

# Public Comments

Montana Districting and Apportionment Commission  
Comments received between 5 pm and 11:59 pm on July 7

Distributed electronically July 8, 2021

**From:** [leg-noreply@mt.gov](mailto:leg-noreply@mt.gov)  
**To:** [Districting](#)  
**Subject:** Submission from Redistricting Input Form  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 7, 2021 9:48:52 PM

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# Submit Your Input Regarding Redistricting in Montana

**Date:** 7th July 2021 21:48

**Your Full Name:**

Tom Boland

**Email Address:**

teberin@gmail.com

**City and State of Residence:**

Florence, formerly Great Falls, Montana

**Your Comment/Input:**

As you do your important task I would like to urge you to have in mind the motion of a pendulum. When it slows and then stops after reaching its right and left extremes, it returns to a state of equilibrium. That is the place we should all want to live our lives and have the lives of our family and friends reside there as well. My grandchildren are 6th generation Montanans. Their ancestors came from Ireland and from Sweden some as far back as 1886, 3 years before Montana even attained statehood. I am a life-long Democrat and some of my best friends have been Republicans. If someone is high centered in a snow drift in a blinding snow storm and below-zero temperature, Montanans don't ask about political affiliation before they get their tow rope out. I've personally been on both ends of that tow rope over the years and I suspect each of you have as well. If you live in Montana long enough, sooner or later you're going to be on both ends of the tow rope and party affiliation matters not at all. I'll save the number crunching and line drawing to the expert staff each of you rely on and consult with as you conduct your important work. I urge you to formulate a redistricting plan that is fair, inclusive and one that will allow all eligible and lawful Montanans to vote in our elections. After all, a democracy that is not good for the many will one day not be good for the few.

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**From:** [leg-noreply@mt.gov](mailto:leg-noreply@mt.gov)  
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**Subject:** Submission from Redistricting Input Form  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 7, 2021 10:51:16 PM

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# Submit Your Input Regarding Redistricting in Montana

**Date:** 7th July 2021 22:51

**Your Full Name:**

Lorraine Collins

**Email Address:**

lorrainecollins31@gmail.com

**City and State of Residence:**

Billings

**Your Comment/Input:**

It is important that the redistricting of Montana legislative districts, and the creation of a second Congressional district conform to high standards in being designed to offer all citizens equal representation. Districts should be fair, based on non-political criteria, and be honorably and sensibly drawn. The citizens of Montana are good people and we want to work together for the good of our state.

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**From:** [leg-noreply@mt.gov](mailto:leg-noreply@mt.gov)  
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**Date:** Wednesday, July 7, 2021 7:49:46 PM

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# Submit Your Input Regarding Redistricting in Montana

**Date:** 7th July 2021 19:49

**Your Full Name:**

Janice Drout

**Email Address:**

janicepurchases@gmail.com

**City and State of Residence:**

Livingston

**Your Comment/Input:**

Everything Sue Beland says! Thanks for the work you all are doing for making all of our voices heard in the "fairest" way possible to all!..Keep Montana the great Democratic state it has been without Fascism governing the voting process as you draw the Congressional voting districts for the next 10 years. While finalizing the redistricting for Montana for 2021 please comply with the Voting Rights Act. One (1) person one (1) vote all of which count to elect individuals who will represent all voters. Tribal areas should be separated and not lumped in with counties. Counties are a poor choice for voting districts. Livingston and Park County are good examples. Livingston is lumped in with Sweet Grass County and our votes do not count. Livingston should be in with Gallatin County in the western district not with Meagher or Sweet Grass County. Another example of why county lines are not appropriate. Gerrymandering county lines and moving tribal areas and voting areas to smother votes should not be the way voting districts are determined. Every person should be represented and their vote should count to elect someone who will hear their concerns about how their lives are affected by government. Dividing the state into an eastern and western district is the best way to allow all citizens to have representation as they should have in a Democracy. Support the 5% deviation between districts for population. If more population is needed for an Eastern District, Flathead County area or portions of it minus the Indian Reservations would be a good choice to add to the Eastern District to make voting fairer. Please support competitiveness so that all voters know that their representatives will actually be there to listen to their concerns. Do NOT use county lines exclusively as the voting district lines. The commission has a very serious job which affects the lives of all Montanans and this effect on lives for the next 10 years should be the top concern in your decision making. Thank you for your work on this commission and please make the results fair to all Montanans

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**Date:** Wednesday, July 7, 2021 10:41:14 PM

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# Submit Your Input Regarding Redistricting in Montana

**Date:** 7th July 2021 22:41

**Your Full Name:**

Chris Goodridge

**Email Address:**

crgood@hotmail.com

**City and State of Residence:**

Billings MT

**Your Comment/Input:**

I have attempted a couple of times to obtain the login info for the criteria hearing tomorrow 7/8 but have not received it. I wanted to be sure that my comments were heard so I am submitting them in this format as well: To all the commissioners: Thank you for stepping up to serve in a thankless and relatively obscure position that nevertheless carries great weight in the crafting of public policy in Montana... and now the United States as a whole, considering the Census has awarded us a 2nd congressional district. We have seen increasingly bitter and partisan warfare dominating both our congress and our legislature. Much of this is due to the sort of candidates that are elected in the partisan primaries. We have the opportunity to lessen the effect of this bitter and destructive partisanship by drawing districts where consensus candidates are more likely to be successful... districts where competitiveness is a criteria to be considered when drawing both our legislative and congressional boundaries. I have run for the legislature twice. Both times the end result in my race was less than 200 votes. This kind of result guarantees that candidates work hard to earn the vote of their potential constituents and get out into their communities to understand what their voters want. I urge the commission to adopt competitiveness as a discretionary criteria when formulating our districts... along with the mandatory criteria of compactness, respect for communities of interest and equivalent populations. Thank you for your consideration!

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**Date:** Wednesday, July 7, 2021 10:04:58 PM

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# Submit Your Input Regarding Redistricting in Montana

**Date:** 7th July 2021 22:04

**Your Full Name:**

Anne Jarshaw

**Email Address:**

Anne@jarshaw.xyz

**City and State of Residence:**

Boyd, Montana

**Your Comment/Input:**

Commissioners, I am writing to remind you that the law (MCA 5-11-115) and the Constitution REQUIRE you to set district boundaries with the following criteria: Compact & Contiguous Territory Less than 1% difference in population I also demand that you set the congressional districts using the same criteria as for legislative districts. Follow the law. Elected representatives voted to make it law. They are our voice, please respect the voice of the people. Sincerely, Anne Jarshaw

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# Submit Your Input Regarding Redistricting in Montana

**Date:** 7th July 2021 21:26

**Your Full Name:**  
Stanley T. Kaleczyc

**Email Address:**  
stan@bkbh.com

**City and State of Residence:**  
Seeley Lake, MT

**Your Comment/Input:**

Dear Commissioners: As the constitutionally established Redistricting Commission, I respectfully request that you adopt a plan of legislative districts which recognizes the diversity in the State, complies with Section 2 of the voting Rights Act, and allows for fair and competitive legislative districts where candidates from either party may win. As an attorney who has practiced in Montana for almost 40 years, it is important that your work support free and fair elections in the best tradition of the State. Thank you for your attention and your service on this important Commission.

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**Date:** Wednesday, July 7, 2021 9:11:32 PM

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# Submit Your Input Regarding Redistricting in Montana

**Date:** 7th July 2021 21:11

**Your Full Name:**  
Margaret Regan

**Email Address:**  
[mregan@mt.net](mailto:mregan@mt.net)

**City and State of Residence:**  
Helena

**Your Comment/Input:**

Dear Commissioners, I am concerned about the redistricting work on Montana's new congressional and legislative districts. It is important that the districts are created so that either political party has a chance at winning elections. Gerrymandering disenfranchises voters from both parties, increases incumbent advantage, increases partisanship, and decreases the number of competitive races in the state. We Montanans cherish our votes and don't want them to be thrown away for some partisan advantage. Please comply with the Montana and US Constitutions, and strongly observe Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act. Gerrymandering increases the vitriolic partisan divide plaguing our democracy. The Packing/Cracking action of gerrymandering hurts our democracy. We want engaged, informed citizens who feel like their votes count, and we lose that if the Montana redistricting devolves into a fight between Republicans and Democrats. Be Fair. You are bigger than your political party. Keep the long game in mind. A strong democracy safeguards our nation. Thank you for considering my comments. I now hope you will keep them in mind as you act for all of Montana. Sincerely, Margaret Regan 318 Chaucer Street Helena, MT 59601

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I served in the Montana Senate from 1978-1998, including three terms as Majority Leader and one term as President of the Senate. In addition, I was the elected Missoula County Attorney from 1998-2014. As such, I think I have a pretty good appreciation for the geographic, economic, cultural and political diversity of our state. It is in this context that I make these comments regarding the creation of Congressional districts. To begin with, I support the adoption of standards which will keep Montana in compliance with the U.S. and Montana Constitutions and the federal Voting Rights Act. In addition, I think it is possible to create two districts, with various that are individually kept whole. Finally, I think the Commission should endeavor to create two districts that are fair and competitive for both the Republican and Democratic parties. In that regard, I suggest the following division be made:

District #1 & #2

County	Population	County	Population
Missoula	119600	Yellowstone	161309
Gallatin	114434	Flathead	103806
Lewis & Clark	69432	Cascade	81366
Ravalli	43806	Hill	16484
Silver Bow	34915	Glacier	13753
Lake	30458	Big Horn	13319
Lincoln	19980	Custer	11402
Park	16606	Fergus	11050
Jefferson	12221	Richland	10803
Sanders	12113	Roosevelt	11004
Beaverhead	9453	Carbon	10725
Deer Lodge	9140	Stillwater	9642
Madison	8600	Rosebud	8937
Powell	6890	Dawson	8613
Broadwater	6237	Valley	7396
Teton	6147	Blaine	6681
Pondera	5911	Choteau	5635
Mineral	4397	Toole	4736
Granite	3379	Musselshell	4633
Total	533719	Phillips	3954
		Sweet Grass	3737
		Sheridan	3309
		Fallon	2846
		Liberty	2337
		Wheatland	2126
		Judith Basin	2007
		Meagher	1862
		Daniels	1690
		Powder River	1682

District #2 (contd)	
McCone	1664
Garfield	1258
Carter	1252
Prairie	1077
Wibaux	969
Golden Valley	821
Treasure	696
Petroleum	487
Total	535068

These proposed districts are largely similar to the two districts Montana last had in the 1990s but they take into account the substantial population growth that has occurred in Western Montana since that time by shifting Flathead and Glacier Counties to District #2 and Pondera and Teton Counties (to maintain overall population balance) to District #1. Missoula and Gallatin Counties which have also grown substantially are grouped together in District #1 because they have a very important common interest in the future of the University of Montana and Montana State University. No doubt some will find fault with my proposal but it accomplishes the goals the Commission is charged with bringing about. Nothing is perfect and I look forward to responding to the comments of others. Thank you for considering this proposal.

Fred Van Valkenburg  
112 University Avenue  
Missoula, MT 59801  
fvanvalkenburg@bresnan.net