

Testimony on Redistricting

Thank you for the opportunity to speak. I'm here to tell you why I believe that a careful, open, nonpartisan, and transparent, redistricting process is important to Ohio's future.

I am a recently retired high-school Mathematics and Statistics teacher. I have helped *many* students learn quantitative literacy, including topics such as voting power, fair division, and apportionment — things you are wrestling with today and in the weeks ahead. A lot of my students found these fascinating but were aghast when they looked Ohio's heavily gerrymandered maps that have been a gruesome tattoo on our body politic over the past ten years. So many gnarly districts illustrate a problem that is far more than the appearance of impropriety. They are evidence that the people who were closest to lawmaking in 2011, the legislators, bent those laws to their own advantage. I imagine I will not be the only person to remind you that 70% of Ohioans, and a majority in every one of our 88 counties, want a fair districting process. Unfortunately, this round of redistricting has already started out badly. I'm not talking about the delay in receiving U.S. Census data. I'm talking about the delay in starting these hearings, and the haste with which they have been announced and are being conducted. Because we citizens have not had sufficient time, for the most part, to process the Census data these hearing are premature for the presentation of completed state maps. So, nearly everything you'll hear today, you could have heard weeks or months ago. I'm certain you were asked to begin these hearings before *right now*, when I certainly would prefer to be finishing a map that I could propose for your consideration.

I can say one or two things about my current districts that I hope will be helpful to you as you construct my upcoming districts. I live in Bay Village, about 17 miles west of here. Members of the Bay Village community constructed a map detailing our community-of-interest that will be submitted to you separately. My first ask is: please don't break up Bay Village and the Westshore community we've defined—that includes our town, Rocky River, Westlake, Fairview Park and North Olmsted. Our current state house district is well-drawn. It is exactly our community-of-interest. Our current state rep is Democrat; the previous one was Republican. Our state reps have been highly responsive and attentive to their constituents both "D" and "R." But our state senate district, #24, is poorly drawn. It's non-compact. And it's on the verge of being non-continuous; saved by a sliver of Euclid and our Lake Erie border. It certainly looks very fishy to have both western and eastern borders of Cuyahoga county as the edges of a Senator's district that does not include most of the in-between. We need a better state senate district. I know you might not handle Congressional districts, although maybe you will. In any case, Bay Village's district along

Lake Erie is taught across our nation as a classic example of partisan gerrymandering. We need a better one there too.

So, please make sure our new maps are constructed of districts that are compact and do not draw them so that they favor or disfavor a political party. Make sure that we see *each and every* iteration of the maps as you draw them and give us the opportunity to critique those maps and suggest better ones to you before they are finalized. Please follow not just the rules and the case law, go further. Follow the spirit of the laws. Make us proud to be from Ohio.

Thank you for your attention.

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Ohio State Senate District #24

