

Co-chairs Speaker Cupp and Senator Sykes, members of the Ohio Redistricting Commission, thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Mia Lewis and I am here on behalf of Common Cause Ohio, a nonpartisan good government group with 30,000 members that has been a central part of the fight for fair maps and fair elections for decades.

When looking at the officially proposed maps, we have heard numerous specific examples where lines have been drawn in ways that divide communities, particularly communities of color, thus undermining their ability to elect the representatives of their choice, and examples of packing and cracking. The updated map submitted by the Senate Democratic Caucus is an improvement -- but there is still work to do. Fulfilling the requirement for representational fairness is non-negotiable.

Auditor Faber made a good point last night about how we need to keep communities together but we don't want to overpack them. It's important for mapmakers to understand what communities want. Yesterday, we heard directly from Cuyahoga County residents about how they see their county as divided by east and west. Public testimony also suggests that splitting school districts divide communities. That's an important thing to consider.

Public hearings are a good way to hear what people want, but you can also look at the many community maps created with Fair Districts in community conversations at <https://districtr.org/event/Fair-Districts-OH>. The Ohio Citizens Redistricting Commission Unity maps offer excellent examples of constitutionally compliant maps that take the wishes of communities into consideration.

Drawing new voting district lines is the most significant public act you will do FOR or AGAINST the people of Ohio for at least a decade, possibly even if your whole public political career. Please, look to the future, look to posterity, look to your better angels.

Yes, you should have started this process earlier -- spread these hearings out over 5 months, heard from all the people -- but here we are.

Let's all acknowledge, this is too important a task to be rushed. Deadlines are important but sometimes they simply can't be met. It is not unheard of

for the Ohio general assembly to miss a deadline here and there by a few days.

The people of Ohio fought for a **good process and for fair maps** -- not for maps by Sept 15. This is not a magical date. We urge you to seriously consider taking **another week** to truly consider each district and the placement of each line. Just seven more days -- but what a difference it could make.

We call for a public, transparent, bipartisan review of the submitted maps, county by county. Ohioans want to see your deliberation in public so that they can both understand and see the choices being made.