



February 8, 2022

Vermont General Assembly  
Office of Legislative Counsel  
Attn: Reapportionment  
115 State Street  
Montpelier, VT 05633-5301

Dear Amerin L. Aborjaily,

Pursuant to your letter of January 20, 2022, the Chittenden, Vermont Board of Civil Authority (CBCA) is responding to provide feedback, proposals and concerns to the House Committee on Government Operations with respect to the latest proposed House of Representative District which would include Chittenden.

As you may be aware, the CBCA met in November of last year to review and discuss the Legislative Apportionment Board's (LAB) proposed reapportionment districts for the State, and responded to that proposal on November 15, 2021. In that response, we indicated that we objected to the district the LAB had submitted for review and provided an alternative district which we believed was superior in all respects. While the current proposed district is completely different from the one we reviewed last year, our position has not changed with respect to the unique and equitable representation our previously suggested and supported District afforded. Namely, a district comprising the entire Rutland County Towns of Chittenden, Mendon, Killington and Pittsfield. If the Legislature's responsibility is to reapportion the State with respect to the criteria under Title 17 V.S.A. Section 1903, we believe they would be hard pressed to find a better fit, and one with a totally insignificant positive deviation from the "target" population of .2 percent or 10 people. ( the current Pittsford/Chittenden district proposal is a negative 4.39% deviation or 188 people)

In light of the above, the CBCA is re-submitting our response to the LAB as an attachment to this letter in the belief that it contains important justification for supporting said district, and should be considered a part of this response.

The current proposal from the House Committee on Government Operations is a district comprising Chittenden and Pittsford. The CBCA met on February 7, 2022 to review and discuss this latest proposal, and voted unanimously not to endorse it. According to the census data used in these calculations, Chittenden has a population of 1,237, while Pittsford's population is 2,862.

If adopted as our “new” district, Pittsford would represent nearly 70% of said district. While admittedly improbable, it is never-the-less possible that for the next decade Chittenden could be represented at the State level by someone who is not very familiar with our town. The CBCA does not believe this unbalanced situation is compatible with fair and equal representation.

The CBCA is particularly concerned about this heavily overweight Pittsford position when it comes to our local educational system. Currently, approximately 73% of the taxes collected in Chittenden are raised for education. Chittenden’s elementary school (Barstow K-8) is a unified union school district comprising Chittenden and Mendon, and we embrace school choice for grades 9 through 12. Pittsford has its own and distinct kindergarten through high school system. Chittenden does not participate in that system directly and only somewhat indirectly by offering school choice for high school enrollments. Again, the CBCA believes that our Town’s best interest would be served by a representative who did not have such potential conflicting priorities, and preferably by one who also represented the entire town of Mendon.

The CBCA acknowledges the difficult task of reapportionment and the political pressures that are inherent in the process. That said, we firmly believe that a district comprising the Towns of Chittenden, Mendon, Killington and Pittsfield is vastly superior to any proposal submitted for our review to date. Furthermore, we doubt any future iterations of towns or portions thereof would approach the positive attributes inherent in our proposal. Whether focusing on all of the criteria given in Title 17 V.S.A Section 1903 , or the other compatible synergies provided in the attached feedback forms, we would urge the House Committee to adopt the proposed district identified above.

Finally, the CBCA would like to clearly emphasize the fact that the Board of Civil Authority for the Town of Mendon and the Board of Civil Authority for the Town of Killington fully support this district configuration and have provided feedback and proposals to the House Committee consistent with this proposal. The Town of Chittenden is hopeful the Legislature will acknowledge our efforts to propose a district that should serve the Town well for the ensuing decade and perhaps longer. Although frequently confused with Chittenden County, we appreciate our small town has somewhat less clout when it comes to decision making in Montpelier, but remain optimistic our voice will be heard. Our proposal is certainly the strongest possible based on the criteria and the merits, and should be recognized and adopted as such.

If, on the other hand, our proposal is rejected, the CBCA would appreciate, and frankly expect a detailed explanation as to why some other combination was adopted.

Respectfully submitted,  
Chittenden Board of Civil Authority

Attachments: Map and LAB feedback

# BOARD OF CIVIL AUTHORITY FEEDBACK FORM

For the Submission of Feedback on the: VERMONT HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - TENTATIVE RE-APPORTIONMENT PROPOSAL by the LEGISLATIVE APPORTIONMENT BOARD

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The following is a report of the decisions and discussions of the Board of Civil Authority of the town/city, concerning the initial House district reapportionment plan proposed by the Legislative Apportionment Board, as required by 17 V.S.A.

§1905: <https://legislature.vermont.gov/statutes/section/17/034A/01905>

It is due on or before November 15, 2021 through this online portal.

This form is for reporting from the BCA through its authorized representative only. There should be only one report from any one BCA. This is not a portal for public comment. This link is not for public distribution. The public should be encouraged to comment to the BCA directly or can reach out to the LAB through its website: <https://sos.vermont.gov/apportionment-board/contact-the-board/>

\* Required

**1. Town/City:** \*

Chittenden

**2. Name of Submitter: \***

Roberta Janoski

**3. Role of Person Submitting This Form (Town Clerk, BCA Chair, etc.): \***

Town Clerk

**4. Contact Phone: \***

802-483-6647

**5. Contact Email: \***

Clerk@chittendenvt.org

**6. Date(s) the Board of Civil Authority met on the reapportionment plan: \***

Nov. 4, 2021

**7. District(s) reviewed that the BCA recommends changing:**

Please use the district names used in the proposed map.

Enter your answer RUT-12

**8. District(s) reviewed that the BCA recommends keeping as proposed:**

Please use the district names used in the proposed map.

Enter your answer N/A

**9. Description of District(s) recommended to be changed:**

Please provide a clear description of the recommended district. For an example of the way this has been done in the past, please refer to 17 V.S.A. §1893: <https://legislature.vermont.gov/statutes/section/17/034/01893>

Use as much detail as possible. If the BCA's proposed district(s) have more than one member, please include that detail. You may also copy the map provided to you and re-draw the line, if desired, but you must also include the description. If necessary, email any attachments to [sos.bcafeedback@vermont.gov](mailto:sos.bcafeedback@vermont.gov) and clearly include your town and district in the title and body of the email.

Enter your answer

SEE ATTACHED #9

**10. Rationale and comments:**

Please give in detail your rationale for the change(s) that the BCA made as well as rationale for leaving the district(s) as drawn by the Legislative Apportionment Board.

Enter your answer

see attached #10

**Chittenden Vermont Board of Civil Authority  
Feedback Form**

**Response to Section 9 RUT-12**

The Chittenden, VT Board of Civil Authority (CBCA) recommends a Vermont House of Representatives district that comprises the towns of Chittenden (1237 population), Mendon (1149 population), Killington (1407 population), and Pittsfield (504 population). The proposed district would include the entire population of each of the four towns and would consist of a district located entirely in Rutland County.

The CBCA proposed district would uniquely and almost perfectly meet the Legislative Apportionment Board's (LAB) responsibility under Title 17 V.S.A. Section 1903 of forming districts which have an "ideal" population of 4,287, with minimal positive or negative deviation. The CBCA proposed district's total population is 4,297, which represents a positive deviation of .2 percent or 10 people. Furthermore, the CBCA believes the recommended district conforms very well to the additional criteria; ie. 1) Preservation of existing political subdivision lines, 2) recognition and maintenance of patterns of geography, social interaction, trade, political ties, and common interests, and 3) use of compact and contiguous territory.

It should also be noted that Chittenden has historically been in a district that has not had a single town (or portion of a town) significantly dominant over the other member towns in the district. The CBCA believes this relatively "equal" representation between individual towns in a district is desirable and promotes good will for all parties concerned. Clearly, if the legislature were to adopt the tentative plan proposed by the LAB, the partial Rutland Town component (2479 population) in the district would outweigh the combined Chittenden and Mendon (partial) populations (2150 combined) significantly.

## Response to Section 10 RUT-12

The Chittenden, VT Board of Civil Authority (CBCA) met on November 4, 2021 to review and discuss the Legislative Apportionment Board's (LAB) tentative plan for the VT House of Representatives district in which Chittenden is located. After reviewing the information provided, and discussing the LAB's criteria used in proposing the tentative district, it was immediately determined that we would recommend changes.

The primary reason for the CBCA to recommend changes was the fact that the Town of Mendon had been split into two districts. The Town of Chittenden and the Town of Mendon have significant, important and long standing relationships that the CBCA believes should be maintained in a single representative district. The K-8 school system in Chittenden (Barstow School) is a unified school district between Chittenden and Mendon. All decisions regarding Barstow School (budgets, facilities, working agreements, policies, ect.) are made in concert with the voters of Mendon and represent the largest expenditures the respective communities vote on.

In addition to the school relationship with Mendon, the two towns have interaction and coordination on various other important matters. For example, the two towns work closely with each other to plan and implement our Emergency Management Plans, and we jointly developed and support a Volunteer Emergency Shelter at Barstow School. The purchase, installation and maintenance of a whole school generator system was possible due to the coordinated efforts from both towns. The CBCA believes that having the residents of Mendon split between two legislative districts would be problematic, inefficient, and confusing. Our current district relationship with Mendon should not be altered.

Given the aforementioned desire to keep Mendon "whole" in our district, the CBCA discussed a variety of options and/or combinations that would satisfy the LAB's objectives. While there are several configurations that could work as a proposed district of 4,287, the percentage of

deviation resulting from these possible combinations range from modest to approaching ten percent. Given the nearly perfect fit our recommended district is, we felt it was clearly the superior option to pursue, and therefore have focused our efforts there.

With respect to the other two towns in the recommended district, Killington and Pittsfield, the CBCA also finds great compatibility, synergies, and familiarity with our town. Killington was a member town in our previous district and offers numerous recreational, social, and employment opportunities to the town. Similarly, Pittsfield, while not in our previous district, is very similar to Chittenden in that our relationship to the recreational community is strong. The VAST (snowmobiling) trail system is connected to our towns at numerous locations and the substantial “bedroom” community status for the recreational industry is apparent. The CBCA would also be remiss if we did not mention the extraordinary efforts made by all of the four recommended towns after Tropical Storm Irene disaster in 2011. The unwavering support by countless volunteers supplying caravans of emergency supplies and assistance was truly remarkable. The magnitude of these neighboring communities working together through their volunteer fire departments and other organizations represents a strong bond that should be acknowledged.

In summary, the Chittenden Board of Civil Authority respects and appreciates the difficult challenge the Legislative Apportionment Board has before it. We also appreciate the ripple effect changes in proposed districts create. That said, we nevertheless believe that our recommended district of Chittenden, Mendon, Killington, and Pittsfield is such a natural fit, for all of the reasons identified above, and undoubtedly numerous others, that it warrants your thoughtful consideration. We also understand Mendon has arrived at a similar conclusion.

Respectfully submitted,

Chittenden Board of Civil Authority



# CHITTENDEN BCA RECOMMENDED DISTRICT Proposed

