

April 10 2021

Co-Chairs, Vice-Chairs, and members of the redistricting committees,

For the record my name is Joy Alise Davis, my pronouns are she/her and I live in Multnomah County within Congressional District 3. I am the Executive Director of Imagine Black, a Black led nonprofit focused on democracy, leadership development and civic engagement.

I have lived in the state of Oregon for nearly seven years. When I first decided to move to this state I was excited to be a part of a strong Oregon Black community and I was excited to be living in a state that is dedicated to improving participatory civic engagement and democracy.

Imagine Black envision a world where people of African descent enjoy the rights, resources, and recognition to be a thriving, resilient, and connected community. We view things through [The Black Queer Feminist lens](#).

We understand that liberation for all Black people can only be realized by lifting up the voices, experiences and prioritizing the issues of historically silenced and vulnerable groups within Black communities – specifically, queer, trans and GNC, femme, poor, disabled, working, and undocumented people. We take Fannie Lou Hamer's words seriously: "Nobody's free until everybody's free."

As you all know, Oregon was not designed for everybody to be free. It was not designed for BIPOC people to participate in shaping Oregon.

Black Oregonians are ready to participate in the redistricting process. In order for our community to be able to meaningfully engage in the process they will need to have accessible information. In the Black community that means translations into Somali, Swahili, Amharic and Arabic. We need a process that is mindful of the technology divide in this state. **It was extremely difficult to logon to this testify this morning.**

We deserve a redistricting process that understands that vulnerable populations, the one area will be impacted directly by the decision of this redistricting process and a few virtual testimony events are not enough for meaningful engagement.

It means giving people a reasonable amount of notice before the hearings and publicizing them in places and spaces our communities use. And it means hiring a Black sign language interpreter fluent in [Black American Sign Language](#) for translation.

As the Executive Director of Black-led nonprofit focused on democracy, I strongly believe that we are a much stronger Oregon community when we have fair representation and deep civic engagement.

I strongly urge the committee to have more engagement and education with communities. And that this plan is shared out in advance so that our communities have time to learn about this complicated process.

I look forward to working with this committee, the Oregon legislature and our communities to ensure that redistricting engages the Black 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.