

Written Testimony of Judith B. Hofmann – 8/26/2021 Lima Ohio Redistricting Commission Public Hearing

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the commission for this opportunity to share my thoughts with you as you begin the task of redrawing Ohio's House and Senate district maps which has been entrusted to you.

My name is Judith Hofmann. I live in Fostoria, Ohio (Seneca County) – Ohio House District 88, Ohio Senate District 26 and the 4th Congressional District.

I made the trip here today because I believe this opportunity to stop Gerrymandering and create fair districts is critical to the future of our country's democracy as well as to the future of Ohio. Since 2012 I have been keenly aware of the unfairness of the current district maps and the resulting apathy of those who represent me, their unwillingness to listen to voices other than those of big business and special interest groups as well as their voting records which reveal a lack of compassion and unwillingness to work for the common good of all.

In 2015 and 2018 I worked hard to get signatures for petitions to put the issue of district reform on the ballot and the election results in those years indicated my experiences with elected representatives was echoed by over 70% of the voters in our State.

I ask each of you on this commission to follow the approved process in spite of the timeline pressures which could be an argument for streamlining and shortcutting the job you have been asked to do. The process is more important to many of us than the timeline. That process calls for complete transparency, resisting partisan pressuring and putting aside partisan favoritism.

I appreciate these 10 public hearings you have scheduled to invite input from the voters. However, the process calls for the public to have the opportunity to easily weigh in on any new maps you create or propose before they are delivered to the General Assembly. These pre-mapdrawing hearings cannot be a substitute for the three required hearings for the recommended Ohio legislature maps and the two required hearings for the recommended congressional map. Furthermore, I ask that you schedule those hearings at three different locations around the state on various days and times of the week to make it possible for those who cannot easily take off from work to be present.

My final request is for you to strongly consider providing the opportunity for virtual testimony for at least one of those hearings for the sake of those who are not able to travel longer distances and for the sake of those who have illnesses and handicaps and cannot attend an in-person hearing.

Thank you all for listening. Thank you for taking the oath to serve on this Commission with the utmost integrity and for your willingness to accept the responsibilities that entails. Know that I and many others are depending on the seven of you to serve us and the State of Ohio well.