

Mike Halaiko's Testimony to The Ohio Redistricting Commission on 9/26/2023

Chair Faber, Co-Chair Antonio, and Members of The Ohio Redistricting Commission

My name is Mike Halaiko, and I am a retired Ohio Public School Administrator and Teacher with over 40 years of service.

Here is a summary of what many voters in Ohio observe about the Commission's Timeline to date:

The Ohio Redistricting Commission held its first meeting (in 16 months), on Wednesday Sept. 13th.

On that date, two hours after the scheduled meeting start time, with all seven members present and no official meeting started during that time, the governor took the gavel and announced to the press, and the public in attendance, that the supermajority could not decide on a chairman, and the two-member minority had not chosen a co-chair. The governor then proposed a possible meeting two days later, on Friday, September 15th. He also announced that if they were still undecided by Thursday evening (Sept. 14th), there would be no Friday meeting. If there was a meeting, it wasn't well publicized.

The first (not well publicized), regional "public" meeting of The Redistricting Commission was held at remote, Deer Creek State Park on Friday, Sept. 22nd during many citizens' workday.

The second (not well publicized), regional "public" meeting was held yesterday (Monday, Sept. 25th), at Punderson State Park at 10:00AM.

It's obvious, the Republican Supermajority, on the Commission, are using the same delay and obfuscate tactics that they have used all along and have no interest in real democracy or serving the public good. In the meantime, Ohio Taxpayers continue to foot the bill.

What the people of Ohio have asked for several times, at the ballot box, in the last eight years is simple and direct: **end all gerrymandering to favor any political party**. So, I urge you to stay focused. It's **not** what the people currently holding office want, that rules the day. It's what the voters of Ohio have overwhelmingly voted for: draw districts that do not favor one political party over another, so we have free and fair elections in Ohio.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today, and I am open for any questions you may have.