

March 18, 2021

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

For the record my name is Daysi Bedolla Sotelo, my pronouns are she, hers, ella and I live in Marion County, House District 22. I have lived in this area for over 10 years now, and I feel like I found my home away from home. This district is rich in culture, diversity, language, traditions, and great food. This area is very important to me as many of my family members live in the district. You see, I am a first generation student in a household of 33 grandchildren I was the first one who was sent to break walls, and barriers in this society. Just like me there are many that are coming along and learning the ropes of the systems that we have to navigate.

In 2016, when Representative Teresa Alonso-Leon was elected. I had hope. Hope that one day I could run for office, hope that my little sister could see herself in leadership positions and dream of being the President one day. As our Latinx community continues to grow and there are more little girls I want them to continue to see themselves in these leadership positions. I want to make sure that there is more representation in our legislature and that those that are in power understand the struggle of farmworkers like my parents who wake up every single morning with the purpose to provide for their families. I want elected officials to understand that our parents can't stay home during pandemics, wildfires or any emergencies because they have to work, and that they deserve protection and a fair wage for their work.

As someone who identifies in the Latinx community, I am concerned about how the legislation affects our everyday lives. One of the major wins we have had as a community has been Driver Licences for all. Without the representation in the legislature, many of our community members would not have been able to get their license this year. We know that our communities win when we come together and we were able to do this because these individuals are our neighbors, our siblings, our compadres and our friends and we share lived experiences.

Redistricting is important to us and we ask that impacted communities are asked to be at the table and their experiences are heard. We want other districts to have the same opportunity as House District 22 all over the state where those who vote feel represented and heard. We know that there is already a system put in place that allows us to continue with the redistricting process and includes the voices of communities. By having these hearings and including us we are able to engage and give our feedback to this committee.

Although, I know that we can't use census data because of Covid-19 I urge you all to start the process by using additional data that is already available to us such as the PSU Population Research Center, American Community Survey. COVID-19 Relief has already excluded many of our BIPOC communities and disenfranchised us, and we cannot afford to exclude them from this process as well. Our voices need to be heard, and represented when these lines are being drawn as this will dictate what our state looks like in terms of representation for the next 10 years.

I trust that the legislature will act in our communities best interest and center our voices. I also trust that my Representative who looks like me will advocate for my community and our needs. I look forward to working with this committee, the Oregon legislature, and our communities to ensure that redistricting engages the Latinx community and that it responds to our growing needs.

Thank you very much for your time and work on this issue, and I'd be happy to answer any questions.

Daysi Bedolla Sotelo