

SENATE COMMITTEE ON RULES AND REDISTRICTING

**April 4, 2001 Hearing Room SALEM LIBRARY
6:30 P.M. Tapes 50 - 51**

MEMBERS PRESENT: **Sen. Peter Courtney, Vice-Chair**

MEMBER EXCUSED: **Senator Steve Harper, Chair**
 Sen. Jason Atkinson
 Sen. Lee Beyer
 Sen. Kate Brown
 Sen. Randy Miller
Sen. John Minnis

Visiting Members **Rep. Vic Backlund**
 Rep. Janet Carlson
 Rep. Steve March

STAFF PRESENT: **Marjorie Taylor, Redistricting Coordinator**
 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 50, A		
004	Vice-Chair Courtney	Calls meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.
006		Members introduce themselves.
015	Vice-Chair Courtney	Comments on redistricting process.
	Vice-Chair Courtney	Calls attention to handout (EXHIBIT A).
049	Vice-Chair Courtney	Asks that witnesses identify "communities of interest" in their comments.
	Rep. March	Explains that the committee is looking for what the witnesses feel are "communities of interest" in this area.
061	Chair Courtney	Reads criteria for redrawing lines (EXHIBIT A). Explains each House seat should have 57,023 people and each Senate district should include 114,000 people, roughly. Explains that some districts must give up population and other districts must add population.
103	Dennis Coho	President, Board of Salem Area Mass Transit District. Comments he previously served as Mayor of Keizer. States he does not want to set up a dispute between the cities of Keizer and Salem, but they are distinct communities of interest. Keizer needs to be kept intact for a House seat. And to stay within county boundaries the district could be connected to a House seat to the north and maybe to the east. Feels Keizer would lose its voice if it were paired it up with a House seat that is all or predominately Salem.
151	Frank Garcia, Jr.	Resident of Salem and Co-founder and Executive Director of

Oregon Latino Voter Registration Education Project. Comments that Hispanics increased their population by 144 percent in 10 years statewide. The Hispanic population is an interest group in Salem and Marion County; 15 percent of population in Salem and 17 percent in Marion County.

Their non-profit, non-partisan organization is interested in and dedicated to increasing the political participation of Latinos throughout Oregon. Last year they registered 6,000 voters statewide and have educated and registered over 10,000 voters since 1996.

177 Their organization's interest is in ensuring the Hispanic population of Salem has access to the process, that they find it equitable and fair, and that they are included. States they would like to be included throughout the project, i.e. special committees where decisions are being made.

States they are a working population and the process does not lend access and equity if the meetings are held during the day.

194 Thinks Salem would be best served by one Senate and two House districts. Really interested in ensuring their voice is heard and not diluted.

204 The Latino community is also interested in presenting their own redistricting maps.

220 Rep. March Advises that the rules ask that any plan submitted to the legislature be a complete plan and that he would be willing to work with Garcia. Advises there is a computer terminal available in the Capitol for the public to use.

232 Rep. Carlson Asks Garcia if his sense is that that people who live in the McKay area are more of a community of Salem or part of the rural area such as Stayton, Sublimity, Jefferson, Woodburn, and Canby.

Garcia Responds he senses the population would have a connection with the Salem community. Adds that the Hispanic population is also strong in north and northeast Salem.

263 Rep. March Notes that Keizer also has a large Hispanic population. States that Salem could almost fit in one Senate district if Keizer is not added to the district.

271 Vice-Chair Courtney Advises witness that they may testify at anytime before the committee. Invites witnesses to testify repeatedly if they wish.

Mary Lou Cornejo Salem resident. States that the Latino population in Salem is split between two districts. The McKay area belongs in the Salem area, not the rural area. States the Hispanic numbers are climbing and asks that the committee attempt to draw a district that would give the Latino population a potential for a voice in the House district. States she would be willing to be part of a committee to look at such a plan.

321 Asks that consideration be given to changing the scheduled meeting times to evening hours, that the proceedings be broadcast on radio and community television stations, and that meeting notices be given in Spanish.

342 Rep. March Comments on efforts of the legislature to hold hearings around the state.

Cornejo Comments on increased Hispanic populations throughout Oregon.

426 Cornejo States her passion is to make sure there is Latino representation

on committees that are being formulated and will have an impact on the Latino community.

TAPE 51, A

018	Brian Clem	Salem resident and business owner. Suggests the legislature try to make Salem its own Senate district. Thinks it would make most sense that the county section in west Salem would makeup about the right numbers for a separate Senate district if they cannot all be included in one. Also some population east of Lancaster do not live in the city. If the numbers in west Salem were not enough, the population east of Lancaster who are not in the city limits could be added to the west side population to make a district.
050		Does not believe it makes sense to have someone in Salem represent the population in Stayton and Sublimity. If possible, that should be avoided. If the numbers allow for a City-of-Salem Senate district, that would be the way to go. It seems there could be two House districts in Salem and about 20,000 extra population. West Salem might be better served as part of Polk County because they have other issues in common with the county. Think those who live in Keizer live there for different reasons. It would make a Senator's job easier to just represent Salem.
070	Ken Becker	Resident of House District 32. Comments the magnitude of the process is staggering. Comments on the need for readjustment to Congresswoman Hooley's congressional district. Asks if a voting precinct must stay in one district.
084 086	Rep. March Becker	Indicates that the existing precinct boundaries can be divided. Asks what some of the specific issues are in terms of adding and taking away populations from districts.
089	Vice-Chair Courtney	Explains that the census statistics were received three weeks ago and no maps for Oregon have been drawn. Comments on explosions of population in Washington County and Bend. Explains that the redistricting plan must be done by June 30 and if the legislature doesn't do it, the Secretary of State will draw the lines for legislative districts and the federal courts will draw the lines for the congressional districts.
122	Vice-Chair Courtney	Explains his Senate district must give up 7,200 people and a Senate district in Bend must give up over 25,000.
.130	Rep. March	Comments that some districts in Portland must pick up 5,000 to 10,000 populations. Comments on redistricting process and results of 1991 redistricting process. States that the lines drawn in 1991 do not necessarily reflect communities of interest in 2001.
163	Amanda Vallejo	Keizer resident. Asks that the committee consider the importance that the Latino community not to be diluted by drawing of the boundaries. States that 16 percent of the 47 percent growth in Keizer has been in the Latino population. States the vote within the Latino group is divided by racial groups as well. and each has an issue that needs to be addressed. Comments on effective translation of meeting notices for areas that are heavily populated by the Latino community.
227	Rep. March	Asks Ms. Vallejo to provide staff with contact information.
231	Vice-Chair Courtney	Comments on changes needed in congressional districts.
253	Dennis Coho	Comments on the "helicopter" house district created in 1991.

		States that at one time Marion County was in the second congressional district with eastern Oregon. States that district five will be affected by the needs of districts one and four. States there is little community interest with Marion County and eastern Oregon. The changes should stay within the Willamette Valley and close coastal environs as opposed to cresting the Cascades and going east.
273	Ken Becker	Asks if the legislature can divide precincts into two or three parts if that is what they deem appropriate.
278	Sen. March	Explains that-precinct line changes occur every 10 years when redistricting is done. States that the city council districts, county commission lines--all districts will be redrawn, i.e. school districts, etc. Explains that is why local districts like for the legislature to follow county, city, and other political boundaries that exist. However, by law, the legislature must equalize population and that overrides the wishes of keeping precinct lines the same.
308	Becker	Comments that his Voter Registration Card has the House and Senate district numbers listed, but it does not list the different districts, such as the ESD and transit district. Believes it would be helpful that the card show all the districts.
317	Vice-Chair Courtney	Clarifies that each House districts must have approximately 57,000 people, not registered voters, in it. The precincts include registered voters.
341	Brian Clem	Comments he would not want to see congressional district four grab Corvallis because there are a lot of issues the universities have with the federal government that one would think would be in common. However, there is a lot of competition for federal grants that professors of both campuses are competing for. Believes it would help to have two congressional people making the cases for the two different institutions.
411	Vice-Chair Courtney	Thanks the audience for participating and invites them to attend any of the meetings and to speak again if they wish. Adjourns meeting at 7:25 p.m.

Submitted By,

Reviewed By,

Annetta Mullins,
Committee Assistant

Marjorie Taylor,
Redistricting Coordinator

EXHIBIT SUMMARY

A - Redistricting, meeting handout, staff, 4 pp