



Rural Oregon Counties Want to Secede From State to Join ‘Greater Idaho’

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Conservative Oregonians are trying to leave the increasingly left-leaning state all together to preserve their values – but not by moving elsewhere. A group called Move Oregon’s Border is leading an initiative to have Oregon’s rural counties secede from the rest of the state and join Idaho, *Fox News reports*.

Mike McCarter, 72, a lifelong Oregonian, retired plant nursery worker and firearms instructor, has been leading the separatist movement for almost two years. He said he and many others are eager to “get out from underneath the chokehold of Northwestern Oregon.”

“We’ve watched the shift take place in Oregon politics where the primary concern of the Legislature is Northwest Oregon. That’s where 78% of the state’s population is based. They tend to forget that every law that you pass in the state affects us out in the rural economies, too,” McCarter told Fox News.

He highlighted a number of benefits that come with being a citizen of Idaho, including lower taxes and generally more freedoms with more permissive gun laws and more restrictions on abortion. The state doesn’t allow sanctuary cities, nor does it issue driver’s licenses to “illegal aliens,” to quote from the group’s literature.

Idaho is ranked No. 3 in regulatory freedom whereas Oregon is ranked No. 43, according to the Cato Institute.

Oregon’s state politics took a sharp left turn during the past 20 years, a trend that is creating frustration in the more conservative, rural communities. McCarter pointed to a recently passed law that made Oregon the first state to decriminalize possession of hard drugs.

“Now you look and you say, ‘well, if you’re homeless, if you’re a hard drug user, if you’re a rioter, if you’re an illegal, come to Oregon – we’re a sanctuary state and you won’t get in trouble.’ And that’s not the way conservatives feel in Oregon.”

Portland has frequently been in the news this year after months of violent protests and riots with little government intervention since the death of George Floyd in May in Minneapolis.

“Idaho is not a sanctuary state at all, and they want to protect their citizens. That’s comforting, to live in a state like that who enforces the laws and not let the lawbreakers go free.”

A measure requiring local officials to meet on the subject of changing the border was on the ballot in four counties this past election. It passed in Jefferson and Union counties and was voted down by small margins in Douglas and Wallowa counties, according to Fox News.

Sabrina Thompson, a Union County resident and a reporter for The Observer, said she was not surprised the measure passed in her county — a conservative, agricultural area, KGW reported.

“(Supporters of the movement) don’t like what’s going on in Portland and on the west coast and then Salem, so they want to separate themselves,” Thompson said. “A lot of the support for it comes from the decisions regarding agriculture that have been made regarding taxes on agriculture and ... regulations on farming.

In order for the borders to actually shift, the issue would have to be considered in both Oregon and Idaho’s state legislatures, and the U.S. Congress. The group hopes 19 of Oregon’s southern and eastern counties will secede and become part of what they call “Greater Idaho.”

Move Oregon’s Border will continue collecting signatures for the May 2021 local elections in 11 other counties.