

Oregon Good Government Plan Description

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This redistricting plan for Oregon prioritizes maintaining the contiguity of cities and counties within the 6 districts. This map necessarily deviates greatly from previous plans and the Legislature-enacted 2021 plans because of its total lack of partisan considerations and incumbency as well as its limited adherence to a “least change” model in adding Oregon’s 6th district. The end result is a map that maintains roughly equal district populations (with a slight deviation that will be explained later in this summary) while only splitting 3 counties.

Oregon’s 1st congressional district is redrawn to contain all of Washington and Columbia counties. This is much more compact than the old 1st district (under the 5-district plan), which stretched all the way to the Oregon Coast in the west and picked up parts of Yamhill County in the south. This also serves to avoid splitting the northern regions of the Oregon Coast and to avoid lumping coastal regions in with the western Portland suburbs.

The 2nd district is substantially similar to the old 2nd district in that it contains all of Eastern Oregon. However, the addition of a 6th district and population growth in Bend necessitated the removal of some of the westernmost regions of the old 2nd district. Most notably, all of Wasco County and Hood River Counties were shifted out of the district, and part of Jackson County was moved to the 4th district. However, an effort was made to keep the town of Medford in the 2nd district.

As in the old 5-district plan, the 3rd district is a compact district containing most of urban Portland and its suburbs/exurbs. However, the new 3rd district does not extend into Clackamas County at all, remaining entirely contained in Multnomah County. Because of the desire to keep Multnomah County’s neighboring counties of Clackamas and Washington whole and the need to add population from Multnomah County to the 1st and 5th districts, the new 3rd district is slightly deficient in population. However, this deviation is relatively small and likely defensible under the principle of respecting political subdivisions.

Similarly to the old plan, the 4th district comprises the southwest corner of the state. However, because of the need to shed population to make room for each of the new districts and the objective of respecting county lines, the new district does not extend nearly as far north, ending at the Lane-Lincoln/Benton/Linn county border rather than stretching north to Corvallis. To balance out the population loss in the northern reaches of the district, more of Jackson County was shifted from the 2nd to the 4th district. The 4th district has a slight population surplus due to the difficulty of shifting population through the 2nd district (where all the county lines are perfectly respected on its borders with the 5th and 6th districts) or north through the 6th district (which has a perfect county border with the 4th district).

The 5th district varies substantially from any previous district, containing all of Clackamas, Hood River, and Wasco Counties and significant portions of Marion County (excluding Salem) and eastern Multnomah County. Though it would likely be preferable to include Wasco County in the 2nd district (with other counties east of the Cascades), the need to shed population from the old 2nd district to make way for the new seat made moving Wasco County a logical choice, especially given that its largest city and county seat (the Dalles) sits on I-84 just east of Hood River.

The new 6th district joins the north Oregon Coast with the towns of Salem and Corvallis. In this sense, it is not dissimilar to the existing 5th district, but it does not cut north into Clackamas and Marion Counties on its eastern edge. Though not especially compact on its face, this district is much cleaner than the old 5th district and serves to unify more of the Coast while respecting county subdivisions. Splitting Salem from Keizer and Woodburn is suboptimal, but much of Salem was required to provide adequate population to this district.