

SENATE No. 559

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT, BOSTON, June 9, 1931.

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives:

Under the provisions of Article LVI of the Amendments to the Constitution, I am returning herewith Senate 521, entitled "An Act to Establish Congressional Districts", with the recommendation that it be amended as follows:

By adding in section 1, line 10, after the word "county" the word "Amherst", and after the word "Goshen" the word "Granby". By striking out in line 16, the word "Granby". By striking out in section 1, line 28, the word "Arlington", in line 29 the words "ward numbered eleven in Cambridge", and by inserting after the word "Lowell" in line 30, the word "Medford". By striking out in section 1, lines 38 and 39, after the word "two", the words "and three in Cambridge", and inserting in place thereof, the words "Three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten and eleven in Cambridge". By striking out in section 1, line 39, after the word "Malden" the word "Medford". By striking out in section 1, line 40, the words "consisting of wards numbered four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten in Cambridge" and by inserting in place thereof the words "consisting of Arlington, Belmont". By inserting after the word "Auburn", in line 45, the word "Blackstone"; by striking out, in line 50, the words "and Ashland"; and by striking out, in lines 115 and 116, the words "Blackstone in Worcester county".

The proposed changes affect the following Congressional Districts: District 1, 2, 5, 8 and 9. The first change recommended is that of taking the towns of Amherst and Granby from the second district and placing them in the first district. The first district as at present constituted is less than the average population, which should obtain for the redistricting of the Commonwealth. By the addition of the towns of Amherst and Granby, in Hampshire county, to the first district, the population is brought to 281,482 in contra-distinction to the total under so-called plan number 1 of 274,703. The total population of Amherst and Granby is 6,779 which, if taken from the second district, which is now relatively over-populated, the population of that district is 285,287.

The changes in districts 5, 8 and 9 are promoted by a desire to keep, insofar as possible, the City of Cambridge intact. The City of Cambridge comprises in area but six square miles and it seems unfair to divide it into four parts, as provided in the so-called plan number 1, if such a course can be obviated without disturbing, to any great extent, the bill as presented.

District 5 is changed by taking from it the towns of Arlington and Belmont and ward numbered 11 in Cambridge. The total population of district 5, as provided for in the bill, is 309,888. If we subtract the total population of Arlington, Belmont, and ward 11 in Cambridge, and add thereto the population of the City of Medford, which, under the proposed amendment is added to the 5th district, we have a population for the revised 5th district of 301,113.

The proposed amendments affect district 8 as follows: Medford is taken from district 8 and added to district 5, and in place thereof, wards four to eleven inclusive of Cambridge are placed in this district. The population of this district, as provided for in the bill is 291,783. By the suggested changes the population is increased to 305,937. It will be noted that wards 2 and 3 of Cambridge are already in the 8th district and the proposed amendment adds thereto wards four to eleven inclusive,

thereby keeping intact, as far as possible, the City of Cambridge.

The changes proposed in district 9 provide for the addition of Arlington and Belmont to this district in place of wards four to ten inclusive in Cambridge. The population of this district by the suggested amendment is reduced from 298,398 to 293,019.

The interchange of Blackstone and Ashland is proposed for the purpose of bringing Blackstone into a district where it geographically belongs. This brings it into a district not only where it geographically belongs, but into a district with which it has been closely associated in every association of life for very many years.

I hope that you may find it possible to make these suggested changes. None of them materially affect the present political alignment, but they tend to make the bill more agreeable to the people affected by it. When I say the people affected by it, I mean the voting population of our Commonwealth. This is particularly true in regard to the Cambridge situation. It seems to me that a city of the size of Cambridge is entitled to a representation in Congress from among its citizens. This commendable objective is seriously, if not absolutely, prohibited by the split-up of the city into four different districts. Such a split-up obviously makes each part a subservient unit of the respective districts; robs the people of their political power; and, as stated, strongly tends toward making it impossible for a citizen of Cambridge to seek Congressional honors.

JOSEPH B. ELY.

