

Testimony To The Ohio Redistricting Commission

Stephen Michael Kellat

August 23, 2021

Good morning. Thank you for the opportunity to address you today. The redistricting process will help determine our state's fate for much of the next decade which makes providing input this morning rather important.

Ashtabula County is the largest county in our great state by land area. Located on Lake Erie's southern shore, it has a land area that gives it an area roughly half that of the state of Rhode Island. Ashtabula County has a population density far, far lower than many of the other counties of our state.

Currently Ashtabula County is split in two as to districts for the Ohio House. The majority of the county is part of the 99th district which is represented by Sarah Fowler Arthur of Geneva-on-the-Lake. A small part of the southern reaches of the county focused on the United States Route 322 corridor is part of the 64th district represented by Michael J. O'Brien of Warren.

Currently I live in the 99th district. Our district is subject to a bit of a socioeconomic mismatch. Ashtabula County is comparatively far poorer than the communities in Geauga County that are additionally included in the 99th district at present. Chardon is greatly mismatched in terms socioeconomically compared to most communities in the Ashtabula County portion of the 99th district. This creates a difficulty for the people of the district in that any representative would have a rather difficult time balancing the diversity of interests of an unbalanced district.

The data from the 2020 Census shows that the racial and ethnic composition of Ashtabula County is similar to Lake and Geauga counties. The data also shows, however, that socioeconomically Ashtabula County has far more in common with Trumbull and Mahoning counties than it does with Lake and Geauga. It is rather disturbing that there is a higher percentage of people in poverty as well as a higher percentage of people with disabilities under the age of 65 in Ashtabula County compared to Lake, Geauga, Mahoning, and Trumbull counties.

I strongly urge that you please consider realigning the 99th district's boundaries so that they do not include any of Geauga County. Inclusion of all of Ashtabula County's population as well as part of Trumbull County's population would create a district that would be more coherent socioeconomically. The federal government already considers interests to align in that direction as Ashtabula, Trumbull, and Mahoning counties are part of the Eastgate Regional Council of Government transportation planning group while Geauga is part of the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency transport planning group.

In too many ways, the definition of "northeast Ohio" used by outlets like the *Plain Dealer* as well as Cleveland-area broadcast media does not include Ashtabula County. They do include Geauga County in their definition of "northeast Ohio" even at the *Plain Dealer* and have staff cover stories there. Even though the Nielsen company includes Ashtabula County in its Cleveland "Designated Market Area" the odd thing is that none of those television stations can actually be picked up readily with a consumer-grade antenna in Ashtabula County. Even though district lines are drawn to try to include Ashtabula County in the Greater Cleveland sphere of influence many areas of daily life show it is not properly part of the party at all.

Geography, social factors, economic factors, and even culture show that Ashtabula County is increasingly a community that should not be included in districts that include areas from Lake or Geauga counties as that is just a grouping of very unlike things. A more natural fit would be to align it more directly with Trumbull County to the south for its Ohio House district as well as its US House district if that decision passes to this commission.



Thank you for your time and consideration today.

QuickFacts

Mahoning County, Ohio; Trumbull County, Ohio; Geauga County, Ohio; Lake County, Ohio; Ashtabula County, Ohio

QuickFacts provides statistics for all states and counties, and for cities and towns with a *population of 5,000 or more*.

Table

All Topics 	Mahoning County, Ohio	Trumbull County, Ohio	Gauga County, Ohio	Lake County, Ohio	Ashtabula County, Ohio
Population estimates, July 1, 2019, (V2019)	228,683	197,974	93,649	230,149	97,241
 PEOPLE					
Population					
Population estimates, July 1, 2019, (V2019)	228,683	197,974	93,649	230,149	97,241
Population estimates base, April 1, 2010, (V2019)	238,787	210,332	93,405	230,051	101,489
Population, percent change - April 1, 2010 (estimates base) to July 1, 2019, (V2019)	-4.2%	-5.9%	0.3%	0.0%	-4.2%
Population, Census, April 1, 2020	228,614	201,977	95,397	232,603	97,574
Population, Census, April 1, 2010	238,823	210,312	93,389	230,041	101,497
Age and Sex					
Persons under 5 years, percent	▲ 5.3%	▲ 5.3%	▲ 5.3%	▲ 4.9%	▲ 5.7%
Persons under 18 years, percent	▲ 19.9%	▲ 20.3%	▲ 22.5%	▲ 19.7%	▲ 22.0%
Persons 65 years and over, percent	▲ 21.4%	▲ 22.1%	▲ 21.1%	▲ 20.6%	▲ 19.6%
Female persons, percent	▲ 51.0%	▲ 51.2%	▲ 50.3%	▲ 51.2%	▲ 49.5%
Race and Hispanic Origin					
White alone, percent	▲ 80.3%	▲ 88.4%	▲ 96.9%	▲ 91.6%	▲ 93.0%
Black or African American alone, percent (a)	▲ 16.1%	▲ 8.6%	▲ 1.2%	▲ 4.8%	▲ 3.8%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone, percent (a)	▲ 0.3%	▲ 0.2%	▲ 0.1%	▲ 0.2%	▲ 0.3%
Asian alone, percent (a)	▲ 0.9%	▲ 0.6%	▲ 0.7%	▲ 1.5%	▲ 0.5%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone, percent (a)	▲ 0.1%	▲ Z	▲ Z	▲ Z	▲ Z
Two or More Races, percent	▲ 2.4%	▲ 2.2%	▲ 1.0%	▲ 1.8%	▲ 2.3%
Hispanic or Latino, percent (b)	▲ 6.5%	▲ 1.9%	▲ 1.6%	▲ 4.7%	▲ 4.4%
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino, percent	▲ 75.5%	▲ 86.9%	▲ 95.4%	▲ 87.6%	▲ 89.3%
Population Characteristics					
Veterans, 2015-2019	15,032	15,654	5,097	14,572	7,549
Foreign born persons, percent, 2015-2019	2.3%	1.6%	2.5%	5.5%	1.4%
Housing					
Housing units, July 1, 2019, (V2019)	111,236	95,617	37,417	103,493	46,269
Owner-occupied housing unit rate, 2015-2019	68.7%	70.6%	86.3%	74.2%	70.5%

Median value of owner-occupied housing units, 2015-2019	\$105,400	\$102,600	\$240,900	\$156,200	\$112,700
Median selected monthly owner costs -with a mortgage, 2015-2019	\$1,065	\$1,022	\$1,672	\$1,317	\$1,073
Median selected monthly owner costs -without a mortgage, 2015-2019	\$412	\$410	\$616	\$527	\$397
Median gross rent, 2015-2019	\$682	\$677	\$818	\$897	\$696
Building permits, 2020	151	105	133	681	149
Families & Living Arrangements					
Households, 2015-2019	98,472	85,621	35,298	96,361	37,832
Persons per household, 2015-2019	2.27	2.30	2.63	2.35	2.49
Living in same house 1 year ago, percent of persons age 1 year+, 2015-2019	87.6%	90.5%	92.2%	89.1%	88.0%
Language other than English spoken at home, percent of persons age 5 years+, 2015-2019	5.9%	4.9%	13.5%	7.6%	7.1%
Computer and Internet Use					
Households with a computer, percent, 2015-2019	86.5%	85.3%	87.4%	90.9%	83.3%
Households with a broadband Internet subscription, percent, 2015-2019	79.8%	76.8%	81.5%	86.3%	75.4%
Education					
High school graduate or higher, percent of persons age 25 years+, 2015-2019	90.9%	89.4%	90.2%	92.3%	86.0%
Bachelor's degree or higher, percent of persons age 25 years+, 2015-2019	24.2%	18.7%	38.0%	27.4%	14.3%
Health					
With a disability, under age 65 years, percent, 2015-2019	11.1%	10.4%	6.8%	8.6%	11.8%
Persons without health insurance, under age 65 years, percent	▲ 7.8%	▲ 8.9%	▲ 9.8%	▲ 7.4%	▲ 9.8%
Economy					
In civilian labor force, total, percent of population age 16 years+, 2015-2019	60.1%	55.6%	65.4%	65.2%	55.1%
In civilian labor force, female, percent of population age 16 years+, 2015-2019	56.0%	51.2%	58.8%	61.2%	52.3%
Total accommodation and food services sales, 2012 (\$1,000) (c)	397,194	516,287	98,710	406,773	121,505
Total health care and social assistance receipts/revenue, 2012 (\$1,000) (c)	1,823,743	991,119	360,185	944,681	420,284
Total manufacturers shipments, 2012 (\$1,000) (c)	1,978,661	9,668,411	2,787,254	6,045,164	2,449,503
Total retail sales, 2012 (\$1,000) (c)	3,104,302	2,495,337	1,007,769	3,504,999	1,081,075
Total retail sales per capita, 2012 (c)	\$13,202	\$12,031	\$10,758	\$15,267	\$10,769
Transportation					
Mean travel time to work (minutes), workers age 16 years+, 2015-2019	22.2	23.3	28.1	23.5	25.0
Income & Poverty					
Median household income (in 2019 dollars), 2015-2019	\$46,042	\$47,280	\$82,303	\$64,466	\$46,700
Per capita income in past 12 months (in 2019 dollars), 2015-	\$28,378	\$26,935	\$42,958	\$34,409	\$24,265

2019

Persons in poverty, percent ▲ 18.4% ▲ 15.4% ▲ 5.5% ▲ 8.3% ▲ 18.7%

 **BUSINESSES**

Businesses

Total employer establishments, 2019	5,360	3,899	2,753	5,611	1,880
Total employment, 2019	85,266	59,481	30,039	86,547	24,440
Total annual payroll, 2019 (\$1,000)	3,346,420	2,252,381	1,309,450	4,311,262	920,032
Total employment, percent change, 2018-2019	Z	-2.8%	1.3%	0.9%	-0.3%
Total nonemployer establishments, 2018	16,154	13,051	11,169	16,558	6,139
All firms, 2012	20,664	15,885	11,901	19,663	6,798
Men-owned firms, 2012	11,395	8,573	7,428	12,263	4,193
Women-owned firms, 2012	7,180	5,359	3,137	5,763	1,916
Minority-owned firms, 2012	3,277	1,214	211	1,043	328
Nonminority-owned firms, 2012	16,753	13,951	11,424	18,008	6,227
Veteran-owned firms, 2012	2,105	1,629	1,228	2,023	609
Nonveteran-owned firms, 2012	17,544	13,249	9,971	16,825	5,836


 **GEOGRAPHY**


Geography

Population per square mile, 2010	580.2	340.1	233.4	1,011.2	144.6
Land area in square miles, 2010	411.62	618.30	400.16	227.49	701.93
FIPS Code	39099	39155	39055	39085	39007

About datasets used in this table

Value Notes

 Estimates are not comparable to other geographic levels due to methodology differences that may exist between different data sources.

Some estimates presented here come from sample data, and thus have sampling errors that may render some apparent differences between geographies statistically indistinguishable. Click the Quick Info  icon to the left of each row in TABLE view to learn about sampling error.

The vintage year (e.g., V2019) refers to the final year of the series (2010 thru 2019). *Different vintage years of estimates are not comparable.*

Fact Notes

- (a) Includes persons reporting only one race
- (b) Hispanics may be of any race, so also are included in applicable race categories
- (c) Economic Census - Puerto Rico data are not comparable to U.S. Economic Census data

Value Flags

- D** Suppressed to avoid disclosure of confidential information
- F** Fewer than 25 firms
- FN** Footnote on this item in place of data
- NA** Not available
- S** Suppressed; does not meet publication standards
- X** Not applicable
- Z** Value greater than zero but less than half unit of measure shown
- Either no or too few sample observations were available to compute an estimate, or a ratio of medians cannot be calculated because one or both of the median estimates falls in the lowest or upper interval of an open ended distribution.
- N** Data for this geographic area cannot be displayed because the number of sample cases is too small.

QuickFacts data are derived from: Population Estimates, American Community Survey, Census of Population and Housing, Current Population Survey, Small Area Health Insurance Estimates, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates, State and County Housing Unit Estimates, County Business Patterns, Nonemployer Statistics, Economic Census, Survey of Business Owners, Building Permits.

CONNECT WITH US



[Accessibility](#) | [Information Quality](#) | [FOIA](#) | [Data Protection and Privacy Policy](#) | U.S. Department of Commerce