

House co-chairs Salinas and Boshart Davis, Senate Chair Taylor, and Vice-chair Knopp

My name is Omar Alvarado and I am a resident of Keizer. I have lived in this community for 25 years. Both my partner and I work in the City of Woodburn where we take I-5 and the 99-E to get to work and our commute is about 15-20 minutes one way depending on traffic. One area of importance for us is grocery shopping. We have to drive down South to South Salem, which is about 20 minutes away with traffic, to grocery stores that offer a more healthy variety of food options compared to my area.

Although Keizer is my home, I must recognize that a lot of my neighbors do not look like me nor do we share the same habits. We are the youngest homeowners on the block and have a gap in generational differences from my neighbors. But still, we have values in enhancing our ways of living, accessing resources, and having plenty of recreational areas for our families. I have seen how much advocacy and work organizations and community members have done to ensure that communities of interest stay together and have the resources they need to thrive. My neighbors in NE Salem and Woodburn have done a phenomenal job at responding to the needs of our community.

I want to be sure that I count on the parks, local businesses, and healthy resources in my current district to still be there; and if they are not, to have them expand and be present in our growing community. My community is very important to me, and I think we are in a position to make a positive difference.

The set of maps proposed by the legislature are a good start to what could continue to allow communities like mine to thrive. House Plan C is the best for my community since it connects Woodburn and Salem as the current HD 22 does. HD 22 is a unique district and separating the communities who have set roots for so long would be a reversal of the work community elders have done. It makes sense to keep these two areas together the way House Plan C does because they are easily connected through I-5.

House Map C also recognizes the communities in Four Corners and up North in Hayesville in comparison to House Plan B, which erases these communities and puts them into a very large and absurd district that makes no sense. These communities have very different needs and pulling them together causes more harm than good.

I understand that this is a difficult task but strongly urge this committee to move forward with House and Senate Plan C's.

Thank you,
Omar Alvarado