

WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY

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By

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before the  
Ohio Redistricting Commission

Proponent Testimony for the Republican Submitted Proposal

Co-Chair Sykes and Co-Chair Cupp and members of the Ohio Redistricting Commission, I thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of the Republican submitted proposal. As you probably know, I have testified numerous times to the Ohio General Assembly, typically on behalf of a client or an employer. However, today I am only testifying on behalf of myself.

As a high schooler I was a winner of our schools Ohio History Contest and was among the top finishers in the statewide competition. I remain today a strong proponent of studying and promoting Ohio's history, especially since the advent of term limits.

Respectfully, elections have consequences, and we live in a partisan world.

While Ohio voters have changed the process, to some degree, in drawing state legislative lines, they kept the partisan process essentially in place. With that in mind, they recognized that it was still very likely that these lines would be drawn in a partisan manner and thus required that any map that would pass with just partisan votes would only last for four years.

In my opinion, that process was an improvement that recognizes the fundamental partisan nature of this process and the fundamental partisan nature of most politically active individuals. It is an improvement because it gives statewide voters additional chances to make changes, every four years of the partisan makeup of this commission.

If Ohio Democrats do not like these maps that will be likely passed by the GOP majority, then they will have an opportunity to win the offices of Auditor of State, Secretary of State, and Governor in November 2022. They could then redraw new maps for the 2026 election, instead

of waiting for the next census after the 2030 census. This reform gives Ohio voters the ability to make changes to state legislative districts six years earlier than they would have had under the previous constitutional provisions.

Ohio Democrats held 3-2 majorities on what was then known as the Ohio Apportionment Board in both 1970 and 1980. They pushed aside any and all proposals to change the process when THEY held the majority.

In fact, here is what Ohio Democrats had to say in 1981 in the New York Times. "If they don't like the game, they try to change the rules," scoffed James P. Leahy, executive director of the Ohio Democratic Party. <https://www.nytimes.com/1981/02/27/us/ohio-gop-asks-redistricting-aided-by-computer.html>

In 1990, Republicans gained a majority on the Ohio Apportionment Board by regaining the offices of Governor and Secretary of State in the general election. Despite the redrawing of districts, Democrats still held majorities in the Ohio House until 1994.

Since then, Ohio Republicans have been dominant in both statewide and legislative elections other than the 2006 statewide elections and the 2008 Ohio House elections. Because Democrats have been in the minority for so long, they, along with some Republicans, changed the rules. However, they did not change them completely from their historical partisan framework.

The alternative map proposed by the two Democrat members of the commission is also very highly partisan Democrat. For example, my home county of Knox, despite having a population of over 62,000 people, is split between two Ohio House districts. To my knowledge, Knox County has never been split in this manner. My neighboring county, Delaware, is also split into two districts, while it crams two Republican incumbent Ohio House Members, Kris Jordan (Ostrander) and Ric Carfagna (Genoa Township), into the same district. I'm sure there are other Republican districts that attempt to employ similar tactics.

I would urge the Republican Members of the Commission to adopt the Republican submitted plan, or an amended plan that is functionally similar. As I opened with, elections have consequences. If Democrats and their leftist allies do not like these districts, then I suggest that they get to work recruiting candidates for statewide offices. Ohio voters have spoken consistently and have elected Republicans to the three statewide offices in both the 2010 and the 2018 elections. Thank you.