

February 7, 2022

TO: House Committee on Government Operations  
FR: Vershire Board of Civil Authority

The Vershire Board of Civil Authority met on Feb. 7, 2022 to review and offer feedback on the alternative map for representative districts (H.589) that was passed by the Vermont House on Jan. 18<sup>th</sup>.

The majority of members present at this meeting were opposed to the alternative map. We are particularly concerned with being placed in a two member district with the town of Williamstown.

The proposed map consists of a five-town district of Chelsea, Corinth, Vershire, Washington, and Williamstown. Though this map seems to have the right balance of representatives for the number of constituents, this balance is not a reality. Williamstown's population is more than double any of the other four towns, giving them a large representative dominance.

This unbalanced dominance should be reason enough to reconsider the proposed map. We believe, however, that there are also other reasons. Community ties should also be considered. The towns of Vershire, Corinth, Chelsea, and Washington share a similar community character and often share community events. We simply don't share this same community culture with Williamstown.

A single member district with smaller towns of similar population and rural character would be much more representative of our voters. The map that was proposed in November showed a single member district consisting of the four smaller towns, with the exception that part of Washington was cut off. Though that map was much more appealing than the current one, we would ask that towns not be divided between two districts. We would not want to be divided, and so also would not wish that for any of our neighboring towns either.

For the reasons mentioned above, we respectfully request that you consider placing Vershire in a single member district with other small towns of similar population and rural character. We do understand and appreciate what a difficult task you have before you.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Bonnie Strout, Chair  
Town of Vershire  
Board of Civil Authority