

To: Redistricting Commission (August 18, 2021)

Thank you for allowing me to speak to you through this written testimony. My name is Valerie Lee. I vote in the 43rd District in Trotwood OH. I would like to draw your attention to the issue of fair districts.

Trotwood OH can best be described as an urban/suburban community on the outskirts of Dayton. During my childhood, Dayton was divided geographically with black residents corralled into redlined areas.

A legislator not familiar with the people who make up the community, their values, and the policies that would amplify our voices, does not represent that community. By having a community with one set of values thrown into a gerrymandered district, it tends to put the residents into a campaign of opposition.

Looking at data from the US Census, the 43rd District is primarily drawn with residents of Preble County in the majority and a smaller slice of Montgomery County with Trotwood providing the majority of the Montgomery County voters. Out of a population of 118,066 in the district the racial demographics are as follows: White 70.3% and Black 25.4%. The racial demographics for the city of Trotwood: Black 67.4% White 26.4%.

Let's examine what that demographic breakdown has provided for Trotwood. The Representative elected to serve the City of Trotwood recently publicly protested vaccine mandates while medical professional, church leaders, and community activists have been pulling out all stops to get people of color vaccinated. Vaccine hesitancy for African Americans can be traced to the Tuskegee experiment and we need our Representative to understand that and speak to the needs in our community. The State Senator, a medical doctor, who serves our community made a public statement indicating Black people might be susceptible to Covid due to poor hygiene. He didn't learn that from his medical training at the Medical College of Ohio. His assumptions come from his life experiences.

I ask you to respect the voters and create fair districts to give voters a reason to vote by allowing us to choose legislators who will represent our values.

Submitted by Valerie Lee (leev5849@gmail.com)

Address: 5000 Sycamore Woods Blvd. Trotwood OH 45426