

September 9,2021

While most of redistricting testimony being heard today will consist of recommended changes to the current redistricting process, my testimony will consist of how poorly previous redistricting changes to House District 11 were made ten and twenty years ago and how that has produced a situation where one party maintains complete control of the entire district even today. I have chosen House District 11 because I am very familiar with the district.

My wife and I lived in south Eugene in the southern portion of District 11 from 1971 to 2016. During that period, I worked in the northern section of House District 11 for 18-years. Believe me, the southern end of District 11, with the exception of the Creswell area, and the northern end of District 11 could not be more different. South Eugene is a densely populated urban area with mostly upper income individuals connected in many ways to the University of Oregon as well as white collar business employees and college students.

The Lebanon-Sweet Home area in Linn County, along with most areas of Linn County, is generally a rural area and is populated by older residents with medium incomes who enjoy a more relaxed rural lifestyle. The northern area of the district is mostly composed of farm and ranch land and timber land. Employment is likely to be related to farming, ranching and timber extraction. Small towns and communities are dispersed throughout the county.

As is generally known, Democrats want to remain in control of the House of Representatives in Salem by dispersing their party members into as many House districts surrounding the Eugene area as possible. House and Senate Plans A and C attempt to continue this effort by splitting South and Central Eugene into four areas and drawing countless surrounding communities including Lebanon, Sweet Home and Brownsville into House District 11. The result is a perfect example of partisan gerrymandering. In other words, residents in these surrounding communities are being represented by a representative who is relatively unknown to them and lives in Eugene.

The effort to create House District 11 violates nearly every redistricting guideline possible in terms of being contiguous, establishing political boundaries, and more importantly, divides communities of interest. The process manages to violate other guidelines by being drawn for the purpose of favoring a political party. In

addition, the unfair redistricting process has given the Eugene area and the Democrat Party an undeserved level of power in the Oregon House of Representatives. All of this coming at the expense of under served representation in neighboring communities around the Eugene area.

A simple solution would be to put Eugene in a separate house district where all residents would be in a contiguous area and all would share a common bond of a true community of interest.

The House and Senate Redistricting Committees need to rein in this abuse of political power and return to following the guidelines as written for the protection of every citizen in the State of Oregon.

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