

Co-Chairs Taylor, and Salinas, Vice-Chairs, Knopp, and Boshart-Davis, and members of the redistricting committees,

For the record my name is Blake Helm, president of AFSCME local 2238, and my pronouns are he/him/his. I currently live in Springfield, Oregon [462 35th Street] -- in Congressional District 4, Oregon House District 12, and Oregon Senate District 6.

I want to express my gratitude for the work your committees are doing to take on a complex and difficult task such as redistricting. I am supportive, generally, of the Congress - Plan A and House - Plan C maps that your committees proposed a few days ago. They preserve some important communities of interest located in and around Eugene and Springfield. Specifically, they preserve the University of Oregon as a community of interest, which ensures its effective representation and also preserves the city of Springfield as a community of interest -- allowing for residents, like myself, to elect candidates who are supportive of the city as a whole.

That said, I am disappointed that more was not done to accommodate a significant and important community of interest in the area, survivors of the Holiday Farm fire. The proposed maps do not keep this community together. Doing so would allow the families and small business owners who were impacted to elect their candidate of choice -- one who will be responsive to their needs as they work to recover and rebuild from tremendous losses.

Thank you again for your service and work on this important issue. These maps are a great start, and I hope that you will keep my thoughts in mind as you work to develop finalized district maps for the forthcoming decade.

Sincerely,

Blake Helm