

The Board of Civil Authority of the Town of Washington met on Jan 13, 2022, to review the Vermont Legislative Apportionment Board's maps and recommendations to the Vermont Legislature for the reapportionment of the Vermont House and Senate.

After substantial discussion, the Washington BCA wishes to express our vehement disagreement with the Apportionment Board's majority plan to arbitrarily divide the Town of Washington between two Districts.

The primary objection to having Washington split is in the nature of the town itself.

Geographically, the town is divided along a north and south axis by the Washington Heights.

This divide is substantial enough that the Town needs to contract with two separate ambulance services as response times from the one service was endangering the population of south Washington. Additionally, those residents south of the Heights receive their mail from Chelsea.

We feel that if the town becomes additionally severed on an east/west axis by the Legislature we may very well lose all semblance of being an integrated community.

Additionally, the mechanics of setting up two voter check lists, or requiring proof of street residency, or setting up and staffing a second polling place so that the voters in the "Northwest" portion of town would be able to cast their votes within their election district, would exceed "difficult" and border on "impossible" for our town.

The LAB's minority report as represented in H-589 is a far superior option for Washington. The proposed OR-1 district consisting of the towns of Williamstown, Washington, Chelsea, Corinth and Vershire is within the population deviance and is a contiguous 2-member district. This option follows all the criteria required by the Vermont Constitution.

The single member plan as proposed by the majority report of the LAB fails to provide the constitutional safeguards provided in Criterium 3 and 5, in that it would destroy both the physical boundary of our town as well as patterns of geography, social interaction, trade, political ties and common interests.

In a unanimous vote by the Washington BCA we ask the Vermont General Assembly to pass final legislation based on H-589 and the minority report of the Legislative Reapportionment Board.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Carbee

For the Board of Civil Authority of Washington, Vt