



Molly Shack

TESTIMONY OF:

Molly Shack

135 W 6th Ave Columbus, OH 43201

614-209-7498 molly@ohorganizing.org

IN SUPPORT OF:

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

[Columbus, Ohio] Good afternoon 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 Molly Shack and I serve as Co-Executive Director of the Ohio Organizing Collaborative. It is our mission to organize everyday Ohioans for racial and economic justice in Ohio.

For the last 10 years I have worked with the OOC on a wide range of issues to improve education, build healthy and safe communities and increase access to good jobs with living wages. I've spent thousands of hours educating my community on the civic process and training our members and their neighbors on how to make our voices heard.

For the last 10 years I have witnessed the devastating impact of fighting for our lives, for our families and communities' futures, only to have our concerns ignored by elected officials who represent gerrymandered districts.

We teach people everyday that their votes matter, that their voices matter, but the rules of our democracy have been rigged by partisan gerrymandering. If we had fair maps in Ohio, we would be having more debates of authentic differences of ideas in the public arena -- differences about how to solve our toughest problems and pass policy solutions that our communities desperately need.

Ohio is a big state. We definitely don't all think the same and we don't all experience the same opportunity to succeed. But we do have a lot in common. Our communities might look different, but from suburbs to small towns, and cities to the country we are facing similar problems that require collective solutions. Addiction is decimating families, schools don't have the resources they need, ICUs are overflowing and parents are losing sleep at night wondering how they are going to make ends meet.

Two times, Ohioans voted in overwhelming numbers to reform our constitution to build a more fair,

democratic governing process together. Yet the majority party leadership of this commission continue to support proposed maps that fail to meet the basic requirements of the constitution and fail to honor the spirit of these reforms. There have been thorough and robust processes like the one led by the Ohio Citizens Redistricting Commission which was much more accessible to many parents and working people and produced fair, proportional maps with fair opportunities for minority communities to make their voices heard.

The current supermajority enjoyed by the House and Senate Republicans was achieved through a rigged system and it is clear that everyday Ohioans have been left behind. All of Ohio has paid the price of a broken unemployment system, underfunded schools and the corrupt, dysfunctional and extremist legislature embroiled in the largest bribery scandal in Ohio's history.

We need fair representation in this state, which means the number of Democratic and Republican seats in the House and Senate need to mirror how Ohioans actually vote - roughly 46% Democrat and 54% Republican. That means our maps should include 44 Democratic and 55 Republican leaning House districts; and the Senate should have 15 Democratic and 18 Republican leaning districts.

I have talked to thousands of Ohioans over the last 10 years about their hopes and dreams, their fears and what keeps them up at night. One thing that unites us all is the hope and joy we find in our communities, the people and places that give color to our lives every day. Each and every one deserves to be respected enough by this Commission to have their voices heard over the next 10 years.