

Obvious Political Posturing

Readsboro BCA provides the following comments on redistricting based on the latest set of proposed maps provided to us on Friday 2/11/22. That latest map of the House District NEW-BEN-1 is a complete mess and **shows utter disregard for Readsboro comments** provided in an earlier letter on 2/4/22. This new map would have Readsboro and Stamford lumped in with Pownal, Woodford and some portion of Bennington. That total population is nearly twice the recommended number of 4287 as defined by the LAB. **What is the thinking here?** Are you proposing two representatives for the district? That would be counter to the LAB's initiative to split existing two member districts into two separate districts. The only commonality seen in this map is all towns are part of Bennington County. **It smells of political wrangling or posturing** and does not consider the **factors of commonality** that should be the basis of any district mapping.

Next, as mentioned in our previous letter, Readsboro and Stamford are **effectively separated from Pownal and Bennington** geographically, in matters of commerce, education, travel and commuting as well as sharing of resources for schools, emergency services and town government. Nothing against the fine people of the other towns but we are **simply not connected** in any way to Pownal and Bennington. Of major concern is that the voices of Readsboro and Stamford will **not be heard** on issues or concerns. The larger populations of Bennington and Pownal will be the controlling interest and we will be effectively left out the conversation. **This is completely counter** to the whole premise of Representative Districting and **will be a complete failure for our small town.**

As a follow up to our previous letter and these comments, I would be interested in the opportunity to testify before the committee if that option is still available. Please contact me as soon as practical to discuss that option.

Thank you for considering our comments.

Respectfully submitted,

Members of the Readsboro BCA

Omar Smith, BCA member

802-430-4301

omarhonda10@icloud.com