

Dear House Redistricting Committee members,

I am writing to request that Albert Lea and Austin be kept together in the same senate district, as they have been joined since at least the 1970s. Besides historic ties, Albert Lea and Austin share economic, geographic and cultural ties. Albert Lea does not share these commonalities so clearly and strongly with Jackson and Fairmont.

Furthermore, Mayo Clinic closed Albert Lea's hospital services between 2017 and 2019 and consolidated them into Austin's hospital. The Albert Lea Healthcare Coalition is working determinedly to restore hospital services, but this will take a number of years, and Albert Lea should have representation from the state senator who serves Austin where the closest hospital services are currently located.

Thank you for considering these important aspects of redistricting in southern Minnesota.

Sincerely,
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