

Redistricting Committee Testimony

Dear Chairs and Redistricting Committees,

My name is Beverly Sherrill, a native Oregonian who has had the opportunity to live in many different areas of our beautiful state. I graduated from The Dalles High School and Oregon State University and currently live in Florence in Lane County in CD4.

Moving to Florence almost three years ago I have learned that my concept of rural Oregon was wrong. The idea that everything east of the Cascades is rural Oregon discounts the fact that every county in the state has rural areas. We are interdependent on each other in our communities based on political boundaries such as counties and school districts, as well as how we live, work, and play through transportation corridors, park districts, etc. In these communities of interest we need to learn how to listen to each other and work together. Rural and urban areas are dependent on each other and that needs to be taken into consideration in drawing these maps.

In preparation for speaking today, I attended information sessions on redistricting and have listened to redistricting testimony from CD1, CD2, and CD4. A consistent theme emerged, the map proposals divide communities of interest including school districts, cities, Tribal communities, and political boundaries everywhere. The criteria for drawing maps include more than communities of interest - they must be contiguous, equal in population, utilize existing geographic boundaries, and be connected by transportation links. If the maps don't meet the redistricting rules why were they submitted?

In my community on the Oregon coast, two of the House map proposals (Maps A and B) divide the city but the best one (Map C) for Florence isn't the best option for other cities or communities. For the congressional district proposals, Map A keeps Florence connected to the southern part of the coast and to Eugene and Lane County. Map B makes no sense because it puts Florence with the north coast and separates us from Eugene and Lane county.

There is no easy solution to redistricting given population growth, political boundaries, our geography, and not to be forgotten, the impending climate crisis. Redistricting will not solve political divisiveness but why add to it?

It is imperative that we understand how dependent we are on each other and do our best to make sure voices are heard and even consider really listening to each other.

The maps need revisions. Please listen to our voices.

Beverly Sherrill, CD4
Florence, OR 97439