

TESTIMONY OF:

Sean R. Burns
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My name is Sean Burns — I live in Mansfield, Ohio - Congressional District 12 Represented by Troy Balderson and Senate District 22, represented by Mark Romanchuk.

Currently the 12th congressional district is manipulated to favor 1 political party. Mansfield resides in Richland County which is divided into 2 separate congressional districts. Dividing Mansfield and the surrounding communities breaks up neighborhoods and people with common goals and interests. Creating districts in this manner has resulted in a district supporting one political party ideals and blocking out opposing party views. Our current congressional representative resides nearly two hours and 70 miles from Mansfield and Richland County. There is no reason for representatives to speak or listen to opposing constituent views when your district is set up to elect only a person from a particular political party. Our 12th congressional district has seen this with the last two elected members of congress that have refused to speak to constituents from opposing political parties when invited to events to present their positions. I have personally witnessed our current representative turn his back and walk away from constituents when asking him questions on his stance on an issue. Why should a representative listen to an opposing political viewpoint when your election is secured by a block of voters that has been gerrymandered to favor only you and reduce competition from opposing political parties.

In 2015, Ohio voters overwhelmingly supported state legislative redistricting reform and in 2018, voters followed up by passing congressional redistricting reform. These reforms were placed in the Ohio Constitution and both reform efforts won in all 88 Ohio counties and by more than 70% of the vote. These reforms focus on encouraging bipartisan map-making and establishing rules that focus on keeping communities or political subdivisions together.

I voted for these reforms and care that maps are drawn according to the wishes of the Ohio voters. No one wants people that have different viewpoints to not be heard. All we are saying is that all voices should be represented in a fair and balanced manner. Please keep redistricting fair, transparent, non-discriminatory and politically impartial and fulfill the promise of the redistricting reforms placed into the Ohio Constitution by the voters.

Sincerely,

Sean R. Burns