

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

My name is Emilio Solano and I am here representing PCUN, a non-profit organization dedicated to empowering farmworkers and working Latinx families in Oregon by building community, increasing Latinx representation in elections, and policy advocacy on both the national and state levels.

I am also the Executive Director at Willamette Academy which is a college access program at Willamette University that serves students by providing support outside of school through mentoring, tutoring, monthly Saturday enrichment sessions, summer camp, and a parent program. We serve Salem-Keizer School District 8th- through 12th-graders from populations that are historically underrepresented in higher education: low-income, people of color, recent immigrants or first-generation college students.

By cultivating in our students both a love of learning and leadership, we guide them on a path to a four-year college or university of their choice — and a brighter future for themselves and our community.

I am speaking here today on behalf of my students, a majority who come from NE Salem, and as a board member of PCUN, an organization serving people that are largely concentrated in Woodburn, Salem, and other parts of unincorporated Salem. The areas of Hayesville, Middle Grove, Four Corners, NE Salem, and Woodburn are all communities that share common interests.

Current HD 22 compacts these communities together and so does House Proposal C. Unfortunately, House Proposal B seems intent on splitting these communities in an effort to grab power for house republicans. Coming from a farm laborer familial background I am hyper aware of the importance of community representation at the legislative level. If proposal B is to see itself through, we are eliminating HD22 as we know it and silencing and disempowering one of our largest communities, many of whom share a similar socioeconomic status, by making it more difficult for them to elect someone that is truly representative and/or shares the interests of that voting block.

This also has the potential of splitting up resources or making it more difficult to seek resources because a community, like Middle Grove or Four Corners, is split into two separate districts. The very students that I support that attend McKay High School or North Salem High School could live across the street from their best friend and lack the same access to support for themselves and their families.

Or, if we look at HD20 that will be created under proposal B, we see the combining of NE and E Salem with the communities of Silverton and Mt. Angel. I don't need to dig into the data to tell you that the communities of east Salem and those of our more rural communities further east have different needs and interests.

I want to end by saying I know that drawing these maps is no easy task and that compromise will no doubt be a part of it. Thank you for your service and work on such an important issue. Given my experience and the advocacy work I do each day for my students in Salem and farmworkers throughout Oregon, I strongly urge this committee to reject proposal B and vote in favor of proposal C. In my opinion, proposal C does the best job of what districts should attempt to do, keeping communities together with shared interests in an effort for representation at every level. I hope you will keep this in mind.