

Attached is my testimony from this morning.

Greetings, Co- Chairs Boshart Davis, Salinas, Chair Taylor and Vice-Chair Knopp and Committee members,

For the record, my name is Marie Bowers, My pronouns are “Rural” and “Farmer” I live in the Coburg area, Congressional District 4, Senate District 6 and House District 11. My family has been farming in Lane and Linn Counties for over 100 years and is located within these districts.

I consider myself highly engaged in politics and the process.

However, for a legislature that praises and asks for citizen engagement they make it hard for the average Jane to understand the process and participate in redistricting, from the map making to even the testimony. I just figured out this week how to make maps, if I would've known earlier I would have needed out the last few weeks doing so.

In 2011, I testified about how important it is to keep communities of common interest together and yet we still ended up in a gerrymandered district. Even my current state Representative Wilde acknowledges that.

And already twice this year I have testified saying the same thing. And while my voice was heard that I do not want the University of Oregon in my district, the majority party decided I would be ok with the Whitaker neighborhood, a large chunk of downtown Eugene and Autzen stadium, all located South of Willamette River. Legislative plans A & C do not work and are the same gerrymandered story with different lines.

I've read many people's testimonies and common theme was that plan C keeps the U of O together...If you look closer it does not include Autzen Stadium or North of Franklin Blvd which the common woman would consider that part of the U of O.

There are several other options, some in OLIS, like House plan B and like the one I drew that keep with natural boundaries, like the Willamette River and transportation links such as Beltline or 126.

For example, one suggests keeps rural Lane County together by drawing East Lane County together around the city limits of Eugene/Springfield. In my personal version my district captures Coburg area and part of North Eugene, goes down to the Willamette River at 126, up the Willamette River, crosses North of Beltline and up to Junction City. I

understand I have a Eugene zip code so that also comes with consequences but does not mean I shouldn't have a chance at fair representation.

Either option B or my map, keeps communities of similar interests and demographic together.

Even in my short time as a rookie map drawer, I also was able to keep U of O and South Eugene including LCC as one district too.

On the Congressional Districts...not sure why having four congressional districts reach into Multnomah County is a good idea. If you have one county that could be a single congressional district...,why wouldn't you? That brings a stronger unified voice for constituents at all levels of government considering many would be shared.

And including two major Universities in Congressional District 4 in Plan A is all but certifying which party will be elected to Congress.

If your party, policies, and politicians are so great then they should have no problem easily winning in a fairly drawn district. That means the district must recognize communities of common interests, stay within natural boundaries when possible, utilizes current transportation links and current political boundaries such as school districts, counties etc.

You cannot force people to agree or get along by putting them in the same legislative district, but you can breed bitterness and even more political division. Which I have seen in my own district.

If you want a unified Oregon, Congressional districts and Legislative districts drawing atypical communities together is not the way, advocating for a governor who would do that is a better choice.

As I heard yesterday in a hearing, "Anytime you mix urban and rural in a district, rural loses". The legislature needs a balance of voices, not just the ones the Super Majority wants to hear.

In conclusion, anyone can put 70,000 people in a district but drawing them to recognize the unique areas of Oregon that makes it Oregon is a challenge and I hope you really take all this public testimony to heart.

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Marie Bowers



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