



ADA COUNTY

COMMISSIONERS'
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November 2, 2021

Bart Davis, Co-Chair
Dan Schmidt, Co-Chair
Tom Dayley, Commissioner
Nels Mitchell, Commissioner
Amber Pence, Commissioner
Eric Redman, Commissioner
Idaho Commission for Reapportionment
Idaho State Capitol
700 W. Jefferson
Boise, ID 83702

RE: Ada County's Comments on Commission for Reapportionment Plan

Dear Co-Chairs and Commissioners:

On October 22, 2021, Ada County submitted proposed plan L072 to the Idaho Commission for Reapportionment ("Reapportionment Commission"). As we noted in our letter that accompanied L072, the proposed reapportionment plan was drafted to keep cities and communities of interest whole rather than reapportioning to protect incumbency or partisan designations. It also limited the number of county splits. Ada County is disappointed that the Reapportionment Commission declined to utilize Ada County's proposal and instead proposed plan L02. For the reasons listed below, Ada County believes that the proposed plan is constitutionally and statutorily flawed and urges the Reapportionment Commission to adopt the County's proposed L072.

Ada and Canyon counties are two of the fastest growing counties in Idaho, yet L02 proposes to divide these urban, growing communities of interest with rural, sparsely populated neighboring counties. For example, L02 proposes mixing Eagle, a community of large acreage estates with Emmett in Gem County. It also proposes mixing the fast-growing city of Meridian with a slice of Canyon County's commercial buildings (1,125 people). And it mixes Kuna, another fast-growing urban area, with a portion of Canyon County and a portion of Owyhee County.

As you are aware there is a hierarchy of requirements that govern redistricting plans. The second criteria is compliance with division of counties. It is our understanding that the Reapportionment Commission is stating they are only dividing eight (8) counties in L02. Ada County disagrees with this assessment because in addition to dividing eight (8) counties, the Reapportionment Commission is actually dividing Ada County four times and is dividing Canyon County three (3) times. Ada County believes it will be difficult for the Reapportionment Committee to reasonably determine that so many divisions of two urban counties is necessary to comply with the Constitution.

Third in the hierarchy is compliance with Idaho Code § 72-1506. Item two in the statutory hierarchy is “To the maximum extent possible, districts shall preserve traditional neighborhoods and local communities of interest.” The Reapportionment Committee fails to maintain traditional neighborhoods and local communities of interest. To forestall litigation, the Board urges that you reconsider and adopt Ada County’s proposal or a comparable proposal that meets equal protection and county division requirements but also complies with the statutory requirement of keeping neighborhoods and local communities of interest intact.

Thank you for reconsideration of the impacts to Ada County.

Sincerely,

ADA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



Rod Beck, Commissioner



Ryan Davidson, Commissioner



Kendra Kenyon, Commissioner

cc: Paul Boucher, Commission Secretary