

Linus Beatty Ohio Redistricting Commission Testimony

First, I would like to thank all commissioners, media personnel, and members of the public for their time today. Like many in our state, I have been frustrated with how the redistricting process has unfolded. However, I am not here to talk about the process so far but rather to look forward. I come before you to advocate for a map that I have proposed that I think is a fair compromise.

This map I submitted would satisfy the Supreme Court's decision while not double bunking any of the incumbents who intend on running for reelection. Additionally, incumbents were kept with counties and municipalities they had experience representing in the past, when possible. Furthermore, this map does an excellent job of maintaining communities of interest throughout the state and ensuring all communities are represented. An example of this would be examining the 12th and 15th districts from the last decade. Both of these districts connected parts of the city of Columbus with Appalachia. These two regions of our state are in very different positions economically and culturally. Under my proposed map, Franklin county is split between two districts. The 15th, which is contained within the county, and the 12th, which stays entirely in the Columbus metropolitan area. Likewise, I created a new 10th district that includes a large portion of Appalachia and some exurban communities of Columbus. In addition to the 2nd and 6th, this district ensures that the Appalachian region is kept together and can elect representatives who live in Appalachia to better advocate for the region in Congress.

District statistics can be viewed in the table attached. This map will most likely function as 9R-6D, which I believe is in line with the Supreme Courts' decision. You can also see that the image of the map shows that the map only splits thirteen counties a total of fourteen times.

Fundamentally, this map is compliant with the constitution without unduly disfavoring incumbents. I think I speak for so many Ohioans when I say that I desperately want to see a fair map adopted as soon as possible. I want to leave the committee with a simple question do you weigh your political ambitions over the values of our republic and the strength of our democracy?¹ Before every vote, I ask that each commission member ask themselves that question. I thank you for your time.

¹ Paraphrased from Mitt Romney speech given before the United States Senate 1/6/2021