

Ohio Statehouse
1 Capitol Square
Ohio House Finance Hearing Room (Room 313)
Columbus, OH 43215

Esteemed Redistricting Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony. As someone who has canvassed for several candidates, who serves on her Community Council, and who is volunteering on a local campaign, I can assure you that our current maps sow and reap disenfranchisement. A large portion of people, particularly those in Hamilton County, feel as though their votes have been manipulated and discounted, both on the local and national level. I implore you to follow the recommendations of Fair Districts to achieve a truly bipartisan final map.

This disenfranchisement stems from political results that do not match our makeup. Ohio has become reliably Red when, in fact, our population is 45/55 split between parties. That close of margin should mean that we watch election results closely, but thanks to the maps from 2011 we do not need to. It should result in dozens of competitive races. And yet, the newly revealed maps show only three. This is abhorrent.

The map-drawing process itself from 2011 is a large reason for disenfranchisement. Secretly drawn maps, backroom deals, emails showing the agreements made between allegedly bipartisan leaders—it is reprehensible. And here we are, watching it happen again. Rushed and hurried maps from the GOP blaming the delays from the Census, even though the Democrats and other community organizations were able to create maps within the deadline using the same information. Barely a week for the public to process and respond, and most meetings held when everyday people must work.

“The statewide proportion of districts whose voters, based on statewide state and federal partisan general election results during the last 10 years, favor each political party shall correspond closely to the statewide preferences of the voters of Ohio,” the state constitution says about General Assembly redistricting. Thus far, you have failed to uphold the constitution. Please rectify this by September 15. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Kate Elliott
6817 Withany Ave
Cincinnati OH 45213
kate.elliott7@gmail.com