

Members of the House and Senate Special Redistricting Committees,

Thank you for the time you are spending and the work you are putting into these public listening sessions. This is the first time that I have followed the process of redistricting closely. So far, the current process is more open than the description I've heard of previous years, and I commend you for that.

I have participated in the Map-a-Thon Citizen-Drawn Mapping Project by submitting data for my town of Antrim and doing a telephone survey of 10 towns in Hillsborough County to determine their shared services. I learned how essential it is to consider communities of interest such as school districts, shared services, and common issues in addition to population. The maps created by this project have been submitted to the committee's website and are shown side by side with the 2010 maps, listing pros and cons for each version. I encourage the members of both committees and the public to look at these maps. I believe the Map-a-Thon maps have districts that provide more fair representation for voters.

Specifically speaking about Antrim, its close ties with Bennington are significant. Many residents from both towns are employed by Monadnock Paper Mills. We have a shared water and sewer department. Our children attend the same middle school. Bennington children participate in Antrim Recreation teams and activities. Even our food pantry is a combined effort. Antrim and Bennington should also share districts. In the New Hampshire House, Antrim is in District 1 with Hillsborough and Windsor, while Bennington is in District 3 with Hancock and Greenfield. It would make sense to have Antrim and Bennington together with other nearby towns in the ConVal School District. Deering is in District 2 with Weare and District 39 with Goffstown and Weare, but has much more in common with Hillsborough. Floterial District 38 includes Antrim and Bennington along with 8 other towns, extending south through Lyndeborough, Wilton, and Greenville. This district should be more compact.

Our New Hampshire Senate District 8 is also spread out, and would benefit from greater compactness.

When these first listening sessions are complete, I ask that you continue to have an open process. Please explain what criteria you will consider in addition to the mathematics of population. When your maps are drawn, please release them to the public for review before they are finalized. And then, I ask that you hold a second round of listening sessions in each county to hear feedback from the public. Lastly, have the option of remote participation in these sessions so that interested citizens may speak before the committees regardless of their individual circumstances.

Thank you for the complex and difficult work you are doing and for the opportunity to submit this testimony.