



Shaquiena Davis

TESTIMONY OF:

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IN SUPPORT OF:

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

[Maple Heights, Ohio] — What is fair? How have we implemented it within our communities? Most importantly, have you ever thought about how gerrymandering relates to segregation?

Good afternoon, Co-Chair Cupp, Co-Chair Sykes and members of the Ohio Redistricting Commission, my name is Shaquiena Davis, a Democracy Fellow for the Ohio Organizing Collaborative.

As an African American woman in Ohio, life is already challenging and it doesn't make it better when there's gerrymandering occurring. To me, gerrymandering is another form of slavery. Since then, African American people have been treated unfairly along with other neighboring minorities. From my understanding, gerrymandering establishes an unfair political advantage for a particular party or group by manipulating the boundaries of electoral districts. Now let's take a look back in time when slavery occurred, white supremacist used this same tactic to control the minority group in keeping us separated from the privileged "majority". That was called segregation which I believe still exists. That's why I'm here and many others to give our testimony to getting better results for fair redistricting.

To put an end to this segregation we want and need a fair redistricting process. Aren't you tired of living in the past? We Ohioans are. I used the word Ohioans because I don't believe in dominance when it comes to recreating fair communities. We are a team, and there is no "I" in our team. We ask that you not just consider, but make a change so that we can live life more comfortably knowing that you care.

Aren't you ready for a new change that will be beneficial to all Ohioans? Don't you want to put an end to segregation within our communities? This can all start by creating fair maps and a fair redistricting process.