

### **Town of Mendon Reapportionment Statement**

The BCA of the Town of Mendon recommends the Towns of Mendon, Chittenden, Killington, and Pittsfield in their entirety be combined as one single district. According to the 2020 census, the combined total population for these four towns totals 4,297. The ideal sized district according to LAB methodology suggests 4,287 voters per district. In our proposal no one town has a large majority of the population over all three of the other towns, and we have seen first-hand how well these towns work together.

Creating a Mendon, Chittenden, Killington, Pittsfield district makes a lot of sense in that, Mendon and Chittenden share a K – 8 school, which is located in Chittenden. Further, many students from Pittsfield attend the elementary school in Killington. Three of the four communities enjoy high school choice, and all are located in Rutland County.

The towns of Mendon and Chittenden have worked closely together to develop an emergency shelter at the school, with shelter expenses being borne equally by each of the towns.

Both Killington and Chittenden allow Mendon residents to utilize their libraries at no charge, as Mendon does not have a library of its own.

The four towns have a history of working together. As an example, during the aftermath of Tropical Storm Irene, all four towns joined together to provide and coordinate the services that were disrupted in each community. Chittenden was a great resource in getting necessities to the other three communities when portions of the towns were isolated due to the storm. Mendon was a hub for the distribution of medications, groceries, pet food, etc. which were then delivered by the constable to local pick-up places in each town. Killington and Mendon set up pick up locations for groceries, MRE's, and other household necessities to be utilized by residents of either town.

Another factor shared by the four towns is the configuration of major roads in the area. Routes 4 and 100 are the economic gateways and lifelines to these four same communities. Route 4 runs through Mendon and Killington and intersects with Route 100 running both south and north to Pittsfield. Meadowlake Drive off Route 4 is the main artery from Mendon to Chittenden.

Further, each Town enjoys the economic benefits of the Killington Ski Resort. All have ski houses and second homes used by skiers. Many seasonal employees of the Resort are housed in Mendon, and the Towns of Mendon, Pittsfield, Chittenden, and Killington all have hotels/motels and restaurants benefitting from and providing services for the local ski industry.

Although we believe the above solution is the absolute best choice for all involved, we fully understand the difficulty of your task and would suggest the following as possible alternatives if there was no way to make the above solution work: Either combine Mendon, Chittenden, Killington, and Stockbridge (total population – 4,511) or Mendon, Chittenden, Killington, and Bridgewater (total population – 4,696). Both of these combinations are over the suggested 4,297 district size, but within a 10% variance.

**The main priority for the Town of Mendon is to keep the Town together in one district.** We are a small community with few services of our own. We are working to build a stronger sense of community and dividing the Town into two districts will hamper those efforts. While we have no library, no fire department, no school, and no post office in our town, we strive to find ways to come together as one. We fear that making us a small voice in each of the currently proposed districts will hamper those efforts.

The current alternate map proposal has only 121 residents from Mendon placed with 3,853 residents from Rutland Town (Rutland-4). This leaves very little chance for fair representation because of the huge difference in size. While Rutland Town is a great town, its tax base is not at all similar to Mendon's.

Further, the current proposal for Rutland-Windsor-1 with a small portion of Mendon carved out totals 4,056, if you find you **must** keep these towns together, adding all of Mendon will bring the total to 4,177 – still below the target number.

Another reason to not divide a small town is that the division makes elections more difficult to manage. Many town offices are small, and do not have the budget, space, or volunteers to handle the additional workload required to have two separate ballots, an additional tabulator, and possibly two polling locations. On the occasion that you **must** divide a portion of a town into another district, it should be a larger town or city

In conclusion, the Town of Mendon strongly supports combining Mendon, Chittenden, Killington and Pittsfield for the reasons stated above and for the reasons stated in the materials submitted by the Towns of Killington and Chittenden. The Town of Mendon strongly disagrees with the proposal to divide a town of fewer than 1,200 residents into two separate districts. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Respectfully submitted,

Town of Mendon Board of Civil Authority

Nancy Gondella, Town Clerk