

Members of the Committee,

Thank you for inviting me here. Most of you don't know me, but I'm running for Governor in order to give the people of this state a chance to have their collective voice heard in our state government. As such, I am grateful and honored to have the opportunity to speak to you today on behalf of the people of Ohio.

I am here to present a redistricting map which follows all of the guidelines imposed by state and federal laws to the greatest extent feasible, and to attempt to persuade the members of this committee to adopt it for the next ten years.

Many, many voters across the country have what they feel are justified and, to date, unaddressed, concerns about the legitimacy of our elections. The stability of our government depends on its willingness to uphold our right to free and fair elections, the procedures of which are governed by the law. When I contacted the Secretary of State's office to ask some difficult questions about the 2020 elections, all of my questions were answered to my satisfaction. In my opinion, Ohio has proved itself more than capable of leading where other Midwest states have failed at accepting that the mandate of the people is the basis for the legitimacy of its government. But why stop there? Since the last time Ohio was redistricted, Ohio voters have told the state government that we've had our fill of gerrymandering.

Others have other incentives, usually based on political bias. But those of us who believe the system is only working when it's not broken are more concerned with facts than with our own partisan political leanings, or other people's feelings. Do I think that communities of interest are entitled to representation? Certainly. But to justify a deliberate attempt to change the outcome of our elections based on the interests of one community or another is to deny the right of equal representation to other communities.

The demographic change which has caused Ohio to lose a seat in Congress has been going on since before I was born. I live in Lucas County, which only lost 1% of its population since the last census. But Toledo, which comprises 63% of the population, has lost almost 6%, and one-third of its population since the decline began. There are complex reasons for this, and I'm not here to discuss them. But as far as redistricting is concerned, let's not overcomplicate the matter with the unproven assumption that the issue underlying our political aspirations is a matter of gerrymandering. When the people who are responsible for drawing the lines understand that the real issues at work here are urban sprawl and the increasing polarization of the political makeup between our cities with the rural areas based on social issues, then we can confidently toss out the antiquated and obsolete policy of trying to pigeonhole your political opposition into a weak geographical position, as well we should. At the very least, every voter should have a clear idea of which district they're in without having to look it up every two years.

This is the map that I have presented to this committee. A casual glance will show that I have adhered to the rules of contiguity and compactness in determining district boundaries. A closer look will show that I have done a better job of preserving natural and political boundaries than have certain activist groups who are trying to convince you of the merits of their arguments. And of course, federal law prevents us from looking at racial demographics. The complaints of splitting communities of interest from the Democratic side ought to consider the implications of defining communities, if only implicitly, as racially homogeneous pockets of an area. The intent of the law is not to prevent us from discussing what we're doing, but to prevent us from actually instituting questionable or overtly discriminatory policies in

practice. Like most conservatives, I detest identity politics and couldn't care less about a person's age, race, color, gender or creed. Even though they are easily accessible with the US Census data, I have not looked at any of these demographics at all. If you don't like the fact that a racial or ethnic minority ends up being disenfranchised by our majority-rule system, at least recognize that the laws which are intended to protect such communities forbid that they be segregated in the manner you're advocating, and that you're the racist.

A much better demographic to consider in terms of how communities and subcultures are organically created is disparity of income. And that's the easiest predictor for a wide range of classifiable socio-economic differences, and therefore which incentives people have to vote which way, and therefore political boundaries. If your concern is with the gerrymandering, you should be looking at it as a matter of urban sprawl. If your concern is with dividing and labeling groups based on their skin color, then you should see it as a matter of what we call white flight, or of the pursuit of economic goals in light of the fact that liberal policies have been reducing our cities to economic ruin for decades. Gerrymandering is not the solution to the population movements which account for the changing political landscape, but putting an end to it is. This should be common sense; whereas the rural areas are dominated by Republican voters and the urban by Democrats, the political battles are being fought in the suburbs.

The current districts map doesn't even begin to address this demographic change. There are two districts which deviate more than 80,000 from the 2010 target population of 728,461, and another five which deviate by more than 30,000. That 7 of 16 districts deviate more than 30,000 from the target population and not because of county lines, constitutes an uneven and inequitable distribution of congressional representation. This is not because Columbus' district grew disproportionately over the average by 40,000 people. It didn't.

We can do better; we could account for the relative and steady population decline of Ohio's cities, so that in 5 years, we're not 50,000 off the mark. Consider that the difference between District 3 constituting much of the Columbus area with District 9 representing Toledo and Cleveland, is more than 105,000. Marcy Kaptur considers herself a Toledoan; whatever monies she secures for her district are not allocated to Cleveland. Cleveland, meanwhile, is languishing so much that its motto in satirical tourism videos on social media is, "We're not Detroit," as though it's only the second-worst place to live in the Midwest. I live in a city ten minutes up the Maumee River from Toledo. My wife works for the University of Toledo, which is also my alma mater. But somehow I'm in a different congressional district from Toledo, separated by three other districts from Cleveland, much of which shares its district with Toledo. That it happened this way because of gerrymandering is self-evident.

If you're interested in keeping communities of interest together, there is no justification whatsoever for keeping Toledo and Cleveland together. None of us in the Toledo area ever check to see what's going on in Cleveland. It doesn't interest us.

As the first president of a political party's national committee, I understand well the nature of the problem. As an Ohioan, I share the concerns of the minority party, and as a registered Republican, I also share the concerns with the majority party. Politics is the art of compromise. This committee can't reach a compromise because it's the voters who decided to give the GOP a trifecta in the government, but it was also the voters who took to a referendum to fix the gerrymandering problem which has come about due to decades of belief that it is somehow in the best interest of the party chiefly responsible for it. Compromise doesn't mean demanding more than you're entitled to when you don't have the upper

hand in negotiations. The assumption motivating both sides of the political debate seems to be that the balance of power will change if the map is fair. Yet even when the new rules are applied as strictly as they can be, this assumption proves to be unjustified by statistical analysis.

As you hear my argument, keep in mind that political boundaries were the last of my considerations in drawing this map. At the end of the day, what matters to the voting public is how many seats are controlled by which party nationally, and whether or not their representative is accessible locally. But politicians seem to think it's more about how wide their margins of victory will be. The Democrats argue that they're entitled to approximately the same percentage of seats as their candidates get among the popular vote. But this isn't a parliamentary system like the one in the United Kingdom; it's a system of national majority rule mitigated by regional representation. If the popular vote determined the number of seats because it was reflected in each district, then the Republicans would hold every seat in every district. 6 of the 15 counties on my map have the GOP projected to finish within 2 points of the statewide average. This is the effect of ending the policy of gerrymandering: the districts tend to the statewide average, and the electoral outcomes remain the same. In other words, gerrymandering doesn't work unless the votes are more evenly split than they are in Ohio. Only 7 of Ohio's 88 counties went for Joe Biden in 2020. By that metric, they should have one or two congressional seats. Moreover, the statewide averages don't favor one party over the other exclusively; Congressman Tim Ryan presently holds a seat with a 1-point Democrat margin. This is just further proof that gerrymandering is ineffectual and prone to failure.

What the popular-vote-minded Democrats have failed to account for is that they only outperform Republicans in the densely-populated urban areas, and even some of those only by a narrow margin. So they are only entitled to seats in those areas—certainly not the 6 or 7 they seem to think they deserve. The only way to change this would be for the minority party to gerrymander the map in their favor far more than the Republicans have, and this is impossible under the new rules which allow only up to five counties to be split only twice.

My map, with no gerrymandering at all, produces the same result in terms of which party has the advantage. Three counties must be split no matter what, based on their populations. This is not gerrymandering. This is following the law. But to arbitrarily draw a vertical line near the border of Hamilton County to fit the population requirement and then say, "Aha, see? The Democrats get Cincinnati," is to ignore the other requirements. It doesn't consider boundary preservation or what actually separates communities. It's just a blatant attempt to flip a district with the justification that Hamilton County predominantly votes Democrat, at the expense of the people who live in the suburbs. It's not clear exactly where we should draw the line of division, but I've chosen I-75 for Hamilton and Montgomery Counties. Had it been possible for Franklin County—that is, if the precincts weren't as disjointed as they are here—I would have used the 270 loop as a hard line rather than as a guideline. The Tuscarawas River is an easy boundary for dividing Stark County without having to divide Canton, as Stark County's relatively lower population allows that. And there is simply no need to divide Lucas County, or to keep it separated from Wood County, which doesn't make any sense in terms of keeping communities intact. Will the Democrats here agree with me on this, knowing that they will likely lose a seat? Because Cincinnati, Cleveland and Columbus *must* be divided from their suburbs; Toledo *shouldn't* be.

Which of the two major parties actually loses a seat after redistricting should not be determined at these meetings. It should be determined at the ballot box next November. What these meetings should do, in the spirit of bipartisan cooperation and compromise, is provide all interested parties a fair chance so that the voters can decide the outcome. And that is precisely why I have drawn up my map and come here to offer my opinion. By drawing district boundaries along county lines and keeping them compact in the area around Toledo, my population deviation for the six counties included here is only 6000. But according to the data for these counties on davesredistricting.org, the composite voting data from 2016 to 2020 show a variance between Democrat and Republican votes of just 81 out of more than 330,000 cast. What's more, this would pit the GOP incumbent based in Bowling Green against the Democrat incumbent based in Toledo. I challenge anyone here to offer a better solution to which party loses a seat in redistricting than a fair fight, or a fairer fight than a historical difference of 81 votes. And I had crunched numbers for eight different sets of data before I settled on using [davesredistricting](https://davesredistricting.org) to complete the maps at the precinct level. Altogether it's taken me about a week, working alone. It seems to me that the failure of the committee with all its resources to come to a consensus is based on partisan political leanings as much as not bothering to do the legwork. The question of who should draw the map is obvious, isn't it? We the People need to do it, otherwise you're not doing your job. You are our elected representatives. Fortunately, the co-chair of this committee understands that. Now it's time for the Democrats on the committee to come to terms with the fact that redistricting doesn't mean you get more seats. It means you have to fight for one of the ones you have had in a dead heat with the majority party. If you can't accept that, then drop the pretense of wanting fairness. If you can, then I will be the first to applaud you for standing with the people.

Ohio's national notoriety for gerrymandering is an embarrassment which we have given you the mandate to resolve. With my map, you also have the tool you need to do it, sourced from the people. It is also your prerogative to tweak things however you like; I'm just one man so I couldn't do it as well at the precinct level as a committed team, but I would be happy to offer suggestions wherever appropriate. I've only split two counties twice, and just seven counties once, so you have a great deal of room to work with. Moreover, every incumbent except Congressman Balderson has his or her seat in a separate district, with the exception of the representatives from Bowling Green and Toledo who belong to different parties. I believe their opinions should be solicited, as they have been elected to represent us, and also that they should find my map agreeable.

Thank you for your time, and I will be making myself available to provide further input or insights, should the committee ask me for them.