



Written by [James Murphy](#) on August 9, 2024

## Oregon County Formally Requests That State Legislature Consider Border Talks With Idaho

On Wednesday, the Crook County, Oregon, commissioners formally requested that the Oregon state Legislature begin the process of discussing moving the state's eastern portion to Idaho. County Commissioners Seth Crawford, Susan Hermreck, and Brian Barney made the request in a letter to state Senator Lynn Findley and Representative Vikki Breese Iverson.

### The Greater Idaho Movement

The move is a part of the Greater Idaho movement of Oregonians east of the Cascades who are unhappy with the left-wing governance of the state. Thus far, 13 Republican-leaning counties have voted in favor of relocating to Idaho, where they feel their more rural sensibilities will be better served.

The [letter](#) comes after [a ballot measure in May asked](#), "Should Crook County represent that its citizens support efforts to move the Idaho state border to include Crook County?" The measure passed with 53.4 percent in favor, prompting the commissioners to write:

Accordingly, following the will of our people, the Crook County Board of Commissioners wants to express to you that our citizens encourage continued discussions with our Idahoan neighbors regarding the possibility of a westward relocation of the Oregon-Idaho border, potentially resulting in all or a portion of the territory of Crook County, Oregon becoming a part of the State of Idaho.

At present, any discussions between the states would be nonbinding. Both Oregon and Idaho would need to approve the move, as would the federal government. Crook County is the eighth county of the 13 that have approved the measure to formally request that the state take action.

"We applaud the commissioners for listening to their constituents and advocating for them by requesting action from state leaders," [said Greater Idaho's Executive Director Matt McCaw](#):

This is how the system is supposed to work. The people of eastern Oregon have done what they can, and that's make their wishes known at the ballot box. We now need the people who represent us to pick up the ball and carry this conversation forward to the legislature.

### Oregon Governor's Response

In July, Greater Idaho leaders contacted Oregon Governor Tina Kotek asking her to meet with them to



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discuss the movement. McCaw; Mike McCarter, the organization's president; and Sandie Gilson, its vice president, [wrote in a letter to the governor](#):

As the leadership team of the Greater Idaho Movement who has helped the voters in these 13 counties have their voice heard, we believe that the people have spoken and that it is time for elected leaders across the state to hear them out and work towards achieving their goals. Therefore, we are formally inviting you to sit down and meet with us so that we can discuss how we all can work together to achieve win-win solutions that help Oregonians on both sides of the Cascades.

Kotek has been mainly silent on Greater Idaho. However, her office [did release a statement](#) noting that she "believes in an Oregon that stays together and supports each other. She recognizes that it's a wake-up call for the whole state when people are frustrated enough about not being heard to consider joining another state."

But the leaders of the movement reminded the governor that she campaigned on a platform that included listening to constituents:

On the campaign trail and throughout your One Oregon Listening Tour, you repeatedly stated that you wanted to listen to communities and hear your constituents' concerns. As leaders of the most successful county ballot initiative movement in Eastern Oregon history, we are ready to provide you with that opportunity.

Idaho [seems willing](#) to take in the disaffected Oregon counties. In early 2023 the state Legislature passed a nonbinding memorial requesting to begin formal talks to redraw the border.

While moving Oregon's eastern border to Idaho remains a long shot, it's inspiring to see people dissatisfied with their government using the democratic process in an effort to change it. Kotek would do well to sit down with these people, as it's clear they're not going away.



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