

10312025 Ohio Redistricting Commission.mp4

Co-Chair Rep. Stewart [00:00:03] Staff please call the roll.

Staff [00:00:05] Chair Stewart.

Co-Chair Rep. Stewart [00:00:06] Here.

Staff [00:00:07] Co-Chair Antonio?

Co-Chair Minority Leader Antonio [00:00:08] Here.

Staff [00:00:08] Governor DeWine?

Governor Mike DeWine [00:00:09] Present.

Staff [00:00:10] Secretary LaRose?

Sec. of State Frank LaRose [00:00:11] Here.

Staff [00:00:11] Auditor Faber?

Auditor Keith Faber [00:00:12] Yes.

Staff [00:00:13] Senator Timken?

Sen. Timken [00:00:14] Here.

Minority Leader Rep. Isaacsohn [00:00:14] Leader Isaacsohn?

Co-Chair Rep. Stewart [00:00:18] Thank you, we have a quorum present. At this time, I would like the commission to review and approve the minutes from our previous meeting. Are there any additions or corrections to the minutes? Hearing none, the minutes stand as approved by the commission. A few rules of the road. I think we need to restate before this commission meeting moves forward. This is a public meeting. That means it's open to attend. It's not open to perform. There will be no interjecting, interrupting, heckling. This is not the Ohio State football game. We're not going to have cheering after every single play. If you cannot follow these rules, the committee will stand at ease while the sergeant at arms removes you. We have 19 witnesses today and we'd like to make sure we can get to all of them if those rules can be abided by. At this time, we will hear public testimony from witnesses who have requested to testify publicly before the commission. Public testimony again will be limited to three minutes per witness. Our first witness today is Wesley Boongaarden. Wesley Boomgarden going once, going twice. Our next witness is Julia Cattaneo. Welcome to commission. You may proceed.

Julia Cattaneo [00:01:38] Hello. Members of the Ohio Redistricting Commission. I'm Julia Cataneo, a resident of Columbus. This commission has not given the citizens of Ohio a true opportunity to testify. Normally I would thank you for that opportunity, but not this time. The meeting's extremely short notice and no map from a transparent process was provided. The map was posted after the start of yesterday's meeting. But that said, I will do my best and hope that you will honor the Ohio Constitution and what the Ohioans voted for. Governor DeWine, on the news, called this commission map a compromise. I now

understand why you did not attend yesterday's meeting. How is this map, which is much more gerry-mannered than the current one, a compromise? Here's my take. The constitutional process was delayed over and over again. The threat from the Republicans, if the Democrats don't agree to a map now, it will go back to the legislators, where they will pass an even more gerrymandered map. This isn't a compromise. It's a threat. How is this representing Ohioans? It is proof of why gerrymandering is a threat to democracy. Ohioans vote about 55 Republican and 45 Democrat. As per the Secretary of State's office, all of you swore an oath to the Ohio Constitution. The deadline for the Ohio Redistricting Commission is today. This commission, again, chose to drag its feet. Can anyone explain how we are going to provide input on a proposed map that we had less than 24 hours to review? How does this commission choice honor the Ohio constitution and your oath? There are good rules for fair map making in the Ohio Constitution, which we are a state that is lucky to have that. And we expect you to do right by the voters and create fair voting districts. Not threatening, and calling this commission's gerrymandered, unfair map a compromise. Yes, you are compromising your integrity, honor, duty, and to represent Ohioans. I urge this commission to vote no on your proposed map. It does not follow the Ohio Constitution in its creation and does not represent how Ohioans vote. 55% Republican, 45% Democrat. Please find your integrity and honor. Do not let this commission fail Ohio voters and citizens once again. I will take any questions.

Co-Chair Rep. Stewart [00:04:50] Questions from the commission. Seeing none, thank you for your testimony.

Julia Cattaneo [00:04:54] Of course not.

Co-Chair Rep. Stewart [00:04:55] Our next witness will be Michelle Evancho-Chapman. Miss Chapman? Our next witness will be Christopher Frazier. Mr. Frazier here? Our next witness will be Zachary Gibbs.

Zachary Gibbs [00:05:27] My name is Zachary Gibbs and I'm a constituent of District 10. I stand before the Ohio Redistricting Commission again today, just a mere 18 hours after the map was uploaded for citizens to review. I would enjoy standing here spending my five, well now three minutes, explaining the major issues with the map that has been presented, followed by every minute detail of yet how again the Ohio voter will end up paying the price for the illogical fruit this mission has come to bear. I would be in fear, however, that those three minutes would be three times the amount of time that you actually spent on the doodles that you presented to the Ohio citizens. It has been made clear by members of this own commission that they had no intention of negotiating between the aisle or faithfully seeking a bipartisan map. It is difficult to contemplate the promises or threats made for people to check their spines, morals, and sworn duties at the door and sell out any chance of Ohio gaining a fair representational map. I ask you. Where would we all be today had our founding fathers been as submissive to the tyrant Kings as this commission has been? We have heard the threats. Remember, Ohio has passed new laws restricting finance for reforms, or how the Secretary of State will be their savior because he may not be able to certify the petitions within the timeframe. And we are aware that the governor, who could not grace us with his constituents with even a moment of his time yesterday, likely because he is simply just collecting his paycheck, waiting for Vivek to move in, and no honest motive for helping Ohioans. It is no secret that the GOP has its tentacles so deep inside these sacred hallways that they have been emboldened enough to already declare Vivek as governor of Ohio. Oh, what a magical pat on the head from the big guy can do. So go ahead, pat yourselves on the back, wait for the attaboy or girl that will never come, and have your moments of smugness and arrogance. Oh gee, you have

really done well for the masters pulling your strings. I will end by paraphrasing Daniel Webster from address at Springfield, Massachusetts, September 29th, 1847. There's a chart in a compass for us to study, to consult, and to obey. The chart is the Constitution. Did this commission study, consult, or obey this chart? Thank you for those who have listened, and I hope you all have the holiday season that you deserve.

Co-Chair Rep. Stewart [00:07:46] Next witness will be James Gregory.

James Gregory [00:07:55] Members of the Ohio State Government, thank you for the opportunity to address you today on an issue that defines the very core of our democracy, and that's fair maps. My name is Jim Gregory. I live in Dublin. I have resided in Franklin County since 1993, and I love my community. I care deeply about the issue of redistricting maps as I believe it's something that if done with fairness and integrity, can reduce the extremism that's growing in our country and ensure that people get to elect their representatives fairly and have a voice in the process. This is fundamental to American democracy and, I believe, to our state constitution. It's with disappointment and urgency that this body must acknowledge what the people of Ohio already know. Our redistricting process remains deeply flawed, lacking fairness, collaboration, and transparency that true representation demands. Redistricting should be a process by which communities are kept whole, voices are elevated, and the public's trust in government is earned. Instead, Ohio has endured years of backroom negotiations, secretive map drawing, and disregard for the constitutional mandate of representational fairness. This body is watched as fair, citizen-led maps were ignored, with current district lines engineered instead to entrench power, not to reflect the will of the people. We must never forget the wisdom and integrity shown by former Ohio State Supreme Court Justice Maureen O'Connor, a Republican. She stood for the rights of every Ohioan, writing, and I quote, Ohioans may opt to pursue further constitutional amendment to replace the current commission with a truly independent, non-partisan commission that more effectively distances the redistricting process from partisan politics, end quote. And I think her call was clear. Fair maps are not an abstraction. They're a legal, ethical, and democratic necessity. Yet this urgency has been unanswered. District after district, Ohioans have seen their community splintered, their influence diluted through gerrymandering. Ohio is now regarded as one of the most gerrymander states in the nation, with maps so distorted that outcomes are predetermined long before votes are even cast. The system has failed to honor its commitment to keep communities whole. Even after overwhelming reforms were passed by voters in 2015 and 2018. It's frankly ridiculous that while Ohio's political landscape may be 55% Republican, the composition of the legislature doesn't come close to mirroring that. In a true democracy, 55% of our residents are registered as Republicans. Roughly 55% percent of the seats should reflect that. And if Ohio ever became 80% Republican then 80% of the seat should reflect that it's common sense. Anything less is an affront to justice. But the shameful reality is not just about bad numbers. It's a corrosive process in our country that we're all dealing with, powered by dark money, the unchecked influence of Citizens United, and the lack of term limits in federal government positions. These failures have driven up wealth inequality, moved our government further from the people, and created a landscape where those with the most wealth dictate the outcomes.

Co-Chair Rep. Stewart [00:11:27] Thank you, sir, your three minutes has expired. Are there questions from the commission? Thank you for your testimony.

James Gregory [00:11:34] Okay. I have like 45 seconds. May I finish?

Co-Chair Rep. Stewart [00:11:36] We're going to move forward with the rest of our witnesses and hold everybody to the same standard. Our next witness will be Jim Gregory.

James Gregory [00:11:43] That's myself. Thank you.

Co-Chair Rep. Stewart [00:11:46] I asked the question.

James Gregory [00:11:49] You've got a moderate guy here, lifelong Republican.

Co-Chair Rep. Stewart [00:11:54] Our next witness will be Maxine Irvin.

Maxine Irvin [00:12:06] Good afternoon and thank you for listening to my testimony that I present today. My name is Maxine Irvin and I live in Hilliard, Ohio and I'm a lifelong resident of what was once the great state of Ohio. But I can no longer refer to Ohio as a great state. In 2010, Ohio ranked fifth in the nation for education by education week. In 2025, U.S. News and World Report ranks Ohio schools as 30th in the state. The passage this year of SB1 will continue to slide education in Ohio. During 2024, Ohioans placed a constitutional amendment on the ballot to end gerrymandering. However, the powers that be took pride in changing the language on the ballot to make it appear that a vote to end gerrymandering was a vote to support gerrymandering. I could see through this farce. Unfortunately, too many Ohioans fell for this lie. And voted for the opposite of what they really wanted. And the powers that be are proud of how they misled Ohioans. Approximately 55% of the population in Ohio is Republican, and 45% is Democratic. Therefore, for fair districts, there should be eight Republicans and seven Democratic districts. Ohio districts, before the map under consideration, were 10 and five, respectively. Now this noon map is 12 and 3. This is not a compromise. This is the Republicans riding rough shot through the process only agreeing to negotiate at the last minute with threats that the maps would be even more gerrymandered if the Democrats did not agree. If the Democrats cave, then the Republicans can gloat that this is a bipartisan decision when it is obvious that the Republicans never had any intention of presenting a fair map. Do not let the Republicans claim victory. With their underhanded methods of using threats and coercions to force you into agreeing to discarding our votes. If you agree with this map, you are complying in advance and not representing all of the citizens of the state. You will be complicit in cementing the unfair advantage of the Republicans and enabling them to continue their quest to destroy what was once the well-respected state of Ohio. Therefore, unless the congressional maps accurately represent all of the citizens of Ohio, do not allow them to silence our voice by agreeing to a bipartisan map where the evidence shows that nothing about this map is bipartisan. Thank you.

Co-Chair Rep. Stewart [00:14:51] Questions from the commission? Seeing none, thank you for your testimony. Our next witness will be Lauren Jusek. Mike Lacinak. Mia Lewis.

Mia Lewis [00:15:17] Co-Chairs and members of the Ohio Registration Commission, my name's Mia Lewis. I'm Associate Director at Common Cause Ohio, an organization that still believes in the promise and potential of an inclusive and sturdy democracy. There's a lot of anger and frustration in this room, and it's not just the result of this most recent betrayal. The anger and the frustration has been years in the making. We're not asking for a favor. We're asking you to obey the law. Like the rest of us. Every one of you understood the purpose of the redistricting reform ballot measures in 2015 and 2018. To end gerrymandering, every one of you knows what gerrymandering is and what it isn't. In 2021, right off the bat, commissioners decided to ignore the most fundamental elements of the law, transparency, meaningful public participation, maps that delivered representational

fairness to Ohio voters. In 2021, Secretary LaRose, you called the first calculations of the commission asinine. Governor, you wondered aloud if what was being proposed was even constitutional. The Ohio Supreme Court struck down your rigged districts seven times, but hey ho, no worries, you plowed ahead, set on your course of ignoring the law, ignoring the court, ignoring the voters, and demonstrating to the world what gerrymandering is and why politicians should not be involved in drawing district lines. Clearly the reforms of 2015 and 2018 were not strong enough. They did not unequivocally remove politicians from the redistricting process. And so, Ohio voters who'd had their hearts broken and their districts rigged, went back to the drawing board. The Citizens Not Politicians Ballot Initiative was an attempt to finally, finally create a redistricting process where citizens, not politicians, were in charge, and a fair outcome for all was required in the law itself. One of the arguments made by the governor and others during the run up to the vote on the Citizens Not Politicians Amendment was that Ohio already has good redistricting rules, rules that require transparency, meaningful public participation, and fair maps. Good to know. Now it's 2025, and what do we get? The same old, same old. Maps made in secret, this charade of a hearing, and a map that is gerrymandered up the wazoo. You politicians have been given enough chances. Today you have shown all of us, all of Ohio, politicians cannot be involved in drawing district lines. This process doesn't work. The evidence, right here. There is no better poster child for the need for an independent Citizens Redistricting Commission. Than what is on display here today. A map like this could only have been drawn in secret, which is, by the way, not just a violation of the Ohio Constitution, but also a violation of Ohio Sunshine Law. A map deliberated in public would not look like it was designed by a dizzy toddler. It would not pair Delaware County with Van Wert, Franklin with Highland, Hamilton with Clinton. It would split the cities of Worchester and Mansfield, let alone Cincinnati. And it could not purposefully shore up the district of an incumbent who was getting worried that his margin was looking too thin.

Co-Chair Rep. Stewart [00:18:40] Thank you, Ms. Lewis, your time has expired. Questions from the committee. Seeing none, thank you for your testimony. That'll be warning number one and there won't be a second. Next witness will be Beth Lykins.

Beth Lykins [00:19:06] Good morning, co-chairs and members of the Joint Committee on Congressional Redistricting. Governor DeWine, I'm particularly pleased to be in front of you this morning, thank you. I don't know the words that would finally break through to you. I have watched as politicians have ripped this country into two over the past two decades. I am exhausted and I'm heartbroken. I've been called your enemy, delusional, deranged, and an infection. Not by people on social media, but by our president. Being called names on the surface is not that big of a deal. But when those words are said by the leader of the free world, they take root and spread out into people's psyche. We're in a moment where years of partisan rhetoric has led to partisan line drawing, which has then succeeded in completely dividing us. Leaders stopped encouraging good faith and started encouraging boastfulness. This is absolutely not one-sided. I understand that. There have been disastrous decisions made in the past on both sides. I don't have to agree with you to see that you're not wrong to stand up for your beliefs. But we as a country are getting this moment wrong. The blame isn't being put on the leaders it should fall to, but is being put on the public, and by shifting the blame to the public you directly have a hand in our division and everything that comes out of it. In order to be leaders and meet the moment you have been called for, you must break away from the norm. Ohio does have a Republican majority. 55% of voters in Ohio typically vote Republican, and 45% typically vote Democratic. Under our current maps, Republicans hold an advantage in 10 of our 15 congressional districts. This equals 66.6% Republican representation, and over-representation by 11.6%. Democrats hold an advance in five congressional districts, which

equals 33.3% representation. Which means that currently 12% of Ohio Democrats are not receiving fair representation. And not only are they not receiving fair representation, their votes are in fact being taken from them by the Republican Party. As I understand it, Republicans want an additional congressional district seat which would change Republican representation to 73% and Democratic representation to 26.6%, leaving 19% of Ohioans without fair representation. This is not democracy. I wish that the argument between committee members had been about how to fairly draw up congressional lines that would have fine-tuned our districts to be more accurate. I think that what I say here doesn't really matter in the end. You will do what you want to do and I have to live with the realization that our government doesn't work in the way I thought it was. Today, I'd like to leave you with this. On both sides of the aisle, more than 70% of Ohioans agree on this issue, which means you will have a lot of support if you pass fair maps. And likewise, you will lose a lot of support if you do not. Democrats being given their fair share of representation, and I'm gonna leave that out, but at the end of the day, fighting for what you believe in is time far better spent than bending others to your will and then living under that precedent. Please meet this moment and pass fair district maps that represent all Ohioans.

Co-Chair Rep. Stewart [00:22:22] Thank you for your testimony. Questions from the commission. Seeing none, our next witness will be Collin Marozzi.

Collin Marozzi [00:22:40] Thank you, Co-Chairs Stewart and Antonio and the members of the Ohio Redistricting Commission for the opportunity to provide interested party testimony. My name is Collin Marozzi and I serve as the Advocacy Director for the American Civil Liberties Union of Ohio. Partisan gerrymandering has been a part of America's history since our earliest days as a nation. Until recently, partisan gerrymander was a fact of political life, a game of inside baseball with outsized yet little known implications for citizen representation and lawmaking. The gerrymandering arms race sweeping the country has put a spotlight on just how sinister of a practice this is. States like Texas, Missouri, California, and others are openly rigging their congressional maps to seize control of the U.S. House of Representatives in 2027. The ledger of partisan seats is being tracked, analyzed, and tallied as we speak, and it's still a full 12 months before a single vote is counted. It's a shame, and it is a plague on both your houses. Ohioans were ahead of the curve on attempting to eradicate partisan gerrymandering. Our constitutional changes enacted in the previous decades sought to do just that. Although these reforms have proven inadequate to stop the scourge of partisan gerrymandering here in Ohio, this system is broken. One overarching principle of redistricting rises above even these reforms. One person, one vote. Population equality across congressional districts is a foundational principle of representative democracy. The measurable and exact nature of this metric commands compliance. The state is required to demonstrate at minimum a good faith effort to achieve population equality among new districts. This has been held and affirmed by the United States Supreme Court since the landmark redistricting rulings of the 1960s. But Ohio map makers have not met this obligation. This is the first most basic hurdle any new redistricting plan must clear. And astoundingly, ensuring compliance with the constitutional obligation has only been mentioned in passing, if at all, during these proceedings. It's premature to even begin to analyze the obvious gerrymandering taking place because accurate population data, this new map is clearly malapportioned. It's been demonstrated in the Rich Case Law on this subject that non-compliance with the U.S. Constitution's equal population standard is a fatal flaw for 10-year congressional maps. Though this requirement does enjoy some latitude. Court scholars and lawmakers alike have agreed that equal population among districts, when achieved immediately following the release of census data, earn the protection of the legal fiction that population equality

remains throughout a 10-year map's lifespan. However, it's unclear whether a constitutionally mandated mid-decade redraw enjoys that same protection. It's one thing to redraw a congressional map mid-decade following invalidation from a court, but it's entirely different when mapmakers have a known four-year runway leading up a mid-decade redraw. We've known Ohio requires a new congressional map since 2021. Thus, this process shouldn't have caught anybody's surprise and it's an unwarranted assumption that population equality using five-year-old data would be sufficient to comply with one person, one vote. This is especially so in light of the fact that the state of Ohio could easily have ensured accurate population numbers for this redraw. The US Census Bureau offers states and other governmental units a special census with specific purpose of offering states mid-decade enumeration services. Unlike the restrictions on the American Community Survey data, which is legally prohibited from being used for apportionment, the special census data products offer granular level population and demographic data that is suitable for redrawing congressional districts.

Co-Chair Rep. Stewart [00:26:15] Thank you, sir, for your testimony. Your time has expired. Are there questions from the Committee? Seeing none, thank you sir.

Collin Marozzi [00:26:21] Thank you.

Co-Chair Rep. Stewart [00:26:21] Our next witness will be our next witness will be Trevor Martin. Welcome, sir. You may proceed.

Trevor Martin [00:26:41] Thank you, co-chairs, members of the Ohio Redistricting Commission. My name is Trevor Martin, program coordinator for the League of Women Voters of Ohio. For over 100 years, the League has been a nonpartisan grassroots organization that believes voters should play a critical role in democracy. And that is why we advocate for fair redistricting at all levels of government. Early in 2021, I traveled the state to inform and educate citizens about the congressional and state legislative processes. I met with many diverse groups of Ohioans from block clubs and neighborhood associations to government officials, churches, reporters, civic organizations. In coordination with our larger coalition, I hosted dozens of trainings, both in person and online, teaching hundreds of Ohioans to use open source mapping software to read, analyze, and create proposed districts. With our Fair Districts coalition, just this month, I traveled to communities across the state to do mapping exercises to help residents understand how the lines drawn on a map impact the resources and representation that their communities receive. Something that must be said that you and your capacity as commissioners have spent no time engaging in. We spoke to residents in Bowling Green area who said they wish to keep their county whole and paired with Toledo. Toledo ranked number two in manufacturing in the country for mid-sized cities, with Bowling green and Wood County playing a large part in that industry growth. We visited Dayton where citizens expressed their desire to keep district 10 in its current form paired with Springfield and the surrounding communities where they are employed by the Air Force base in Green. Last night we were in Kent where residents were discouraged to see the Kent-Brimfield-Talmadge area divided into the city of Uniontown split. Much of our redistricting work focuses on identifying communities of interest, which are areas of broadly shared interests and representational needs, including common ethnic, racial, social, cultural, geographic, environmental, socioeconomic, and historical identities or concerns. It is this best practice to keep these communities together and our community mapping program helped us understand how every day Ohioans. Identify and define their communities, and therefore how they believe their districts should be drawn. A congressional, a congressperson can represent a community far more successfully when they represent a district of otherwise,

when they can, more successfully when they, than they can represent a district otherwise disconnected places and people needed together without respect to their backgrounds. Ohio's congressional districts in this proposed map are plagued by disparities in health, wealth, infrastructure. And are subject to unnecessary divisions that split small towns, neighborhoods, and schools. Few of these examples in Hamilton County, the suburbs of Cincinnati have been carved from the county and paired with D8, including minority communities and cities like Loughlin, Forest Park, Mount Healthy, and Lincoln Heights. The village of Indian Hills split, which appears to be the purpose of connecting the city of Cincinnati to the neighboring counties of Warren and Clinton. Warren, one of Ohio's most affluent counties, is paired with Cincinnati, which has a poverty rate five times higher than Warren. The average household income in Cincinnati, less than half of those who live in Warren, thus any economic policy could potentially benefit half of the district at the expense of the other half. In Mahoning County, the city of Austintown is divided with a majority of the population in District 14 on each end of the city, while every single school building is located in District 6, sandwiched in between. District 7 pairs the bustling suburbs of Cleveland with the village of Loudonville, deep in the Mohican wilderness of Ashland County, splitting the city Wuster and Wayne County in the process. The city of Mansfield, seat of Richland County, split down the middle. District 15 splits our nation's capital, or I'm sorry, our state's capital building in downtown area from the rest of the city, diluting West Side Columbus voters by pairing them with Faraway, Pickwell, and Miami County. This is classic gerrymandering, done for the benefit of partisan advantage. I'm gonna skip right here because I know you'll kick me out of here. The League of Women Voters of Ohio launched our anti-gerrymandery campaign decades ago. In fact, our history of opposing gerrymander in Ohio started with opposition to gerrymandering by Democrats. We will continue to fight any politician or any party who seeks to serve their short-sighted political interests over the rights of every Ohioan to have equality, unbiased representation. Our resolve remains firm. We will not end this campaign until Ohioans have districts that uphold their constitutional rights and a congressional delegation that truly serves them.

Co-Chair Rep. Stewart [00:30:41] Thank you, sir.

Trevor Martin [00:30:41] Thank you.

Co-Chair Rep. Stewart [00:30:42] Questions from the commission. Seeing none, thank you for your testimony. Next witness will be Loraine McCosker. Loraine McCosker, Janine Migden-Ostrander. Welcome to the commission.

Janine Migden-Ostrander [00:31:07] Good morning. My name is Janine Migden-Ostrander, and I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you. And I would urge you to vote no on the current maps as they are not fair and impartial. I've been very disappointed in this whole process because due to the opacity of how you have reached the map you've reached today, there's been very little opportunity for anybody to review it. Nor has there been an open and transparent discussion. Everything was done behind closed doors. As public officials, you swore an oath to uphold the Constitution of the United States and the state of Ohio, and to faithfully and impartially discharge your duties. As the former Consumers' Council, I swore a similar oath back in 2004. I understand the importance of that oath, and it was always front of mind for me in every decision and every action I took. On behalf of the citizens of the state of Ohio, I fear that you have lost your way and are not following the oaths that you swore to take and that you are ignoring your duties that you swore it to do. The actions to date of the redistricting commission are inconsistent with your duties and responsibilities. The ends do not justify the means. And the failure of the

commission to work in good faith to achieve a fair map is very disappointing. Your duty to the state should come before your allegiance to the Republican Party. It is well accepted that roughly 55% of Ohio voters are Republicans, 45% are Democrats, yet, and that we have 15 House seats, yet 10 are Republican and five are Democrat, already askew. If you wanted to correct the maps and do the right thing, you would have eight. Seats that reflected Republican views and seven that reflected Democratic views. Instead, you're going in the opposite direction. Where is your duty to the citizens of the state of Ohio when you do that? We have seen over and over that gerrymandering districts can be akin to taxation without representation. Representatives who fail to represent those in the minority party in their district are not serving all of the citizens in their state. Gerrymandering districts allow congressional representatives to act with impunity without regard to the concerns of their minority constituents. It also prevents moderate conservatives from doing what they truly believe is best in service of the ultra-conservative in their party. Thus, many voters lose the value of their vote and become disheartened. As patriotic Americans who want what's best for this country, we all do best when all voices are heard, and everyone has the opportunity to participate, to find a middle ground. People in this country are sick and tired of the vitriol. They want to come together. Gerrymandering keeps us apart. It keeps us from coming together and finding common grounds and good solutions. I urge you to vote no on this map and do the right thing. Thank you.

Co-Chair Rep. Stewart [00:34:11] Questions from the commission.

Janine Migden-Ostrander [00:34:13] I wasn't expecting it, so I started to leave.

Co-Chair Rep. Stewart [00:34:15] Questions from the commission. Auditor Faber.

Auditor Keith Faber [00:34:22] Apparently I pushed the button. Thank you for coming in, and in your former role, you dealt a lot with numbers and rates. So I just wanna help me understand something. I've heard this conversation now for years about this 55-45. So let's start with this premise. If Ohioans were equally distributed geographically, every district would be 55% Republican, 45% Democrat. Am I right on that? How would that not be true? If we were to put all the Ohioans in a hypothetical blender and distribute them equally around the state, why wouldn't Ohio, statewide, because statewide, we're 55-45? That's the number I keep hearing.

Janine Migden-Ostrander [00:35:04] Senator Faber, it's a matter of drawing the districts.

Auditor Keith Faber [00:35:06] It's auditor, but that's okay.

Janine Migden-Ostrander [00:35:08] I'm sorry.

Auditor Keith Faber [00:35:08] It's Auditor Faber.

Janine Migden-Ostrander [00:35:09] Excuse me, I'm remembering when we met when you were senator. Yes, excuse me. Auditor Faber. The issue is how you draw the maps. To be fair.

Auditor Keith Faber [00:35:21] I get that. I'm just asking the question.

Janine Migden-Ostrander [00:35:22] So in some areas of the state, you might have 90% Democrats and 10% Republicans. In other areas of this state, you may have the opposite.

And so you draw them maps that reflect the communities and let the communities that may have different percentage and different ratios determine how the vote should be.

Auditor Keith Faber [00:35:41] Ma'am, that's music to my ears, because that's what we've been arguing about drawing compact districts that represent their communities. So I agree.

Janine Migden-Ostrander [00:35:48] But I don't think that's what you've done, but that's not what you what you made. I'm glad to hear that you support that you support that because I don't think you've done that.

Co-Chair Rep. Stewart [00:35:55] To the witness, let the commission member ask the question, you'll then get to answer the question.

Janine Migden-Ostrander [00:36:00] My apologies.

Auditor Keith Faber [00:36:00] You should remember that from your days of testifying, but let's go back to the question.

Auditor Keith Faber [00:36:06] Let's go back to the question. If, in fact, the map were going to be distributed, 55-45 on a statewide basis, and we were going to draw districts, you would expect that the average across all 15 districts to be 55- 45, wouldn't you? If I were to take, back up and make sure I'm clear on what I'm asking, if I were to take all 15 districts and run the average across all 15 at the bottom, some districts are going to be more Republican in certain areas based on geography. Some are going be Democrat based on geography to run them representationally. If I'm truly drawing a 55 45 map, when I do the average at the bottom of all 15 district, I should have 55% of the people in Republican districts and 45 in Democrat districts. Is that right?

Janine Migden-Ostrander [00:37:01] What you're saying is what is the population of Ohio? 55% Republican, 45% Democrat. Yes, that is the case. However, however, let me finish my answer, please. However, when you draw a map, you draw map based upon the population in various sections. You don't do these crazy gerrymandering loops where, for example, you exclude Wood County to hurt Marcy Capter. You don't do things like that. You put the groups together and you look at what their percentages are. And if I were to go with your theory then you would say all fifteen congressional districts should be republican and so what happens to the other forty five percent of the population that doesn't work that's not the way this should work

Auditor Keith Faber [00:37:42] But I'm going back again, now you're interpreting what should work, and I asked the different question. If I were gonna draw, the fact is any district you draw, you're going to have a percentage of people who identify with the other party. And if you were to say those people are unrepresented, okay, that would not be accurate. They are represented, just that person doesn't necessarily who represents them isn't going to vote the way they want them to vote all the time. They will sometimes, they won't sometimes. But I ran the numbers for this map. And I've run the numbers from a lot of other maps. This map, across all 15 districts, breaks down, on an average, of 55% of the concentration is Republican, 45 is Democrat. Now, the problem is, is I fully agree with you, and I have argued this for years, that geography and political geography in Ohio mean that you're going to have some districts that are going to be Republican in some districts that are going to be Democrats. That is a fact. This concept that you're going to be able to draw districts within that range without gerrymandering is false. And if you're gonna

do that, and I've done the math trying to look at various eight, seven maps, you never get to a statewide distribution of 55, 45. You start approaching a 50, 49. And that's the problem with ignoring political geography. And if you look at where Ohioans are... Democrats tend to concentrate in urban core centers, now a little bit more in suburban areas, and Republicans tend to concentrate in rural areas. That's the political geography of Ohio. So the problem with getting to your map that you've tried to argue for is a completely different analysis. And so that's why I wanted to just, as somebody who for years argued numbers in front of courts, just to help understand that geography.

Janine Migden-Ostrander [00:39:39] Okay, so may I respond?

Auditor Keith Faber [00:39:42] Sure.

Janine Migden-Ostrander [00:39:42] Okay, first of all, would you be willing to share that calculation that you have with the rest of us? Because the problem is none of us have had the time to run the numbers and do the research that you apparently have done to back up your alleged claims. So that's the first thing. Would you be will to provide that?

Auditor Keith Faber [00:40:00] Sure, I can tell you how to get it. It's this sheet that we were given yesterday afternoon that I sat here and did the math on.

Co-Chair Rep. Stewart [00:40:09] We have one witness and we have one questioner. And we're not gonna have a commentary from everybody else in the room, okay? We've gone over it once, this is twice. One questioner, one witness. Beyond that, we're gonna start clearing the room.

Janine Migden-Ostrander [00:40:22] Okay, so if I may complete my answer. Your theory seems to be premised on the idea of everybody that there be 55 to 45 in every single district.

Auditor Keith Faber [00:40:40] No, that's what it would be if we were perfectly geographically distributed Republicans and Democrats. That's not the reality in Ohio. I've argued that for 20 years.

Janine Migden-Ostrander [00:40:50] Okay

Auditor Keith Faber [00:40:50] If we were perfect geographically distributed in Ohio, that's what the answer would be. We're not. And so then the question is, if you're going to draw a map and distribute people fairly, the numbers should still, by all the districts I think, still kind of appropriate percentages in Republican districts should be about 55 percent, and percentage in Democrat districts should about 45 percent.

Janine Migden-Ostrander [00:41:15] And this is where we disagree. Because you're saying under your theory then every single district in Ohio would end up being Republican and we would have 15 Republican representatives in Congress and zero Democrat. Even though 45%, almost half the population is Democratic. So no, I think what you need to do is proportion the maps so that you get an eight, seven split so that you're fairly representing all of the people in the state of Ohio and that you're not splitting up cities, you're not splitting of school districts, you not splitting counties in order to achieve the results that you want to achieve.

Auditor Keith Faber [00:41:55] Again

Janine Migden-Ostrander [00:41:55] I think there are other ways and to my understanding and I'm not an expert on all the maps I will say that up front, but there have been other maps that have been proposed before this commission I understand that would more fairly achieve the appropriate split

Auditor Keith Faber [00:42:09] Again, you're assuming that the political geography in your math would go eight-seven. The reality is Ohio's political geography does not go eight seven without doing exactly what you just argued against. And that's unnecessarily dividing cities, counties, townships, and the things that are protected. By the way, school districts are not on the list to protect, maybe they should be. But the question is, is cities, counties, township are the areas that we look for? And I go back to this concept that we've argued for for a long time. You can't get to an eight-seven map without unnecessarily splitting and dividing those areas. And so I just ran the math on trying to get there and it really distorts those percentages. And so, I just wanted to make sure that, first of all, I'm very happy to hear the advocates out there talking about compactness and keeping communities together because that's exactly what some of us have been arguing for a long time. But I'm not sure your maps get there. But I just wanted to... I wanted to have that conversation. Thank you for that. I know you want to land at a different place. You guys want the outcome to be eight, seven. I've argued that I don't know how you get to eight, seven without unnecessarily dividing cities, counties, and townships. But that's just the difference of where you land and what that means.

Janine Migden-Ostrander [00:43:26] May I respond to your question, please?

Co-Chair Rep. Stewart [00:43:28] One last response, and then we're going to move on.

Janine Migden-Ostrander [00:43:30] You're assuming what lawyers like to say, and I believe you're a lawyer. You're assume facts that are not in evidence. We don't have evidence of what you're saying, that if you got to an 8-7, you would have to divide up cities and towns. I don't think you've worked hard enough to figure out a way to do it fairly. So I'm rejecting your premise, your entire premise, about how it would be impossible to do redistricting in a way that would not break up cities and counties and at the same time preserve an eight-seven. And that would be a dream considering where we are right now. So no, I don't agree with you at all.

Co-Chair Rep. Stewart [00:44:07] Other questions from the commission? Seeing none, thank you for your testimony, ma'am.

Janine Migden-Ostrander [00:44:11] Thank you very much.

Co-Chair Rep. Stewart [00:44:12] Our next witness will be Mark Ryland. Mark Ryland. Our next witness will be Scott Sibley. Welcome, sir, you may begin.

Scott Sibley [00:44:37] Chair Stewart and Antonio and other redistricting commission members, I appreciate the opportunity to testify today. Redistricting, as you all know, is foundational to democracy. Get it wrong and the whole house crumbles. When i heard last night that the republicans up until now secret plan was to go from a gerrymandered ten to five to an ultra-gerrymandered 13 to 2 map, I thought, no. That level of disrespect to democratic values would be too obvious of a betrayal to Ohio voters that they would not put something like that forward. And that the democrats would consider agreeing to give up only two more seats on an already gerrymandered map selling out the longest-serving

woman in congress makes me want to throw up my hands and move to a more democratic country maybe North Korea. This whole process has been a sham, and you all know it. I am strongly against this, quote, compromised backroom deal because it is wrong. Is this map compact? Contiguous. Keep cities and counties and townships together, and not unduly favor or disfavor a political party as required by the Constitution that our voters voted for? Can any of you look at this map and say this map meets those criteria with a straight face. This map is an affront to democracy, and you should all, every one of you, be ashamed. And if the original extortionate map is put forward and passed in November, democracy has died in Ohio. Ohio voters may have been swayed by your lies last November, but these maps are such a betrayal of what you all promised last year, your strategy of doing terrible things and hoping no one will notice will not work. It cannot work. For the sake of democracy. Thank you.

Co-Chair Rep. Stewart [00:46:43] Questions from the commission. Seeing none sir, thank you for your testimony. Our final witness will be Richard Topper.

Richard Topper [00:46:57] Welcome, sir. Good morning. How are you today? Good to see everybody here on the redistricting committee. I know a lot of you. And I've testified quite a bit in front of the redistributing committee, quite a bit in front of a lot of committees involving voter suppression and voting rights. I do this all, I'm a retired attorney now, and I do all pro bono because I feel passionate about voters' rights. And making sure everybody's vote counts. Senator Antonio, I appreciate your comment yesterday about the system being broken, because it obviously is. And Governor DeWine, I think you even said the system was broken, and you were going to try to put forth a Iowa-type redistricting plan back in 2024. There was a nice op-ed written to dispatch about that today. And I would, as governor, I would work on that for the next two years of your term or the next year of your turn. I am sympathetic to the minority party on how the majority has used and abused Article 19. I'd like to take you back really to what this was all about in 2018 when 75% of voted to adopt Article 19. Senator Faber at the time, you were there, Senator LaRose. Senator Rob Hoff, I see you back there. I remember you standing next, I think, to Arnold Schwarzenegger, who actually came in. And everybody was talking about how this was going to end gerrymandering, how we were never going to have gerrymander again in Ohio. And I looked at the ballot language. I wanted to go beyond just the article itself, but the ballot language that was put forth by a lot of Republicans on the committee, that it was to end the partisan process for drawing congressional districts, keeping local communities together, and having district boundaries that are more compact, and that the plan shall must comply with explicit anti-gerrymandering requirements. That was what voters saw. On page one of the ballot. And in the argument four, which was on page two, which was endorsed by Matt Huffman, senator at the time, it says this vote will be for a fair, transparent, and bipartisan process. Gerrymandering is defined by the Supreme Court, as you know, as an abuse of power, where the majority takes away power from the minority. Which is actually probably what happened here. Not only in the Adams versus DeWine case, but in the citizens, not politicians case, in the ballot language. And speaking of the ballot, language you once again in 2024 promised and committed to Ohioans, don't vote for issue one because you're going to take away a anti gerrymandering situation and we already established fair state legislative and congressional districts. Now let me ask you a question, really a serious question.

Co-Chair Rep. Stewart [00:50:39] Sir, your time is expired, but we'll let you finish the question.

Richard Topper [00:50:42] All right, one question. You don't have to answer, it's rhetorical. But in 2018, if you told 75% of Ohioans that these maps were going to happen. That we were going to be faced with these maps, how do you think they would have voted? So as a lawyer, and I know a lot of you have been told throughout your life, your word is your bond. I have always lived by that, and I will continue to live by that. And I ask you, when you promised, when you committed to Ohio voters that we would have fair, anti-gerrymandered districts, And when you... Told Ohio voters over five million in 2024 that we need a we already have a fair process.

Co-Chair Rep. Stewart [00:51:49] Counselor even for a lawyer that's a rhetorical question.

Richard Topper [00:51:51] I'm almost done okay i'm almost done.

Co-Chair Rep. Stewart [00:51:53] All right land the plane for me land the plane for me.

Richard Topper [00:51:55] I will land, my wife says that all the time

Richard Topper [00:51:59] But what I what I'm asking you is we still have time in this process not many hours but will you stand by the commitments that you made to Ohio voters in 2018 and 24?

Co-Chair Rep. Stewart [00:52:20] Thank you so much for your testimony. Questions from the commission? Leader Antonio.

Co-Chair Minority Leader Antonio [00:52:25] Thank you, Co-Chair. Thank you so much, Mr. Topper, for being here again today and for your dedication to fairness for the electorate. My question is, do you believe that politicians can objectively draw fair maps.

Richard Topper [00:52:48] To the chair, Senator Antonio, I would like to think so. I would to think that politicians can live up to their promises that they've made to Ohioans. But after what's happened with, as you say, this broken system, which has obviously been used and abused, I don't think that's possible. And I think we need a new way of districting in Ohio.

Co-Chair Rep. Stewart [00:53:22] Leader leader Isaacson.

Co-Chair Rep. Stewart [00:53:24] Thank you chair. I just want to take a minute and say thank you to everyone who came and testified and traveled here Your passion and commitment to the people of Ohio is appreciated and noticed, and I just wanted to take a minute to say thank you. Chair.

Co-Chair Rep. Stewart [00:53:40] Thank you, Leader Isaacson. Thank you sir for your testimony. Seeing no other questions.

Richard Topper [00:53:44] Thank you very much everybody, appreciate it. Thank you all.

Co-Chair Rep. Stewart [00:53:55] That is the conclusion of the public testimony portion of our agenda today. As co-chairman, I now move that the Ohio Redistricting Commission adopt the congressional redistricting plan that I presented that was uploaded on the Ohio redistricting commission website by commission staff on October 30th, 2025 as the congressional redistricting plan for the state of Ohio.

Sen. Timken [00:54:17] Chair Stewart, I second the motion.

Co-Chair Rep. Stewart [00:54:20] We have a motion before the commission to adopt the congressional district plan. Is there any further discussion on the motion? Seeing none, staff will please call the roll.

Staff [00:54:37] Co-Chair Antonio?

Co-Chair Minority Leader Antonio [00:54:39] Yes.

Staff [00:54:40] Co-chair Stewart?

Co-Chair Rep. Stewart [00:54:41] Yes.

Staff [00:54:42] Governor DeWine?

Governor Mike DeWine [00:54:43] Yes.

Staff [00:54:44] Secretary LaRose?

Sec. of State Frank LaRose [00:54:45] Yes.

Staff [00:54:46] Auditor Faber?

Auditor Keith Faber [00:54:47] Yes.

Staff [00:54:48] Senator Timken?

Sen. Timken [00:54:49] Yes.

Staff [00:54:50] Leader Isaacsohn?

Minority Leader Rep. Isaacsohn [00:54:50] Yes.

Staff [00:54:52] Having received a unanimous vote by members of the Ohio Redistricting Commission, as well as two affirmative votes from members of each of the two largest political parties in the Ohio General Assembly, as required by Article 19, Section 1E of the Ohio Constitution, the congressional district plan for the state of Ohio is adopted and will remain effective until the year 2031. Commission staff are directed to file the congressional district plan. Commission staff are directed to file the Congressional District Plan with the Ohio Secretary of State's Office as soon as possible. Do I have a motion to adjourn?

Co-Chair Minority Leader Antonio [00:55:31] I second the motion, see no objections, we are adjourned.