

CD 3 - April 10, 2021 Oral Testimony

Chair Salinas, Chair Taylor, Vice Chairs Boshart Davis and Knopp, members of the committee:

For the record my name is Steven Demarest, my pronouns are he, his, him. I live in northeast Portland where I am active in my community and a recent retiree from public service. I have lived in Congressional District 3 for almost 33 years. I moved to this district from northwest Portland in order to purchase a home and to raise a family.

My history reflects the character of the area where I live. NE Portland is home to neighborhoods of middle- and working-class family residences, neighborhoods of historical communities with a strong sense of neighborhood and with neighborhood pride. This is why redistricting is important to us. This legislature has the opportunity to help shape what sort of representation the NE Portland neighborhoods, with their distinct histories and culture, will have – their representation in the state legislature and in congress for the next decade. That representation will impact our future as communities and help determine if the NE Portland neighborhoods, including our unique, location-based commercial and arts districts, continue to thrive. The

cohesive neighborhoods of NE Portland must not be divided by arbitrary district boundaries.

At the congressional district level, Portland and Multnomah County east of the Willamette River is an area that has grown greatly in population and diversity. It has multiple school districts. It has inadequate infrastructure. It requires a representative who understands its unique issues and funding needs.

An open and accountable deliberative process will result in fair district boundaries in Oregon. So, I support the legislature taking the lead on the redistricting process. Thank you for the lengths you are undergoing to take public comment. The public's input, including the input of the diverse groups in congressional district 3, is necessary for drawing fair lines.

Please begin the redistricting work now. The Oregon Supreme Court has given the legislature a short window between the hoped-for release of official census data and the court's deadline. The window could be VERY short if the data is not released as soon as hoped. There is reliable data available now, including from Portland State University, that the

committee could consider so it is not starting from scratch when the official census data is released.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Additional (Written) Testimony

The maps posted by the legislature showing how lopsided representation based on population has become in the last 10 years in Oregon. This has resulted in under-representation for some Oregonians that has particularly impacted BIPOC, immigrant, and LGBTQ communities. It is anticipated that the disproportionate population growth in the next 10 years will occur in the same areas it occurred in the last 10 years.

The 2021 redistricting will not result in exactly even populations in each state House and Senate, or federal congressional, district. Different factors will result in a range of population instead. One of the factors that should be considered when creating a district and where it falls on that range is anticipated future population growth in order to minimize the lopsidedness that will result in the next 10 years.