



# Montana Districting and Apportionment Commission

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September 20, 2021

Governor Greg Gianforte  
Office of the Governor  
PO Box 200801  
Helena, MT 59620-0801

Dear Governor Gianforte,

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 state and federal prisoners as residents of the correctional facility in which they reside on Census Day, many Montanans would prefer that these prisoners be counted as residents of the places in which they resided prior to incarceration. We are currently exploring ways our state could gather that residential information and adjust the P. L. 94-171 data that we receive from the Bureau to reallocate state prisoners to their previous residential addresses. However, we also recognize that this work would be easier in the future if you direct the Montana Department of Corrections to gather information on state prisoners' race, ethnicity, and previous residential address data on intake to a secure facility. This direction would create more complete, useful redistricting data for policymakers and line drawers in the future.

Additionally, we respectfully request that you direct the Department of Corrections to gather the last known residential address for each state prisoner incarcerated in a prison on April 1, 2020, including facilities operated either by the Department or under a contract with the Department, and deliver that information to the commission as soon as possible.

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