



Robin Turner

OPPONENT TESTIMONY OF:

Robin Turner

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NOT IN SUPPORT OF:

Maps proposed by Senate President Matt Huffman

Ohio Redistricting Commission

Ohio Redistricting Commission (ORC)

Testimony Opposing the Map Currently Considered by the Ohio Redistricting Commission

[Cleveland, Ohio] Good evening Co-Chair Sykes, Co-Chair Cupp and members of the Ohio Redistricting Commission thank you for the opportunity to be here today. I'm here today to talk about why fair districts are important to my community and why the past 10-years of gerrymandering in Ohio has been so devastating for many of us in Ohio.

My name is Robin Turner. I am a mother, community leader, and I also happen to be formerly incarcerated. I am from Cleveland Ohio and over the past 10 years I've seen my community's political power and ability to influence policies that affect us decline due to unfair maps and rigged rules of the political game.

I am very worried about the safety of my family and myself. There's been an increase in poverty and crime where I'm from, especially violent crime involving guns. I am always contemplating moving out of this area, but what would that solve?

I'm not the kind of person who runs from problems that plague the neighborhood, I want to help find solutions. I work with the Ohio Organizing Collaborative and our membership organization Building Freedom Ohio which builds political power for formerly incarcerated people and their families.

But the problem is I don't think many elected officials really know what happens in our neighborhoods. I never see or hear from them until it's time for re-election. When it comes to making my community better, and making all of Ohio better, the gerrymandered districts we've had for the last decade keeps us from getting anything done. We are never able to move our agenda forward because we don't have any power to make policy at the state level. We want to build safer communities by ending mass incarceration and investing in communities, but all too often our voices are not heard. There's a total mis-trust of political officials, which is not how democracy is supposed to work.

All people in this state, no matter their background or where they live, deserve to feel seen and represented by the people we elect. I'm asking this commission to please put party interests aside to make sure that people in our state have a chance to create solutions and make their communities better. Please follow the spirit and the letter of the reform Ohioans voted for in 2015. We need real representation in this state, which means the number of Democratic and Republican seats in the House and Senate need to mirror how Ohioans actually vote - roughly 46% Democrat and 54% Republican. We live in uncertain times, we deserve more certainty that our voices will be heard and our interests represented. Thank you for the opportunity to be here, this concludes my testimony.