



SPONSOR TESTIMONY OF:

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IN SUPPORT OF:

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

[Columbus, Ohio] Dr. Lis Regula Testimony:

To the honorable members of the Ohio Redistricting Commission:

My name is Lis Regula. I am an Ohio boy, born and bred, and proud of that fact. I'm also the father to an amazing teen, and like most dads, at least part of why I do so much of what I do is to help give my kiddo the best future that I can. I teach at the University of Dayton, and I want my students to have a bright future as well. I also served on the Ohio Citizens Redistricting Commission this summer because I realize that the future of all Ohioans hinges to some extent on the outcome of this map-making process, and I firmly believe in the responsibility to participate in our democratic process.

I'm writing today to share my thoughts on the proposed new district maps for Ohio, and I thank you for abiding by the constitutional mandate to allow citizen input to this process. That mandate has not entirely been followed throughout this process. I can point out the tardiness of the maps as one example, and the statement by (look this up) that representational fairness was not considered as another. In 2015 and 2018, Ohioans voted overwhelmingly to instate a new, more fair process to draw district maps. This was in response to both the heavily gerrymandered and non-representative maps drawn in 2011 and the non-transparent and undemocratic process by which Ohioans got those maps. While I can appreciate Hamilton County Republican Party chair Alex Triantafilou's candor in stating publicly that Republicans should look out for Republicans, I heartily disagree with him and I believe that the actions of 2015 and 2018 show that most Ohioans would also disagree with him.

Ohio is a swing state. We regularly are split around 55%-45% in elections. This is far different than the 67-32 split represented in your proposed maps, and more extreme a partisan split than what we currently have. The policies of the last decade under these maps have led to Ohio growing at a slower pace than the rest of the country, and reduced representation of Ohioans' interest in Washington, along with driving the Ohio legislature further to the right ideologically. That has driven a wedge between the average Ohioan and their representatives that is harmful to our state. Governor DeWine himself has not just talked about but also invested in promoting Ohio's "progressive policies" because he understands that good education, equality of opportunity, investment in research, and investment in people ATTRACTS businesses, families, and investors. The partisan split proposed in your map has the high potential to not only disenfranchise voters and build additional distrust in the process, but also to lead to a further lowering of Ohio's economic status and political relevance on the national stage.

We saw on January 6th what can happen when citizens no longer trust the political process. What I saw on TV terrified me. If we continue to polarize the country, I fear my child's future will be filled with political unrest and more insurrections as we face more complicated societal issues. This redistricting process can either reinforce the distrust that voters showed in the redistricting process in 2015 and 2018, or it can start to show all Ohioans that their voice matters, the will of the people matters, and that the political process in Ohio is improving toward a more representative and just system for all concerns to be heard and validated.

Please show your pride in our great state by engaging in a more transparent process and approving maps like those proposed by the Ohio Citizens Redistricting Commission that put the will of the people before partisan power grabs.