

Opponent Testimony of John Michael Halaiko
285 West Columbus Street
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Not in Support of Unfair Redistricting Process
Ohio Redistricting Commission

My name is John Michael Halaiko, and I am a retired Educator, with over 40 years of teaching, administrating, and coaching experience, in one of the most Economically Disadvantaged Districts in The State of Ohio, New Lexington City Schools. I have lived and voted in Ohio my entire life. I have never missed a primary, special, or general election in 50 years.

I am here to testify against unfair redistricting processes and procedures. I do not want to see a repeat of the 2011 Gerrymandering Process, which led to the incumbents choosing their voters. This is the antithesis of the democratic process.

The voters must choose their elected officials.

All elected officials must answer this question: Are we a Democracy or not?

I am opposed to voter manipulation, of any kind, by any elected official, regardless of party affiliation.

A truly fair process in redistricting must include the following components:

- Decisions made in public
- Actual consideration of maps and input provided by the public
- A fair opportunity for the public to review proposed maps
- Public access to actual redistricting data, including political indexes, the number of districts favoring each party, compactness measures, number of splits, and any other data supporting an individual plan.
- Use of nonpartisan redistricting criteria such as compactness, minimizing splits of governmental units, maximizing politically balanced districts, and balancing the number of districts which favor each party.
- Identification of the factors which are used to evaluate each plan.

Advancements in technology make public access to data, and all meetings a straightforward process. All media available should be used to make sure the public knows what is happening in the redistricting process every minute. No decisions should be made in secret.

The redistricting process is a public process. Districts should never be drawn or redrawn to provide easy re-elections for incumbents, increase campaign contributions to elected officials, or to ensure that a party can stay in power for decades ahead.

The people of The State of Ohio do not want democracy to be made a sham of, because decisions are made in secret. The re-districting process must be a transparent process based on all the bulleted guidelines detailed above.

Elected Officials must always remember that they work for the people.

Reference material, for my testimony, was taken from the "Ohio Redistricting Transparency Report" by Jim Slagle, Manager, Ohio Campaign for Accountable Redistricting, December 12, 2011.