



Julie Scarsella

TESTIMONY OF:

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IN SUPPORT OF:

Maps proposed by the Ohio Citizens' Redistricting Commission
submitted to the Ohio Redistricting Commission

[Youngstown, Ohio] My name is Julie Scarsella and I serve as Director of Operations for the Ohio Organizing Collaborative. For the past 6 years I have been a part of this Organization which fights for a level playing field for ALL Ohioans to live their lives free of racial, social and economic injustices. These injustices which infringe and inhibit our family, friends and communities from having equal access to the same opportunities that everyday Ohioans are supposed to freely enjoy.

How can we as citizens, as voters, actually believe such opportunities exist when our democracy is steeped in a polluted system that feels the need to silence democracy before it even has the chance to speak? The partisan gerrymandering that these maps are proposing is unconstitutional at best - but more abhorrent are the dark economic and racial undertones that this maneuver actually carries.

Fair maps for Ohio do not just speak to giving an unbiased voice to democracy, which is a just ask in its own right. They also provide a pathway for everyday Ohioans to be heard. Ohioans who truly believe their voices - their very lives - do not matter to our elected officials.

Just as no individual is the same, every county also has unique challenges and differences that require a balance of representation from our elected officials. Fair mapping offers an opportunity to equalize traumatic experiences and life circumstances that affect the citizens of our counties in vastly different ways.

The number of Democratic and Republican seats in the House and Senate need to mirror how Ohioans actually vote - roughly 46% Democrat and 54% Republican. I cannot believe that the majority of our elected officials do not see this current situation for what it is - a rigged and desperate attempt by the immoral few to protect their own interests. I cannot believe that our beloved State would fall victim to this

blatant attempt to corrupt our democracy and reinforce to our citizens that their voices do not matter. We are better than that. I am confident that our voices will be heard and valued by the Commission - that Ohioans' pleas for a request as basic as having fair and balanced representation will not go unheard.