

Testimony of Stephen Michael Kellat Before The Ohio Redistricting Commission

Monday, September 25th, 2023

Picture of the Ashtabula
Historic Harbor District. In
the distance is the
landmark bascule bridge
over the Ashtabula River.



About the witness

Stephen Michael Kellat is a resident of Ashtabula City in the 99th Ohio House District. Mr. Kellat holds an earned master's degree in library science from Clarion University of Pennsylvania. He is an adjunct instructor at a community college in Pennsylvania teaching digital literacy and commutes there from Ashtabula. He has also previously served as a precinct election official at a variety of precincts in Ashtabula County.



Recapping The Situation

- Only hearing being held in northern Ohio
- Co-Chair Faber and Catherine Turcer had a colloquy Friday about keeping cities, townships, and counties whole
 - Ashtabula County wasn't kept whole under the last map
 - That map was imposed by a federal three judge panel in *Gonidakis v. Ohio Redistricting Commission*



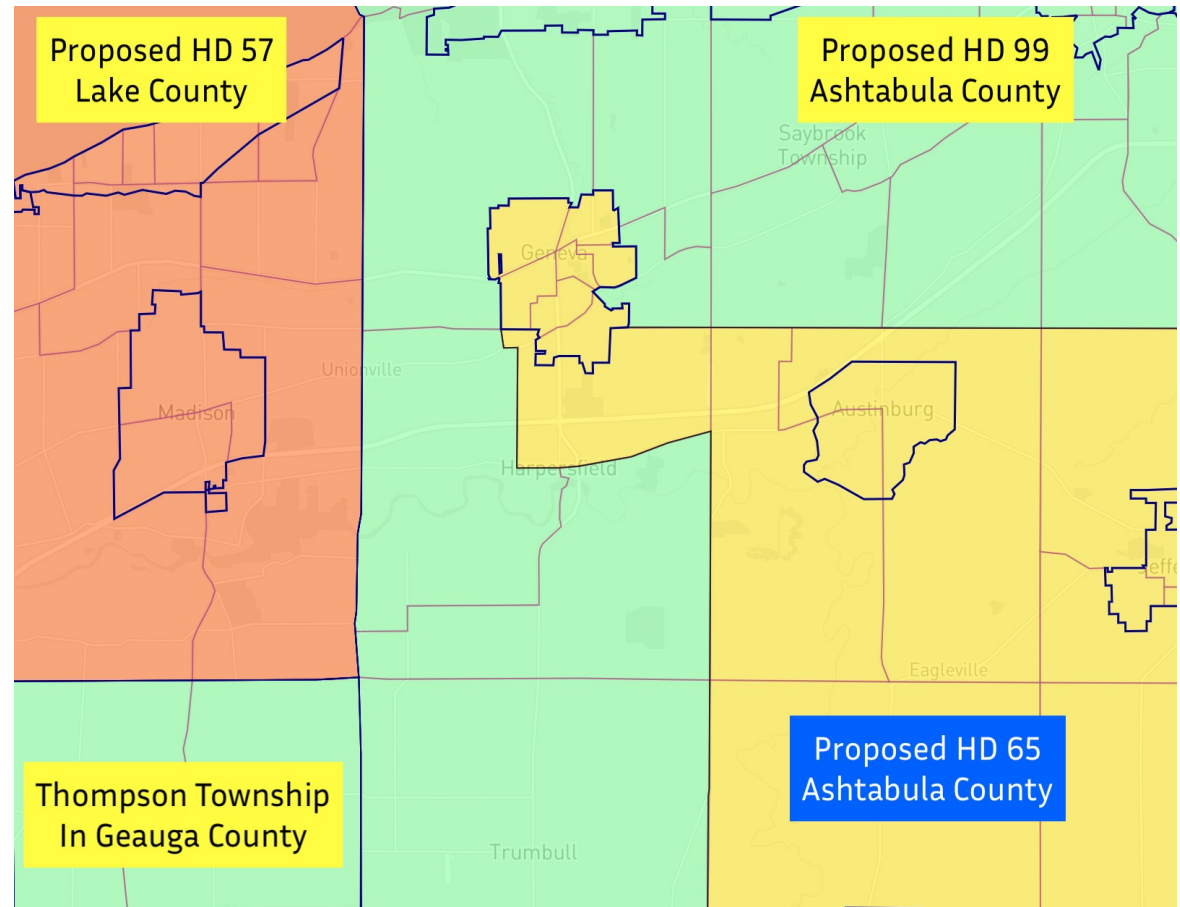


Recapping The Situation

- Ashtabula County is split oddly
 - The majority of the 99th district is based in Geauga County while a strip of Ashtabula County is attached
 - The remainder of Ashtabula County is attached to the 65th district which is predominantly based in Trumbull County

Carving Up Geneva

- Adapted from output of Dave's Redistricting



A Look At Geneva

- St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church and Preschool



A Look At Geneva

- Dr. Drought's office



A Look At Geneva

- Plaza on Broadway



A Look At Geneva

- Geneva Church of Christ



The Problem in Chief

- This unduly creates safe Republican seats
- This squelches the voices of Democrats in northern Ashtabula County
- This devalues the voices of Ashtabula County residents through cracking and packing

A Solution Path

- There have been calls in the community to keep Ashtabula County *whole* in a district if possible
- Ashtabula County has historically been competitive with both Democrats and Republicans winning the Ohio House seat when the county was whole in one district
- A whole county in the district brought voices like Deborah Newcomb, L. George Distel, Casey Kozlowski, and John Patterson to Columbus

Honor Our State's Diversity

- We're more than numbers
- Please remember that Columbus is not the whole state and that life there certainly doesn't reflect *my* Ohio
- There is not one single, monolithic Ohio

Thank You

Do any members of
the commission have
any questions?

