

written only

Co-Chairs Cupp and Sykes and members of the Ohio Redistricting Commission:

My name is Phil A. Long from Celina, Ohio. I am retired after teaching in Celina City Schools for 35.5 years. I currently serve on the Mercer County Board of Elections, vice chair of the Ohio Education Association – Retired, and president of the Kids Voting Ohio Board.

Every aspect of my active career and my retired career centers around education and elections. Fair representation is essential to the process. In both the education and election world, lobbying is important and having responsive legislators is needed. With "safe" districts, politicians do not need to be responsive to their constituents, especially those who may express differing views. With more fair districts, legislators tend to more willing to compromise when making decisions.

Living in Mercer County, we have three Congressional Districts – 4, 5, 8. This creates additional work for the Board of Elections staff in creating ballots with all the splits. This allows for possible mistakes with ballot creations. A small county like Mercer County should never be divided up as is the current situation.

The Commission needs to end gerrymandering by continuing public hearings and make sure the maps are fair and transparent. Ohio's districts should reflect Ohio.

Thank you,

Phil A. Long, Mercer County

*Phil A. Long*

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