

Dear Redistricting Committee,

Hello, my Name is Shawn Girdham, I am a resident of The Dalles, a health care worker, husband of a small business owner, father of 2 teenagers and I have been living in Wasco County for 12 years. This is my first time getting involved politically, mainly because I think it's not fair that so many marginalized populations have been unrepresented in Oregon. I didn't really think Salem paid attention to people like me, but I am putting myself out there because redistricting matters. I looked over the proposed maps and the HOUSE AND SENATE PLAN B are the best maps to enfranchise people that for too long have been left behind and left out of the democratic process. Both urban and rural populations deserve a fair shot and fair representation and HOUSE AND SENATE PLAN B maps give us that shot.

Oregonians expect lawmakers to draw political maps that are fair and compact, that keep communities of common interest like school districts and neighborhoods together, provide historically marginalized communities with the representation they deserve, and follow the requirements set forth in Oregon law. Under our current maps, 30% of the members of the Oregon House represent at least some portion of the City of Portland while the City of Portland represents only 15% of the total population of the state of Oregon. Portland should not have an outsized voice in our political process.

Some districts, such as House District 11, seem clearly drawn to disenfranchise rural voters by including a few urban, university precincts that drown out the voices of the rest of the community. Even the current representative for the district recently criticized how the district was drawn, pointing out that it divides multiple communities and that it quote: "does not serve the best interests of my constituents." He went on to say that "we can do better." If you look at a map of the district, I think you would agree.

Several of the maps would lead to further overrepresentation by Portland-area voters at the expense of rural Oregon. For example, one map would put the Portland-area voters in control of selecting 4/6 members of our congressional delegation. An Oregonian analysis further showed that 5/6 of these seats - or approximately 86% - would likely be controlled by one party. Maps that under populate the metro districts and push urban area voters into rural districts while overpopulating these same rural districts limits representation for rural voters and is a clear sign of gerrymandering.

I feel that I am already marginalized and do not have a voice in this state. House and Senate plans A and C discourage me even more and come across as Gerrymandering. I believe that HOUSE AND SENATE PLAN B maps are the best way for Oregon to move forward towards equal representation in the state and fairness to all voters.

Thank you for your time.

Shawn Girdham