

Hello.

My name is Lorraine Cathala. I'm a resident of Brown Township, just west of Hilliard, in the 15<sup>th</sup> district. I am testifying today to get redress for the current gerrymandered districts in Ohio. The outcomes I am seeking from redistricting include:

- A fully transparent redistricting process that
  - Meets the spirit and letter of the constitutional amendment requiring fair districts
  - Provides 100% publicly accessible documentation of the actions and decisions of committee members, all data used, consultation agreements and outcomes, and proposal sources
  - Obtains robust and geographically comprehensive public participation in pandemic safe forums
  - Provides adequate time for public review, feedback, and revisions, including at least 14 days to review maps prior to public hearings and 5 days to review maps
  - Includes an analysis of how new maps impact historically disenfranchised groups
- Fair district maps that avoid costly and time-consuming court challenges
- Ultimately, districts that allow me to elect political office holders who reflect my needs and concerns and, more globally, reflect how all Ohioans want to be represented

In the past Ohio was a bell weather state and had fairly evenly composed districts. Because elections could flip either way, politicians paid attention to everyone's concerns. With our current gerrymandered districts now guaranteeing Republican victories, almost half of our state's residents are being ignored because their votes are not necessary to win election. This is not good for individuals, districts, the state, or the country. It is driving discontent, inequality, more extreme candidates, and the current acidic public climate. We can do better for our citizens and our country. Ohio citizens have explicitly required you, through constitutional amendment, to fix our current unrepresentative district design.

#### **What are the characteristics of fair districts?**

- They cause candidates to be responsive to the entire electorate
- They engage citizens in a balanced fashion, not favoring one constituency over another all the time
- Because they require politicians to appeal to a majority of citizens, fewer extreme candidates can be elected
- They encourage and perpetuate democracy since voters recognize that their vote matters
- They do not perpetuate minority rule
- They are not based on prior election results, political affiliation, or the addresses of specific individuals that have been analyzed for voting behavior
- They group communities of interest that have shared policy concerns
- They do not split communities

#### **How fair is my current district? Not at all.**

Steve Stivers has been my representative since 2011. His voting record indicates that he, and Republicans in general, have essentially nothing in common with my needs and priorities. Since he has not needed to appeal to the minority position voters in his district to get elected, he has

ignored our positions. I have contacted him on numerous occasions and have observed no change in voting based on my input or requests, receiving only form letter responses. The new candidate to succeed Mr. Stivers looks even worse.

Based on statistics from [politicsthatwork.com](http://politicsthatwork.com), Mr. Stivers has voted for policies that I disagree with the indicated percentage of the time.

- Support military spending - 100%
- Favor big business - 100%
- Favor wealthy individuals - 93%
- Tax the middle class - 92%
- Restrict voting rights - 89%
- Favor hawkish foreign policy - 79%

His record on supporting environmental and social needs is equally against my priorities. He has only voted in support of the following categories the indicated percentage of the time:

- Foreign and humanitarian aid - 33%
- Public health - 30%
- Disaster relief - 30%
- Education funding - 27%
- Labor rights and wages - 26%
- Racial equality - 16%
- Women's rights - 15%
- Financial sector regulation - 8%
- Environmental protection - 4%

And he has not voted even once in support of:

- Consumer protection - 0%
- Taxing business - 0%
- Gun control - 0%
- Taxing the wealthy - 0%
- Ameliorating poverty - 0%
- LGBTQ rights - 0%

The 15<sup>th</sup> district is spread across urban, suburban, and rural areas, diluting individual communities of interest. Hilliard is split so that only half is in the district. Upper Arlington residents do not have the same needs and priorities as Brown Township farmers.

The district is not compact, leading to the conclusion that it was drawn for political advantage.

#### **What characteristics should all new districts have?**

- They should be as close to squares as possible, with no protrusions or indentations
- Compact, as measured by an accepted method such as Polsby-Popper
- Contiguous
- Follow existing geographical boundaries such as city limits, townships, and counties

- As nearly equal population as possible. Where inequalities exist, base districts on anticipated population growth
- Don't split counties up beyond the number of districts required based on population; ie, don't dilute surrounding counties by slicing and dicing a single county
- Provide racial minorities with an equal opportunity to participate in the political process and do not dilute or diminish their ability to elect candidates of choice whether alone or in coalition with others.
- Keep communities of interest intact

#### **What should my Ohio House district look like?**

- It should include all of Hilliard and surrounding semi-rural areas that Hilliard is likely to grow into in the next 10 years
- It should exclude Upper Arlington and Columbus
- It should exclude the mostly rural southwest corner of Franklin County
- It should be roughly square in shape
- It should eliminate the current oblong shapes of districts 15 and 3
- The eastern boundary should be the Scioto River
- The western boundary should be the Madison County line
- The northern boundary should include Amlin

#### **What should my Ohio Senate district look like?**

- It should include all of Hilliard and surrounding semi-rural areas that Hilliard is likely to grow into in the next 10 years
- It should exclude Upper Arlington and Columbus
- It should encompass the western 1/4 of Franklin County, with the Scioto River or route 270 being the rough north-south dividing line

#### **What should my US Congressional district look like?**

- It should include all of Franklin County, excluding a district on the East side of the county that includes all of Columbus and adjacent communities like Westerville
- It should include Madison, Delaware, Union, Pickaway, Fairfield, and Licking counties
- All these counties are experiencing significant population growth and have more in common than the more rural current district makeup. They are also contiguous, and the design is compact.

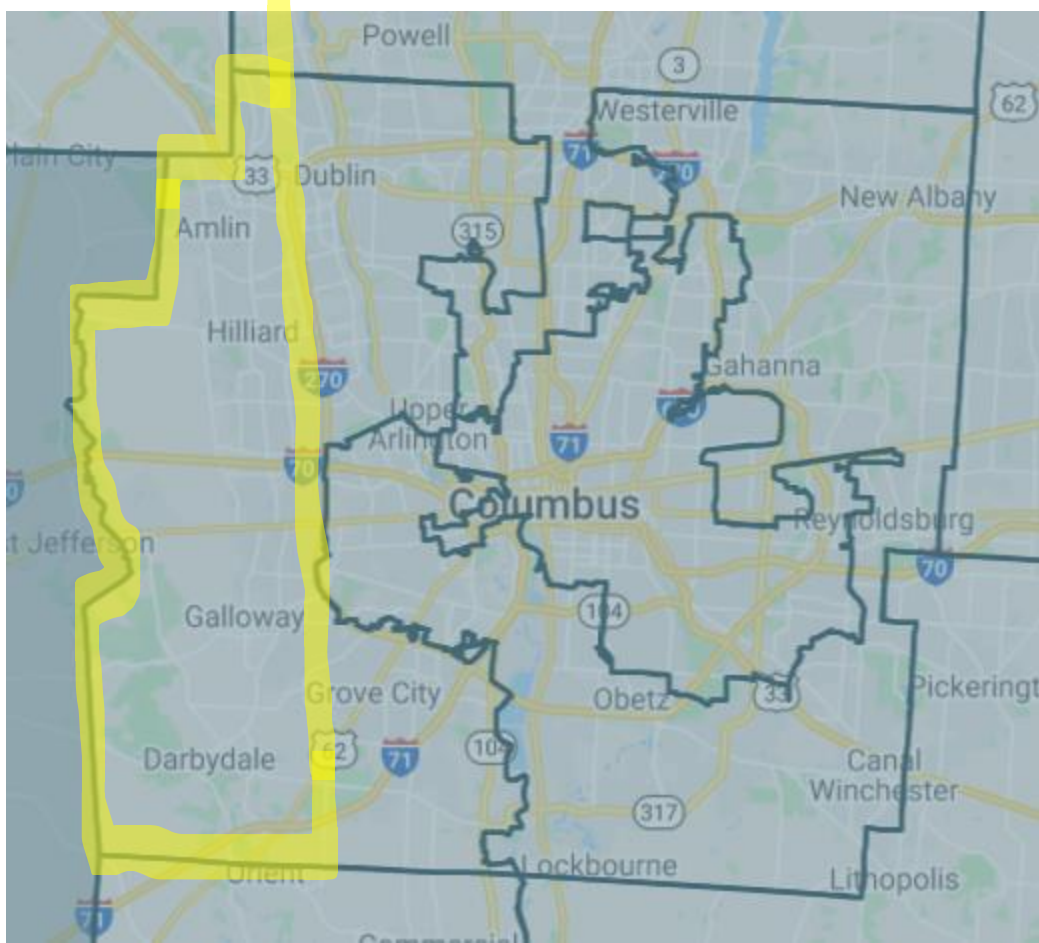
# U.S. Congressional Districts 2012-2022 in Ohio

(As Adopted 2012)

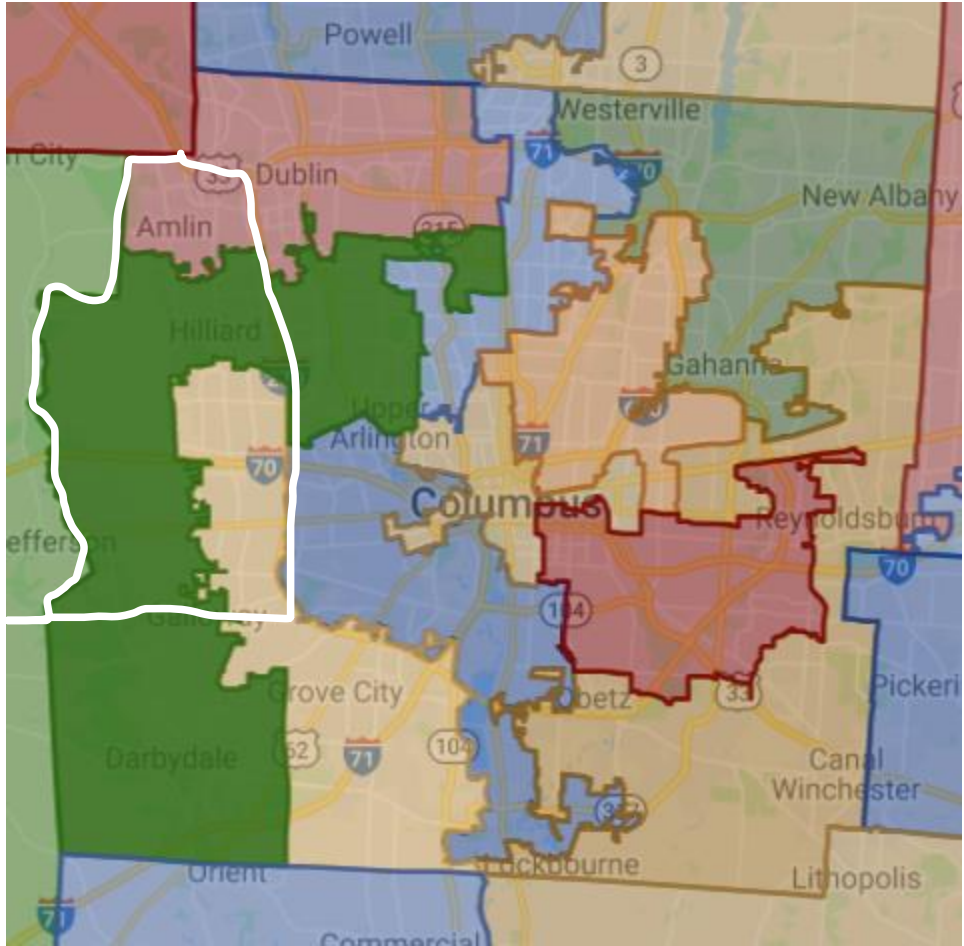


*For the most up-to-date and detailed information on each district, please contact the local county board of elections.*

Last Revised 02/2018



Ohio Representatives



Thank you for your consideration of my testimony. I look forward to reviewing the new set of fair districts that the committee draws. As a final reminder, fair districts are the fundamental basis for life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness our founders envisioned for us all. We have elected you to follow through on these ideals.