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OHIO REDISTRICTING COMMISSION INTERESTED PARTY TESTIMONY

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Good Morning Co-Chairs; Speaker Cupp and Senator Sykes and members of the Ohio Redistricting Commission (ORDC). My name is Robert Davis, and I am the Political & Legislative Director of AFSCME Ohio Council 8, the union that represents more than 35,000 public and private sector workers in Ohio and West Virginia. Please accept this written testimony as our organization's interest in making sure that Ohio has legislative district maps that are drawn to accurately reflect the political interests of Ohioans.

For far too long, the party in power has been able to draw district boundaries, thereby choosing voters it feels best aligns with its political ideology. This practice of "Gerrymandering" further tarnishes the trust the public should have in the democratic process and goes further by creating an unfair advantage for the political party that controls the creation of legislative and congressional maps thereby disenfranchising thousands of Ohioans. The most recent state legislative maps drawn by Republican statewide and legislative leaders failed miserably in its duty to create fair and competitive maps. In fact, their failure rose to such a level that the Ohio Supreme Court ordered the ORDC "back to the drawing board" to create legislative district maps that better align with the voting outcomes in the state (currently 54 percent Republican to 46 percent Democrat).

Members of the ORDC, we recognize that it may not always be possible to have political representation that aligns perfectly with the population of any legislative district that is created; however it can be aligned as closely as possible. There have been numerous maps submitted to the ORDC that better reflect what these voter-determined districts could look like as well as software that can be used to assist with the process.

The ORDC should also make fair representation of communities of color a priority. These communities continue to be drastically underrepresented in not only Ohio's state legislative districts but its congressional districts as well.

Members of the ORDC, we trust that you will give our areas of concern thoughtful consideration and we stand ready to assist you in your efforts or answer any questions you may have. Thank you.





OHIO REDISTRICTING COMMISSION

Please complete the Witness & Media Information Form before testifying/recording

Date of hearing/meeting: January 20 - 21, 2022 Location: Ohio Statehouse

Name: Robert A. Davis

Are you representing: Yourself: Organization:

Organization (If Applicable): AFSCME Ohio Council 8

Position/Title: Political & Legislative Director

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Will you have a written statement, visual aids, or other material to distribute?

Yes: No: (If yes, please provide written or electronic copies to the co-chair)

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