

Testimony to Charter Review Commission public hearing June 28, 2021, presented by Walter Weyler, Chair, DNA

I am speaking on behalf of the Downtown Neighborhood Association. We are a dense, diverse neighborhood, housing not only the downtown business core, but PSU and about 15,000 residents.

We are very aware of problems our Portland City Commissioners face due to the current Commission form of government. As residents of the city we are impacted by these problems too. Problems become intractable and hard to resolve in the siloed structure that exists because Commissioners are bureau administrators with budgets to defend.

We believe that for this city to work, an appointed, non-political professional city manager must be hired and given day to day responsibility for operational management, oversight and coordination. Elected officials must give final approval to the City's budget and operate as a legislative body.

We believe that there are too few Commissioners and that geographical representation is vital. Each part of this city has distinct needs and deserves an elected official who answers to them at the ballot box and can take their concerns to the Council as a whole.

We are following your work and are grateful that you have volunteered to do this very important task. We support you, and are ready to assist in providing input, educating our membership on your work and helping to get out the vote when you have referred new Charter language to the ballot.