

Fair Districts Testimony of F. Mark Laskovics – 24 August 2021 – University of Cincinnati

Dear Speaker Robert R. Cupp and Senator Vernon Sykes,

I am F. Mark Laskovics and I live in Montgomery, Ohio; a Northeast suburb of Cincinnati. I am in the Ohio 28th House District, Ohio Senate District 8, and the 1st US Congressional District. I want to see the reforms established by Ohio voters in 2015 and 2018 realized in the redistricting resulting from the 2020 census. At present my Ohio Senate District, District 8, and my US Congressional District are heavily gerrymandered. This means that the elections for these seats are decided in the primary and are not at all competitive during the General Election. The result is that I don't feel that our representatives pay attention to ALL of their constituents. Our current gerrymandered districts discourage citizen participation in the democratic process. This is bad for our form of government and for our country.

We need to re-energize the democratic process by creating fair political districts that include:

- Communities being the building blocks for new districts.
- Communities should be kept whole – the important community economic, cultural and value-added aspects are maintained in the voting district.
- Minority communities are not biased. It is critically important for Minority Communities to have a seat at the table!
- Districts should be compact and contiguous so that a representative can adequately meet with and support the aspirations of the constituents.

At the end of the day, new districts should result in representation that approximates the registered voters within Ohio. Embodying these reforms will allow this to be achieved and I am confident that, over time, we will refocus our representatives on the aspirations of the constituents.

Thank you!