

## Ohio Redistricting Commission - 9-22-2023

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**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [00:00:00] Ready to begin this morning. I want to welcome and thank everyone for joining us today, those in person as well as those joining us virtually. I also want to thank everyone who submitted testimony electronically. So we have your written testimony. As a reminder, we we have just been if you saw us having discussions up here, it's because we will be meeting Monday at Punderson State Park. We also understand that it's Yom Kippur on Monday. And so we also want to make accommodations for any of our friends in the Jewish community to be able to participate in these public hearings and to be able to provide public testimony. So the members of the commission are going to seek an additional date and time that we can accommodate our friends in the Jewish community as well. It may perhaps be on Tuesday, we may add an additional hearing around the Columbus area, but we'll keep you posted on that. So for right now, we will be having hearings again on Monday at Punderson State Park and on Tuesday at the statehouse in the Senate Finance Room. Both of those meetings will commence at 10 a.m.. All right. I already gaveled in. So? So we're set with our meeting starting. And will staff please call the roll.

**Clerk** [00:01:42] Leader Antonio?

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [00:01:43] Here

**Clerk** [00:01:44] Auditor Faber?

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber** [00:01:46] Yes.

**Clerk** [00:01:46] Governor DeWine is excused. Secretary LaRose?

**Secretary of State Frank LaRose** [00:01:49] Here

**Clerk** [00:01:50] Senator McColley?

**Senate Majority Leader Rob McColley** [00:01:51] Here

**Clerk** [00:01:53] Representative LaRe?

**Representative Jeff LaRe** [00:01:54] Here.

**Clerk** [00:01:54] Leader Russo?

**House Minority Leader Representative Allison Russo** [00:01:55] Present.

**Clerk** [00:01:58] A quorum is present.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [00:01:59] Thank you. With a quorum present, we're going to meet as full committee. At this time the commission will hear a public testimony and the clerk will call up they will call your name for you to come to the podium and provide your testimony for the commission. Brianna, will you call the first testimony, please?

**Clerk** [00:02:24] Catherine Turner.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [00:02:31] While Catherine's coming to the podium. I just want to mention, if you're here to testify please— and you have not signed in, please make sure you sign in, provide for our staff a completed witness slip with your written testimony, which will be included in the public record of the proceedings. And with that, thank you for joining us this morning, Ms. Turcer you can commence whenever you're ready.

**Catherine Turcer** [00:03:02] So as she said, my name is Catherine Turcer. I am with Common Cause Ohio. I am the Executive Director and I've been, you know, advocating for fair district since the late nineties. And as you might guess, I always look forward to public hearings because I want us all to have an opportunity to hear from the public and have conversations. I'm here today to urge you all to review previous testimony and explore the state legislative maps that have been proposed to the Ohio Redistricting Commission. And by this I mean all the way back to 2021. So in 2021, 702 Ohioans testified at the regional hearings. Now, they urged the commission to create a truly transparent process to focus on keeping communities together. And they highlighted that they wanted to participate in meaningful elections. So, for example, they highlighted the need for more competitive elections. We are here today because the Supreme Court repeatedly sent the commission back to the drawing board, and then you'll all you all delayed for over a year. Today, we're in a state park. In 2011—, 20, 2021. There were hearings. Hearings in Akron, Cleveland, Columbus, Dayton, Lima, Mansfield, Rio Grand, Toledo, Youngstown and Zanesville. In other words, A to Z all over Ohio. I say this because you're missing an opportunity to truly hear from the public. Many of you weren't part of the Ohio Redistricting Commission for that kind of first round of regional hearings. And I urge you to take a closer look at the state leg— state legislative redistricting proposals by, for example, Fair Districts Ohio, I put us first because, of course, that's the coalition I'm with, but also the Ohio Citizens Redistricting Commission maps are well worth taking some time to explore deeply. Please consider the community maps that were also submitted as and when I went to go look at the archives, I did not find the district lines. I did not find the maps from the previous. So there was testimony, there are transcripts, but I did not find the maps. So I'm going to urge you to go and look at District R after in which it's literally district with an on and then R.org where you can find Ohioans put together community maps. So you could think about, well, how do they see their own community. And it can help you have a conversation and a debate discussion about what makes for good maps because you're weighing a bunch of different values. And it's important to think about what is it that the public wants, What is it that they expect? Now, hundreds of Ohioans attended hearings in 2021 and 2022. Now, they were really eager to share their thoughts and their hopes about the Ohio maps. But, you know, looking around the room today, it is a different story. You know, because of foot dragging back room mapmaking and repeated redraws. Many Ohioans are so frustrated that they've frankly given up on you. They don't believe you'll listen to them. They don't believe that you're actually going to produce fair maps that abide by what's in the Ohio Constitution. Now, that does not mean that you all should just say, okay, the public is not paying as much attention. They've given up on us. I watched you all, you know, swear an oath to the Ohio Constitution. And I urge you to think about this process now in a really different way. This is an opportunity. They're not so many of us here today that you couldn't spend time after this meeting having debate and discussion in public in a way that the public would like to see. So I would encourage you to take this, you know, cup not even half full quarter full and reexamine it. Turn lemons into lemonade and actually spend some time really debating and discussing and looking at the maps really closely. I was you know, I was pleased that there was a presentation at the last hearing, but a presentation and

discussion and really deep dive into the maps is really different at this point. Commissioners have had an opportunity to look at the districts, and so you're going to have a more productive, open deliberation if you take an opportunity to do that today. So you will notice that my testimony looks really long, but it's mostly because I thought it would be helpful for you all to have kind of a little bit of background. So I did highlight the folks that were part of the Fair Districts mapping competition. And so they ranged from from academics to folks like former state rep Joan Lawrence. We also have folks like Reverend Dr. Jack Sullivan Jr, who is the executive director of the Ohio Council of Churches. That's on page two. I also included, you know, information about about the district lines drawn by Geoff Wise. Pranav, I always struggle with this part, Padmanabhan and then Paul Nieves. Now one of the things that they did is they focused on representational fairness. That's that criteria that's in the Ohio Constitution. You will notice that these are created in Dave's, you know, Redistricting App, and that's because that's what the public has access to. That doesn't mean that you should, you know, yes Maptitude is much better. It's you know, there are a lot of advantages to that. But it makes sense to look at these as an opportunity to consider how you might do things differently. And so if you get to like four, you can see the Senate Senate districts. And then I just wanted to highlight Mr. Wise can speak for himself, but this is from 2021. And so the Geoff from Cincinnati and I'm sorry, folks, I have analyzed the Sykes and and the Ohio Redistricting, the Ohio Citizens Redistricting Commission maps and determined that they emphasize proportionality over district competitiveness. I therefore am proposing a more competitive map that also strikes a more natural balance between GOP and Democratic interests. And then on page six, you can you can see what Pranav said he focused on. Well, how when we talk about communities of interest and we talk about keeping communities together, what is a good proxy for that? And school district can be a really good proxy for that. And I think that is something that's well-worth looking as you're having a deep dive into those maps, thinking about where the school districts are, are you dividing them up? And of course, sometimes you're going to naturally do that because of population. There are times that you're going to make different choices, but it's worth kind of spending some time to say together in public, figuring out what you value and what you'd like to do. I also want to highlight Paul's map. This is Paul Nieves. He is with the Princeton Gerrymandering projects. You might say Yonkers, New York. Why was he paying any attention to us? But that's because he's with the Princeton Gerrymandering Project. So he spent a lot of time kind of looking, you know, essentially to focus on compact districts and creating more communities of interest, specifically looking at kind of minority districts. And certainly as we're going into this round of map making, it's worth spending time and energy thinking about, you know, are you packing them, you know, minority communities into really tight districts in weird ways. You know, pretty is is pretty does. But but that whole thing you can look to see, are you packing them in a little bit too tight or are you diluting them by separating them? And so it's important to kind of go through the maps together and to identify, you know, what are the kind of changes you'd like to make. Now, on page ten, you know, you can actually see kind of the differences because sometimes, you know, one of the things that we sometimes hear, you can't actually do that. I agree. It is nearly impossible to weigh all of the different factors to make good maps. And I guess, you know, like I want to highlight again, it's very hard to do that. But I do know that Ohioans will feel differently about maps that are created in public where you're having a conversation where they better understand the choices that you make. And so, once again, I'm urging you, please, you know, spend some time to do that. I also, on page 12, I just included some of the community maps so you can actually find community maps. It's like Event Fair Districts Ohio. So the longer link is available here if you want to not just look at district or kind of in general, but if you want to easily get to Ohio maps that's available. And then I did want to highlight a few of what we would think of

as the Bipoc areas. And so I think if you look at Franklin County and so now we're on page 13. Sorry, everybody. Page 13 I think it's important to think about how communities of color are divided in Franklin County. So I encourage you to look at South Lyndon Bronxville like the King Lincoln area and also South Columbus in southwest Ohio. So we're talking Cincinnati area. It's worth looking at how folks are divided in North College Hill, Mount Healthy, Forrest Hill, Lincoln Heights and Roselawn. And then we get to kind of northeast Ohio. So this here we have Cuyahoga County. So it's worth looking at like, you know how things go, you know? You know, East Cleveland to University Heights. Mount Pleasant to Garfield Heights. Bedford. And also looking closely at Bedford Heights. And then when you get to Akron, it's important to look closely at North Hill. Goodyear Heights, East Akron. Now, I also included some just, you know, just to give you ideas of kind of how communities were divided. And so like in District three, you look at that cut out, like literally there's a cut out for the short North and Arena district. And so this may be due to population, but it's worth having a conversation about what are we losing? Does it make sense to actually rethink that? You know, if you if you if you look at District one, it divides the communities of Linden and District— it divides the communities of Linden in District six and ten and like. There's no municipal boundaries that would be dividing. Like, why is Hilltop, you know, so cut up Westgate? It's worth having conversations about. You know, if this isn't about population, then let's let's think about how to move things around so that you not only keep communities together, but that you're focusing on ensuring that your map isn't manipulated to to unduly influence the votes of Ohioans. So when we talk about gerrymandering, a lot of times, you know, sometimes we're talking about partizan, gerrymandering, sometimes we're talking about racial gerrymandering. But what is important is thinking about making sure that districts are not manipulated unfairly to favor one political party over the other or to impact all of our votes. And certainly making sure that people of color are able to elect the folks that will reflect them so that we have, you know, the kind of representation that we deserve at the Ohio House and the Ohio Senate. And with that, there's also included Lucas County, mostly because, you know, speaking of, you know, once again, pretty is this pretty does. But all you have to do is look at districts 44. And how it you know, you remember we used to joke about the 'Snake on the Lake' Marcy Kaptor's old district. This is this is a snake along Lake Maumee. And I think it's important because it basically covers western Lucas Lucas County, and then it's connected by the river and basically threads along the river over to the communities of Rockford in North Eastwood County and west portions of Ottawa. And so I highly encourage you to do a deep dive in public. And to actually make some significant changes. And with that, I just wanted to thank you all for the opportunity to speak with you all today. I'm glad that there will be an additional hearing because of Yom Kippur, because I was worried about that. And so I appreciate your doing that. And with that, if you all have any questions.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [00:16:39] Thank you, Ms. Turcer. Are there any questions for the witness? Leader Russo.

**House Minority Leader Representative Allison Russo** [00:16:45] Thank you, Chairwoman. Thank you, Ms. Turcer, for driving out here today. Admittedly, while I love our Ohio State Parks scheduling these at a state park that has no public transit that I'm aware of that comes directly to the park in the middle of a workday presents many challenges for many different members of communities who are deeply impacted by these maps. And I appreciate you and others who are here today taking the time to be here. You know, I'm glad that you kind of delved into a couple of the districts here and ask some questions about how they divide certain communities. I will also note District 44 and Lucas County, maybe the first district that I've seen that you take a canoe from one side of requires

maybe a canoe to go from one side of the district to the other because of the way it snakes along the the Maumee there. But I am curious, you know, have you had a chance to besides some of the things you pointed out, delve into the proposed map, the McColley map, that is the proposed commission map that everyone is here today to evaluate. And your key takeaways, particularly as it relates to meeting Section six of the Constitution and representational fairness.

**Catherine Turcer** [00:18:16] Well, thank you very much, co-chairs. So one of the things that I think is important when we go back to 2014, when the state legislature was considering how to do a reform, there was a lot of debate about the inclusion of of what we call representational fairness. And the idea was, hey, just saying don't gerrymander is probably not adequate, that it can be really helpful to have a metric so that you can identify whether there's a problem. And so, you know, representational fairness, what you do is you look at kind of statewide elections over the past decade. And so these are ones, you know, U.S. president, U.S. Senate speaker, I was going to say Secretary of state, you know, the statewide offices auditor, and put them all together and come up with an average over of how folks voted. And then you can identify, you know, what is representational is fair. And I think, you know, we can have some quibbles about what exactly that means. But the reason that we focus on representational fairness and political scientists focused on proportionality is because because it's a way to help us identify that something's out of whack. And so I urge you to focus on, you know, representational fairness or proportionality so that folks are well represented. It's a way of saying, well, wait a second, someone in this mapmaking process or a bunch of y'all have actually skewed things. You've manipulated things and maybe unintentionally. However. Well, it's hard to believe that, right? It's hard to believe it would be unintentional because of how much time and thought goes into mapmaking. But you are all now together and you can look into the maps really carefully and closely so that they are not manipulated to favor one party unduly.

**House Minority Leader Representative Allison Russo** [00:20:26] Thank you. Quick follow up. So so thank you for that. And you're calling out the ten year proportional of this, the statewide elections over a ten year period. Certainly, if we were looking through the election year, 2000, the ten year, your look back to that, we previously were at I think a 45/55 split, the current map, the unconstitutional map that we are under and our our current seats are under. You know, when we take out the toss up seats and there was a lot of discussion in the Supreme Court orders about that. I'll just use the House because I'm particularly interested in the House seats. We sit at 32% for quote-unquote, Democratic seats, non-tossup seats and 67 Republican seats. If we look at because they had no tossup seats in the current map, in looking at the analysis of the McColly-LaRe map. Again, you know, once the data were uploaded and we had a chance to evaluate, it appears again that if you just eliminated or included even the toss up seats, it's about 37, about a 37/62. But if you take out those toss up seats, it's at about 33%. So essentially what I'm saying here is these maps from the unconstitutional maps that were currently under and the ones that have been proposed, there is a very strong argument that there was zero improvement. In some cases, it actually got worse there. But but I guess from your assessment, does this meet the spirit and the intent, the people's intent, when they voted twice on this redistricting for reform, for representational fairness?

**Catherine Turcer** [00:22:37] Thank you, co-chairs. So what is clear to me is this is just a beginning. This is just a beginning. And what's clear is that it unduly favors one political party over the other. What I focused in on are the kinds of things that you could do so that you could improve it, so that you could address other goals as well. You could focus on,

well, how are we dividing communities? How do we keep communities together? How could we make this so that it works better for all Ohioans? Well, you could engage in a robust discussion in public, and all you have to do is think about how much Ohioans really loved kind of the map making where they were able to watch what was going on with the independent mapmakers. You know, I have to say, I was one of those nerds that would watch until they ended the day. I think what is important here is that Ohioans don't want to have gerrymandered maps. Clearly, the Ohio Supreme Court said, hey, get back to work because they didn't want gerrymandered maps. And so now I think it's a matter of taking taking your marching orders seriously and focusing on, well, how can you actually create fairer districts? And that's by closely looking at how you've divided communities, closely looking at, you know, how representational fair things are. But at the end of the day, if you set aside kind of representational fairness and you focus on, well, what do we actually do to this map that divides folks? You are going to create something significantly fairer. Thank you.

**House Minority Leader Representative Allison Russo** [00:24:28] Thank you.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [00:24:29] Are there other questions for the witness? I actually have one. Thanks again for being here. So. So you've talked a lot about fairness, about why and you've also talked about process in terms of not just coming up with a map that's more fair, but also you've really encouraged and and have been enthusiastic about a process that includes doing some of the work out in the open with, with the ability for public scrutiny. Why you've said a little bit about Ohioans like to see things in action, but can you talk a little bit about why that process point is something that you've really emphasized? And then my second question is, you've talked a lot about the fairness, the proportionality. What's the result of that in your mind? Why is that so important for the state of Ohio? Why this exercise today completely and all the other exercises?

**Catherine Turcer** [00:25:32] So I, I care about process because a good open process and public deliberation about the choices you will make. Will you know, we'll all be watching will all be encouraging you to be accountable to the Ohio Constitution, to the Ohio voters. I firmly believe that a process where, you know, the Republicans and the Democrats, chocolate and vanilla are actually, you know, that whole thing of you all are hanging out together, having a conversation. You can improve this map if you choose to. You can create a process where you can get fairer districts if you choose to. Now, well, why do I care about gerrymandering or why do I care about representational fairness or proportionality? The manipulation of district lines is the manipulation of elections. The manipulation of elections is the manipulation of public policy. So at the end of the day, manipulating districts to favor one political party over the other manipulates all sorts of important decisions that are made at the statehouse. And that's why I care.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [00:26:53] Thank you. Seeing no other question— oh, Co-Chair Faber.

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber** [00:26:59] Thank you, Madam Chair. And, Ms. Turcer it's good to see you again. You mentioned a couple of things I just want to emphasize, and it's somebody who worked on the original constitutional amendment that led us to where we're at. My recollection is, is there was a lot of discussion about keeping cities, counties and townships whole as a as a good guidepost to keep people with an opportunity to elect somebody who shares their values. You would agree with me on that. You're shaking your head. Yes.

**Catherine Turcer** [00:27:31] So co-chair and auditor. Yes, I completely agree. One of the things I think is important is that we can value keeping political subdivisions together without thinking about inappropriately dividing communities. And that's what I've been focused on.

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber** [00:27:49] And that is a great suggestion. And if you have specific amendments, I'd happy to take a look at them to make tweaks within those divides when you have to divide in a community for population basis. Because I agree that that, you know, if you're generally trying to keep as many intact communities with districts inside of city limit or county limit or township limit, you're generally going to give people an opportunity to vote for people who generally share their views. Because the reality in Ohio and I think you would agree with this, is that people in Ohio tend to live around people who think and vote like them. And if that's our reality, to avoid gerrymandering, we have to be very concerned about efforts that are unnecessarily dividing communities. And one of the issues that in just changing gears for a second, one of the issues that you flagged, that one of the prior maps that and I don't remember which were the ones I voted against or voted for, but one of the prior maps tried to focus on competitiveness.

**Catherine Turcer** [00:28:54] Mm hmm.

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber** [00:28:55] And it is the quintessential if you have a competitive race, people can get a say generally. But there was a part of a Supreme Court opinion that kind of said, now we really don't care much about competitive races. We would rather have safe seats to hit this magical ratio. Would you agree or would your organization, based on your testimony, saying you want more competitive elections or more competitive seats, that people can have a chance of impacting the outcome? That competitiveness is a good thing to look towards when you're drawing districts.

**Catherine Turcer** [00:29:38] Yes, co-chair Auditor Faber, one of the things that is very clear to me is there are multiple values going on at the same time and so that it becomes it becomes a challenge. And one of the reasons why I actually suggests kind of slowly deliberating and discussing, you know, spending time on, you know, let's say central Ohio, spending time looking really closely, Hamilton County, for example. And that is because what are the what are the values that we're thinking about? We're thinking about how do you keep communities together? Okay. Well, political subdivisions. But then how do you keep communities? You know, then there's the whole –er. We have to think about the Voting Rights Act. How do we address that? We have to think about, well, how do we value representational fairness or proportionality? I do think, you know, competitiveness is important. I it's my understanding and, you know, once again, it's my understanding that the Ohio Supreme Court was it wasn't that they were quibbling about competitive districts. They were quibbling that the Democrats got most or in some cases, all of the competitive districts. So that that notion of like, okay, we're going to call these, you know, to to meet this criteria of representational fairness. So so, you know, we can have an argument about that. But what we which is not fruitful but what is fruitful and could be fruitful is really looking closely at these districts. And, you know, I can I can give you an amendment, but one change impacts another change which impacts another change, which is why if you were to do this in public, we could watch and discuss and see how things change, because one thing change changes and it changes everything because you know, the head, you know, the head bone is connected to the nose bone and the knee bone, whenever you change anything, it changes things. So why not engage in a truly public process? And you could start you could start on Monday. You could start today. So, like I

realize, we don't really have oh, we do have screens. You could literally start today doing this in a public and maybe you're not ready immediately to begin that. But it's worth considering.

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber [00:31:57]** Madam Chair, just just as a follow up. I agree with a lot of what you said, but we have this inherent conflict and I think you identified it between competitiveness and this concept of I call it the magical mystery ratio. You call it proportionality. The reality is, is when you look at those two factors and we saw it very clearly when we had the map drawers come in, they were clearly gerrymandering and drawing districts to have a higher number of Democrat districts and violating compactness and violating keeping communities together to hit some ratio number. That's a factor of political geography. You would agree with me that it is also equally bad if you start doing things like cracking. Where you draw hub and spoke districts to to pull one party's individuals either out of a rural area that's predominantly Republican into an urban areas so that they have a Democrat district or other people who who are inherently going to represent a significant percentage of the community that don't share their values.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio [00:33:04]** There's a question here somewhere?

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber [00:33:05]** There is, yeah.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio [00:33:06]** Thank you.

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber [00:33:07]** I ask the question: that is also a bad idea.

**Catherine Turcer [00:33:12]** So thank you, Co-Chair Auditor Faber. I want to draw your attention to number 10. Number 10, Page number 10. So this is just to give you a notion like I completely understand what you're talking about, kind of balancing the different values, trying to think about, well, how do you make things more proportional or representational fair? At the same time is making them more competitive. How do we make sure that there aren't splits of political subdivisions? How do we address, you know, minority representation? Clearly, this is not necessarily easy, which is why I'm recommending you do it in public. But on page 10, you can actually do kind of a comparison where you can see that, look, I'm going to look. Pranav Padmanabhan. If you look at that one, you can see that they that this map was more competitive. It hit kind of splitting in the same kind of way as this, this would have been, this is the map you're proposing. And also hits proportionality. So so what I would say is don't give up, engage in those conversations about how do we actually make the map better so that we can meet all these goals. And, you know, I firmly believe if you want to do this, you can. And there are citizen mapmakers that are here to help you. Now, I certainly have made a bunch of maps, but I am not a proficient citizen mapmaker. But any you know, we can come up with a number of folks who would be available to help and provide good amendments. Keeping in mind, you know, once you do one amendment that leads to the second amendment, which leads to the third amendment. So which is why I've been talking about maps as a whole, because I couldn't quite figure out how to talk about, hey, make this change.

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber [00:35:07]** It is— madam Chair, it is inherently difficult when you push on the balloon, as you're mentioning, some something's got to pop out someplace else. And that's why mapmaking is not always an easy task. But I think you, I think you hit it nicely. Using the chart that you referenced, it is interesting that, you know, between those factors, the competitiveness, the compactness, the splitting, the



proportionality, as you push in one area, it tends to adjust in another area. And I just think I wanted to point that out, that that's the reality of mapmaking. And when you try and pick one preferred option and the other, you're going to, by the very nature, sacrifice generally some of the other factors. And so thank you for for for your testimony and thank you for that point. I look forward to your continued input.

**Catherine Turcer** [00:35:57] Well, thank you.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [00:35:58] Do you want to answer that question?

**Catherine Turcer** [00:35:58] Oh, sure. I was just going to say I was going to say thank you and. I also wanted to highlight it is a challenge, but there are citizen mapmakers. There are folks up here that are here to help you. And if you engage in a public process discussing the maps, we can help you a lot more. And so. Please take this opportunity. Thank you.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [00:36:23] We have a follow up question from Leader Russo.

**House Minority Leader Representative Allison Russo** [00:36:26] Yes. Thank you, Mr. Turcer, for your patience, answering many of our questions. So I do want to follow up with what Auditor Faber, Co-Chair Faber talked about. You know, there's a lot of talk of competitiveness, compactness, keeping communities together, which I think we all agree are our priorities. But certainly, you know, again, looking back at your presentation and some of the question I –er some of the issues that you point out. You know, I'll go back, for example, to Lucas County District 44, which goes all the way from the east side of Lucas County through a river to the west, north, sorry, all the way from the west side. Let me get my directions here. South, west side of the county, Up the river, to the northeast corner of the county to Oregon and then over into a separate county, violating, I would say, compactness and certainly violating keeping communities together all to make it less competitive and more favorable to a Republican. Or in Hamilton County, you point out District 27 in the west sorry, east side of the county District 27, and it sort of snakes through the middle to pick up communities of color, to combine them with more of that east side of the district, presumably to make District 29 less competitive and more favorable to the Republican and or to impact District 28, which is then inexplicably paired with Warren County to create a more favorable Republican Senate district. Or, as you point out, in Franklin County, we have quite a bit of manipulation that's happening in the south part of the county and pairing it with counties, rural counties around in order to make a less competitive Republican Senate seat. And, you know, I would point out specifically in districts 6 and 10, you've broken up the community of Hilltop in order to make District 10 less competitive so that it is more favorable for a Republican representative. So, again, you know, going back to, I think some of the discussions points and certainly agree with with my friend Co-Chair Faber that we do want to value things like competitiveness and compactness and keeping communities together. But would you agree that the current map and the manipulation of some of these districts, as I just pointed out from your presentation, violates all of those things?

**Catherine Turcer** [00:39:21] Yes. Thank you. Leader Russo, Co-Chairs. So what is clear to me is that it is hard to meet all of the goals that we have when it comes to map making, but it's much easier to make fairer maps than it is to make gerrymandered maps. And, you know, how do I know that all I have to do is look at District 44? You know, only if you're really playing games do you actually create a district that is essentially the river.

Like it's and I guess that's what I want to highlight. I firmly believe that you can fix this map so that it is more, more representationally fair keeps communities together. And now, now you just need to do it.

**House Minority Leader Representative Allison Russo** [00:40:15] Thank you.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [00:40:17] Thank you. With seeing no further questions. Thank you.

**Catherine Turcer** [00:40:21] Thank you all.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [00:40:22] We'll call up the next witness, Carol Loxley. Okay.

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber** [00:40:36] Well.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [00:40:41] Sorry. Yeah, we will do that. Okay. Thank you for being here. You may proceed whenever you're ready.

**Carolyn Loxley** [00:40:48] Thank you. What a tough act to follow. Catherine has laid out the history, laid out the objectives and the information that we all hope this body will consider. I am not a professional in this arena of operations at all. I am here as one of those unsatisfied voters, and I want to talk to you about how this process looks from where I sit and where I live, and that there are consequences from failing to achieve fair and balanced representation in the Ohio Statehouse. Basically to to my mind, it comes down to are the elected representatives in our Ohio Statehouse selecting their voters or are the voters selecting our representatives in the statehouse? I know that's cliché, but it is bottom line, what we're here to talk about. If we can get politicians out of the map designing operation, one would hope this one would hope that we would get more fair, competitive, compact, protected maps to serve us in this state. This environment that we're in, as lovely as the state park is and as beautiful as this lodge is, it is such a jewel for those of us who live in this community. This is a really intimidating environment. It's hard for people to want to be here and absolutely people do not want to get up here at the microphone and speak to you folks who hold so much power in our lives and in our communities, in our future, in our children's future, our grandchildren's future. This is not easy, but I want to thank you for allowing me to testify today. I fully recognize as well that the attempts to silence people through scheduling anyone and everyone who who might choose to be pregnant er—pregnant. Where did that come? I have to be thinking about issue 1. At any rate, those who might choose to be present and let alone speak out, the way these hearings were scheduled really is pretty shameful. I testified at the prior round of hearings, and I fully acknowledge that my testimony made absolutely no difference. Nonetheless, I am here today, again, whether you hear me or not. The special election in August should inform future actions. Voters saw the reality and the expense of the maneuvering behind that \$20 million taxpayer funded debacle. Disregard for voters is unfortunately a common card in the deck of gerrymandered states in the United States of America. Ohio seems to be intent on becoming the most extreme of the extremists leading the way, setting the example for minority rule anti-democracy. It is diametrically opposed to every American value I have held in my long life. Our democracy requires a two party system that is the bedrock of our national success. It seems that our state legislature and our administration is set on destroying that. I want to share some news with you. The, quote, silent majority that we heard of from Richard Nixon back in 1969 has changed colors. The new silent majority is rural Ohioans, and as a farm owner in multiple counties in south central Ohio, I want to

assure you you cannot count on us remaining silent. We clearly see what is being done, the rights that are being stolen, and we will not remain silent. Gerrymandering Ohio is a losing game. Not today, not tomorrow, perhaps not even in my remaining lifetime. But it is a lame duck in the worst possible way. We will vote you out. Thank you.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [00:46:25] Thank you, Ms. Loxley. Are there any questions for the witness? Leader Russo.

**House Minority Leader Representative Allison Russo** [00:46:32] Thank you, Miss Loxley, for being here. And you know, I appreciate your comments. And again, I want to say how much I also appreciate you taking the time out of the middle of your day. I happen to know that you're in Pickaway County. You are a farm owner, and I know you are very busy taking the time out of your day to be here to talk about these maps. You know, if I recall correctly, about you being in Pickaway County under the current set of unconstitutional maps, I believe the proposed district keeps you in that same essential footprint of the district that you've been in. I don't think that there are large changes, but one of the interesting things about the districts that you're in, both the current unconstitutional map and this proposed map is that, you know, you actually go all the way from Pickaway County, the district you're in up through Madison County and it keeps those two counties whole, but then it juts into Franklin County and picks up a Columbus suburb as well. Can you talk to me just a little bit? I mean, do you think in terms of, you know, keeping communities together compactness, do you think that perhaps, you know, the residents in that suburban community and Franklin County may have some of the same—you do obviously have some of the same concerns, but in terms of, you know, the representation of what your community is versus maybe what their values are in their community, do you think that those always align? Would they be different? Is that challenging?

**Carolyn Loxley** [00:48:17] Thank you for the question, Co-Chairs. I am totally puzzled and befuddled by why that township in Franklin County is pulled in with us. It it just simply makes no sense to me. There, there are larger residential areas in that township, so I suppose that there might be some very, very weak rationale in putting that in with two rural non-urban, essentially non-urban counties. But I, I don't get it. It makes no sense to me. And I do not see how a single representative could effectively cover our small towns are completely rural areas, and then a suburban area in Franklin County makes no sense to me.

**House Minority Leader Representative Allison Russo** [00:49:21] A follow up, please.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [00:49:23] Yes.

**House Minority Leader Representative Allison Russo** [00:49:23] Thank you for that. I actually used to previously represented that township. So I agree with that. You know, I will ask, you have watched this process play out over the last two plus years at this point. And I guess I would just ask you, as just an everyday citizen, do you think this process is working in terms of the intent of when these reforms were passed? And do you think that this is working for the citizens at all as you stand here today? You know, over two years into this process, I'm curious what your perspective on that is.

**Carolyn Loxley** [00:50:09] Thank you. Leader Russo, co-chairs. It absolutely is not working. It is disappointing. It is shameful. It is a complete contradiction for what the citizens of Ohio voted for. When we spoke loudly and very clearly that we wanted more fair

representation in this state. No, it is not. It is not at all satisfying. As I said, we will vote the perpetrators out at some point in the future. That's that's not a threat. It's a statement of fact. Look at the August special election. We are going to speak up and speak out. We will raise our voices and make our choices. And it will not go well for those who try to obstruct our ability to have fair representation in the state of Ohio. Thank you.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [00:51:16] Any other questions for the witness? I have one. You've you've pointed out that procedurally there were issues even with finding out about the meetings. I tend to agree with you. I was hoping that we would have a more robust schedule, certainly in some areas around the state that, you know, we would get to rural areas and urban areas as well. But given this is what we have and we appreciate very much you being here, and when you're talking about folks in the rural areas, you know, some might look at the maps, look at what we've often been told is that the state of Ohio wants Republican representation. I know we're not supposed to talk about Democrat and Republican, but the reality is there's a supermajority. You're saying this isn't a fair process and that actually you're not getting the representation that you hope for, nor are some of your rural neighbors. Can you say a little bit about how in the world is that possible when often it's generalized that that folks in rural areas are very much getting the kind of representation they're asking for right now?

**Carolyn Loxley** [00:52:42] Yes. Thank you for the question, Co-Chairs. Leader. There is a very, very strong sense, we hear it over and over in rural areas, I thought I was the only one who felt this way. And people are so isolated, so completely under-represented and as specifically in Pickaway County, one of my colleagues is here with me today, we we are attempting to use a megaphone to encourage people in the county who who feel like they are alone, but they are not. We're attempting to become a voice for those who are so completely underrepresented and, you know, without without even the hope of a competitive area, we become hopeless. We become more isolated. We become more estranged from trust in government. And we see that everywhere throughout the state, throughout the nation. Trust in government is so hampered today. And part of that is tied in my mind directly back to the lack of fair representation and and the isolation of of those of us who in a specific geographic area are truly in the minority. And that's that's okay. We don't care about being in the minority in our county. But we also don't want artificial minorities to be created, and we don't want the minority statewide to rule the entire state unfairly.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [00:54:56] Thank you. Thank you for that. Yes, auditor, co-Chair Faber.

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber** [00:55:01] I want to follow up where you left off, because I think that was an important distinction that I heard you say, and I want to make sure I heard you say what I think you said. You recognize that in Pickaway County where you live, you're going to be represented by a Republican. Is that what you said?

**Carolyn Loxley** [00:55:17] No.

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber** [00:55:18] Or let me— let me finish.

**Carolyn Loxley** [00:55:19] Okay.

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber** [00:55:20] Or did you say you want to be drawn in a district to where you may not be represented by a Republican, even though you live in Pickwick County?

**Carolyn Loxley** [00:55:31] I actually said neither of those things, sir.

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber** [00:55:34] So I'm glad I asked you to clarify.

**Carolyn Loxley** [00:55:36] Yeah, absolutely. You made the comment earlier that people tend to live in common, principled areas, areas of common values. Rural Ohio is really, really an interesting experience because, you know, it's just as we've been talking about here today, the competing priorities of a legitimate mapmaking process are very real and very honored. The same is true in rural Ohio, where those of us who are farmers have very much shared values in. And I keep talking to my neighbors about the reality that we all want the same things. We all want the same things. In Pickaway County in Ohio, in the United States of America. We we know what those things are. Our differences come in the way we choose to go about achieving those values and carrying out living our principles. So in in Pickaway County, with the strong rural background that the farmers who farm our farm for us here are staunch Republicans. I love this family with all my heart. I would never, ever do anything to to damage them or go in any way. We share common values about the land, about farming about family integrity and honor. We we have different political views. Do I resent that? Not at all. Do I want to be pulled into a differently gerrymandered district where I can be sure I can elect a Democrat to represent me? Absolutely not. What I want is the opportunity to spread hope and and respect among those individuals in my county who feel under voiced because of the way things are set up in the state of Ohio. I am not at this point in time speaking specifically about my district. We partner with Madison County on a whole lot of things. So it's it's an okay partnership. I appreciated the proposal that our two leaders on the Democratic side of the legislature put forward to change that alignment. I haven't looked at it in the kind of depth that Catherine has, but I could respect and and value that as well. So I'm I'm speaking from a broader platform. My point about Prairie Township being pulled in is absolutely. What the heck? Why? Why do that? It makes no sense.

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber** [00:59:13] So.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [00:59:14] Follow Up?

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber** [00:59:14] And I can't agree much more with what you just said representing a rural area my entire career. We tend to all look at things that matter. But one of the things that was interesting that I recall from my time in the General Assembly there on most matters, the General Assembly operates in a bipartisan fashion. I think the numbers were in the 95% range. There tends to be that 5% of things that get the headlines, whether it's guns or abortion or whether we're getting increase or lower taxes or spending that tend to get the headlines and that tends to get differences when ideas. But generally, I would agree that a suburb in Franklin County has less in comm— in kind with some other area. But one of the problems you have in redistricting is you have to hit a number in a district. The populations of Madison County in Pickaway County are such that you have to go someplace else. And the populations in Franklin County are such that you're going to have to go someplace else with some district to fill those areas. The Minority Leader's proposed map decided to go up into rural Union County to tie that in. And so that's one of the dilemmas when you try an associate in some regards. But one of the things that I can't agree with you more on is your concept is is that you darn well better

try and avoid cracking and packing where you can. And if you're going to draw districts outside the community just to get a political result. It's a bad idea, and I would agree with you on that. And thank you for sharing that.

**Carolyn Loxley** [01:01:00] You're welcome.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [01:01:01] Seeing no other questions. Thank you very much for being here today. Before we call the next witness co-chair Faber has some thank you's for our host today.

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber** [01:01:14] Thank you, Madam Co-Chair. I want to recognize Joan Arrowsmith of Great Ohio Lodges for their hospitality and making space available for us. And I think Lindsay Lawrence is the banquet manager who did all the all the hard work of making this place look as nice as it is for us and making sure we had technology. And we would always be remiss if we did not thank OGT. I don't know how they do it, but they show up and provide technology. And then I think the technology is also being provided by the I assume it's I'm not even sure anymore who who does it, but it's somebody from the legislature, what we call them.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [01:01:54] I.T.

[01:01:55] Is it legislative I.T. or is it or is it LSC I.T.? I don't know where they're at, but it's the great I.T. people from the legislature who provided technology where's Clint? There he is. I think it's important that we thank them as well, because they've agreed to follow us around and frankly, make the technology look good and make sure Ohioans have access to this.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [01:02:16] And while we're thanking everyone, we also want to thank our folks from the Highway Patrol. I personally am indebted to them for making sure that I'm here today. Thanks to Ken Mumper and our Highway Patrol folks who are with us every step of the way, as well as our staff who made sure that we had space and room and everything set up for our for our work today. And with that, I will call our next witness, David Pepper.

**unidentified** [01:02:49] She'll need some water.

**David Pepper** [01:02:56] Thank you, co-chairs. Thank you. Members of the committee. It's an honor to be here. I'm a member of the State Parks Foundation, so I'm really excited that we're in a park although I do agree we need to be more than just in a few parks, in a lot more places than that. But it's a beautiful park. And thank you for the park and its staff also for hosting this. I'm really reminded of two years ago because I was in the hearings of some, you may recall two years ago where we had this same sort of 30,000 foot moment of conversation about the difficulty of balancing the different factors. And I remember Jon Husted was talking about that as this very 30,000 foot level. And there's some truth to that. But the truth is the maps that are coming out from this process don't reflect at all a good faith effort to do that. You can see citizen presented maps that do dozens, hundreds of them, and they all actually accomplish that goal, the balance, and the maps you keep coming out of the committee do not. So I appreciate the sort of the academic discussion of it, but the reality is that's not what these maps are doing. That's not the intention. And I watched that a couple of years ago and then it felt like a good faith discussion. A couple weeks later, we said, well, they weren't even trying to do that. They weren't pushing the bubble or the balloon in certain way. They just went and did one clear thing, violating so

many those rules for a clearly partizan outcome, an outcome that actually turned out to be unconstitutional as well. So, you know, it's the same conversation that really isn't getting to what's really happening. So I want to take a step back though, and are the others are more sort of in the in the weeds of the maps, which is they all to be very important. But I want to take a step back and really challenge those of you on the committee to think about this way. What if we watched what is happening in Ohio over the last two years and some of you have probably traveled and sort of done this, what if we watched all that we have seen happen in other country? It's happened in Ohio in the last two years as a country, as a as a people who believe in democracy and the rule of law if we saw another country behave in the ways I'm and describe what we say to them, what would we say to the people making those decisions? What will you say about them? How we characterize their belief in democracy, the rule of law? What if in another country, let's say Eastern Europe, a former Soviet republic, another continent somewhere? What if that country consistently was rigging almost all the districts of its legislature? So the outcome of almost all of them was completely predetermined. What do we say? What if what if that that rigging meant that in some cases. As Ms. Loxley's talking about the minority party was in the majority anyway, because the districts were drawn in a way that let them win, even if they didn't reflect the majority or had a much bigger majority than was reflected in the people themselves. If that happened to their country, what would we think if Orban did it? If Putin did it? Districts that guaranteed the outcomes, the guaranteed numbers that had no basis in the people of that area. What if we then watched that country? And I love the line about the manipulation of elections is the manipulation of policy because of that rigged system. That country's government just kept passing law after law that didn't have the support of the people in that place. You know, we have them in Ohio, an abortion ban, no exception. So a 10 year old rape victim is sent to Indiana. We know about 10% or fewer of Ohioans actually agree with that. But that that government, because of those districts, is doing something that doesn't reflect 90% of the views of that place. Or, as some of you learned in August, an attempt to change democracy, rig the rules there at 60%. I think almost every single member voted for that. Yet the people rejected it soundly. So what if we saw another country rig a system, no accountability, Almost not a single member of that body ever facing the voters ever in a real election by design, and then passing laws consistently that don't reflect the people of that community, of that state, that government. What if that also happened to be a place like Ohio that was named the most corrupt going in that continent? Then we're going to go another step into the further down depth of that country for a second again. Remove your partizan hats, remove the bodies you sit on. Imagine if you were being presented this as another country. Imagine then, that country's process of rigging all those districts was called out by an independent Supreme Court of that country. And you'd say to that country, well, you're if you had the rule of law there, of course you will abide by that ruling, because in America, that's what we would do, because we have a rule of law here. We respect courts. So we would expect another country to do that. Well, what if the body that rigged all those districts didn't do that? They simply ignored the ruling. They simply defied it. They sent private text messages saying this thing is, what was it? Asinine. But we're still going to do it. And then they another another map, another ruling, another map, another ruling, Another map. Another ruling in a fifth ruling. And that legislature of that country ignores it again. It ignores it for so long that a map that is ruled the final court ruling still today is that map is unconstitutional, meaning Mr. McColley and Mr. LaRe, for eight months or nine months, you have been sitting in districts that violate the Ohio Constitution. So you have a country having defied an independent court for all that time. Where the entire legislature is in power in violation of its own constitution, the very oath those people take. What would we say if we saw that, what would you say? You would say, You know what I would say? I think. Mr. LaRose you'd say this if you were elsewhere, we would say, My God, that country is losing its democracy in plain sight. And

we'd say that country is losing its rule of law in plain sight. And we would be absolutely right to say that. And you all know what we're saying here. This isn't another country. This is the great state of Ohio. Here's what we're doing. We're the heart of it. All right. The new billboards everywhere, the heart of it all in the United States of America is pulling apart through this process and other things I've described. We don't to get into issue one, state school board, all that stuff. We are pulling apart one piece at a time the essence of democracy in the state. And we're absolutely thumbing our nose at the rule of law. And then there's one other step, and this is part of that step. And then the entire time, let's go back to that hypothetical country, the the entire time that country is ignoring those court rulings. That country also changes the rules as to how that Supreme Court that struck them down is selected or elected to favor candidates that they believe will be friendly to their cause. So as those rules are passed to change and manipulate the ballot of court races, for certain court races that impact this other court race has not changed. They defy the law the entire time until the new courts in place that they believe will be friendly. And that's where we are today. And now, today, after all of this, we are bringing back a map, others are analyzing it. But I just saw [inaudible] even says is worse than the current map that violates the Ohio Constitution that you were sitting on. Again, if we saw that in another country. I think we would all say if we took our partizan hats off, what kind of country is that? What kind of rule of law is that? It's not a rule of law because they defied Supreme Court orders, changed the rules of electing courts, and now come back with a worse map, assuming the court, the new court under the new rules, is going to be more friendly. We would say that's not a rule of law at all. We say that Viktor Orban style democracy. And that's Ohio right now. That's the big picture. That's where we are. And, Mr. Faber, I appreciate your your your comments and the tone in which you asked them. I want to I agree completely with Catherine Turcer. And this is going to sound this is sort of an underdog sales pitch. I'll acknowledge that. But you really do still have choice right now. And the tone of your questions, I hope and I appreciate that you voted no on a few maps last time. You seem pretty open minded about it. My gosh, I can't imagine Governor DeWine would want his legacy to be what I've described. I know he's under COVID so but I hope he's watching this. But my goodness, that's four people right there, at least, maybe more who can decide today. No more of being a laughingstock, of being what would be a country we would think was literally killing its democracy. Why would we ever want any part of that here in Ohio? So the question I think of all of us in you in particular, is, as Catherine Turcer suggested, it's not about the maps. You can get the maps, right? You put you put a bunch of smart people in a room like you almost did, and then they call the clock on it. You'll get the maps, right, You'll do the balance. It's about the mindset. You actually want to do it. And I would say, I know looking at you all and you deal with things that I'm not part of. Of course, there are a lot of short term consequences that you're thinking about. Some are running in elections. Some guy wants to be Speaker apparently, who's not here today. All these short term considerations, clearly are driving most of this. Clearly. But that's not what should drive this. What should drive this is the Constitution as it is right now. Which asked you to actually take this seriously. And I agree it's not working well, but I think the Constitution allows it to work well if the folks on this committee decide to make it work well. But but the bigger picture beyond the Constitution and the fact that it also reflects the will of the people three times now, both on gerrymandering and that Issue One was that bipartisan, multi-partizan loud call out from the people to how we want democracy. So you're with the you could stand with the people as well, but I want you to think about your own legacies. Because whatever the short term considerations, whatever the primaries and whatever the the machinations about who's Speaker next that's literally all small potatoes long term. You have a chance to set a legacy here. That when the state you take an oath to serve is having its rule of law destroyed because this committee, your predecessors to it ignored Supreme Court rulings repeatedly. Allow your current map to be



unconstitutional that that questions frankly the legitimacy of everyone in power in those maps. You have a choice to be the ones that said, our legacy is going to be better than whatever small time considerations take us down the wrong road. Our legacy is going to be one where we lifted the state of democracy in Ohio. And we saved the rule of law in Ohio. And I hope you'll all think about that. And there are a couple other things that come with that, by the way, to talk about the rural, the rural piece and I'm a I'm from Cincinnati, my wife's from a very small town, Adams County. So I sort of see both both sides. Folks. The other thing that comes when you actually draw fair districts that reflect the people of Ohio are better outcomes, better outcomes. First of all, you won't have the people running around having special elections, having to vote against the people who don't represent them in the state. Obviously, that happened in August. It's going to happen again in November, where we spend half our time trying to undo the result of a unrepresentative body. But I believe also that if you look closely at gerrymandering and the really screwed up incentives that you get when you're in a body that's gerrymandered where the people back home really have no choice because they're elected, you're elected no matter what. But certain players, we've all seen this play out in very ugly ways in recent years, get everything they want. The results of these broken systems and their broken a broken democracies are terrible public outcomes. You know, a few years ago we were ranked fifth in the nation, the quality of our public schools? We're now in the mid-twenties. In 12, 14 years, we've plummeted. We have among the highest levels of student debt in the nation with one of the highest infant mortality rates in the nation, when we had the Cleveland Clinic and Ohio State and Children's? These come when you have a rigged system where public outcomes are no longer the incentive these places because results are guaranteed. Any system I think we all agree on this any system where there's no accountability left breaks down. And what we are seeing in Ohio is the result of the broken democracy leading to a breaking down very quickly in public outcomes. So you fix, your legacy is not only that, you fix democracy, that you got the rule of law back. But you also, by the way, create a system that reflects the people's views in the deliberation of the legislature, which I think long term also fixes the outcomes of the state that in too many measurable ways are absolutely going downhill right now. So as Catherine said, you know, this is the first hearing. My hope is and we don't have that many witnesses, although we've taken up a little bit of your time. I appreciate the time. My hope is you don't just fiddle with the maps because that's the secondary thing. It's a mindset shift. That what's happened for two years is clearly disgraceful. Some of you, I think in different moments, the text message, some of your questions understood how disgraceful, what Mike DeWine has said it was broken. So that's a text message saying it. Your question suggest it, Mike DeWine said it's broken. Act on those instincts for a few weeks and you could actually secure some incredibly sort of positive legacies that amid all the small time stuff we got that we let consume all of us. You actually did some very big things for the state of Ohio. So I hope you'll you'll take that. And if there are any questions, love to answer them. Thank you very much.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [01:18:12] Thank you. Are there any questions for the witness?

**David Pepper** [01:18:17] All set? Thanks, everybody.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [01:18:19] Thanks for being here, David. All right. Our next witness is Geoff Wise. Welcome when you're ready to address us you may proceed.

**Geoff Wise** [01:18:43] Um. Okay, great. Welcome, everyone. I did have some prepared testimony. My name is Geoff Wise. G. E. O. F. F. W. I. S. E., and I have a prepared testimony. But then I watched the Wednesday hearing I saw that there are a lot of questions on using the 2022 election results, so I want to clarify some stuff there and then I'll get into my testimony. I hope that's okay. Um, so I think Auditor Faber's question, questioning like is the data available? And yes, the 2022 precinct level and block level data is available. I informed the legal counsel's office on 9/11. The data is at the redistricting data hub. It's like a central repository for redistricting and demographic data. They don't usually do their own data they're usually pulling from other sources like the voting and election science team. Those are the ones who did the 2016, 2018 and 2020 disaggregation. Once, once the August 21 census data came in. And as we all know from the the court case, that the 2014 data aren't available in spatial format so we can't use those, but we can use the 2022. There are nine elections there that we can use in addition to the nine elections before that. So if you've been using your your Dave's Redistricting to do your your statistical breakdown of, you know, the district stats, just remember that that uses a composite of two Senate to US president and two Attorney General races. And again, that only goes up to 2020. Dave's is on vacation right now. He'll be back on Monday. So if you've been looking for it updated there, you're not going to see it. Maybe you'll get it next week. But the composite they're going to do is not going to be the same as doing all 18 of the elections that we want to do. So the composite can be slightly different there. So what I've done is, you know, if anyone needs it, they can they can just kind of pull it out into a spreadsheet and calculate that themselves where I can help with that. So I'm not sure how the ORC has been doing their quotes for that, but you obviously do need the precinct boundaries for that. I have the side hobby of doing political science, academic research, so I was looking for the data back in March. I contacted RDH about it. They said, We're just trying to work on that because no one else is doing that. And I said, Hold on, let me contact the Secretary of State's office. So I reached out to the director of Constituent Affairs and Alison told me that the Secretary of State did not have any plans to host those boundaries. I hope that's consistent with what LaRose, Secretary LaRose believes. I'm getting a head nod there and that I should just go and collect that data myself from the 88 Ohio counties. So that's what I did with some help with some other people who were involved, the redistricting process back in 2021. So we got that that data. You know, a lot of phone calls and emails and fixing some data files, but we sent that to RDH and they finally have that data ready now on September 11th. And that's where that's where the data is now. Um, so that's, that's, that's the story there on the data. And I know if anyone had any questions on that or had any problems with calculating partizan indices. But that's a— yes.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [01:21:55] Yes. Thank you for that. And we'll get to that. I want to clarify that while Dave's Redistricting is certainly used, those maps, all of the maps, both the the ones prepared by the Democrats and the Republicans are are then loaded into and what we have as the final product is through Maptitude just to just to clarify that point. Auditor Faber do you have a question?

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber** [01:22:27] I just want to follow up on what you've got. Do you have have you uploaded this data someplace that we can get it or is there a place—?

**Geoff Wise** [01:22:34] Yea so, it's at t he, it's at the redistricting data hub. So redistrictingdatahub.org.

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber** [01:22:39] So we can go out to find that.

**Geoff Wise** [01:22:40] I don't want to be one person responsible for sending that out

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber** [01:22:41] So you run a spreadsheet of the districts. Have you run those calculations on these maps or not? I don't know.

**Geoff Wise** [01:22:48] I have done that for some maps. I will be passing out some information when I have the rest of my testimony that compares this map, the McColley map to the 9-15 [inaudible].

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber** [01:22:57] I appreciate that because that's something I'd like to see.

**Geoff Wise** [01:23:00] So okay.

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber** [01:23:00] So thank you to get that that data to see what that changes.

**Geoff Wise** [01:23:03] Yeah. And can I ask the question back to co-chair?

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [01:23:09] Mr. Wise. Go ahead.

**Geoff Wise** [01:23:10] Yeah. And so when you said the final product is, is that do you consider the block assignment file to be the final product?

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [01:23:17] Mr. Wise, you have superseded and gone beyond the extent of my nomenclature on that, but I can check on it.

**Geoff Wise** [01:23:27] Because, I mean, when you when you guys put the maps up in the commission website.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [01:23:31] The answer is the answer is yes to your question

**Geoff Wise** [01:23:35] so its a block assignment file, Right. Right.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [01:23:35] According to people who know a lot more about than I do. Thank you.

**Geoff Wise** [01:23:40] good, good, all right you're always welcome to contact me offline

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [01:23:42] Mr. Wise. Do you have more of your testimony?

**Geoff Wise** [01:23:46] Yeah, So before I do that, let me just hand out these little packets. One per customer. It's like three pages each. Distribute those. And again, you know, welcome to the members. I haven't met before to the two statewide officials. I know. I'm sorry the governor can't be here today. I don't have any Halloween candy today or any sausages or anything like that. I do have one visual aid, but that comes a little bit later. But welcome and I appreciate your time here, but I do think that many of us would rather not be here today. Right? We would rather have fixed redistricting two years ago. And whenever something like this happens, I think back to, well, why are we here today? What

you know, what caused us to be here in order to move forward, we have to understand how we got here. Sorry. If there's any—?

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [01:24:42] Mr. Wise you can continue.

**Geoff Wise** [01:24:43] Okay. I'm sorry.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [01:24:44] He's just handing out handouts, But you can continue. Okay.

**Geoff Wise** [01:24:47] Thank you.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [01:24:48] Thank you.

**Geoff Wise** [01:24:48] All right. And so for those on the Democratic side, imagine you looked at the behavior of Senator Huffman a couple of years ago and said the reason we're still here today is because of the things that he did two years ago. And if you're on the Republican side, you might look at what Senator Vern Sykes did two years ago and place the blame there. But to be honest, I don't I don't blame either side of them on what they did. I feel like they were doing their jobs. And that job was like to maximize the partizan advantage that they could have either through the maps themselves or through how they spin that in the public sphere to get more votes for their party. So that's what I kind of expect from a political commission. And so I don't really have any blame for the legislative sides on how they do that. I mean, I do have some concerns with how the statewide officials conducted themselves. I feel like that could have been a lot better. But I getting that a little bit later. Okay. The important thing is that we have seven equally empowered members here on this commission. We don't have four map makers and then they slug it out for a few rounds. And then you have three ringside judges who raise one hand and say, okay, this is the winner. That's not how this process is designed to work. And if you have people who aren't being allowed to make maps what those people should be doing on the commission is saying, I'm not going to vote for any map until I have the same powers that you do to draw maps and make corrections. And that's what I would expect from a statewide officials. But I understand that all the people here are political animals. Some of you are up for reelection. You might have been worried about, you know, what was going to happen to your primaries and maybe safer to sit back and wait for to see what happens rather than to take a position. I understand that. But we're all past that now. All three of the statewide officials have committed to another four year tour of duty. I mean, unless you choose to resign, you're stuck with this and you might as well make the most of it and be active members of this commission. And when I think about who the statewide officials are on this commission. We don't just have three random executive branch members. We have the overall leader of the state. We have the chief compliance or accountability officer and the person who's in charge of free and transparent elections. To me, that's like the dream team of statewide officials that I would want to have on this commission pulling for the entire state of Ohio. For the legislative members you only represent 8% of Ohioans. What about the other 92%? Well, those have to come in through representation from the statewide officials who, by the way, each pulled in more votes in the last election than all the other four combined in their entire lives. So the statewide officials really should have a lot of power in this commission. So I talked about having the dream team. Are we live in the dream? Now don't tell my wife I borrowed her Jigsaw. Okay. But I did. All right. And this is my district. This is district 26. Look at this thing. All right. When you've got a district that looks like that, you can have a representative get pulled over for a DWI, his first two months in office and then run for

reelection unopposed. That's not representation. And that's the kind of things that we're trying to get away from here. So how do we get out of this mess? We've been in this mess for two years. How do we get out of it? I think we have to recognize that the actual language in Section 6 is problematic. Honestly, I think it's terrible. I would never write anything like that. Let's just read a couple of the parts of it. 6A says, I'm paraphrasing a little bit here. No General Assembly district plan shall be drawn primarily to favor or disfavor a political party. And if I'm a Republican, I look at that and say, aha, we can't be, you know, trying to draw extra districts to favor the Democrats. We have to do it just what a neutral draw up or nonpartisan draw would do. That's 6A, let's read 6B, 6B says the statewide proportion of district...shall correspond closely to the statewide preferences of Ohio voters. And the Democrats say, aha, the seats should be proportional to the votes no matter how the electoral geography works out. And that's the fundamental tension here. And I feel like I'm the only person in the whole state of Ohio that knows exactly how far apart those two parts of Section 6 are. And I think I see the Auditor nod his head. I think you've probably been the most tuned into that from the past hearings that I've seen. So. The first thing that we have to do is just be truthful about what a nonpartisan or neutral draw would look like. I haven't seen that yet here. And honestly, when I was testifying two years ago, I didn't know how— I knew was important, but I didn't know at that time how to how to calculate that. And I just want to be honest to the Republican side, that nonpartisan draw is not the Huffman map of September 9, 2021. The way Ray DeRossi presented, he said that, Oh, I didn't use partizan data. But then if you look at the choices that were made, you can see where partizan choices were obviously made. And I feel like that's where the wheels first started falling off the bus here. And I think to the Democratic side, what I would say is there's no magic wand where if I don't look at partizan data, I'm magically come up with proportionality. This is not what happens with a state like Ohio because it's unbalanced and because it's it's Republican. That's just the reality. And so what I've done so far is, you know, now the state has come out for the 2022 elections. I've shared with your legal councils and now with the entire commission through a submission what a neutral draw actually looks like. So you can all see it. Everyone here, everyone has to be grounded in what that reality is. Now, if we go back to the court case, what Senator Huffman's lawyer argued is that the process we should follow is you start from a non partizan draw and then you move towards proportionality. That's what he argued. The conservative justices on the court agree with that. And I think in this case, that is reasonable. But you have to start from a neutral and move towards portion, proportionality. So if you think of there being two goalposts, you have to go through. There's let's say, the Republican view of of partizan fairness in 6A and the Democratic view and 6B you got to kick the football through the goalposts. All right. This is not the Super Bowl 25. Scott Norwood wide, right. I feel like I'm watching that Super Bowl over and over again. Every single kick is going wide right. Now, I don't really care whether it's on purpose or it's accidental. It's unconstitutional. Even using the Republican viewpoint of partizan fairness. So that's why I share the neutrality so everyone understands exactly where we should be. Now, it's not my job. Well, sorry. Let me skip. Skip over here. Okay. The one thing I just feel is part of this process is people don't seem to acknowledge where that right goalpost is. And if you continue to do that and say, well, it's anywhere Huffman said eh to that 81%, that's a statewide split and and results for statewide elections. If you continue to ignore where it actually is. It's going to go away. And the way it's going to go away is Eric Holder and his national Democrats are going to come in here and say, actually, we don't like that goalpost either. Let's just take it down and use the proportionality goalpost. And that's what you're going to be left with in Ohio. If you don't kick it through the goalposts. Now, I'm not going to tell you whether you have to split the uprights or not to the right or left. That's up to you and the commission. I'm not going to tell you how far. I mean, you've got five boys and two girls on this commission. You got more on this way. I don't care. Figure that out.

And to be honest, if the statewide officials had said going into this process, you know, actually for a 55/45 vote, it should be 63 seats or whatever it is, if that's what they had said, all of this bickering back and forth would go away because no one could get to the votes they need to pass a map unless they said it was 63 seats. So that's the way I would see the process going forward. All right. And the problem we had in 2021 is you were all negotiating in the darks and no one wanted to give away too much. They didn't know how much they could give away. So I'm just trying to bring this all to light. So I would just ask people to have the true the true leaders we have here, to have the backbone to say this is what I think is right, articulate that standard of partizan, fairness, and let's move forward. Questions.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [01:33:17] Thank you. Mr. Wise, Are there any questions for the witness?

**Geoff Wise** [01:33:22] I have a question

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [01:33:23] Yeah repre— uh Senator McColley, I'm sorry.

**Senate Majority Leader Rob McColley** [01:33:27] Thank you, Chair. Antonio. So I'm looking at your, um, this right here. So, yeah, your example of a compact, neutral map.

**Geoff Wise** [01:33:38] Right.

**Senate Majority Leader Rob McColley** [01:33:39] That if I understand correctly, and this is primarily my question. So you're you're saying that map is drawn on a proportional basis of 55/45 Republican versus Democrats?

**Geoff Wise** [01:33:52] No, I'm not saying that.

**Senate Majority Leader Rob McColley** [01:33:53] Okay, So what what is—?

**Geoff Wise** [01:33:56] So let me be proper here to the co-chair, if I may respond. Yeah. What it's doing is saying if I don't look at Partizan data, this is an example of a map you are doing. And earlier Catherine Turcer talked about one of the Fair Districts Ohio winners who also did not look at partizan data. So they said let's just try to keep school districts said and I've spoken to him personally he did not try to keep that data. And you get a different you don't get strict proportionality when you do that. But if you look to what other states do, the more they lean one side of the other, the more they tend to use that neutral draw standard versus the proportional standard. So if you're in a state like Michigan where it's pretty close to 50/50, you can you can make it such that 50% votes equals 50% seats if you get down to Colorado or even worse, like California or to New York. It's very difficult to draw a strictly proportional map. And so the standard that's used more in those states, if you look at New York's judicial, congressional, you know, what that map maker did was to do more of a neutral draw. So I just that's that's that's what I do.

**Senate Majority Leader Rob McColley** [01:34:58] So if I could clarify this or maybe this So this is your example of a compact neutral map, a map that would be compact and politically neutral.

**Geoff Wise** [01:35:07] Correct.

**Senate Majority Leader Rob McColley** [01:35:08] And I think what you're saying now, if I understand you correctly, is that if we had a statewide election, that would be 55/45, it would result in 65 GOP seats. Is that what you're— I'm looking at this—

**Geoff Wise** [01:35:21] Yes. I'm saying if you did a strictly neutral thing, it would be about 65 for 55/45.

**Senate Majority Leader Rob McColley** [01:35:25] Yeah so

**Geoff Wise** [01:35:25] and I can explain why that is if you.

**Senate Majority Leader Rob McColley** [01:35:28] Yeah. I'm guessing it's because Ohio's political geography.

**Geoff Wise** [01:35:34] Right.

**Senate Majority Leader Rob McColley** [01:35:35] You were talking about the other states with political geography being challenging. I'm assuming that might be the same reason here.

**Geoff Wise** [01:35:40] Right. So there's really two components to it. One is, I mean, every state, as you, every state if they're a little bit competitive, as you get higher in votes, you get higher in seats. Right. So and that's more than a 1 to 1 relationship. So if you look at the Colorado legislature, they have 55% seats, leads to about 63% in the vote. And that was done by an independent commission. Okay. So that's one aspect to it. And then in a state like Ohio, you also have the geography bias. You know, you have the clustering and that. So Auditor Faber, I think you quoted something like 3 to 5%. It really depends on what kind of map you're doing. But if we use 5%. And you basically tack that on. Okay. So there's there's a 5% advantage from the geography plus the inherent non proportionality of as you go up and in votes, you get higher in seats. And each day it's going to be different like that. And so one of the things I've done is like, look at congressional maps of all the different states and say, what does that look like? But each state is different.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [01:36:39] Other questions for the witness. Are you. Do you have a followup?

**Senate Majority Leader Rob McColley** [01:36:43] No, thank you.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [01:36:44] Okay. Other questions for the witness. Leader Russo.

**House Minority Leader Representative Allison Russo** [01:36:47] Thank you. I meant a follow up to my colleague, Senator McColley's question, and I'm trying to follow along here. So when you talk about the example of a compact, neutral map.

**Geoff Wise** [01:37:00] Right.

**House Minority Leader Representative Allison Russo** [01:37:01] Which, again, I think what you're saying is abiding by section 6A, but that's not the only requirement. There's also Section 6B of the Constitution and what you're saying is if you're going strictly bipartisan, or being neutral about partizanship you're going to be the upper bound. As opposed to the 6B component and really, we need to be somewhere in the middle there.

So I don't think that you're suggesting that we go with a completely partizan neutral map because the Constitution has two parts, two requirements to it, as you've laid out. And the second slide.

**Geoff Wise** [01:37:48] Right? exactly Yeah, [inaudible]

**House Minority Leader Representative Allison Russo** [01:37:51] Am I understanding that correctly?

**Geoff Wise** [01:37:51] Yeah. Yeah. So I'm not saying that we should exactly follow the neutrals. And in fact, in some conversations I've had with with Fair Districts Ohio, I think I've not been clear on that. I'm not saying they should hug that line. I'm saying it's the job of the commission to decide where to go between those two lines. And if you're an independent commission, that work happens organically, naturally. I don't see that happening here. I don't honestly expect it to see it happening in organic, natural way here. But that's what you have to grapple with, is to find where you want to be between those lines. And if you're above that line, if you're more Republican, that you're clearly unconstitutional, even with the change in the court.

**House Minority Leader Representative Allison Russo** [01:38:26] And so quick follow up.

**Geoff Wise** [01:38:27] Yeah sure.

[01:38:28] Leader Russo.

**House Minority Leader Representative Allison Russo** [01:38:28] So if again, I'm looking at your graph correctly in on the second slide, you were saying clearly the versions of the maps that are previous, but this map as well as previous the current unconstitutional maps that were under even go beyond the bounds of a neutral. If you took that sort of pure approach, a neutral partizan neutral map, Is that a correct interpretation?

**Geoff Wise** [01:39:00] No, not quite, because I don't have the enacted map on this this plot. What I have is the Huffman 9-15 map, which the first set of maps that was adopted.

**House Minority Leader Representative Allison Russo** [01:39:10] Oh, I see. Circle.

**Geoff Wise** [01:39:11] Right. So we have. McColley We have we have the one that was proposed Wednesday.

**House Minority Leader Representative Allison Russo** [01:39:15] Correct.

**Geoff Wise** [01:39:16] And then we have the first map that was adopted that was not the one that was finally enacted, because then there was back and forth of the courts. So if you look at that, the enacted map, it would look better. It would it would probably fall between the goalposts at a low statewide vote, but then be above it at a high statewide vote. Because remember, there are a lot of maps that were drawn close to being 50/50 if the state was 53/47. And what I think also is really interesting here, if you look at like, oh, the X's and O's are on top of each other, not they're not quite on top of each other. So if you look at the X's, you can see the lower statewide votes, particularly around like 52 or 53%. You can see the X's are higher. So in other words, the effort to increase the GOP



seats was more focused on the map being 53/47, if you look at the current map here. Which the circles they tend to be more Republican at the higher vote. So the my interpretation there is that the Republicans believe based on how well they did in the recent statewide elections, is that it's better to have better results. They should focus their better results on when the statewide vote is closer to 57, 58%. So you can even see that just looking at this as far as if they were trying to get above the neutral standard, were they trying to because you only bend the map so much, you can't do it across the whole curve. Where are you going to focus the efforts? And it looks to me like the efforts are focused on 57, 58%.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [01:40:45] Leader Russo?

**House Minority Leader Representative Allison Russo** [01:40:47] No that's it, thank you.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [01:40:50] Um, Co-Chair Faber

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber** [01:40:50] Thank you. And thank you, Mr. Wise. I always appreciate your input and analysis because you have a way of looking at things that I think helps us get to the brass tacks. What do you believe the statewide proportionality percentage should be today after the last cycle of elections?

**Geoff Wise** [01:41:10] So the statewide vote is 0.555 So so 55.5% average each time. If I average all 18 elections, you get 55.5%.

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber** [01:41:22] And that's just over the last decade.

**Geoff Wise** [01:41:24] I actually that's only 2016 for but that's just a straight [inaudible]

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber** [01:41:29] How about adding in the 22 cycle?

**Geoff Wise** [01:41:31] So I'm saying including the 22, I'm not including the 2014, I'm just doing 2016 and beyond.

**Senate Majority Leader Rob McColley** [01:41:36] If I could?

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber** [01:41:37] Yeah, sure.

**Senate Majority Leader Rob McColley** [01:41:38] I think, I think—

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [01:41:39] Uh, excuse me.

**Senate Majority Leader Rob McColley** [01:41:39] Sorry. I was looking to the wrong co-chair

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [01:41:40] co-chair faber, are you finished with your question?

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber** [01:41:45] I have more questions, but I would yield to Senator McColley.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [01:41:48] All right, Senator McColley.

**Senate Majority Leader Rob McColley** [01:41:51] I just want to clarify, because I think there's a number of us who are making who are maybe conflating these two things.

**Geoff Wise** [01:41:58] Right.

**Senate Majority Leader Rob McColley** [01:41:58] I think you're asking about the statewide ten year look back.

**Geoff Wise** [01:42:00] Yeah,

**Senate Majority Leader Rob McColley** [01:42:01] Correct? And what should be the vote applied to that? Not what the index number should be on a per district basis?

**Geoff Wise** [01:42:09] Correct, correct.

**Senate Majority Leader Rob McColley** [01:42:09] Yeah. All right. Sorry.

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber** [01:42:11] Madam Chair, as a follow up, one of the questions—

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [01:42:14] Co-Chair Faber.

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber** [01:42:15] I just want to make sure I understand this.

**Geoff Wise** [01:42:17] Yeah.

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber** [01:42:18] So what you're saying is, is that if a completely neutral and this is what you drafted here,

**Geoff Wise** [01:42:23] Right.

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber** [01:42:23] Completely neutral, compact map, redrawn without any partizan advantage.

**Geoff Wise** [01:42:27] Yeah.

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber** [01:42:28] If the state went 55% Republican, 45% Democrat during election cycle, and I guess you have to pick a race. So it's tough to do an average because it's going to vary from seat to seat

**Geoff Wise** [01:42:40] Well, you can just draw a curve and draw a line through the curve, but if you picked a race, it would you you would a judicial.

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber** [01:42:44] You would expect the House to include 65 to pick up have 65 seats.

**Geoff Wise** [01:42:51] Right.

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber** [01:42:52] In an election where the governor got, what?

**Geoff Wise** [01:42:55] 62 and a half.

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber** [01:42:56] 62 and a half

**Geoff Wise** [01:42:57] of the two party share. Yeah.

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber** [01:42:59] And and the rest of the statewide is won by 20 or so. The the House went to 67. That was the actual number. I think that's where the house is today, is it not?

**Geoff Wise** [01:43:12] But the governor's race doesn't reflect those district races.

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber** [01:43:15] So I go back and say there is something to be said about political geography and you've hit on that. If you're going to draw maps in Ohio that are fair and neutral, do you do that by slicing and dicing urban core centers and moving them out into rural areas?

**Geoff Wise** [01:43:40] So what's the best way to hit it between the goalposts while minimizing the the damage, let's say, to to to the citizens? Is that what you're asking? I think the way I would do it and is is you look, there's certain counties where it's easier to make reasonable, compact partizan choices that help the Democrats or help the Republicans. And there are other counties where you you really can't make much of a difference unless you do really goofy things. And so if you look at one of these pages, the pages which has the beautiful faces of our statewide officials, those are the counties that I would focus on as being the ones where like, hey, if we're trying to hit a certain number, these are the ones where I would look at different compact options to achieve that number. Now, I'm not saying that DeWine gets Cincinnati and the LaRose get Summit. You guys can, you know, duke out who does what, I don't care. But the point is, are like those are the counties that have the most spread, I would say, in terms of what the partizan lean would be for reasonable compact choices. And I'm not an expert here on, you know, how to pair different types of voters. I don't have that scale. That's a community understanding point that I do not have. But all I know is that from a contact map standpoint, those are the counties where you can have the most flexibility.

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber** [01:44:55] Is a follow up, Madam Chair.

**Geoff Wise** [01:44:56] Yeah, sure.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [01:44:57] Follow up co-chair

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber** [01:44:57] Mr. Wise. And again, thank you. Do you, have you looked at these areas and made suggestions based on the as-adopted working map, changes that would be within these realm of discussion? Do you have amendments that we can take a look at?

**Geoff Wise** [01:45:15] To be honest, you know, I have a day job and I just saw the maps Wednesday night. I have not had time to do that. And so I actually prepared this stuff a couple of weeks ago. So I have no idea what the fast track schedule would be. And so my thought point, what my thought was to start from the September 15th Huffman map, and the reason not because I thought it was a good map. But there's one thing that I do want to point out here, and that is there's the choice made here to pair Cuyahoga and Lake Counties together. All right. In the original 9-15 map, it was not done that way. Cuyahoga was was paired more to the south and and to the east. And I think that's a better choice

because when you do it the way that the that the McColley map does, it's a really constrained situation as far as the number of people that you have per, per district. I mean, you're very close to having to be 104 and 105% in every single district in that plan. And that really constrains your choices. In fact, honestly, you should be realizing that the census data is a little bit inaccurate. They deliberately inject noise into that data so you could actually have some some districts that are not actually compliant. They may look approximately compliant but they're not truly compliant if we were to use the real data. So that's why I, as I say, to go back to the original pairing that we had of the counties and that was and then you have a little bit more flexibility to do that. I'm not sure if that answers your question.

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber** [01:46:45] Madam Chair. It certainly helps. And as a follow up, if you have—.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [01:46:49] Follow up, co-chair Faber.

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber** [01:46:56] If you have specific suggestions in areas I would look forward to hearing those [inaudible]

**Geoff Wise** [01:46:59] Yeah, I will, I will do that this week.

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber** [01:47:01] As you usually do.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [01:47:02] So I actually have a question for you. Thank you, Mr. Wise, when as you've been talking about this, I couldn't agree with you more about the pairings that you just mentioned. In fact, in the Antonio-Russo map, we actually did the pairing you're talking about, especially with Cuyahoga and Summit Counties. But I want to, you have said a couple of times, you know, and then you've kind of echoed what one of our other witnesses talked about when you started talking about the participation. And it sounded like you don't have an analysis. I'm assuming I appreciate the fact that you have a day job and that your that you're here really performing a service for the citizens. And I appreciate that. But but you talked a little bit about the participation, especially when we're we're looking at the percentage when we're I think when we talked about Governor DeWine, 62 and a half percent. And while that represents one one election, one choice, do you really do you really think that we can, how much how much weight can we put on one election or should we look over a period of time? Certainly we do a ten year summary before and we base it on the census to see about those shifts in population. Where's the population? But isn't there another shift that takes place with voter participation? And to your mind, do you do you know of of anywhere where the actual participation numbers come into this? Because I believe and one of our previous witnesses suggested that as gerrymandered districts increase and over time, participation actually reduces for people who do not feel represented. So my question is, is there any statistics available or anywhere where we actually look at the participation level and then how it influences the bottom line of those percentages?

**Geoff Wise** [01:49:32] Here's a suggestion I have. This is just off the cuff is when you have a presidential election, people know that their their vote could be more important if you have a particularly I think the most influential election is probably the Senate, the U.S. Senate election, because the presidential election, if it's not close. Right. I mean, the Senate elections have tend to be closer. So you could look at that turnout in those elections versus elections that were just for legislative. So I frankly don't buy the argument that people get. I mean, I think people do get somewhat discouraged on what the

legislative districts look like. But I think most people would come out to vote for other offices, even if those districts were gerrymandered. So I don't put a lot of weight into that. But I mean, you can always look at that data. Now, just to get back to your earlier point, you're saying like which which elections should we be using? What you can do is you can look at the the expected seat outcome for each of those individual 18 elections and then you can kind of just draw a line between those. And if you have a a fairly drawn map, it's going to be a very smooth curve. And then you can say, well, no matter what, the statewide vote I think is important. This is what that expectation is.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [01:50:44] Thank you. And just just one follow up is that we talked before about whether it's Maptitude or Dave's Redistricting my understanding is that Dave's Redistricting does have available the ability to look through the lens of the presidential election and the Senate elections. Correct?

**Geoff Wise** [01:51:06] No, you have a limited choices. You can either use, I think, two thousand— that 2020 composite or maybe one other composite so you don't have the opportunity to look at individual elections. So that's why. But you'd have to be able to do that yourself based on individual elections. But that data is available. It's possible I would help anyone with that.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [01:51:22] Absolutely. And what you just said, thank you for the clarification. You can do that individually. Okay. Are there any other questions for the witness? Thank you so much, Mr. Wise, for spending time with us and the work that you've done on this.

**Geoff Wise** [01:51:35] You're welcome.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [01:51:36] Our next I'd like to call our next witness, Carol Griffith.

**Carol Griffith** [01:51:44] Came in here to watch. I wasn't sure I was going to talk. So you have nothing in writing in front of you. Um, when they put through the petition to change the redistricting rules, I collected lots and lots of signatures and went everywhere from the Ohio State Fair to Comfest, asking people to sign. Lots of them said, I'm too busy. I'm having fun. But lots of them, lots of them listened. And only two of them said, No, I like it the way it is. So obviously there was a lot of support for that, those changes. Um, and watching the hearings on TV. I want to thank you today for being a lot more polite and attentive than I saw on television where there were people off talking by themselves and ignoring what was going on. So I appreciate I feel like we're being listened to. I do have a question. Is this on TV?

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [01:52:43] It's being, the answer to your question is this being livestreamed by OGT

**Carol Griffith** [01:52:49] Okay. I only recently found out about this meeting like two days ago, and I watched the news every night. So I think that we need a lot more, um, to be other places than than out in the country. We need to be where people can get to them. And I think we need much better publicity. It was like, but sign off on one TV said, Oh, by the way, I had to cancel a doctor's appointment to be here, and I just wanted to hear what's going on. But I do have a few things to add. I think that the meetings would be a lot better if you guys could donate a little of your 9 to 5 jobs time to come in places where people who work or people who take college classes can actually be there, um, so that

they can see it. Yeah, they can see it later on TV, but they can't contribute. And I think it'd be helpful for them to see, watch what's going on and watch how many people are paying attention and how well it's going. I would really like to see that happen. Um, I would. I also lived half of my timing Ohio in downtown Columbus and half I live now in Pickaway County, and I can tell you that we were a very mixed set of opinions and electors in downtown and that we got along okay. We didn't like somebody, it wasn't their politics. But down where I am, there isn't even, I don't even want to meet you if I know you're on the other side. And that's ugly. And I think when you have no power in your district, you, um, you quit voting, or you just get angry. And we have way too much separation in this country right now that, um, this is adding to if you feel like you were listened to. Okay, I lost this one. You know, I played sports. I lost a lot. But, um, if you feel like we don't care to hear your voice, I think things get worse. And I believe that, um, they have here. I mean, I have also heard the report that we're in the most corrupt state in the union, and I'm not proud of that. That's all I have to say.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [01:54:58] So are there any questions for Miss Griffith? Would you. Would you come back so we can ask you some questions? And before I turn it over to my colleagues for for their questions, I want to say thank you so much for coming here today and for your suggestions. I agree with all of them, especially the ones making things available. I do want to clarify for you that this job is much more than a 9 to 5 job, at least for myself. It does include evenings, weekends and, um, all kinds of crazy schedules sometimes. But I think the point that you're making about really making this available for working our working families and for working people to be able to come and attend. And so perhaps I'm hoping that one of the things we may be able to discuss after this hearing today is the possibility of having one of our hearings after session, maybe in the late afternoon, early evening on the following week, on next Wednesday. But that's something we will talk about. But thank you for bringing that suggestion of having a nighttime or at least after five hearing for people available who are working during the day. So thank you for that, Leader Russo.

**House Minority Leader Representative Allison Russo** [01:56:26] Um, thank you, Madam Chairwoman. For Mrs. Griffith, I again would like to echo saying thank you for being here and my sincerest apologies on the behalf of the commission that you canceled the doctors or had to cancel doctor's appointment because you were correct it was very short notice. And at the end of the day, it is the public that gets shortchanged not only by perceiving this as a rigged process, but the hurried nature of the process that forces these public hearings to be compressed in a small number of days at, you know, very frankly, inconvenient hours when most people are working during the day and or cannot get to someplace like a state park. So, you know, my apologies that we are here in this process that forced that to happen. I also just want to say to you and there is a question here, you know, one of the things that strikes me that you are saying and I think I heard you say you do reside partly in a rural area and then also partly in a very urban area. I think you you have an expectation probably of how the partizanship representation is going to be in both of those areas. But what I hear you say, and I think is really the damaging aspect of gerrymandering, is that you and other people around you, regardless of partizanship, they don't feel heard and they don't feel like they have a government that is responsive to their needs. From, really could happen on either side of the aisle. If you are in a district where the results have been in, the lines have been drawn to predetermine the results already, you do not feel heard and you don't feel like that elected representation is responsive to whatever your issue is. They're not responsive. Am I correct? And that is what I'm hearing.

**Carol Griffith** [01:58:37] Yeah, I think that does happen. And I joined a next door Facebook group to find out what's going on in my neighborhood. And the political bullying, too, has taken over. And they really basically are saying, we don't care what you hear, we're going to win anyhow. They've been telling people, well, move if you don't like it. And that's not, not right. And they but they may be.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [01:59:05] Any other questions for the witness? Thank you, Ms. Griffith, thank you for taking the time. Thank you. And our next witness VL Bickenell? That's what we have down? VL Bicknell? No? She's. Oh, I'm sorry.

**VL Bicknell** [01:59:29] Yeah, Bicknell, you got it.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [01:59:30] I got it.

**VL Bicknell** [01:59:30] pretty good job. I wasn't prepared at all for this. If NPR hadn't given me a little report that this meeting was happening, I wouldn't be here. I'd be at the beach. You guys are totally wasted here. This is Deer Creek. Just down the road, the best sandy beach around the warmest water. It's like August water is perfect down there. And you guys are sitting here, and I don't think it's too hard to tell that not many people knew about it. And if it were for NPR, I wouldn't be here because I would have had no idea. So I just heard the apologies and oh we're on a crunch time frame and, you know, we didn't get the word out. We're at a state park during office hours. But yeah, it's pathetic. So I guess I missed, I came in late. I was headed for the beach. Saw the lodge exit and thought, well, I can't go by this, you know, NPR told me this is happening, so I don't have anything prepared. But I do as a citizen, hate that Ohio takes it on the chin repeatedly for being corrupt. I just watched a Simpsons rerun where they literally shredded Homer in the voting machine. That's how bad Ohio is viewed by the nation. So I came late. Maybe I missed this, but I'm hoping with all this wonderful brain talent up here that you guys could help me help your average high school journalism student who's trying to write about politics in Ohio. What got us here? How many failures and how are those failures being fixed with whatever you're doing now? Can anybody sum that up for, say, an eighth grader?

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [02:01:21] Well, thank you, Ms.. Big. Now for the question. I can't I can't speak to how it's being fixed here today because I think there's still many flaws and we have a long way to go to being able to fix both the process and the maps that are under consideration that I voted no on. But maybe some of my colleagues can shed some light on how this map in this process is actually going to progress Ohio forward.

**VL Bicknell** [02:01:52] I'd really like a summary of why the Supreme Court jumped in and what happened there. I feel like I don't have a grip on it. I wasn't prepared to be here today, guys. I'm your average voter. And as a Democrat, I can tell you I'm going to walk out of here with a kick me sign on here, because I know as a Democrat, we're the ones, you know, swimming in the deep end without any bouyes. So can somebody explain why these other maps failed? In a way that an eighth grader could understand. Um.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [02:02:27] Leader Russo.

**House Minority Leader Representative Allison Russo** [02:02:28] Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you. First of all, Mrs. Bicknell, for being here. I am the mother of an eighth grader. So I will make my best attempt here if I were explaining this to my eighth grader, I would say to my eighth grader that, you know, we are here because the Ohio Supreme

Court called foul on the players in the game, rigging the rules in their favor. And that's probably the simplest way to put it is there are rules to the game, as outlined in the Constitution. And the team that maybe was in, you know, wanted to be the winning seat, wanted to continue to win. And so they ignored the rules of the game and or change them in the process. And the Supreme Court called foul multiple times as the referee and the players from that team completely ignored the referee and decided that they won anyway.

**VL Bicknell** [02:03:37] [inaudible]

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [02:03:39] Ms. Bicknell, can you please, just a point of order, can you let the the leader finish and then you will have an opportunity to ask a question as well. Okay?

**House Minority Leader Representative Allison Russo** [02:03:51] And Madam co-chair, that that is the simplest way to put it at this point. That said, we have another chance to come back to the field and to be a good uh, exhibit good sportsmanship, follow the rules, follow the referees in how we proceed and listen to the referees. You know what we always talk about with my kids, they're also athletes that they should respect the referees as well, in this case, the rule of law and try this again.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [02:04:28] Any other responses to Ms. Bicknell's question from the commission members? Well, unfortunately. Well, or fortunately Ms. Bicknell. Yes?

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber** [02:04:43] op no.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [02:04:43] Co-Chair Faber, do you have?

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber** [02:04:46] no go ahead.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [02:04:47] No? I was going to summarize. Do you have a?

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber** [02:04:51] Go ahead.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [02:04:51] ...questions? Comments?

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber** [02:04:52] No, go ahead.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [02:04:53] Okay. Ms. Bicknell. I'm sorry that we couldn't give you any more information than that.

**VL Bicknell** [02:05:00] Let me ask you this is there a state you can model? Is there a state that's done this? And you can go, Oh, look, they figured it out. I can't believe this is the wheel being formed. What, what is going on? Why can't Ohio get out of being the most corrupt organization around? It's disgusting!

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber** [02:05:18] I'm going to just take objection to the repetition that Ohio's somehow the most corrupt. I disagree with that. As the person who enforces a lot of the public corruption with regard to local government and other folks, I



can tell you we certainly have our issues. But I think most people who work in Ohio government and are honest, hardworking folks trying to do the will of the people of Ohio.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [02:05:45] And co-chair Faber, I appreciate that clarification. Without going too far down the path, I think the corruption that a couple of our witnesses have mentioned today and the fact that there has been a classification of the state of Ohio as the most corrupt and I agree, the majority of our workers in the state of Ohio have not been carried off to jail for corrupt actions, but rather there have been leaders, politicians that have given us that moniker, unfortunately, and it's been played out in the press. And I think that's what we're hearing is the repeating of something that the media have certainly identified through some of our corrupt politicians who have been held and justice has been served.

**VL Bicknell** [02:06:42] Finally, Householder is a household name. But I have to say, you got to go back to all the people that covered for Householder and put Householder in power.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [02:06:51] And thank you, Ms. Bicknell, we're we're we're traveling off the path of our duties here, so we're going to thank you so much,

**VL Bicknell** [02:06:57] So please, visit the beach!

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [02:06:58] Thank you so much.

**VL Bicknell** [02:06:59] It's incredible. You won't regret it.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [02:07:01] Thank you. Miss Bicknell, Now, are there is there anyone else here today that wants to testify? Fill out a witness slip that we have not heard from. Seeing none. I would like before we adjourn for today, I would like to remind everyone who is listening as well as the folks in the room, that we have some other hearings in our future. We have a hearing scheduled for Monday at Punderson State Park. We have a hearing scheduled at the statehouse on Tuesday. Both of those are at 10 a.m.. And we are seeking an additional hearing and perhaps before we adjourn, is there any motion to come before this body in terms of consideration of an additional hearing, as was suggested to us, that would probably start at 5 p.m. to make room for some of our working folks to be able to come and participate?

**House Minority Leader Representative Allison Russo** [02:08:19] Madam Chairwoman, sure. Move to add an additional hearing that we can work out amongst the commission members to accommodate a location, time and location that I think is more conducive to working citizens in our state. Those, of course, who work during the day. We have met many citizens who work very odd hours, but also working parents in many of our underrepresented communities to have better participation in this process and certainly understand that we need to work amongst ourselves as a commission to come to some sort of time and location that accommodates that.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [02:09:02] Do we have a second? I'll second it. This is the opportunity where we could make a decision by, um, yes?

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber** [02:09:13] Madam Chair, chairman. I don't have I don't have an issue with having an additional meeting until we know that we can have

another location at a date. I was going to suggest either either that we recess and try and reach out and find out today, but I don't think that's practical today. I would suggest by Monday morning we could probably have a discussion about a second loc-, a second location or a second meeting on Tuesday with the time schedule that the Secretary has laid out. I don't know where that would be or what that would be. I guess it is conceivable that we could do a Monday morning and a Monday evening, but we run into the Yom Kippur issue there as well. But I just I am open to all of that. But I just want to be sensitive based on the input that we've had, that we do have a time deadline for consideration. But I am certainly open to additional meetings. I'm certainly open to an evening meeting. But we have to find the location. We have to have a time and I don't know that I can have that answer before Monday morning. I'm also open for a Sunday or Saturday meeting, but I understand other members might have conflicts. So working amongst us to get our schedules aligned probably means we're having a conversation Monday morning at our 10:00 start time.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [02:10:32] Other discussion, other weigh in on that?

**Senate Majority Leader Rob McColley** [02:10:36] I would I would object to the motion on the grounds that Auditor Faber laid out.

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber** [02:10:44] Could we? Madam Chair, could I offer a friendly amendment?

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [02:10:48] I was just going to ask if you had a friendly amendment, I think that's a great idea.

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber** [02:10:53] The friendly amendment would be not to set a timer or place. But to say it is our intention to try and add an additional meeting sometime within this time parameter at an agreed upon location in time and place to reflect what I think we've all independently discussed. But I just don't know that I can say it's going to be at a certain time or certain place until we find out A. Where can be and B. How it fits in the schedules.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [02:11:24] Leader Russo.

**House Minority Leader Representative Allison Russo** [02:11:25] Madame Chairwoman and Co-Chair Faber, I believe I didn't specify a time or place, I said after discussion, so I'm not sure a friendly amendment is necessary because it provides some flexibility. I would simply urge our consideration of a time and place that accommodates the working people of the State of Ohio better than 10:00 in the morning over these days in some of these locations that are clearly incredibly difficult for people to come to if they are working.

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber** [02:11:59] start at 3:00 or 4:00?

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [02:11:59] And so I'm going to suggest without object, unless there's an objection.

**Senate Majority Leader Rob McColley** [02:12:06] I would, Madam Chair, I would. I would again, object again. I mean, I think we're trying to balance, um, seven. It's my understanding the governor may or may not be able to join us again on Monday. Maybe it's Tuesday. I'm not really sure. I don't want to speak on behalf of him, but we're trying to

balance seven schedules here to try and set up a meeting. And I think it is, uh, I would prefer we wait and have this discussion on Monday when we actually are able to look at schedules, we're able to look at availability of venues. Uh, we're able to look at availability of a lot of other things before we commit ourselves down this road one way or another.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [02:12:53] Thank you, Senator. Leader Russo. For clarification of your amendment?

**House Minority Leader Representative Allison Russo** [02:12:58] Clarification again of my amendment, and we have not set a date, time or location. It is consideration of a time and location that accommodates working people. So I don't think that that is in conflict with any of the concerns that have been raised by co-chair Faber and Senator McColley. So I do not withdraw my friendly amendment. And I suppose if there's an objection, we should vote on it.

**Senate Majority Leader Rob McColley** [02:13:32] To the chair. Uh, again, I'd prefer if we're going to agree on it that it'd be a specific time, location and venue.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [02:13:39] So I think what we were agreeing, I'd just to be clear again what, what the question the question right now for us to consider is will we get together and try to talk about adding another one? It there is no time and location. It's a consideration of that.

**Senate Majority Leader Rob McColley** [02:14:01] To the chair. I understand that we don't need a motion for that. We can have that conversation independently and—

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [02:14:09] Can we all agree on that then? If that's possible. If not, then I mean, look, we are trying to, I think, accommodate and take into consideration what we've heard today. We also know that we are it's important to also consider some of the folks that we want to make sure can participate who have a religious observance next week. We've considered all that. So is it possible for us without it, we can take a vote And and there's a question. We can call the question. There's a question on the table or. Is, is it? You know, Auditor Faber had suggested last time that if we could make decisions by, we actually could make a decision by consensus. Is this one of those questions that we could have consensus that at our next meeting we will consider this? Is that possible?

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber** [02:15:17] Madam Chair, I have no objection to that, but I would offer maybe a more acceptable proposal that you and I work with the other members to try and find a mutually acceptable time, place and location for our subsequent meetings with the potential of adding one more. And if we can't get agreement, that's acceptable. Look, I, I know members have have have family events and other things that they're doing. And I think if it's not unanimous, it's tough to get an agreement. So I'm happy to take on that task with you to call around and try and find a mutual time place with an agreed upon location as well. And I don't think we need a motion to do that. What we do need is agreement by this body that we can do that. And we will if we get agreement, we will accept that as a meeting time.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [02:16:11] Okay. We will hold on to that. Put a pin in that for a minute. Leader Russo, With what you've heard so far, do you want to continue to have us vote on your amendment?

**House Minority Leader Representative Allison Russo** [02:16:22] Thank you, Madam Chairwoman. I feel comfortable having the two co-chairs have this discussion with the understanding that the intent is one to add an additional hearing. But number two, to attempt to accommodate with better hours and location citizens who probably are working during the middle of the day. So I gladly withdraw my motion.

**Co-chair Senate Minority Leader Nickie Antonio** [02:16:50] Thank you. Thank you, Leader Russo. Thank you for this, this work in progress. I think it's what the citizens have asked us to do is probably do this kind of work. I want to be really clear to the dates and the times and the locations that have already been put on our schedules. I am sure there are members up here that had to change things. I know I have. I know that there's a lot of work I think that points to how important this work is. And with that, is there any other business to come before this commission? Then we stand adjourned.

**Co-chair Ohio Auditor Keith Faber** [02:17:29] Thank you.