



LWVWY Statement: Regarding the Secretary of State's direction to the Fremont County Commission regarding the current districts

LWV of Wyoming Director Gail Simonds submitted the following statement to the Joint Corporations, Elections, and Political Subdivisions at an interim meeting held in Lander on May 21 and 22. The statement addresses the Secretary of State's recent letter to the Fremont County Board of Commissioners regarding the current districts.

The League of Women Voters of Wyoming is troubled by a letter from Secretary of State Gray to the members of the Fremont County Board of Commissioners, directing them to restructure the commission to accommodate a federal congressional redistricting case. The case appears to lack any application to the board of commissioners of Fremont County or any other county in Wyoming. Further, it seems to be an overreach by that office.

Title 18 of Wyoming Statutes governs the composition of boards of county commissioners in Wyoming, including the power of voters to increase the number from 3 to 5.

The statute governs how a county that adopts a five-member board structure can establish "residence districts." Fremont County is districted, to comply with a federal court decision outside Title 18, and its structure has its own separate subsection (k) of W.S. 18-3-501.

The Legislature authorizes the structure and districting of boards of county commissioners under W.S. 18-3-501, which does not reference the Secretary of State.

The Secretary of State is not included in WS 18-3-501. That office has a role in the administration of elections, but not with commissioners. We believe the Fremont County Board of Commissioners should ignore this overreach.