



DRAFT FOR CONSIDERATION ON AUGUST 17, 2021

Montana Districting and Apportionment Commission

PO BOX 201706
Helena, MT 59620-1706
(406) 444-3064
FAX (406) 444-3036

MAYLINN SMITH
Presiding Officer
Arlee, MT 59821

JEFF ESSMANN
PO Box 80945
Billings, MT 59108

JOE LAMSON
612 Touchstone Court
Helena, MT 59634

KENDRA MILLER
3734 Potosi St.
Bozeman, MT 59718

DAN STUSEK
3477 Birkland Drive
Helena, MT 59602

COMMITTEE STAFF
RACHEL WEISS, Research Analyst
JOE KOLMAN, Research Analyst
GINGER ALDRICH, Staff Attorney
LAURA SHERLEY, Secretary

[Month, Day, Year]

Dr. Ron S. Jarmin
Acting Director
U.S. Census Bureau
4600 Silver Hill Road
Washington, DC 20233
Delivered via email to: Ron.S.Jarmin@census.gov

Dear Acting Director Jarmin,

The Montana Districting and Apportionment Commission is the five-member, citizen commission charged by the Montana Constitution with drawing the state's congressional and state legislative district lines. One of the challenges we face is how to account for incarcerated populations as we draw those lines. While the U.S. Census Bureau (Bureau) counts prisoners as residents of the correctional facility in which they reside on Census Day, many of our stakeholders would prefer that prisoners be counted as residents of the places in which they resided prior to incarceration. We are currently exploring methods that our state could use to gather that residential information and adjust the P.L. 94-171 data that we receive from the Bureau. However, we encourage the Bureau to update its concept of "usual residence" for future census operations. Specifically, we request that the Bureau count prisoners at their home addresses rather than at correctional facilities. In addition, we ask that the Bureau allow prisoners to submit race, ethnicity, and address data through forms completed by the prisoners themselves when possible. These changes would create more complete, useful redistricting data for policymakers and line drawers.

[Other commission statements and requests?]

Thank you for your service and for considering our requests.

Sincerely,

Commissioner Maylinn Smith
Presiding Officer

Commissioner Jeff Essmann

Commissioner Joe Lamson

Commissioner Kendra Miller

Commissioner Dan Stusek