

Ohio Redistricting Commission – Public Hearing
Columbus, Ohio - 9 September 2021

Hello, my name is Rhyan Goodman, and I am a sophomore at Ohio University. I study Business Administration through the Honors Tutorial College, and I am a Henry W. and Edith Pattison Cutler Scholar. I am from Grove City, Ohio though I currently reside in Athens, Ohio, to pursue my degree. I would first like to thank the Commission for the opportunity to share my written testimony in Ohio's redistricting process.

Growing up I never understood why elections meant so much to some people and so little to others. In my education, I was always told that it was my responsibility to vote and that by casting my ballot, I was using my voice to implement change. Until last year, my first election, I had never really understood what that meant. As a young person, I often feel left out of decision-making in Ohio and feel that nobody truly represents me or my ideas. It seems that our statehouse is no longer working for everyday Ohioans, and we know it. That's why we passed strong nonpartisan redistricting guidelines. Both parties have used gerrymandering to select their voters, and now it's time to let Ohioans choose their representatives instead of the other way around. Every Ohioan deserves to be heard, and our current gerrymandered maps aren't serving Ohioans.

Over the past few years, Ohioans have dealt with a variety of issues caused by partisan gerrymandering in our state. Corrupt politicians, specifically former members of the Ohio General Assembly, took bribes to pass a bill that was disastrous for Ohioans and that we have been paying for ever since. Gerrymandered maps helped make healthcare discrimination the law in our state, and Ohio politicians are actively trying to restrict the right to vote, selecting their voters more than ever. In our times of need, Ohioans have been let down time and time again in the statehouse, and fair maps are an easy way to give Ohioans trust in our government. In our current maps, communities are divided, districts are stretched across the state, representatives serve communities that look nothing like theirs, one of our districts is in the shape of a seahorse.

Though I understand that in the interest of our state's supermajority, our districts would be drawn to increase or maintain the seats held by the majority, I am asking that you respect the wishes of 71% of Ohio voters and create fair, representative maps that genuinely reflect the needs of the Great State of Ohio. Ohioans deserve better from our legislature, and as electors of this great state, we deserve fair districts for both the Ohio General Assembly and Congress.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rhyan Goodman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Rhyan Goodman