

Sharon Kim
OPAWL
Ohio Redistricting Commission
September 14, 2021

My name is Sharon Kim and I live in Columbus, Ohio. I am a member of OPAWL, an Ohio based progressive Asian American and Pacific Islander organization. As a member of this community, I am demanding of this commission to produce fair maps. In these last ten years, the demographics of Ohio have shifted to include a significantly greater number of AAPI. These maps will make decisions for political action and advocacy for the next ten years. In a rapidly changing and increasingly diverse Ohio, we need fair representation so that our communities can survive and thrive in this state. Our Asian and Pacific Islander communities are at particular risk of being cut out of this process, diminished in maps, and dismissed in the political and legislative process. This is unacceptable. As our numbers grow, our political concerns and our potential political power grow with us, and we are eager to contribute to the political landscape of Ohio. We can do this with fair and equal maps which represent our communities accurately. Though the reform measures of 2015 and 2018 offer some hope of transparency, we are keeping a watchful eye on this process because it informs our involvement as constituents and advocates.

I support fair maps for the following reasons:

1. There was rapid growth of the AAPI community over the last ten years. In Columbus alone, the AAPI population increased by over 75% per the most recent census data. This means that for at least the last decade our communities were not fairly represented and have been impacted by unfair policies. I will not take that risk for the next ten years, as the AAPI population only surges.
2. A fair political process is the foundation of our ideological democracy. Without a chance at proper and accurate representation, my voice will be diluted and left out. Policies will be written that are not for us, and the continuation of years of neglect of our communities will continue.
3. I am an advocate for underserved and underrepresented communities in Ohio. We know that a hand in this political process means a hand in everyone's success in Ohio.

At OPAWL, we focus on supporting the success of all people of color, not just our API communities but also our Black and Brown communities. According to the most recent census data, Ohio's growth in concentrated areas is due in large part to Black, Asian, and Latino populations. The Ohio AAPI community is a growing one. We span every sector and we have the desire to participate in our political process. We are able to inform the Commission on where our AAPI communities live, where we go, with whom we interact, and most importantly, *what our communities look like*. We demand that the new district maps present a fair and accurate representation of our communities.

Thank you,
Sharon Kim