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Montana Good Government Plan Description

This congressional plan prioritizes keeping political subdivisions intact. The plan splits the state into two districts: district 1 in the east and district 2 in the west. To achieve population equality, the district splits one county (Cascade), one precinct, and three cities/towns, showing an overall respect for political subdivisions. The districts are highly compact, with mean Reock, Polsby-Popper, and Ehrenburg scores of 0.51, 0.46, and 0.56, respectively. The plan did not consider partisan implications, and both proposed districts are safely Republican. A PlanScore analysis therefore concludes the proposal heavily favors Republicans. The plan complies with all applicable federal and state law.

When choosing which county to split, I prioritized compactness considerations. As a result, the north-south line dividing district 1 from district 2 is fairly straight, cutting Cascade county in half. When equalizing the population within Cascade county, I avoided splitting precincts and towns, splitting only one precinct and two cities/towns. The third city/town split comes from Big Sky, which is spread across two counties. As my plan placed these counties in different districts, the proposal splits this city.

Both districts have similar demographics. As Montana does not have any minority groups which are large enough to form a majority in a district, both proposed districts are overwhelmingly white by voting age population (VAP): district 1 is 84.34% non-Hispanic white and district 2 is 86.79% non-Hispanic white. Moreover, both districts are overwhelmingly Republican: during the 2020 presidential election, proposed districts 1 and 2 had Republican vote shares of 60.67% and 56.34%, respectively. In general, Montana leans fairly Republican (a PlanScore analysis predicts a state-wide Republican vote share of 58% during an average election), so drawing competitive districts would require prioritizing partisan considerations (see, for example, the “Montana One Competitive District” [plan](#) on the website).

Overall, this plan succeeds in respecting political subdivisions and drawing compact districts, but it may fall short on partisan fairness considerations.