

Members of the Commission, my name is Barbara Yaksic and I live in Concord Twp. in Lake County. I thank you for hearing my testimony today. However, I must first express my extreme displeasure with the scheduling of today's hearing. Today is Yom Kippur, the holiest Jewish holiday and yet a hearing was set for today. Would you have scheduled this hearing on Easter? I find it very hard to believe that no one on this Commission or their staff checked the calendar. It is an unnecessary insult to all Jewish citizens of Ohio that you have ignored this holiday and scheduled a hearing today, when this could have easily been avoided if the Comm. had started its meetings earlier this year, instead of delaying and in-fighting over who would be the Commission co-chairs.

However, it is because redistricting is such an important issue to me (and countless other Ohioans), I went to temple last night and am here today to offer my testimony. Yom Kippur is a time of reflection, a time to look back at the mistakes of the past year and resolve to do better in the upcoming year. It is in that spirit that I ask each of you to honor the oath you took when you joined this Comm: ***listen to Ohio voters and comply with the Ohio Constitution.*** As twice demanded by an overwhelming majority of Ohio voters of ***both*** parties, our Constitution was amended to preclude partisan gerrymandering of voting districts. Hundreds of Ohio citizens testified at public hearings 2 years ago, urging this body to create a transparent process and draft a truly representative map, reflecting ***all*** Ohio voters. Notwithstanding this mandate, the prior maps put forth by this Commission not only failed to be bipartisan, but were held to be unconstitutional on many grounds numerous times by the Ohio Supreme Court.

As noted today on Cleveland.com and as testified to by many witnesses today, the proposed maps are again unconstitutionally gerrymandered. These gerrymandered districts are corrosive to our democracy. They lead to unresponsive lawmakers who refuse to meet with and talk to their constituents or to hold town halls to find out their constituents' views. They lead — indeed have led — to corruption of public officials. They lead to extremist views, bad policies, and policies unresponsive to the voters' concerns.

I strongly urge you to review, in detail, the testimony submitted during the prior hearings of this Commission, and listen—and respond—to ***what Ohio voters want.*** Meaningfully discuss and debate the merits (or lack thereof) of the proposed map, and create a map that does not unduly favor one political party and otherwise complies with the Ohio Constitution. As the recent Aug. election showed, Ohio voters want ***their*** voices to be heard and complied with, not ***yours.***

Again, thank you for listening to my testimony.