

September 8

Good evening Co-Chairs Taylor, and Salinas, Vice-Chairs, Knopp, and Boshart-Davis, and members of the redistricting committees,

For the record my name is Sara Schmitt, my pronouns are she, her and hers and I live in House District 44 in Multnomah County. I am an educator, a leader in my union, and I have lived as a renter in the Overlook neighborhood in North Portland for the past 3 years. My husband bike commutes to work daily, and a small delight in our neighborhood is walking over to watch the sun set behind the West Hills from the bluff on Willamette Blvd.

First off, I really appreciate the hard work of this committee, and the importance of the responsibility that you've been tasked with. I know there are a lot of complexities to drawing new district lines, and I hope that the testimony you're hearing today is helpful.

When I first looked at the maps for North Portland, I oriented myself by looking for the major landmarks and natural boundaries. It looks like there has been thought given to transportation links like [Interstate](#), [Greeley](#), [Lombard](#), [Columbia Boulevard](#) and the [St. Johns Bridge](#), as well as natural boundaries that need our care and protection, like the Willamette River, Smith and Bybee Lakes, and the Columbia River to our north.

What is not visible on these maps are the ways that our communities have changed since the last redistricting process. It's not cut and dry, either. I've seen a lot of new development in my neighborhood, with condos, mixed-use buildings, and houses

that are flipped by developers - residents have also been impacted by housing prices that have skyrocketed over the last 10 years.

Something else that's not visible on the maps, are the places in my community where there are homes, but not necessarily houses. Our houseless neighbors are living in the area around Delta Park, along the I5 corridor, and the beautiful community of Hazelnut Grove in Overlook. The demographics in North and NE Portland, and across the river to the West Hills are complex and deserve very careful consideration. I think these maps are a good start, and there is more work to do to drill down to the details.

This process needs to ensure that representation is given to Oregonians who have been and currently under-represented and marginalized, and to ensure that our new legislative districts align with the ways that our communities have changed. [Thank you for your service, and for undertaking this important work to protect democracy, and create the best future for all Oregonians.](#)

Sara Schmitt