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From: Jeff Wilson <jeffwilsonvt@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 28, 2022 9:39 AM
To: Redistricting2022
Subject: [External] The Arlington, Manchester, Sandgate and Sunderland District - Retain Two-Member District

[External]

Dear Committee Members,

I have had the good fortune to live in Manchester for the past 36 years. During that time I have served as Manchester;s Town Manager (17 years), the District's Rep (6 years, 2009-2015) and have participated in a number of community and civic-oriented endeavors.

During my tenure as a State Representative, I originally served in a single-member district, and then after 2012 reapportionment, I was part of a two-member district. Quite frankly, I think I was a better, more thoughtful Representative during my time in the larger two-member district. Not only was I able to kick around ideas and problem solving strategies with my district "partner", but developed a broader, less parochial perspective when my constituents included the folks from Arlington, Sandgate and Sunderland, as well as Manchester. Northshire (northern Bennington County) residents have much in common, but there can be occasional nuanced differences between a resident of Sandgate and one from Manchester. They may, in fact, come down on the same side of an issue, but approach the matter from a different vantage point -- which I believe, results in richer, more meaningful input.

Moreover, I think this more regional approach to policy-making is often a better model to follow in a small state like Vermont. I currently serve as a School Director for the Taconic and Green Regional School District. The success of this nine town district is largely due to a culture which promotes a regional mentality; one that tries to achieve the best outcomes for the whole (not one that champions separate, disparate parts of the puzzle).

Thank you for this opportunity to present a few thoughts as to why Bennington-4 should remain a two-member district, Best of luck with the challenging work that lies ahead.

Jeff Wilson

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