



**SPONSOR TESTIMONY OF:**

Ellen Greene Bush

5599 E. South Fairway Drive, Port Clinton, OH 43452

**IN SUPPORT OF:**

Maps proposed by the Ohio Citizens' Redistricting Commission  
submitted to the Ohio Redistricting Commission

**[Port Clinton]** Ellen Greene Bush PhD, Ohio citizen, clinical psychologist, leader of American Promise Ohio, and member of the Ohio Citizens Redistricting Commission

Good morning. I'm Ellen Greene Bush from Port Clinton, Ohio. I have lived on the shores of Lake Erie for most of my life. Professionally, I was a registered nurse and clinical psychologist. Currently, I am a volunteer leader for American Promise, a cross-partisan national group with the goal of getting big and dark money out of politics. These three things about me are the motivating factors that inform my work for fair and representative maps for Ohio.

Every August morning for the last 5 years, I check the cyanobacteria bloom alert so I know whether my grandchildren can swim in Lake Erie. Today, I read that the bright green scum is flowing east toward the beach in Port Clinton. And my family's swimming pleasure is a minor issue compared to the destructive effects of a polluted lake on tourism, the fishing industry, and our drinking water.

We have a precious natural resource: Lake Erie. And yet Ohio cannot muster the political will to stop the devastating effects of industrial animal agriculture on our environment.

As a health care professional, I want the highest quality of affordable healthcare for all Ohioans as well as robust public health initiatives. Many Ohio citizens experience inequality in meeting their health needs. We are barraged with outlandish public health information. And yet Ohio cannot muster the political will to reduce the inequality in health care and promote

scientifically-sound public health policies.

As a volunteer for American Promise, I am appalled by the unlimited and hidden money in elections and policy-making. Unlimited and secret money influences policies that affect health care, drug prices, climate reform, gun reform, energy decisions, and social justice. In many polls over many years, including in Ohio, almost 80% of people from all political parties support limiting the influence of money in politics. And yet Ohio cannot muster the political will to set reasonable limits for and transparency on the use of special interest and corporate money in our elections.

What is the relevance of this discussion to gerrymandering? A majority of Ohioans support an issue, yet our elected officials do not translate those issues into law or policy. Our elected officials do not serve us, their constituents, and the needs of our communities. They will be elected and re-elected again and again due to our skewed district maps. Elected officials can concentrate on generating money to sway elections and promote outlandish political agendas.

Gerrymandering undermines the democratic process. Voters ought to be able to fairly elect their representatives and weigh in on policy issues. Fair maps will benefit all Ohioans, not just political parties. Fair maps will give Ohioans a real choice about election reform. We need maps that reflect what Ohioans think and how they actually vote.

We want those who run for office to be able to conduct a viable campaign. We want voters to be equal and able to vote. We all want and need to be heard and not to be drowned out by the special interests of large corporations and the ultra-wealthy. We need fair and representative maps for all of Ohio.

It has been a privilege for me to serve on the Ohio Citizens Redistricting Commission. We present these unity maps the Commission, and to Ohio citizens and leaders as fair and proportionally representative examples statehouse districts. These maps will ensure that Ohio's government reflects the will of the people.

Ellen Greene Bush  
American Promise Ohio

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[americanpromise.net](http://americanpromise.net)