

Chair Taylor, Vice-Chair Knopp, Co-chairs Salinas, Boshart-Davis, and members of the redistricting committee,

For the record my name is Prof. Janet Lorenzen, I live in Salem, Marion County, Congressional District 5, Senate District 10, House District 19. And I have for the past 6 years. Thank you for your diligent work on this committee. I have a few recommendations for Salem and Marion County.

I work at Willamette University, about half of our faculty and staff members live in Portland or Wilsonville and commute to Salem. And several faculty members live in Salem and travel to Portland to teach classes. It's also my understanding that homes in North-West Salem are often used as a bedroom community for travel to Wilsonville and Portland. I think of the I-5 corridor between Portland and Salem as deeply interconnected in terms of home-life and work-life.

Therefore, (1) I think pairing Marion County with the Southern Portland Suburbs makes sense. The district would be compact and contiguous.

(2) Second, pairing NW Salem with rural areas, as in Plan B, doesn't make sense. Salem should stay together as one community of interest. And people of color in North-West Salem should not be separated from people of color in East Salem.

Additionally, I have many Latinx students who commute from Woodburn to come to classes in Salem or drive in from East Salem. My students are deeply interested in supporting the political power of Latinx communities, as am I. In the interest of Latinx political representation, (3) Salem, Woodburn, and Gervais – which are all in Marion County – should be kept together so that Latinx people living in those areas can make their voices heard. Marion county has a population that is nearly 30% Latinx, the highest percentage of any county in the state. Breaking up Salem and Woodburn would amount to a textbook example of cracking and stacking, or separating Latinx residents from each other and diluting the Latinx vote with either working-class, rural white votes or middle-class, urban white votes. Woodburn is already contained within one district and changing that would disenfranchise residents.

Also, Plan B divides up Salem in a way where no district has a majority of people of color in a small region that has large and vibrant Latinx communities. Plan B dilutes the percentage of people of color in the one area in the state where a majority minority district is possible and justifiable. This would be a case of racial gerrymandering.

I think that the proposal in Map A makes the most sense and that any map adopted in Oregon needs to respect and support Latinx political representation.

Thank you for your service on this important issue.

Sincerely,
Prof. Janet Lorenzen

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Willamette University was previously the Indian Manual Labor Training School and is on the land of the Kalapuya, represented today by the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde and the Confederated Tribes of the Siletz. Support the climate goals of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians: <http://atntribes.org/climatechange/>