

**Public Submission to the West Virginia Legislature
Senate Select Committee on Redistricting**

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From: @aol.com
Sent: Thursday, October 14, 2021 6:19 PM
To: Charles Trump; Joint Redistricting
Subject: Amendment #1 on Proposed Senate Districts

Dear Senator Trump,

Whether you recognize it or not, your service as chair of the Senate Redistricting Committee has made some folks (me) become your temporary constituents. Although I live in Monongalia County, you have been working for me and West Virginians in all counties. I have been following the redistricting deliberations closely and have been generally comforted by the fair and equitable way you have discharged your duties as chair. I had no reason to doubt that conclusion until now.

What changed? The so-called "Amendment #1" to proposed Senate districts — brought to the Senate this week and NEVER discussed publicly by the Senate Redistricting Committee — is a problem. A big problem. Actually, it has several problems but I will focus on one particularly egregious problem.

It chops Monongalia County into at least two pieces and thus violates the law that mandates how districts shall be drawn.

- **Population/One-person-one vote.** Out of 55 counties, only Monongalia County meets the equal population criterion on its own. Its 105,822 people fall within 0.3% of the ideal population target of 105,513. The population deviation is only 309 people!

- **Contiguity.** On the Senate floor, you (yes, you) equated contiguity to preservation of county boundaries. Obviously, cutting Mon County into pieces, with no legally compelling reason to do so on population grounds, does not honor county boundaries.

- **Communities of interest.** Obviously, Mon County represents a distinct community of interest, which arguably is the most subjective of all the considerations in drawing district boundaries. Regardless, the population and county boundary parameters for Mon County must override any more subjective considerations.

I watched as the majority of the Senate Redistricting Committee debated and then voted to recommend a map of Senate districts that preserved the boundaries of Mon County. Was that just sleight of hand? Was it, as some have suggested, a parliamentary Trojan Horse? Or is something more sinister going on?

I don't expect answers to those last 3 questions and I don't want to assume the worst. Instead, as your current constituent from Mon County, I respectfully ask that you work to maintain the integrity of Mon County as its own distinct Senate district. Whether by keeping the amendment from ever coming to the Senate floor or by helping to vote it down, the amendment must be defeated.

Thank you for your service.

Judy K. Ball, PhD, MPA

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