemployment that we face every day in our communities. We have a different history. Non-Indian communities did not have their children shipped to boarding schools, their most sacred ceremonies banned, and their childrens' mouths washed out with soap for speaking their native language. That unique history calls for unique solutions. No other state in the Nation has tribal community colleges on all of its Indian reservations, working with our tribal governments, to address these challenges.

We work together, as tribes and reservation communities, to address our issues and problems. That's why we have established the Montana-Wyoming Tribal Leaders Council based in Billings. And that is why keeping the existing Indian-majority districts



is a good idea. It ensures our voice is heard in Helena on issues that are of concern to our communities, and not muted as they have been in the past.

Our political cohesiveness is even stronger up here on the Hi-Line between the three tribes that share Senate District 16. We share the same river, which we have shared for hundreds of years, and we socialize and dance together at each other's pow-wows up and down the river.

We share sacred sites. There is no better example of this than the Sweet Grass Hills, one of the principal sacred sites in all of the Northern Plains. The Chippewa Cree, the Blackfeet, the Assiniboine, the Gros Ventre, the Salish, and the Kootenai all have oral histories that connect their people to the Hills. These Hills are still used today for our fasts, though the Hills lie outside our reservations. And the Hills still unite us. In the 1990's, all of these tribes came together in united fashion, and working with local non-Indian communities, took action to protect the Sweet Grass Hills from being permanently destroyed by massive mining.

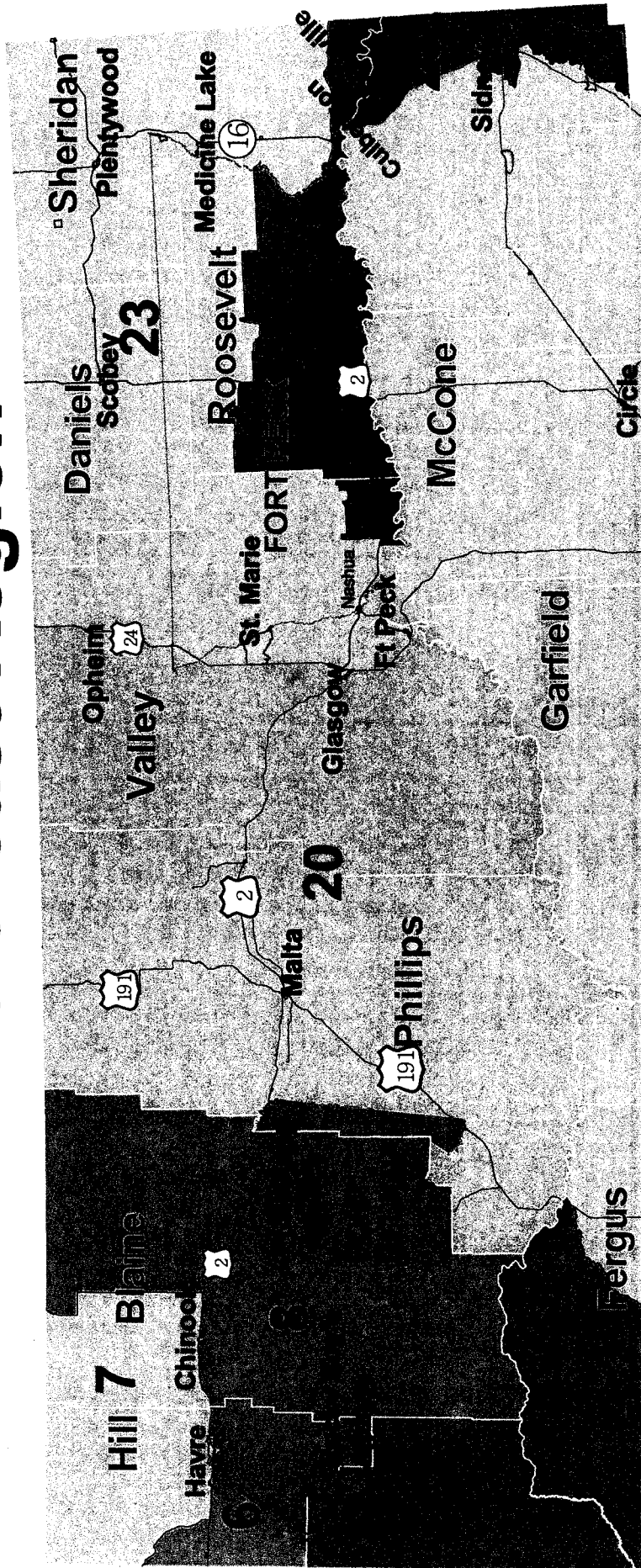
INSERT OTHER EXAMPLES OF THE THREE TRIBES WORKING TOGETHER,  
ESPECIALLY IN HELENA

I applaud the last Redistricting Commission for creating the six Indian-majority house districts that we have today, and for creating the Indian-majority Senate District in our area. Being six percent of the Montana legislature does not guarantee that our issues will be solved, or even addressed. But it does guarantee that our voice will be heard, and it best assures that the legislators who do represent us in Helena are familiar with our issues.




Thank you for the opportunity to testify and for holding this hearing in Havre.

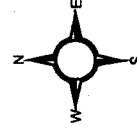
# Plan 200

## Northeast Region



### Counties

-  Proposed House Districts
-  Roads
-  Reservations



*Legislative Services Division*

December 18, 2001