

SENATE COMMITTEE ON RULES AND REDISTRICTING

May 09, 2001 Hearing Room BAKER CITY
5:00 PM Tapes 80 - 81

MEMBERS PRESENT: Sen. Steve Harper, Chair

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

VISITING MEMBERS: Sen. Ted Ferrioli
Rep. Greg Smith
Rep. Patti Smith

STAFF PRESENT: Craig Allen, Committee Administrator

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.

<u>TAPE/#</u>	<u>Speaker</u>	<u>Comments</u>
TAPE 80, A		
005	Chair Harper	Calls meeting to order at 5:02 p.m. Describes the process of redistricting. Indicates that the goal is to move district lines to equalize population within districts. Explains the population deviation between legislative and congressional districts.
017	Chair Harper	Asks for community input. Indicates that the committee would like to hear where lines should be drawn based on communities of interest. Explains that all comments will be added to the public record.
025	Chair Harper	Introduces himself.
035	Rep. Patti Smith	House District 56. Introduces herself.
038	Rep. Greg Smith	House District 59. Introduces himself.
040	Sen. Ted Ferrioli	Senate District 28. Introduces himself. Thanks Senator Harper for holding this public hearing in Baker County. Acknowledges that Senate District 28 may be an epicenter of change, and citizens of the district needed the opportunity to testify. Thanks American Association of University Women, Baker City High School and Aletha Bonebreak for help in getting the meeting together. Indicates that the population of eastern Oregon has not increased at the same rate as the rest of the state, therefore legislative districts must get bigger. Explains principle of "one person, one vote."
074	Chair Harper	Acknowledges that the population of eastern Oregon grew, but not as rapidly as the rest of the state. Indicates that the eastern Oregon legislative districts must increase in population.
080	John Hays	Expresses appreciation to the committee for traveling to Baker City. Indicates that the geographic size of districts make it more difficult for elected officials and elections. Explains that the

		community has unique issues related to timber, cattle, mining, and crops, and the locally elected officials are aware of them. Indicates that Baker County would have to compete with larger counties, such as Umatilla County, during elections if they are redistricted together. Expresses the need for a representative who knows about agricultural issues. Indicates that their current representation is excellent since the legislators are familiar with the local issues. Asks that district boundaries and representation not be changed since everything is working just fine.
130	Hays	Speaks about problems in Klamath Falls, and how the same thing can happen in Baker County. States Baker County needs representation from people who know their issues.
159	Dick Haynes	Describes his experience related to economic development issues in the region. Explains that the community needs every advantage they can get just to tread water. Acknowledges that change is inevitable, however expresses preference for no change to current representation.
207	Aletha Bonebreak	Resident of Baker City. Discusses the relationship between Baker and Grant Counties. Explains that Grant County has a county library that she works with, and residents of Grant County trade, learn, and benefit from what Baker County has. Acknowledges that the two counties share economic interests more so than counties to the north and south. Acknowledges that the district will have to grow into more populated areas. Asks that three districts abut the Idaho border so that the interests of eastern Oregonians continue to be represented.
227	Don Clark	States that people he has spoken with would prefer that districts remain as they are, however acknowledges that isn't possible. Asks that population be added from surrounding districts rather than surrounding districts pick apart Baker County.
244	Bill Moore	Ranches in the area and near Vale. Urges caution in drawing boundary lines. Suggests representation based on geographical areas rather than population. Explains that eastern Oregon has unique problems such as distances between population and the environment. Says the current boundaries are workable, but suggests they may not be if the boundaries are expanded.
270	Mary Alice Pieri	Resident of Baker City. Asks for improved transportation in remote areas. Asks for the return of Amtrak and better airports.
285	Sen. Ferrioli	Explains that the current district needs to increase in population, but expresses concern that Baker County might be removed from the district.
302	Eloise Dielman	Resident of Baker City. States that distance is a huge factor in eastern Oregon and that it is a long way to everything. States that the community needs representatives who understand issues on the east side of the state. Asks for clarification on issues related to redistricting.
319	Chair Harper	Focuses on the issue of equal representation in districts. Explains that the Cascades are a natural boundary. Discusses growth of areas of eastern Oregon. Explains field hearing handout (EXHIBIT A).
400	Sen. Ferrioli	Answers question from audience as to what the legislature is looking at in terms of redistricting plans. Speaks of the importance of keeping communities of interest together, stresses the history of communities and how they developed.

TAPE 81, A

015	Terry Schumacher	Resident of Baker City. Stresses that it makes economic sense to keep Baker and Grant Counties together. Suggests picking up Madras, which has more in common with Prineville. States that areas north of Baker County are very different than Baker County. Explains that Prineville and Madras are similar to the Baker and Grant County district. Expresses concern that Baker County would get lost in the shuffle if they are added to a district to the north. Reiterates that it makes sense to add Madras to the district, and add Boardman to the northern district. Stresses that if part of Baker County is included in a northern district, then the current district might have to take part of Bend and the remaining part of the current district would not be represented as effectively as they are now. Reiterates that representatives need to represent the community in Baker County. Restates that geographically and economically the two current districts that include Baker County and Umatilla County are very different, but are similar in their constituencies.
090	Audience member	Asks if House District 55 and 56 have enough population to make up for the lack of population east of those districts.
095	Chair Harper	Acknowledges that House Districts 55 and 56 have enough population to make up for the lack of population and none of the eastern districts will have to reach across the Cascades.
100	Rep. P. Smith	Thanks Mr. Schumacher for testimony, and states that Sen. Ferrioli and Rep. G. Smith represent the area very well.
107	Mark Boothby	Resident of Baker County. Acknowledges that the community shares many common problems, but they also share common assets. Growing up in a small town is an asset. Explains that in looking at Wallowa, Union, and Umatilla Counties, Baker County formed partnerships with Morrow County because of their common issues. Wonders how the partnership with Morrow County will be affected if Baker County is removed from the district.
120	Rep. G. Smith	Expresses concern and acknowledges that Baker and Morrow Counties are working on projects together that will have long term impacts on the counties. Explains that the partnership is still solidifying and maturing. Expresses concern if it was to go away. States that he wants what is best for Baker County. Explains that there are strong ties between Grant and Baker Counties, and Baker County's voice is strong in the legislature. Indicates that there are strong economic and natural resources ties in the area. Suggests that electrical power issues will only become more important, and states that he is the only Representative who represents issues on the Columbia and Snake Rivers.
150	Boothby	States that the voice of Baker County would be diluted if the district was shifted north, and suggests that the district could move south.
165	Lynn Shumway	Rancher from Burnt River. States that the community does not want to lose representation and expresses appreciation for Sen. Ferrioli and Rep. G. Smith. States that they are familiar with the issues that affect the area, including timber, water, and agriculture. Indicates that they are also familiar with the struggles of small schools. Stresses the importance of keeping

		the same representation.
185	Elizabeth Huntsman	Resident of Baker County. States that she will always want the option to have a legislator from eastern Oregon.
210	Sen. Ferrioli	Clarifies that the issue at hand is not to retain current representation, and explains that term limits prevent the Senator from running again. Expresses the need to maintain the current communities of interest between Grant and Baker Counties. This process is about which communities are connected for the next decade.
225	Bob Evans	Resident of Baker County. Stresses the importance of linkages to other entities such as the Forest Service, BLM, and Oregon Dept. of Forestry. Explains that there are links between the Wallowa/Whitman National Forest and the Malheur National Forest. There are linkages between watersheds in northeast Oregon also. Suggests that the districts should represent geography also.
240	Henry Bates	Explains redistricting in 1980. Indicates that district boundaries will have to move to pick up population that they lack. Suggests that moving north and south won't make as much difference as moving east or west to pick up population.
255	Glenn Bates	After looking at the populations, suggests that House Districts 60, 59, and 56 could get their needed population from House Districts 55 and 54. Acknowledges that House Districts 58 and 57 have a little problem, but suggests that House District 58 go west to pick up Milton-Freewater, and House District 57 should go west to pick up population in 59. Agrees that House District 59 would have to pick up a little population too. States that there is no solution except to go west, except for House District 56, which must pick up population to the south. States that the Representative from House District 58 already represents the area near Milton-Freewater and it probably wouldn't make a difference to move that district farther west. Asks that consideration be given to the geographic area that a representative must serve. Explains that the larger the district is, the harder it is for a representative to serve the constituents.
285	Rep. P. Smith	Asks when the redistricting plan will take effect and wonders if Sen. Ferrioli will be separated from his district.
300	Chair Harper	Understands that changes might occur.
328	Rep. G. Smith	States that he doesn't want Baker County to be removed from House District 59, but hopes that comments will show the common interest between Grant and Baker Counties.
359	Chair Harper	Explains that districts may not be drawn to favor political parties. Indicates that they are trying to be fair and follow the law, however there are 60 legislative districts that have different opinions. States that they are trying to do the best job for the most people.
372	Audience Member	States that the eastern Oregon vote in the state doesn't mean anything. Explains that things that matter to eastern Oregonians, during elections for instance, are overridden by other parts of the state.
405	Schumacher	Stresses the importance of smaller communities staying together.
440	Brian Cole	Chair, Baker County Commission. Expresses appreciation to the committee for traveling to Baker County. Indicates that the

Board of Commissioners scheduled a public hearing on redistricting and received one response of interest.

TAPE 80, B

005	Cole	Stresses the importance of Baker County's relationship with state government and how they have been able to accomplish many projects such as the Powder River Correctional Facility, Oregon Trail Interpretive Center, Sumpter Dredge, the Industrial Park, redoing Main St., Blue Mountain Community College, and all agricultural interests. Explains that it has been important for the community to be represented by a representative and senator from rural areas.
020	Cole	Understands that some redistricting options would make the district less rural. However, Baker County has similar interests to Crook County and Grant County because they have similar populations. Options are to be less rural. Explains that the historical development of Grant County is very similar to that of Baker County. States that it is significant to have three Senators represent the Oregon/Idaho border. Explains that the partnership with Morrow County is going very well.
056	Audience Member	Wonders why redistricting must be based on population.
060	Chair Harper	States that the Constitution requires division by population.
062	Sen. Ferrioli	Describes the concept of "one person, one vote." Explains that there are four Senators and eight Representatives east of the Cascades, and they have to work together to represent the interests of eastern Oregonians.
100	Chair Harper	Adjourns meeting 6:08 p.m.

Submitted By,

Reviewed By,

Marjorie Taylor,
Redistricting Coordinator

Craig Allen,
Committee Administrator

EXHIBIT SUMMARY

A - Redistricting, Staff, 4 pp.