

From: Bennington Town Clerk's Office <cbarbeau@BenningtonVT.org>
Sent: Tuesday, January 25, 2022 4:12 PM
To: Andrea Hussey <AHussey@leg.state.vt.us>; Sarah Copeland Hanzas <SCopelandHanzas@leg.state.vt.us>
Subject: [External] Bennington redistricting written testimony

[External]

Good afternoon,

I am unable to testify in person or on the phone on Thursday, so I wanted to submit my thoughts via email.

First and foremost, I want to express my appreciation of your hard work and your efforts thus far. I believe the situation for Bennington currently is better than what was originally put forth by the LAB. We are well-served as two two-member districts. My Board will be meeting to further discuss the proposal and give our final thoughts and recommendations prior to the February 15th deadline.

Bennington was very close to being within the 10% deviation, just 101 people short, so we requested to be left as is. I see now, your hope is to be within 7.5% deviation. Although we are stepping in the right direction, I believe that we can make some minor adjustments to our lines within Town to make Bennington 2-1 larger and maybe add the Town of Woodford to Bennington 2-2. This was one of the scenarios we considered in the Fall as a Board. We need to be careful about where we draw the line in town, as an incumbent is located very near the district line. It is my understanding, statute makes accommodation to not be pitting incumbents against each other. Additionally, in this scenario I described, we are only disrupting one other Town, rather than three (Pownal, Woodford & Searsburg) in the alternate proposal currently in place.

At this point, I am not speaking for the full board, just simply considering compromise and how best to move forward with as little disruption to Bennington and surrounding Towns as possible, while still meeting your needs. You may hear testimony from other Bennington BCA members with other points of view. Thank you for taking consideration from all of us and we will continue our communication to the committee following our BCA meeting next week.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions.

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