



SPONSOR TESTIMONY OF:

Tom Roberts

P.O. Box 29014, Columbus, OH 43229

IN SUPPORT OF:

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

[Dayton, Ohio] Tom Roberts President Ohio Conference of branches NAACP
Commission Member, Ohio Citizens Redistricting Commission

Co-Chair Antonio, Co-Chair Faber and members of the Ohio Redistricting Commission thank you for the opportunity to be here today. My name is *Tom Roberts, I am the President of the Ohio Conference of branches NAACP* Commission Member and serve on the Ohio Citizens Redistricting Commission.

This testimony is offered in support of the maps submitted to you by the Ohio Citizens Redistricting Commission.

The mission of the NAACP is to ensure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of rights of all persons and to eliminate racial hatred and racial discrimination. When legislative maps are not fair, communities of color don't have a real pathway to representation. That means Black political power is diluted, and adequate political representation is denied. I participated in the OCRC to give our chapters and my broader community the opportunity to make their voices heard in an accessible process that took into account the interests of the Black community and other underserved populations.

After a year of unprecedented global calls for racial justice, it is time that the leadership of Ohio rise to the promise of equal opportunity for all.



Our OCRC Unity Map districts were reviewed to understand the extent to which minority voters can meaningfully influence elections. Adhering to the rules about keeping county and political subdivisions together largely allowed communities of color to be drawn into compact districts and at the same time avoided packing and cracking.

Packing and cracking is a practice which has been used historically across the country and right here in Ohio to dilute the voice of Black and other minority communities and weaken our overall electoral influence. The NAACP has fought for over a century to end all practices like these which seek to place a ceiling on the hopes, dreams and abilities of minority communities. We must continue fighting against these practices today with the Ohio Redistricting Commission.

We need fair state legislative maps to give Black communities a fair chance for our voices to be heard and remove the gerrymandering that has silenced our voices. Fair maps give Black communities the power to choose representatives that speak to our interests concerning jobs, justice, education, healthcare and safety.

We are calling on the members of the Ohio Redistricting Commission to draw fair maps and to give Black communities the opportunity to meaningfully influence the political process.