

This document is a written transcription of my live testimony Sept 10, 2021 in the 1:00 pm session.

RE: HOUSE AND SENATE REDISTRICTING IN N & NE PORTLAND

Thank you, House and Senate Interim Redistricting Committees, for all your dedicated energy to make redistricting work for Oregon. And thank you for considering my concerns for this important topic.

My name is Gary Lietke, and I reside in North Portland's Kenton neighborhood, HD44, SD22, and CD3. I consider myself a political activist and invest enormous time and energy to engage the everyday residents of my HD and Multnomah County to care about, be informed, and invest their own energy in civic discourse and problem-solving. It makes your job as legislators much easier and effective when your grassroots constituents do their part in civics study and advocacy.

My ask is your attention to the House and Senate Districts in N and NE Portland, specifically the area now covered by HDs 43, 44, and 45. Oregon House District 44 consistently rates as one of the top districts in the state of Oregon for voter turnout, and I'm sure many of you are keenly aware of our many civic leaders who contribute in so many facets of civic responsibility.

My concern as you draw district boundaries is how they encourage or discourage participation at this *very local level*.

I start by acknowledging that a key objective is facilitating meaningful and potent representation of historically marginalized groups, and I especially appreciate the care you are clearly assigning in the redistricting process to ensure their voice. I do trust that you will synergize that concern with the one I will now discuss.

But specifically, I want to address the shape of HDs and how that impacts participation in local civics-focused organizations, particularly those organized to match the HD boundary and its needs and issues. Everyday people should NOT have to spend more time trying to get to meetings and appointments and back home than the meetings and appointments themselves! You legislators appreciate how these meetings and appointments are often frequent, in order to make progress on projects.

In N and NE Portland, where many people rely on public transit, biking, and walking—distance and non-highway routes are real accessibility factors. These are transportation modes promoted by our local governments. Busy highway routes accessible only by automobile and cab/uber discriminate against the poor, discourage sustainability, and are unsafe for biking and walking.

The current HD44 boundaries exemplify an egregious disrespect of those factors. The very horizontally shaped area extends along the Columbia River all the way from the Willamette River, past the airport to NE 148th Ave. It encompasses about 120 blocks of residential street addresses, and largely isolates residential addresses in the Eastern third.

Instead, I ask you to consider a set of 3 West-to-East contiguous, mostly rectangular HDs, that extend South from the Columbia River. Generally, these 3 would cover the current HD43, 44, and 45 area. But I think they would be residentially more compact than the current districts, and improve local transportation, and thus ability of neighborhoods to identify with each other and its residents to work together in civic matters.

Thank you for listening. I appreciate that assembling all the puzzle pieces into a coherent picture is no small feat.