

Dear Nancy,

I am hopeful that you are the person to contact regarding the proposed district maps. If not, please forward this.

I am most unhappy with the proposed map.

First the Senate: For as long as my husband and I have lived in Albert Lea (since 1979) Albert Lea and Austin have been in the same Senate District. This makes sense for a number of reasons. Culturally and financially we share many services: the Freeborn/Mower Electrical Coop, our school districts share services, Riverland College has campuses in both communities, Mayo Clinic shares many services, and historically we share a common background of being mid-sized factory based economies. I know many people going east from Albert Lea to Glenville, to Austin. That seems very common to our communities. How can a representative do a good job of representing our communities when they are pulled in other directions with other interests and needs? And with the elections coming up so soon, I don't know how either political party can do a good job of recruiting candidates and running a good campaign.

In fact, I think that this plan is a slap at the rural areas!

I understand that our Senate District needs to grow but I suggest that the core remain the two cities of Albert Lea and Austin and add to that.

As to the house district map, I would make a similar argument: the map goes too far to the west to areas that are far flung from Albert Lea and its interests and needs. I think that Albert Lea should, as far as possible, remain somewhat central geographically. As drawn, it will make for a very confused and unfocused district which will be a problem for the representative and for both political parties.

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