

Randall K. James  
249 W College St Oberlin OH 44074

The drawing of state and federal districts for representation in government is a critical process of our representative democracy, one that is foundational to obtaining the continued consent of the governed. The results of this process determine a host of policy agendas and governance practices. It is fair to say that how these lines get drawn and the impact of those lines, determines the social, financial, and political course of a given state or the country. The last time this process was conducted in the state of Ohio, it was done in secret, behind closed doors with little to no input from the constituencies that were impacted. The results have been a disaster for representative government and have overwhelmingly favored Republican candidates to state and federal offices.

I am from Oberlin OH., perhaps one of the most liberal communities in Ohio. For that past 12 years my community and I have had to contend with a Representative in congress who is ideologically our polar opposite, and there is no real way to vote him out because of how our district lines have been drawn. The fourth district covers a swath of Ohio from Lorain down to almost Columbus and Lima toward the West; no logic in these boundaries holds other than keeping Republicans in power. It is my understanding that Jim Jordan actually chose this district to represent. Meaning that MY representative chose me, not the other way around. This is not how a representative democracy is supposed to work. The people should choose their representatives. The voices in my community have been effectively silenced, canceled if you will, as a result of the gerrymandered 4th Congressional district in the state of Ohio. We must end this unfair practice of gerrymandering districts for politic gain. When winning at any cost becomes the objective, representative democracy is weakened and fails. It has certainly failed for me and my community here in Oberlin.

This process needs to be transparent, with equal oversight from both parties.

As stated by a local 9 year old in a postcard to a representative, "Everyone knows that cheating is wrong." It is time to end the cheating! It is time to end gerrymandering in Ohio. You on this counsel have the opportunity to create fair and truly representative districts that accurately reflect the will of Ohio voters. Please to so!

Sincerely,

Randall K. James