

I bring my warm greetings, deep respect and gratitude to the Ohio Redistricting Commission. This is hard work you are doing, and it is critical to the wellbeing of all our citizens.

I am fortunate to have been born the son of an Eisenhower Republican dad and a Stevenson Democrat mom. They were both committed to civic engagement and knew they needed strong relationships with the diverse groups of neighbors they worked with to improve our community. Their voices and the sight of them gathered with neighbors at the kitchen table are with me today.

In my adult years I became a strong advocate for social and economic justice and racial equality. But I always considered both the conservative instinct and the progressive instinct to be the lifeblood of our country. It always seemed plain as day to me that if either party commits itself completely to crushing the other party it will be a disaster for both parties and the country as a whole.

So, it is natural for me to be an advocate of our Ohio constitution's Articles 11 and 12 in its standards for redistricting. We have a good set of guidelines, to the extent they push us toward fairness, logical ground rules, and a transparent process designed to give citizens a chance to review and comment on the commission's progress. It is not surprising that this Commission has had a hard time meeting deadlines. That is common. But neither sacrificing public engagement and transparency nor sloppy work should be justified by having to meet the deadlines. The Commission needs to get it done, and get it done according to the constitution.

I support the plan of the Ohio Citizens Redistricting Commission.

I urge the Ohio Redistricting Commission especially to:

- Strive for compact and contiguous legislative districts
- Base district boundaries, to the extent possible, on county, municipal and township boundaries
- Seek maps that do not favor one party over another, and representational fairness that matches the overall percentage of votes the parties have received over the past ten years, and
- Avoid partisan gerrymanders on all maps

Now is the time to burn the midnight oil and spare no effort at fairness and an on-time redistricting plan that will make all Ohioans proud.