

Ohio Redistricting Commission Hearing
Punderson Park Manor House
September 25, 2023 at 5:30 pm

My name is Shelly Lewis and I am the President of the League of Women Voters of Geauga. It's election season and that brings our role into sharp focus. Our job is to make sure every eligible voter is registered, has accurate, timely information about candidates and issues, and is able to vote using their preferred method. Our job is not to influence an outcome but to make sure that voters are able to make informed decisions that align with their personal values. We trust voters. We think you should too.

YOU had the power in 2021 and 2022 to create proportional, competitive maps. You refused to do so and repeatedly thumbed your nose at the Ohio Supreme Court. I sometimes wonder what would happen to me if I disregarded a court order.

YOU've had the power in 2023 to create an open, transparent process that welcomed public participation throughout the state. Instead, you gave us THIS...a handful of oddly located public meetings that exclude the vast majority of Ohio voters. We don't even have a way to view and discuss the proposed maps.

I do not speak for Geauga voters but I can offer these observations. Geauga voters are tuned in and they turn out. We consistently have some of the highest voter turnout numbers in the state. And while Geauga is a Republican majority county, on August 8th voters from across the political spectrum sent a clear message that they value democracy over partisan politics.

Voters did you a great favor on August 8th. They showed you exactly where the line is - don't mess with democracy. I will remind you that over 70% of Ohio voters explicitly told you they want fair maps so that their elections will have meaning.

YOU HAVE the power to fix this. But to do so, you will have to trust voters.