

Dr. Peter Miller, Researcher, The Brennan Center for Justice

Peter Miller graduated from high school in Billings, Montana. He holds a doctorate and a master's degree in political science from the University of California, Irvine, a bachelor's degree in political science from Reed College, and was a Fulbright Scholar in Finland. One of Miller's articles on redistricting commissions was cited by the 2015 U.S. Supreme Court decision written by Justice Ginsberg in *Arizona State Legislature v. Arizona Independent Redistricting Commission*. He is a frequent commentator on topics related to redistricting reform, voting rights, and elections. Miller is currently a researcher at the Brennan Center focusing on redistricting, voting, and elections.

Sheila Stearns, Chair, Montana Districting and Apportionment Commission

Sheila Stearns is a native of Glendive, Montana, who earned a doctorate in education at University of Montana and holds an honorary doctorate from Montana State University. After six years as chancellor at Montana Western in Dillon, she moved to Nebraska to be president of Wayne State University. Stearns then became the first woman to serve as Montana commissioner of higher education, led the university system for nine years before retiring in 2012. She returned to fill leadership gaps in 2014 as interim chancellor for Montana State University Billings and in 2017 as interim president for the University of Montana. Stearns was appointed by the Montana Supreme Court to be the non-partisan Chair of the Commission.

Jeff Essmann, Montana Districting and Apportionment Commissioner

Jeff Essmann earned his B.S. in Industrial Engineering from the Illinois Institute of Technology in 1974, and his J.D. from the University of Montana in 1977. His professional experience includes working as an attorney, owner/manager of Valet Today Cleaners, and owner/manager of Esstech Limited Liability Corporation. Essmann is a former Republican member of the Montana State Senate. Essmann served as the Majority Leader in the 2011-2012 session and as Senate President in the 2013-2014 session before being term-limited. He then served in the Montana House of Representatives, representing District 54 from 2015 to 2019. Essmann also served as chair of the Republican Party of Montana from 2015 to 2017. Essmann was appointed by the Montana Senate Republican Majority Leader.

Joe Lamson, Montana Districting and Apportionment Commissioner

Joe Lamson has a master's degree in natural resources from the University of Michigan and a bachelor's degree in environmental studies from the University of California at Santa Barbara. He served as a commissioner on both the 2000 and the 2010 Montana Districting and Apportionment Commission. Lamson has a long career in Democratic politics. He was executive director of the state party from 1981 until 1983. From 1983 until 1996, he worked as Democratic U.S. Pat Williams' statewide director, then held various positions in state government. Lamson also ran political campaigns for Democrats Nancy Keenan and Linda McCullough. Lamson was appointed by the Montana Senate Democratic Minority Leader.