

Hola, my name is Gabriel Fernandez, a 29-year-old man of color that identifies as Latinx. I've lived in the Nob hill neighborhood since June of this year. I'm a certified Speech language pathologist who moved here to work in a program that helps and coaches' parents/caregivers who have children who are developmentally delayed, on the Autism spectrum, or who have diagnosis that effect communication skills. Many of the communities I serve identify as Black, Native, Latinx, Asian, and many other identities including but not limited to biracial. These communities/families are located primarily in Northeast Portland, East Portland (Gresham/Lent, Rockwood/Cully/etc.). Currently one in three people in the State of Oregon now identify as person of color. These communities are impacted by various issues, such as gentrification/displacement, environmental injustices, racial injustices, food deserts, and discrimination of all sorts that effect their day to day living experience. Without a fair redistricting process there is less probability of adequate representation within new districts formed. It's important to keep these communities in mind and together to have better representation and access to resources. Communities of color deserve to thrive in this state especially since we are the most likely to be impacted by climate change, displacement, racism, and many more critical issues.

Other than my profession, I spend most of my time cycling in and around Portland. Coming from a very diverse city, Orlando Florida, I was very concerned with the lack of diversity Portland had to offer. I was lucky to have found a local group of cyclists who started a group of Bi-POC cycling events. Here I was able to meet and connect with so many wonderful individuals in my community. I was able to find my sense of community in a large city/sport that is predominantly Caucasian.

Thank you for taking the time to read my written testimony. I believe my community should be kept together for the various reasons listed above. Thank you everyone on the committee for their consideration of keeping communities of color together and holding a fair redistricting process.

Thanks,

Gabriel Fernandez