

Thank you for accepting written testimony for a more fair and transparent redistricting process. My name is Eric Lochtefeld from Celina, Ohio. I vote in Statehouse District 84 which neighbors Statehouse District 82. Both districts are nearby / touching Grand Lake St Marys. The cities of Celina and St. Mary's sit on Grand Lake but are in two separate districts while the surrounding communities are lumped in with District 84. Congressional districts are even worse, dividing the area into three districts.

When neighbors are separated by district lines, their collective political power is divided. As new lines are drawn, it is important to consider factors besides the minimum constraints passed by voters with overwhelming support. The commission needs to value the intent of the law, keeping communities together. Public input is vital to accomplish this as communities are not always in the same county, city, or town. Although they are two cities, Celina, St. Marys, and the surrounding region, partner on many of the initiatives. Dividing the community into more than one district divides our collective power, ability to contact the statehouse, and vote for a representative who values our concerns.

I urge you to consider factors like our own community both in the Grand Lake region and around the state as you accept public testimony.

Thank you,

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