



## ALASKA REDISTRICTING BOARD

**Alaska Redistricting Board Meeting  
April 6, 2022 | 10:00 a.m.  
Anchorage Legislative Information Office and Zoom Virtual Meeting  
1500 West Benson Blvd, Anchorage, AK 99503**

The Alaska Redistricting Board met on April 6, 2022. Present participants are below:

John Binkley	Chair of the Board
Melanie Bahnke	Board Member
Bethany Marcum	Board Member
Budd Simpson	Board Member
Nicole Borromeo	Board Member
Peter Torkelson	Executive Director
Matt Singer	Legal Counsel

### **Agenda**

- Call to Order & Establish Quorum
- Adoption of Agenda
- Public Testimony Specific to District 29, 30, and 36
- Possible Adoption of Revised District 29, 30, and 36
- Public Testimony, All Topics
- Consideration of Alternative Pairings Proposals
- Adjournment

### **Call to Order**

Chairman Binkley called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m. With all board members present, a quorum was established.

### **Adoption of Agenda**

Member Borromeo moved approve the agenda as it was written. Member Simpson seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

### **Public Testimony Specific to District 29, 30, and 36**

There were no members of the public present to testify on the changes on remand to the "Cantwell carveout" in House Districts 29, 30, and 36.

Public testimony was closed.

### **Possible Adoption of Revised District 29, 30, and 36**



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Member Borromeo moved her proposed corrections to House Districts 29, 30, and 36 that would return the community of Cantwell to the Denali Borough in line with the Alaska Supreme Court's directions to the board on remand; Member Simpson seconded the motion.

The Board voted as follows:

- Member Bahnke – Yes
- Member Binkley – No
- Member Borromeo – Yes
- Member Marcum – Yes
- Member Simpson – Yes

The motion passed 4 to 1.

### **Public Testimony, All Topics**

- Anchorage resident, Cristine Hinter, urged the board to consider a plan that is more representative of the similar socioeconomic profiles and equitable seat assignments.
- Anchorage resident, Elizabeth Roderick, testified against pairing South Anchorage with Eagle River and encouraged the board to support the proposal for East Anchorage that is in most alignment with the court ruling.
- Anchorage resident, Leon Jaimes, testified against pairing Eagle River with South Anchorage and encouraged the board to take the solution proposed by the plaintiffs from East Anchorage to keep the Muldoon districts and the Eagle River districts together.
- Anchorage resident, Frank McQueary, gave some historical perspective as his company supplied technology to Alaskans for Fair Redistricting (AFFR) in the last redistricting process. During Frank's involvement in this process, he has observed that the AFFR plan presents the least possible opportunities for additional litigation. Shuffling every pairing in Anchorage, as other proposals do, could potentially open the board up to further litigation. Frank testified in favor of the AFFR plan and testified against pairing Districts 22 and 9. Frank urged the board to not reshuffle the map entirely.
- Anchorage resident, Ray Kreig, testified in support of Alaskans for Fair and Equitable Redistricting's (AFFER) proposed Senate pairings and referred to the court rulings on the Senate districts that should be revisited. AFFER pairs House Districts 22 and 9 to create Senate District E in the East Anchorage uplands where local service areas and snow management are common and key issues in both House districts. Other similarities between these districts are the real estate, socioeconomic uniformity, and neighborhood settings. Additionally, these districts maintain their own roads and do not rely on the Municipality of Anchorage to maintain their roads. This pairing has also been done historically. Three other Anchorage Senate districts had revised pairings to facilitate the court-required action and four districts were unchanged. The alternative "Bahnke pairings" disrupt all eight Anchorage Senate pairings.
- Anchorage resident, Ellen Jaimes, encouraged the board to adopt a proposal that is most aligned with the Supreme Court ruling that creates the least amount of change. Ellen testified against pairing House Districts 9 and 22.
- AFFER member, Randy Ruedrich, requested a minor repair to the proposed plan submitted by AFFER at the Alaska Redistricting Board meeting on April 5, 2022. Randy reminded the board that the Municipality of Anchorage is, by law, a socioeconomically integrated entity, so the only requirement left to consider is the constitutionally directed contiguity. The following Senate



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pairings were proposed: Districts 9 and 22, 10 and 13, 11 and 12, 15 and 16, 17 and 18, 14 and 19, and 20 and 21. Randy did not review incumbent information to result in these suggested pairings. Randy stated that Districts 9 and 22 both have unique characteristics, were combined in a House seat, and should be considered for a Senate seat. Additionally, the two districts have a significant contact that is considered practicable.

- Anchorage resident, Frank McQueary, gave some historical perspective as his company supplied technology to AFFER in the last redistricting process. During Frank's involvement in this process, he has observed that the AFFER plan presents the least possible opportunities for additional litigation. Shuffling every pairing in Anchorage, as other proposals do, could potentially open the board up to further litigation. Frank testified in favor of the AFFER plan and testified against pairing Districts 22 and 9. Frank urged the board to not reshuffle the map entirely.
- Anchorage resident, Ray Kreig, testified in support of AFFER's proposed Senate pairings and referred to the court rulings on the Senate districts that should be revisited. The AFFER map pairs House Districts 22 and 9 to create Senate District E in the East Anchorage uplands where local service areas and snow management are common and key issues in both House districts. Other similarities between these districts are the real estate, socioeconomic uniformity, and neighborhood settings. Additionally, these districts maintain their own roads and do not rely on the Municipality of Anchorage to maintain their roads. This pairing has also been done historically. Three other Anchorage Senate districts had revised pairings to facilitate the court-required action and four districts were unchanged. The alternative "Bahnke pairings" disrupt all eight Anchorage Senate pairings.
- Anchorage resident, Ellen Jaimes, encouraged the board to adopt a proposal that is most aligned with the Supreme Court ruling that creates the least amount of change for East Anchorage. Ellen testified against pairing House Districts 9 and 22.
- Anchorage resident, Steve Straight, testified in support of pairing House Districts 22 and 9 for the following commonalities the two districts share:
  - During the winter, snow is a more significant issue in the elevated areas than they are in the lowlands.
  - There is large fire risk with no hydrants in these areas.
  - There are non-standard roads that have not been passed by city codes, making it a challenge for water trucks to travel up and down the hills.
  - With aviation, is a challenge to complete water jobs in the mountain areas because of turbulence issues.
  - These areas run on septic systems, not on main city water systems.
- Anchorage resident, Rachel Laiki, testified against pairing Eagle River with South Anchorage because the communities are not contiguous, do not have many things in common, and are too far apart to troubleshoot the issues experienced from having common geographical traits. Rachael testified in support of the East Anchorage plan as it is much more aligned with the court ruling.
- Anchorage resident, Doug Robbins, testified against pairing House Districts 22 and 9 because these communities do not have many things in common, are not contiguous, and demographics published by the State of Alaska in 2017 (in the Alaska Economic Trends report) show that Hillside Anchorage is a distinct community in terms of marital status, household income, voter turnout, and education. The communities he can walk or bike to are the communities that are contiguous and socioeconomically integrated with his own. Doug referred to the unconstitutionality found by the Supreme Court for the Senate District K pairing. He expressed that he was amazed by what seemed like a lack of remorse from the "Republican mapmakers who willfully proposed an illegal map to leverage the Republican majority in Eagle River into an



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additional Senate seat." Doug testified in support of Option 1 because it reflects the integrated communities, particularly in Hillside Anchorage. Option 2 represents the fewest number of changes to the pairings that the courts already approved; this option is also a reasonable choice.

- Anchorage resident, Carl Berger, testified against pairing House Districts 9 and 22 as they both appear to be two non-contiguous districts that go against the court ruling. Carl testified in support of Option 1.
- Anchorage resident, Veronica Sajer, testified in support of the East Anchorage proposal because it is most aligned with the court's ruling and expressed strong opposition to pairing South Anchorage with Eagle River.
- Anchorage resident, Joni Bruner, testified against pairing South Anchorage with Eagle River and encouraged the board to support the East Anchorage proposal that is most closely aligned with the court rulings and has minimal changes.
- Anchorage resident, Kimberly Hunt, testified against pairing House Districts 9 and 22 because they are non-contiguous, separated by mountains, and represent cohesive communities that would be diluted. Kimberly supports a map that is in close alignment with the court rulings and has the smallest changes.
- Anchorage resident, Loy Thurman, is a resident of District 8 (Big Lake), which has now been pushed out of the valley. Big Lake is the largest growing area with anticipation for continued growth. Even as such, Big Lake did not have any new representatives assigned. The old District 8 is now pushed into the Bush, which is "an irritation" to District 8 because it is on the west end of the valley. Currently, District 8 stretches from Point Mackenzie to Anderson in Fairbanks. Additionally, Cantwell has been gerrymandered across Glennallen, and Eagle River districts should remain together due to the socioeconomic factors differing from South Anchorage.
- Anchorage resident, Randy Philips, has previously represented North and South Mountain View, Nunaka Valley, Muldoon, Chugiak, Eagle River, Eklutna, and Fort Richardson. Randy offered his observations as a resource to the board:
  - Eagle River has a different road service area than Hillside Anchorage.
  - Hillside has 18-19 separate road service areas, and Eagle River has one.
  - The Chugach State Park is the only connector between Eagle River and Hillside.
  - Most Eagle River water sewers are public.
  - Chugiak Fire Service is separate from the Municipality of Anchorage.
  - When Randy represented Eagle River and Anchorage, Eagle River was a middle-class community, and East Anchorage was a working-class community.
- Eagle River resident, Susan Fischetti, testified in support of pairing House Districts 9 and 22 as they are contiguous since they likely share more landmass along the district lines from the Chugach State Park than any other Anchorage district. The demographics of both districts are also very similar such as household, age, and marital status. Eagle River also has a separate road service area from Hillside and the Municipality of Anchorage. Susan supports the Option 3 map because it has the least impact on all the other districts.
- Anchorage resident, Denny Wells, pointed out that the board has two non-partisan board members, and three board members are connected to a specific political party. There are two maps proposed by non-partisan groups and one by a member who has been the chair of a political party. The public perception is that the board is not exercising diligence in being non-partisan, especially when being connected to a particular political party. Denny expressed the importance of the board proposing maps that are not politically gerrymandered, such as Options 1 and 2. While Districts 9, 11, 22, and 24 have a demographic of high-income households over 75% white, what distinguishes them is that Districts 22 and 24 share the core of Eagle River. Districts 9 and 11 share the Hillside Homeowners Association. Districts 9 and 22 share the



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Chugach State Park but do not have a common political entity. Options 1 and 2 pair House Districts 22 and 24 and Districts 23 and 17 together; these pairings keep the Eagle River and Downtown Communities together. Regarding keeping Districts 23 and 24 together due to the tie from JBER to the Chugiak-Eagle River area, through his real estate photography business, he has seen military households in the Chugiak-Eagle River reasonably often. Denny's Muldoon duplex is also usually rented out by enlisted military members. Lastly, the Anchorage reapportionment process divided the community into six, and the Senate pairings were split into eight. Although they are different numbers, the same communities still share the same issues. During this process, several community councils and other groups opposed the pairing of Hillside and Eagle River. Denny encouraged the board to read the formal resolutions of the following councils: Huffman/O' Malley Community Council, Rabbit Creek Community Council, Home and Landowners Association, Baxter Community Council, and the Girdwood Board of Supervisors.

- Anchorage resident, Judy Eledge, testified in favor of Option 3 because it is the fairest among the maps and believes that House Districts 15 and 16 should be paired together. These districts are closely related, as she has seen through her experience as a Sand Lake resident. Judy also testified in support of House Districts 22 and 9 being paired together as before, and both districts share similar interests.
- Anchorage resident, Ted Eiseheid, testified in support of House Districts 22 and 24 being paired together and gave some insight on his experience working in the Mat-Su Borough as an East Anchorage resident. Ted commutes through Districts 22 and 24 and sees the connections that could make both districts one Senate districts. This pairing is logical. In Ted's skiing experience in the Arctic Valley (northeast of his East Anchorage home), it is hard to see Districts 9 and 22 as a logical pairing. If one drove from Ted's house to Districts 22 and 24, they would likely agree that the two districts are a logical Senate pairing. If one went on a ski tour in Arctic Indian, they would probably not see the connection between Districts 22 and 9 because there is mostly wilderness. Ted cautioned the board on the perception of their decisions and expressed the importance to him, as an Alaskan citizen, that he feels the board's decision is fair. Lastly, there are plenty of military members who live in East Anchorage by Ted which shows that not all live in Chugiak-Eagle River.
- Anchorage resident, Jason Norris, testified in support of Option 1. When the original Senate pairings were reviewed, one argument was that Eagle River residents shop in Muldoon, making it permissible to pair the communities. This same argument does not apply to Districts 22 and 9. The obvious connection is between Districts 22 and 24. Jason testified against Option 3 as the map seems to be gerrymandered

### **Consideration of Alternative Pairings Proposals**

Member Marcum explained the rationale behind her proposed Senate pairings:

- While pairing districts, Member Marcum kept in mind the constitutionally required contiguity and geographic features to be used as boundaries.
- Member Marcum began with the response to the court ruling and paired Districts 20 and 21 (also proposed by Member Bahnke), this pairing joins residential neighborhoods that exist along the east-to-west transportation corridor of Debarr Road.
- Districts 9 and 22 were paired using the Ship Creek drainage as the geographic feature that links the two districts. Ship Creek is in the eastern portion of District 22 and drains near Bird Creek.
- Districts 10 and 13 were paired because this pairing is nearly the same as the current Senate District L. This unites the neighborhoods that travel along the three major north-south





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- transportation roads: Old Seward Highway, C Street, and Hickel Parkway/Minnesota Highway.
- Districts 14 and 19 were paired to combine two primary Midtown Anchorage roads into one Senate pairing. Both districts also share the same business infrastructure.
  - Four districts remain intact from the current Proclamation plan:
    - Districts 23 and 24 must be paired to keep Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER) whole.
    - Districts 17 and 18 unites the areas around the Merrill Field infrastructure.
    - Districts 11 and 12 unites the areas around the shared boundary of Abbott Road.
    - Districts 15 and 16 is a coastal district for Cook Inlet.
  - The pairings of District 23 and 24 leaves District 22 to be paired with District 9.
  - Muldoon would only have two Senators as opposed to one Senator because of Districts 20 and 21 being paired.
  - These proposed pairings acknowledge the public testimony heard by Muldoon and Eagle River residents.

Member Marcum reviewed the proposed Senate pairings from a 40-year Eagle River resident, Craig Campbell. The board held discussion on the proposed pairings:

- Member Borromeo stated the unconstitutionality of this proposed map as Districts 9 and 21 are not contiguous and the court will likely strike this down immediately. Member Marcum responded that the testifier submitted a solution to make these districts contiguous.
- Member Bahnke noted that the remand does not authorize the modification of House districts other than the Cantwell solution.
- Matt Singer clarified that the court has remanded to the board to correct the Cantwell appendage and Senate District K. Matt encouraged the board to be able to explain how each change it makes is directly linked to the two areas identified by the court. The board must have a sufficient explanation for any adjustments made to the House map to fix Senate District K.
- Member Simpson expressed disinterest in adjusting House districts as it may extend beyond the board's authority, but Member Simpson noted that there is no objection to accepting this map for consideration as there may be a part of the map that could be used as a compromise.
- Member Borromeo spoke against the consideration of the proposed plan and stated the plan likely will not pass muster.

Member Marcum moved for the board to adopt the proposed plan as submitted by Craig Campbell as a potential correction for publication on the website and to receive public testimony; Member Simpson seconded the motion.

The following discussion was held on the motion:

- Member Simpson noted his hesitation in seconding the motion for reasons stated earlier but does not object the map being moved forward for public comment.
- Member Bahnke spoke against presenting an unconstitutional map to the board and suggested that the plan could be posted on the website for public viewing, but not consideration. Districts 9 and 21 are not contiguous and could confuse the public if the board adopts the plan as a possible solution to Senate District K.
- Member Borromeo noted that the board has abused the public's trust and asked the board to not adopt the proposed unconstitutional plan. Member Borromeo noted that the mapmaker did not have the benefit of a Voting Rights Act consultant to review the map.



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- Member Marcum clarified that the proposal includes a solution to the non-contiguosity of Districts 9 and 21.
- Chairman Binkley expressed support of the motion as the board has asked the board to provide input and it would be disingenuous to not allow the public to comment on the proposed plan.
- Matt Singer stated that the board should be focused on Section 6 of the Alaska Constitution and advised the board to present options that hold the requirements of the constitution. Matt Singer recommended against pairing Districts 9 and 21.

The board voted as follows:

- Member Bahnke – No
- Member Binkley – Yes
- Member Borromeo – No
- Member Marcum – Yes
- Member Simpson – No

The motion failed 2 to 3.

Member Borromeo made the following statement regarding the withdrawal of Option 1 for consideration: "While I do believe that there was overwhelming public support for this option back in November, I recognize that times have changed, and the Superior Court and the Supreme Court have spoken. So, while it may have been a more perfect option, Options 2 and 3 are sufficient for the board to consider and I'd like to withdraw the commonly referred to "Bahnke pairings".

Member Borromeo moved to withdraw Option 1 for the board's consideration; Member Bahnke seconded the motion.

The following discussion was held on the motion:

- Member Bahnke noted that, given the narrow scope of the remand, she will be voting in favor of the motion.
- Member Simpson spoke in favor of the motion as it has the inherent issue of requiring a change to every Senate district with no minimalistic approach to the court remand.

Member Bahnke called the question. The motion passed unanimously.

The board now presents Options 2 and 3-B for consideration by the public.

### **Board Member Comments**

- Member Borromeo stated that the withdrawal of Option 1 for consideration will streamline the process and proposed that, going forward, the two options remain for public through Friday, April 8<sup>th</sup>, and the board act on April 9<sup>th</sup> as there is no reason to belabor the public process further.
- Member Marcum proposed to continue with the meetings that have been publicly noticed. This will also allow the public to have time to digest the proposed options.
- Member Simpson stated that he will not be ready to address the proposed options substantively by April 9<sup>th</sup>.
- Chairman Binkley concurred with Member Simpson's comments and acknowledged the public's



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interest in the proposed solution to Senate District K. Thus, the board should continue with the noticed public meeting schedule.

- Member Borromeo called to the board's attention the fiftieth page of the trial court order and noted the amassing testimony on each side. The public has meaningfully weighed in and there are thoughtful proposals and reasons on record. Member Borromeo noted there is no reason to delay the process and the board should take action on April 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup>. Member Borromeo stated that she is unavailable on April 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>.
- Member Marcum noted that the timeline put forward by Member Borromeo could still be accommodated.
- Member Bahnke requested adequate time to debate and discuss the proposed options prior to acting.
- Member Borromeo suggested that the board meet on April 10<sup>th</sup> for the board to begin debating the proposed options and reiterated that she will be in all-day meetings on April 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>.
- After discussion, the board agreed to hold the April 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> meetings potentially in the evening pending Member Borromeo's schedule on those days.

### **Adjournment**

Member Bahnke moved to adjourn the board meeting; Member Simpson seconded the motion.

The board adjourned at 1:03 p.m.