

Members of the Ohio Redistricting Commission:

Thank you for allowing me to speak today. My name is Kelly Goshe and I reside in Ohio Senate District 24 and Ohio House District 6.

I believe that most of what needs to be known about the effect of Ohio's gerrymandered districts can be summed up in a statement made by my own state senator. In a 2019 interview on WCPN, my senator was asked why he had not proposed a certain policy which was supported by 80 to 90% of Ohioans. He said simply, "I didn't propose it, because that policy is a non-starter with the legislature. They won't support it." Let me say that again. My state senator admitted loudly, publicly (and perhaps inadvertently) that the Ohio legislature would not vote on, debate, or even give a committee hearing to legislation supported by 80 – 90% of Ohioans. We do not live in a representative democracy when our representatives don't have to represent us.

Now, most witnesses today will ask that you create balanced districts in the interest of fairness so that all Ohioans are represented. That is democracy, and I support that wholeheartedly – I put a Fair Districts sign up in my yard as soon as they were available and I carried one with me here today. But as my father loved to tell me growing up, "Life isn't fair." So I am not asking you to create balanced districts for the sake of fairness, but I am asking you to create balanced districts for the sake our economy and for the sake of competition.

The biotech and healthcare industries are hugely important for our state, but when Ohio makes national headlines for a bill that would force its citizens to re-implant ectopic pregnancies (a medical impossibility) the doctors and researchers that the healthcare and biotech industries need don't want to move here. When Ohio makes national headlines because an "expert" witness invited by legislators testifies that vaccines make us magnetic, the scientists and engineers needed by our aerospace and defense industries don't want to move here. When HB6 bans development of renewable energies, companies that could bring thousands of jobs to our state, don't want to move here. Ohio has struggled with the "brain drain" for as long as I can remember, and frankly, it's not hard to see why.

So how do we fix it? How do we create a legislature that will represent its citizens and that puts forth legislation to propel our economy? Well, we could spend \$50 million on a marketing campaign. Or, we could simply start by making districts that are balanced and competitive. Competition drives innovation. Competition drives growth and adaptation. If our representatives actually have to compete for their positions, then we will get better representatives. We will get better ideas. We will get better laws. We will get a better Ohio.

Thank you for your time.

Kelly Goshe