

## **Wednesday, September 8 from 5:30-8pm**

I want to thank the committee for giving me a chance to testify. My name is Tierra Salmon and my pronouns are she/her/hers. I live in Overlook, in Congressional District 3, House District 44, and Senate District 22.

I'm a mom, a birthworker, and a grower of herbs and plant medicines. In addition to growing my own herbs for healing, I am active with two farms that are owned by BIPOC. Wombyn's Wellness Garden is an Indigenous owned farm and Mudbone Grown, a Black owned farm. My own plot - and these two farms owned by other BIPOC folks - are part of claiming our land and space as Black and Indigenous folks in N/NE Portland.

I've lived in N/NE Portland the majority of my life and I've lived through the gentrification that has come with the past twenty years. What happens to a community when its residents are pushed out? The lived experience is this: there are fewer aunties to lend a helping hand when I have to go to a birth at 2am and I need someone to watch my kids. The lived experience of gentrification is White people who are new to my neighborhood looking at me like "What is this person doing here?" But I am not new here, they are.

The facts are that North and Northeast Portland are still home to the Black community. The narrative that Portland is so white or that North and Northeast Portland are gentrified invisibilizes the Black community that lives here today and continues to call this home. In addition, Black businesses like mine, Black farms like Mudbone, Black stores, and Black churches still call North and Northeast Portland home.

I also hope the legislature will consider how the Black community has been harmed by redistricting in the past, and makes different choices this time around. The legislature failed to complete redistricting in 1941 and in 1951, when the Black community had grown from 2,000 to nearly 25,000 people. By not acknowledging our growth in Oregon, the legislature set up decades of under-representation for the Black community.

When I look at the maps that the legislature is considering redistricting this time around, specifically House Proposal C, I see opportunities to connect my community, address gentrification and ensure we can elect leaders who look like us and come from our communities. Where to put the boundary of my district matters. For example, I-5 was built through the Black community in the 1960s, but our community was never divided. A more logical boundary for the district is Interstate Avenue, which remains home to many Black owned businesses. And some parts of the district proposal bring in neighborhoods that we have very little in common with, like the neighborhoods of University Park and Cathedral Park.

Thank you for hearing my feedback today.