

Redistricting Testimony – Congressional District 1 09.08.2021 8am

Dear Redistricting Committee members,

I will focus my testimony on the Congressional Maps as they relate to my county, Washington.

I have been a resident of Washington County for over 35 years. We purchased a home in the Oak Hills area in 1983 and still live there. Our children attended Beaverton schools and participated in programs at the Tualatin Park and Recreation District. I worked at Intel for over 23 years and am now retired. I have seen many changes over the years. I strongly believe that Washington County, with its unique set of interests and issues, should remain intact, in one Congressional District, as it is in Map B.

Washington County is the second most populous county and is the most diverse. Our residents include American Indians, Alaska Natives, Black or African Americans, Asians, Hispanic or Latino of any race, and non-Hispanic whites. 24% of the population speaks languages other than English.

Washington County is home to several universities and colleges and enjoys one of the highest levels of educational attainment in the state. It is also home to some of the largest employers in the region that play an important role in the local development and economy. As an attractive county to work and raise a family, affordable housing in Washington County is a significant concern for many. Nearly a third of housing units are cost-burdened, meaning the resident households spend 30% or more of their income on housing costs. Washington County has ranked as one of the healthiest counties in Oregon but there are still disparities in health insurance coverage across the county.

Ensuring Washington County's diverse population is heard and major issues like affordable housing and access to health care get the appropriate focus, Congressional Map B is the best map. It keeps Washington County intact. Map A divides the Washington County into two districts that combine it with the coast, Yamhill, and Polk Counties. Map A dilutes the ability to address the common interests of Washington County residents and combines it with counties that have their own, very different issues and concerns. Washington County deserves the full attention of a Congressional Delegate.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input,

Melissa Laird
Beaverton