

Dear Ohio Redistricting Commission:

Thank you for allowing me to submit written testimony about the redistricting process.

I, along with many Ohioans, sent a message in 2015 and 2018 that we want fair maps and a transparent redistricting process. This process has not been fair or transparent. Instead of fair maps, what we have now with the proposed maps are even worse maps than what we have now. These proposed maps would give Republicans even more seats in the House and Senate despite only winning 55% of the vote. A fair map would reflect the partisan makeup of our state which means at least 44 Democratic House seats and at least 15 Senate seats.

Gerrymandered state legislative maps have been bad for Ohio. Thousands of people like me feel like the General Assembly is smugly indifferent to what most Ohioans want and instead only care about what special interests, dark money and a small group of far right-wing voters want. Gerrymandered maps mean corruption in our state government goes unchecked without any real consequences. HB6, a bill created in a cloud of bribery and corruption, is deeply unpopular among voters and for a year the person behind this bill did not face any consequences. How can people have faith in their government when elected officials can get away with corruption?

Gerrymandered maps also mean that other unpopular legislation like Stand Your Ground, anti-abortion, anti-science, and anti-climate change bills get passed. The hearings for HB248 were mocked on late night talk shows; it was embarrassing. I fear lame duck session every year because that is when the most extreme bills get introduced and passed. And some of you wonder why more and more young people continue to leave the state or, like me, they are giving serious thought of leaving the state.

I ask that commission take this process seriously and to honor what the citizens of Ohio voted for in 2015 and 2018. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Brittany Hayes