

As Chairman of the Bennington Board of Civil Authority, I feel it necessary to comment on the proposed map of the Bennington Districts proposed by Mr. Nicholas Atherton.

I want to state at the outset that the proposal currently under consideration is unacceptable at best, and probably could be considered political gerrymandering, at worst. This Board of Civil Authority and the Bennington Town Clerk spent many hours considering the proposals put forward by the LAB.

We came up with proposals that keep Bennington as a contiguous entity, which it basically has been since reapportionment of the House in 1960s, when it was reapportioned to 150 members. The two-member legislative districts have been part of our history for many years and have served us and the State of Vermont well. To divide Bennington into single member districts is unnecessary and will create mass confusion for the voters and election workers.

Additionally, to propose removing a chunk of Bennington voters and place them in a proposed district with Pownal, Stamford, Woodford and Readsboro violates many of the guidelines that the LAB recommends should be considered when proposing newly redrawn district lines. With this proposal, existing political subdivision lines for Bennington are destroyed, the pattern of geography makes no sense and there are few, if any, common ties to the towns being considered for the newly proposed district.

In closing, I would urge the Government Operations Committee members to consider adopting our previous recommendation for reapportionment of the Bennington 2-1 and 2-2 districts, which are in line with all the guidelines.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "David Shaffe". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

David Shaffe
Bennington BCA Chair