

Date: September 12, 2021

From: Collin Marozzi, Policy Strategist, ACLU Ohio

To: Ohio Redistricting Commission

RE: Testimony on Proposed General Assembly Map

My name is Collin Marozzi and I am a Policy Strategist with the American Civil Liberties Union of Ohio. Thank you to the Ohio Redistricting Commission for the opportunity to testify on the introduced General Assembly district map plan.

The General Assembly map plan that is being considered by this commission is fatally flawed.

My testimony will focus on the failure of this proposed map to take into account the Voting Rights Act, and the failure of the proposed map to comply with Section 6 requirements.

Section 3(B)2 requires any adopted General Assembly map to comply with the US Constitution, the Ohio Constitution, and federal law. The Voting Rights Act is federal law. The Voting Rights Act protects minorities from having their right to vote, including minority vote dilution through gerrymandering, denied by state and local governments. In order to comply with the Ohio Constitution and federal law the Commission must conduct analysis on the map's effect on minority representation. This is even more necessary given the demographic shifts in Ohio's population according to the 2020 census. This Commission must do its due diligence and analyze this proposed map to ensure compliance with the Voting Rights Act, and present those findings to the public.

Second, the disproportionate partisan advantage of these proposed General Assembly districts clearly violates Article XI Section 6(b), which says "the statewide proportion of districts whose voters, based on statewide state and federal partisan election results during the last ten years, favor each political party shall correspond closely to the statewide preferences of Ohio voters."

This proposed map perpetuates and extends the gerrymander-created super majorities that currently exist in both the House and the Senate. The people of Ohio demanded better in 2015. You've heard from hundreds of Ohioans during these hearings calling on this commission to create fairer maps - and instead of listening to the pleas of your constituents, this commission has doubled down. Is this what the members of this commission promised when you voted for and sponsored HJR12? Is this what millions of Ohioans voted for? Is this what was promised in 2015? No it isn't. I'll say it again, the splitting rules of Sections 3 and 4 are only a means to an end. Compliance with Section 6 is the true goal, and the guiding principle, of Article XI, and creating



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a map that honors Section 6 is the only way this commission will have legitimacy in the eyes of Ohio voters.

The proposed General Assembly district plan again violates Section 6(a), which also provides that “no General Assembly district plan shall be drawn primarily to favor or disfavor a political party.” The protection of incumbents in the Senate plan, and the strategic pairing of incumbent representatives in newly created House districts reveals that this proposed plan was drawn to disfavor a political party.

You can’t say this map was drawn to keep communities together - not when you slice Trotwood off from Dayton and bury it in Preble and Butler Counties; not when the city of Youngstown is in a Senate district with rural Carroll County, but not with other Valley metros like Niles and Warren; and not when you pull Dublin out of Franklin County and stick it with Union County. Those are not communities of interest.

The map wasn’t drawn to be more competitive. According to Dave’s Redistricting App (DRA), both the proposed House map and Senate map are less competitive than either current map.

Nor was the map drawn to be more compact, as DRA scores both the proposed House and Senate maps as equally, or slightly less, compact using the Reock and Polsby-Popper metrics.

The sad fact is, other than the allocation of General Assembly seats to the majority party, it’s hard to find a quantifiable measure where the proposed House and Senate maps outperform our current maps.

This is not what the people of Ohio earned when they went to the ballot in 2015. Thank you and I’m happy to answer any questions.

