

From: [Mineko Prestes](#)
To: [zzRedistricting Commission Voicemail](#)
Subject: Do not redistrict Bob Hasegawa out of the 11th Legislative District!
Date: Wednesday, August 03, 2011 9:40:32 PM

To Whom It May Concern,

I'm writing in the hopes that I can convince you that redrawing the district lines of the 11th LD and in turn forcing the incumbent State Representative Bob Hasegawa to run against his fellow representatives would not only do a disservice to the people who currently reside within those district boundaries and are represented by Rep. Hasegawa, but would also likely result in the loss of one of the few faces of diversity already currently underrepresented in the House of Representatives.

According to the 2010 U.S. Census, minorities make up 22.7% of the 6.7 million people living in Washington State. Asians are the second largest ethnic group after Hispanics, making up 7.2% of the overall population of Washington State. According to a report by Annabel R. Kirschner, a Professor at Washington State University, diversity in the State of Washington has been steadily increasing since the 1980s at a rate nearly 8 times as fast as the population-growth of Whites (198.8% vs 25.6%) and is expected to continue to grow "faster than the White population for the foreseeable future." There are many reasons for this growth, the two main ones being immigration (the percent of Washington State's foreign born residents more than doubled from 5.8% in 1980 to 12.3% in 2008) and higher birthrates among some racial/ethnic groups than the White population.

Currently in the Washington State Legislature, there are 98 Representatives serving in the House of Representatives. Of these 98, only 7 are minorities (7.1%). 3 are Asian (3%).

Redistricting out the Seattle portion of the 11th district would force Rep. Hasegawa to run against fellow incumbents Rep. Eric Pettigrew or Rep. Sharon Tomiko Santos, Santos and Hasegawa being 2 of the 3 above-mentioned Asian Americans that currently make up 3% of all Representatives in the House.

The Census is a snapshot in time - it captures demographics at a certain time period and serves many important purposes and is an important source of data about our country's people and economy. It offers us data points to monitor changes and trends in our demographics and allows us the opportunity to make adjustments accordingly. However, as addressed earlier, population growth is never stagnant, and the rate at which minority populations are growing should not and cannot be ignored in the process of redistricting. The growth that ethnic groups are sure to see in the next 10 years by the time the next population Census is taken will surely be offset by the under-representation of these groups in our government if we allow ourselves to ignore these facts during this process.

There are many political reasons I believe Bob Hasegawa should be kept in the Legislature. However, politics aside, I believe it is important that we respect these statistics and continue to move in the direction of diversity in the representation of our communities. I urge you to:

Tweak the borders as necessary around the edges but keep the already established communities of interest intact;

Don't divide communities of interest any further than they already are;
Don't pit communities against each other: our sitting legislators work well together to represent our communities of interest; and
Do not marginalize communities of color by diminishing their numbers in the legislature. Draw boundaries to enhance the diversity in the legislature, not diminish.

Thank you for your time and thoughtfulness regarding this issue.

Sincerely,

Mineko Prestes

Sources:

U.S. Census Bureau: <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/53000.html>

Kirschner, Annabel R. "Increasing Diversity in Washington State 2000 - 2008." *Washington Counts in the 21st Century*. Washington State University, 2009