

Lori Stegmann
Multnomah County Commissioner
Representing East County, District 4



4/10/2021

House Special Committee on Redistricting
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Chairs Salinas, Vice-Chair Boshart Davis, and members of the committee,

I was thrilled to hear yesterday that the Oregon Supreme Court has extended the deadline for the Oregon legislature to complete the state redistricting process. This will now allow us to have accurate and fair representation statewide.

I represent District 4 of Multnomah County, which begins at East 148th in Portland and extends out to the Hood River County line. It not only includes outer SE Portland, but Gresham, Fairview, Troutdale, Wood Village, Corbett and the unincorporated areas through Bonneville.

East Multnomah County is rich in diversity and has become home to many communities from around the world with over 40 languages spoken here. We have some interesting boundaries that exist, both human and geographically made. In the west part of my district, the Rosewood Community is an area that has been hindered by the city boundaries of Portland and Gresham. Referred to by some as “no-man’s land” this community has suffered from a lack of emergency services, where jurisdictional confusion around law enforcement has led to some neighborhoods not receiving adequate assistance.

On the eastern edge of my district in the Columbia River Gorge area, there are small unincorporated residential communities, which are more closely aligned to the urban core even though they are located in a largely uninhabited area. As the legislative districts are currently drawn, some rural areas are combined with more urban-like communities resulting in representation that is largely focused on adjacent, more rural counties. This can lead to competing priorities at both county and state levels.

It’s imperative that we keep communities like these in mind to ensure that redistricting does not result in decreased resources and/or lower levels of service.

When it comes to determining district boundaries, census data is vital, but data alone cannot replace the lived experience of our residents. Ensuring that community members who speak a language other than english have equitable access to the table is paramount so that all voices of our community are heard. I so appreciate and encourage you to continue this robust public engagement process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lori Stegmann".

Commissioner Lori Stegmann, Multnomah County District 4