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## **Official Statement on Laramie City Ward Proposal 1b and Request for Postponement**

Thank you for the opportunity to present our thoughts and our recommendation to postpone the third reading of Proposal 1b.

The first area of concern with Proposal 1b within the Albany County Clerk's Office regards the overlap of the expected House District 13 and Ward 2, the precinct that includes the University of Wyoming dorms. This precinct, dubbed 13-2 in the rest of this report, currently has a census population of 1,884. Due to the largely transient student population of this precinct, there are currently 204 registered voters in this area. That would be acceptable, except that the four primary dorm buildings are planned to be demolished by 2026, and the student population will be moved to House District 45, which would be the future precinct of 45-2. With the potential of 166 registered voters being moved out of 13-2, only 38 registered voters may remain from the fraternities and sororities.

The existence of 38 voters in an entire precinct is a grave threat to voter confidentiality; this area's status as its own precinct is entirely unacceptable when considering the needs of elections within the City of Laramie. While the population numbers are technically adequate at this moment in time, it will only be four years before this area is unconstitutional based on the current University of Wyoming plan.

The second primary concern we have involves the problem of population distribution and West Laramie. We believe West Laramie is a community of interest with overwhelmingly overlapping interests in representation. While we do appreciate and respect the idea of establishing a greater number of ties between West Laramie and city representatives, this does not necessarily increase the quality of these ties. In Ward 1, the population west of the river is currently 2,001, with the east side of the river having a population of 8,183. As for Ward 2, a similar split exists. The west side of the river has a population of 2,409, while the east side of the river's population is 7,917. Less than a quarter of the people in each Ward reside in West Laramie.

While the numbers likely speak for themselves, we believe that the interests of West Laramie cannot be properly represented when its voting population is split up and attached to two larger populations. This is not a precedent that we want to set in the City of Laramie, and we would like to advocate for a reconsideration of this route. This does not involve West Laramie more with the rest of the city, but Proposal 1b instead removes all opportunity for these citizens to vote in their preferred city representatives when overwhelmingly outnumbered by an area of different socio-economic statuses within the same Ward.

With these two concerns in mind, we at the Albany County Clerk's Office strongly encourage a postponement of the current proceedings. It is also important to note that the current Redistricting Bill has not been signed into law yet, so there is still ample time to meet our statutory deadlines. At this moment, we do endorse the following proposals: 3 and 3-2.