

03/17/2021

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

For the record my name is Maria Cabrales, my pronouns are she, her, hers, and I live in Marion County District 5. I have lived in this area my whole life, going on 25 years.

Throughout this redistricting process I believe these key things should be at the forefront of consideration. This committee should center impacted communities in the process and outcome because we need to feel represented in our district. I want to share a little bit more about my story and why we care about redistricting.

Growing up as part of the public school system I found myself taking classes and learning lessons in my first language. Writing essays and reading stories that were culturally relevant to my own experiences. With homework that my parents could actually understand and actively help me with as part of the bilingual K-12 program. When conferences came, more often than not they'd be met with bilingual teachers who understood them. Being from a District that is a majority Latinx allowed my family to find and have access to support systems like the teachers in the public school system that contributed to our success and continues to contribute to the success of our neighbors.

Whether it be working from 4 in the morning to 5 in the afternoon under the scorching sun, planning a quinceañera, missing our families because they are too far away to regularly visit, or spending Saturday mornings in the park watching club soccer games. When we walk down the street, and around our neighborhoods there is always someone there that looks like us, speaks like us, and understands our struggles. Keeping communities of interest together allows us to build power and solidarity with one another.

This is why representation matters, our parents, cousins, and neighbors deserve to be represented by someone who they can communicate with. Someone who they can have a conversation with. But it's not only about language, it's about understanding the culture and customs as well as having shared experiences. Being represented by someone who can relate to our stories because they have lived it, or know of a relative who has. Who shares in our struggles and understands our needs.

This committee should use additional data that is already available in the state of Oregon. These resources can include the PSU Population Research Center, the American Community Survey, school districts, and housing developments to start looking at and considering. This can give us a chance to start the process before the census data is available and then re-engage our communities with maps made using census data.

I look forward to working with this committee, the Oregon legislature, and our communities to ensure that redistricting engages the BIPOC community and that it responds to our growing

needs. The Legislature's process for engaging Oregon communities in redistricting is going to be critical. Thank you very much for your time and work on this issue.

Maria G. Cabrales