

SENATE COMMITTEE ON RULES AND REDISTRICTING

April 20, 2001 Hearing Room PENDLETON
10:30 AM Tapes 65 - 66

MEMBERS PRESENT: Sen. Steve Harper, Chair

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Sen. Peter Courtney, Vice Chair
Sen. Jason Atkinson
Sen. Lee Beyer
Sen. Kate Brown
Sen. Randy Miller
Sen. John Minnis

VISITING MEMBERS: Rep. Richard Devlin
Rep. Dan Doyle
Rep. Bob Jenson
Rep. Steve March
Rep. Dave Nelson
Rep. Mark Simmons, Speaker of the House of Representatives

STAFF PRESENT: Cara Filsinger, Committee Administrator
Annetta Mullins, Committee Assistant

MEASURE/ISSUES HEARD: Redistricting

These minutes are in compliance with Senate and House Rules. Only text enclosed in quotation marks reports a speaker's exact words. For complete contents, please refer to the tapes.

TAPE/#	Speaker	Comments
TAPE 65, A		
002	Chair Harper	Calls meeting to order at 10:31 a.m. and thanks the Oregon Guard for their hospitality and accommodations.
	Chair Harper	Opens public hearing on redistricting and explains redistricting process.
		<u>REDISTRICTING - PUBLIC HEARING</u>
	Staff	Distributes handout (EXHIBIT A).
	Members	Introduce themselves.
055	Bill Hansell	Umatilla County Commissioner. Submits and reads prepared statement (EXHIBIT B) suggesting redistricting lines for Umatilla County. Submits Umatilla County Board of Commissioner Resolution (EXHIBIT C).
183	Rep. Doyle	Asks if Hansell has thoughts on having multiple state legislative representatives as opposed to one person.
183	Hansell	Responds that if the lines are drawn as he has suggested, part of the county would still be in Rep. Simmons' district. Adds that

214	Larry Clucas	Umatilla County may have three representatives for their landmass. City Administrator, City of Umatilla. Reads letter from Mayor of Umatilla (EXHIBIT D). Adds that their numbers may be incorrect and that by putting the entire county in one district, the total may be closer to 70,000. Based on that, they would like to recommend, and the council stated at their meeting on Tuesday, that they stay as close to their present representation as possible.
256	Chuck Norris	Comments on criteria and redistricting process in general, and results of 1991 redistricting. Suggests that the legislature should develop the plan before it gets to the Secretary of State and that the plan not be built on census blocks like it was in 1991.
350		Issues discussed:
434	Tom Groat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether there were personal contacts about how to split the areas between Baker and Union counties in 1991. Resident of Pendleton. Suggests that Pendleton be maintained as a unit. People on both sides of the freeway in Pendleton have mutual concerns and interests. Suggests that the district be connected to Hermiston and Boardman. Explains there is a tremendous amount of commerce between those communities and are communities of interests with the same kinds of agriculture, the same interests, education district, etc.
TAPE 66, A 017	Rep. March	Comments the current District 57 splits Morrow County in half with Boardman being in District 57 and Ione, Lexington, and Heppner in the other districts. Asks if Groat would favor continuing that split.
	Groat	Responds that it would probably be better to have someone living in Morrow County respond to the question, but his observation is there is quite a difference between Heppner and Boardman for a lot of reasons. It may not be as big an issue as the connections between Milton-Freewater and Pendleton. Knows there are a number of issues between Heppner and Boardman, and thinks that Hermiston and Boardman are probably more closely connected than Hermiston and Heppner.
035	Pete Wells	City Attorney in Pendleton. States he is speaking as an individual. The City of Pendleton does not have a position in this matter. Is personally concerned for equality of representation. Believes the court would find that a difference of several thousand population would be significant and hopes the committee can stay close to the target of 57,023 in each house district. Is concerned that communities of interest are different now than they were in 1991, particularly the connection between the City of Pendleton and the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation. States the reservation is now in Rep. Simmons' district. In the last 10 years they have increased the connection between the City of Pendleton and the Tribes considerably. This week they concluded an agreement with the Tribes regarding a joint development of water projects. SB 869 and SB 870 were the results of that agreement and the legislative committee had hearings this morning. The agreement was worked on for the last five years and Pendleton will be tied together significantly with

		the Tribes in water, culturally and politically, over the next 10 years. Suggest there will be a great deal of community of interest between Pendleton and the neighbors to the east on the reservation.
073	Wells	Suggests that the community of interest standards be set in a priority recognizing the first priority be quality of representation. The closest communities of interest for Pendleton would be 1) Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian reservation, 2) the area immediately south of the City of Pendleton toward Pilot Rock, 3) Adams, Athena and Weston, (agrees with Hansell that Athena and Weston should be put together if possible because they are a twin-city kind of entity), and 4) Hermiston, Irrigon, Umatilla, and Boardman.
090	Wells	Adds that while driving from Pendleton to Boardman, one passes the Umatilla Chemical Depot. In the next 10 years there will be incineration of the chemicals in that facility and the areas of north Morrow and Umatilla counties are working together and that is a community of interest.
	Wells	Personal experience is that Milton-Freewater is less connected to Umatilla County than perhaps Irrigon (which is in Morrow County). Milton-Freewater trades with Walla Walla, Washington, and they also get telephone service out of Walla Walla. Milton-Freewater and Ukiah are in less daily contact with the rest of Umatilla County than some of the other communities.
109	Jim Burns	Milton-Freewater resident. Comments there is connectivity between Milton-Freewater and Pendleton. States they receive phone service from Walla Walla because that is the only way they could get the phone company to provide telephone service without a long distance charge. States their residents shop in Walla Walla, Tri-Cities, LaGrande, Pendleton, and Hermiston. Believes we need to look more at the connectivity of political interests. The political interest of Milton-Freewater is that they are part of Umatilla County. They have enjoyed working with Rep. Simmons but they are faced with being a "third arm" The only political clout is they have elected the state representative for the past 10 years because they provide 63 to 64 percent of the vote. A qualified person from Milton-Freewater who has the ability to run cannot run because the majority of the total county is unknown to the rest of the county. Milton-Freewater has political clout in District 57.
150	Burns	Submits proclamation from Lewis S. Key, Mayor, City of Milton-Freewater (EXHIBIT E). States he is the Chairman of the Umatilla County Republican Party and yet the majority of the county is not in his district. States that the people in Milton-Freewater do not have the same political clout as one has in most other districts because of the Blue Mountain line. That makes it difficult to hold communications with the rest of District 58. Milton-Freewater likes the power they have in District 58 because they do elect the people, but it is not right that they lose the political ability of their citizens to be able to run for state offices because of the setup of the district line.
181	Burns	Thanks the committee for giving their citizens the opportunity to speak about how they feel. If they do get put into District 57, he

		will miss Rep. Simmons but will gladly shake hands with Rep. Jenson.
188	Sen. Nelson	Asks if prior to 1991 they were a part of the district that included Umatilla County.
	Burns	Responds that their district was changed in 1971.
195	Rep. March	Asks if Milton-Freewater residents feel they have connections with Hermiston and Stanfield.
196	Burns	Responds affirmatively. Adds Milton-Freewater has an agricultural base that has absolutely nothing to do with Union and Wallowa counties; it is more with Umatilla County.
207	Becky Marks	Resident in House District 57. Asks that House District 57 retain its boundaries as close as possible to where they are now. Would not like to see Pendleton split into different voting districts. States she works for the county in the communities and would be concerned about the services continuing to run as smoothly as they are now if the districts are chopped up. The two major concerns are how the problems will be handled with the chemical depot. Common interests are the transportation links of Highways 84, 82, and 395. The interests are very much the same throughout District 57.
248	Sen. Nelson	Asks Marks how she would feel about splitting Helix and Athena-Weston from the Pendleton community.
250	Marks	Responds she does not want to see any of them split. Adds that it is important to her as a voter and member of the community that they continue to be able to act as a community.
271	Ray Jones	Resident of Hermiston and Administrative Assistant to the city manager. Submits proclamation from Mayor Bob Severson (EXHIBIT F) . Adds that Hermiston is probably unique because they do have commonalties with the Boardman area. As other testimony has indicated, politically it seems to make more sense that the northern section of Umatilla County and the 10 cities be united in one district.
301	Rep. Jenson	Asks what Jones' response would be to the Diagonal Road area east of Hermiston being split away from the City of Hermiston into a different house district.
	Jones	Responds they would be very much opposed to that. It would totally defeat the desire of maintaining common interests within a district. It would split their community down the middle.
316	Rep. Jenson	Comments that Jones is saying that the people in the Diagonal Road area, while they are not part of the City of Hermiston, probably don't recognize it except they don't have to pay city taxes.
	Jones	Responds they are not part of the City of Hermiston, but they are a part of the community of Hermiston.
328	Carlton Ryder	Hermiston resident. Comments he is against splitting the Hermiston community. The people in the Diagonal Road area have been a part of their community since 1907.
356	Cliff Benson	Attorney in Ontario. Comments that Pendleton is 172 miles from Ontario. If House District 60 is going to grow, a natural push would be to pick up Unity and Huntington. Most of the people in those towns shop in Ontario. Understands that 7,000 people will need to be added to Senate District 30. States that will be a challenge because expanding

further into the western part of the state changes the character of the problems. Is curious about what is being considered for the expansion of Senator Harper's district. It will be of great interest to people in Ontario, Vale, and Pendleton because the problems in the current Senate District 30 are almost 80 percent water related and there are definitely different views on the issues. To pick up people who do not share the degree of concern could be a problem for the person representing them.

408 Rep. March

Asks if there is a better community of interest between Ontario and Baker City than Ontario and Klamath Falls, or whether the people have more connections with Pendleton than Klamath Falls.

418 Benson

Responds that Ontario's community of interest would be Baker City much more than Klamath Falls, without a doubt. Adds that Baker City did have a timber industry and believes that is why it was linked with John Day and Prineville.

436 Bob Ramig

Mayor, City of Pendleton. Comments their city council met Tuesday night and reached an agreement with the Confederated Tribes on how to use the water. The council felt Commissioner Bill Hansell had done such a good job in preparing the argument for the Commissioners that if they disagreed with him in any way, they might find the City of Pendleton pushed out of the district.

TAPE 65, B

036 Ramig

States that he believes he can say, without formal action or resolution, that the Pendleton City Council pretty much supports Commissioner Bill Hansell's statement.

043 Rep. March

Asks Ramig if he sees Pendleton and the Umatilla nation as a community of interest that works together.

Ramig

Respond affirmatively. Comments on relationships and the tourists the casino brings into the communities.

062 Ken Thompson

Resident in Helix area. States he was chairman of the county planning commission and is still a member, and was on the regional economic development committee for Union and Wallowa counties. Having served on a regional board does not believe there is much difference among the three counties. Suggests the lines may need to be moved but should not extend on the west side.

082 Sen. Nelson

Comments that Thompson lives in District 57 now. Asks what Thompson's response would be if that area were moved into District 58 and not be a part of the Pendleton district.

086 Thompson

Responds he is in agreement with Commissioner Hansell. The more cities can be kept together, the better it is but knows that is not going to be feasible. Notes that Sherman County does have one person representing them. Disagrees with Pete Wells; there is a strong connection between Milton-Freewater and Pendleton, particularly if you look at the traffic on Highway 11. Other than the freeway reaching into Hermiston, the most traveled road in Umatilla County is Highway 11. There must be a strong connection flowing both ways.

105 Rep. Jenson

Would prefer Helix stay with Pendleton because that is their tie. Comments that a number of people who live in Milton-Freewater work in Pendleton.

111	Thompson	Comments that Umatilla County is the largest county on the east side and has grown for a variety of reasons, but a lot of people are moving into the rural communities. Adams has grown significantly. People want to live in the smaller communities and commute either to Milton-Freewater or Pendleton. Hermiston, Milton-Freewater, Weston, and Adams are growing and the county will continue to grow because industry has diversified significantly.
130	Kim Clark	Councilor, City of Athena. Totally agrees with the proposal by Commissioner Hansell. It makes the most sense. It will unite cities in the county that belong together in the same district.
139	Tom McAdams	Mayor of Stanfield and representing the City of Echo. Supports the resolutions passed by the Stanfield and Echo city councils this past week supporting Umatilla County's stand on reapportionment. States that Umatilla County has two state penal institutions. The county seems to absorb those populations even though the people who are in the prisons come from other areas of the state. Asks how that population is figured when the distribution figures are looked at.
156	Rep. Devlin	Responds that the prison populations are counted in the census of the area where they currently reside.
	McAdams	Comments that the prison population inflates their population count and in some areas that helps and in other areas it hinders.
170	Chair Harper	Explains handout (EXHIBIT A).
185	Rep. Jenson	Asks if David Coppock of the Oregon Wheat Growers has a perspective as far as the agricultural community is concerned.
190	David Coppock	Executive Vice-President, Oregon Wheat Growers League. States that the league does not have a position on redistricting and he is here personally. States he has lived in Adams or Pendleton most of his life. Concurs with everything Commissioner Hansell said. Thinks that Milton-Freewater, Pendleton, Adams, and Athena--all the way through the northern part of Umatilla County tie together extremely well and strongly. A reference was made to the Morrow County split earlier. There is a big ideological split between northern and southern Morrow County on a number of issues--how to pay for the hospital, who gets money for the school district, whether they have a road through property that joins Taller Road to Ione.
214		Believes the proposal laid out by Commissioner Hansell is extremely sensible and probably the best way to organize the communities in this part of the state.
222	Sen. Nelson	Asks Coppock what the connection is with Baker and Union County as far as his job is concerned.
227	Coppock	Responds those are isolated pockets. Believes Baker City and LaGrande fit together fairly well, better than some other matches would. They have seen a lot of decline in wheat production in Baker County.
245	Judy Price	Comments that the plan presented by Commissioner Hansell sounds like a good plan.
268	Chuck Norris	States that Coppock's testimony brought back memories from his campaign in 1986, and that drawing of the lines has human consequences. A proclamation from Tim Crampton, Mayor, City of Weston, was also received by the committee and is hereby made a part of

288

Chair Harper

these minutes (**EXHIBIT G**).
Adjourns meeting at 11:50 a.m.

Submitted By,

Reviewed By,

Annetta Mullins,
Committee Assistant

Cara Filsinger,
Committee Administrator

EXHIBIT SUMMARY

- A - Redistricting, handout, staff, 4 pp**
- B - Redistricting, prepared statement, Bill Hansell, 5 pp**
- C - Redistricting, Resolution, Bill Hansell, 2 pp**
- D - Redistricting, letter from Mayor Hash, Larry Clucas, 1 p**
- E - Redistricting, Proclamation, Jim Burns, 1 p**
- F - Redistricting, Proclamation, Ray Jones, 1 p**
- G - Redistricting, Proclamation, Tim Crampton, 1 p**