

Ohio Redistricting Commission Testimony
September 9, 2021
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My name is Dr. Tommie R. Radd. I vote in Ohio Senate District 3, House District 19 and Congressional District 3. I testified on August 27 in Mansfield and submitted that testimony. The reason I'm here is to voice my appreciation to the minority party commission members for submitting a map before September 1. My disappointment is that the majority party commission members did not submit a map for review at a minimum. The Commission was responsible to work jointly to meet the September 1 timeline. That didn't happen despite hours of testimony in Ohio hearings requesting your diligence to create fair maps, follow the constitutionally required timeline and work fairly as a team. This Commission had access to the basic data and could have done the basic groundwork and then plug in the census data to modify the maps per constitutional requirements. The Governor chose to do nothing until the last minute and now the majority members on the Commission are just as unresponsive.

When I contacted your offices to voice my concern that no hearings were set or a joint map submitted, I was informed to contact someone else on the commission. That is not acceptable! Each commission member is constitutionally responsible for the Ohio Redistricting process, maps and end results. Everyone on this Commission is accountable for the way they conduct themselves and work transparently with the process. That hasn't happened.

The detrimental impact that partisan gerrymandering of our Ohio House, Senate and Congressional districts has on our community and state was well documented in the statewide hearings from August 23 – 27, 2021. Ohioans voted in record numbers to have Ohio constitutional amendments added in 2015 and 2018 to address these inequities. Ohioans expect representative fairness for the new districts and the calculation of those districts be done fairly and transparently.

Gerrymandering is cheating. Drawing maps without transparency is deception. A group of people who need to resort to those tactics must not believe they can win the vote by their ideas and policies to benefit the majority of Ohioans. To gerrymander to create and maintain a super majority in the Ohio House, Senate and Congressional representation is Wrong. That is the reason the citizens of Ohio stepped up to fix this problem and hold you accountable. Ohioans voted for You to fix this unfairness and stand for ALL people now. This Redistricting Commission has a responsibility to draw fair maps per the Letter and the Spirit of our Ohio Constitutional Amendments as demanded by the voters. We expect you to follow the constitutional requirements, hold public hearings to review the maps prior to approval and to integrate public input into the maps prior to the implementation.

As a lifelong educator I taught my students that cheating was not allowed and they needed to follow the rules to the letter and the spirit of the assignment; to be team players when working with a group. So far you haven't passed that basic requirement we expect of elementary through doctoral students. It's overdue that you do your jobs and know you will be graded on the process and maps that you create. The voters stand ready to give you a grade.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today,

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