**Ohio Redistricting Commission - 9-13-2021- Cleveland part 1**

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**Co-Chair Speaker Robert Cupp** [00:00:00] I like to call this meeting of the Ohio Redistricting Commission to order, uh, and before we start, we'd like to begin our official business. We'd like to thank the Cuyahoga Community College, Tri-C, for hosting us today and introduce William Gary, executive vice president for Workforce Community and Economic Development, for a short welcome.

**William Gary** [00:00:25] And will be short. Thank you. Let me first of all, governor and members of the legislature and the commission and invite a guest. Let me welcome all of you on behalf of our president, Dr Alex Johnson, who could not be with us today due to a mild illness. But it's our pleasure to have you. And this meeting here at this institution, as most of you know, Tri-C as the oldest and the largest community college in the state. This facility was founded in nineteen, I'm sorry, 2003 and represents one of the premier aspects of the college's workforce development community and economic development division. We're very, very pleased to have all of you here. This facility provides training for over a thousand businesses, individuals and government entities. And we are so pleased that you saw fit to have this event here today. So I want to acknowledge also my colleague, Clarabelle Sotho, who worked with the commission to bring this event here today. So, again, thank you for coming. We hope that this meeting will achieve the outcomes that we desire. And if there's anything that we can do to assist you in this process, by all means, please call on my colleagues. Thank you and have a great meeting.

**Co-Chair Speaker Robert Cupp** [00:01:52] Thank you. Appreciate your hospitality. As the people arrive, who would like to testify, if you could please fill out a witness slip, we'd appreciate it and provide it to the staff at this time would the staff please call the roll.

**Staff** [00:02:13] Sorry.

**Co-Chair Speaker Robert Cupp** [00:02:13] Call the roll

**Staff** [00:02:16] Co-chair Senator Sykes,.

**Co-Chair Senator Vernon Sykes** [00:02:16] Present

**Staff** [00:02:18] Co-chair, Speaker Cupp.

**Co-Chair Speaker Robert Cupp** [00:02:19] Present.

**Staff** [00:02:20] Governor DeWine.

**Governor DeWine** [00:02:21] Here.

**Staff** [00:02:22] Auditor Faber.

**Auditor of State Keith Faber** [00:02:22] Here,.

**Staff** [00:02:23] President Huffman

**Senate President Matt Huffman** [00:02:24] Here.

**Staff** [00:02:25] Secretary LaRose.

**Secretary of State Frank LaRose** [00:02:25] Here.

**Staff** [00:02:26] Leader Sykes.

**House Minority Leader Emilia Sykes** [00:02:26] Here.

**Co-Chair Senator Vernon Sykes** [00:02:28] Our quorum being present. We will now continue the meeting. I understand the commission will hear testimony on the commission plan that was introduced on September 9th. 2021 in accordance with the commission rule, these proceedings will be recorded and broadcast by the Ohio Channel. So the board in its deliberation may consider everything that's said, we asked our audience today to refrain from clapping and other loud noise out of respect for witnesses and so persons can can hear remotely. If you are here to testify again, please complete a witness slip uh we ask you. We have over 40 over 50 witnesses today. We were in session for five hours yesterday. We're hopeful to be able to get to everyone here today. If you could limit your comments to four minutes and the staff will raise up a card to indicate when you have one minute left and when your time has expired. At this time, we'd like to start with the first witness and the staff will read three witness at a time so the people can be geared up for the for their testimony.

**Staff** [00:03:57] Gerald Barna, Catherine Buechner, George Bohan, the third.

**Gerald Barna** [00:04:24] I have a witness form plus 10 copies of the written testimony. My name is Gerald Barna. I'm currently a member in House District 57, Ohio Senate District 13 and Congressional District seven. I've been a resident of Avon, Ohio, for 18 years and lived in Lorain County for over 50 years. I was employed at the NASA Glenn Research Center and retired after 40 years of service. I went, I'm an engineer, but most of my career spent in project management and large organization management and I was a senior executive service member and that I'm here at NASA headquarters. After retirement, I consulted for small businesses and nonprofit organizations. During my tenure at NASA, most of the time, we had stringent schedules. Strong requirements that have to be met, usually constraints and funding as well, and the need to interact with many organizations and bring them together to a successful conclusion. What I want to do today is give you my overall assessment of the commission introduced maps, and I'd like to start with the example of District fifty seven. I testified about districts fifty seven previously. It is a large district. It is not compact, but has a large group of counties and it works its way up, splits North Ridgeville and ends at eight on the. So it is not compact. Avon has no significant share interests with most of the communities in that district. But Avon has very strong shared interests with nearby communities such as Avon Lake, North Ridgeville, Sheffield, Lake Sheffield and Eden. What I reviewed the maps produced by the introduced by the commission, I believe that all the issues I raised have been addressed. And I thought this out because I wanted to demonstrate that it is possible to do this. After initially looking at District 57 and what was done to create the District 52, I looked at the remaining maps and looked for compactness, shared interests, and found that very few times. Could I find evidence of these things being in place further and looking at what was presented in terms of expected outcomes? There was a significant increase in the number of Republican dominated House and Senate districts, and I don't believe that is appropriate or in the best interests of the state. And I am a registered Republican. I urge the commission, the Democrats, the Republicans to work together in good faith, willing to make compromises and come to the conclusion of a 10 year plan. Otherwise, it will be absolutely destructive to the state and harmful to its citizens. Thank you.

**Co-Chair Senator Vernon Sykes** [00:09:02] Are there any questions? Thank you very much.

**Staff** [00:09:11] Katherine Buettner, George Bohan, Daniel Bruce.

**Co-Chair Senator Vernon Sykes** [00:09:39] Please state and spell your name for our record, please.

**Daniel Bruce** [00:09:45] Hi, I'm Daniel Bruce, I assume I didn't cut the line and see anybody else get up. I am a resident of Lakewood, 13th House District and twenty third Senate District. I'm not going to get into a lot of the details of the maps. I was at an earlier meeting a couple weeks ago. I wanted to give you a little bit of my perspective. One little thing about this process, though, both of these times have been during work hours. I appreciate that this one later in the day, but I work part time. I work a bunch of part time jobs. So this is my second time trying to take part in this process. And it has now cost me two hundred and twenty five dollars. I want to briefly say I hope that you all have taken a look at the maps that were submitted to Fair Maps, the winners of their competition, and take a very serious look at those.

**Daniel Bruce** [00:10:50] OK, I'd like to talk to you about my own experience and that of many of my friends. Right now. We represent the younger generation that finished college and moved away from Ohio, something I hear about a lot to big cities or to the coasts. After getting a little older and having children moving back, began to look like a good idea. It's cheaper. We can be around our family. And I like it. Having grown up here discussing this plan with my wife and other friends, the one thing that kept coming up was the politics of Ohio is gaining a reputation as a state that is moving more and more to the extreme right. I don't believe this accurately reflects the political will of the voters. I think it has happened over the last 10 years, largely due to this issue of gerrymandering. So here we are with Stand Your Ground bills being passed in multiple bills being introduced to restrict women's reproductive rights. The legislature has taken away the governor's power to declare health emergencies. So now I'm sending my kids to school when the numbers are as bad as they were last winter and just hoping for the best, I guess. All this while failing, failing to properly fund public education, my wife and I want to live in a place that reflects our values to some degree. We've been here for five years. As we become more aware and involved in politics in this state, we've begun discussing where else we might want to live if things keep going this direction. Given that part of the proposed budget last year was allocating funds to market Ohio to young people from other states. I don't think this is a good sign that I'm having this talk with my wife and many of my friends who have moved back. You've lost our trust, you've forgotten that you're supposed to work for the people, we should not have to spend our lives getting signatures, missing work to come to meetings, et cetera, to beg you to do your job in an honest manner with decency and integrity. I do thank you for the chance to talk and have a good day. Are there any questions?

**Co-Chair Senator Vernon Sykes** [00:13:04] Again, I would ask youput to hold your applause so we could continue.

**Staff** [00:13:13] Glen Campbell Ann Caruso, Sylvia Chim Leevi.

**George Bohan** [00:13:19] I didn't know quite how that worked out. George.

**Co-Chair Senator Vernon Sykes** [00:13:24] Please state and spell your name, please.

**George Bohan** [00:13:26] George Patrick Bohan, the third B O H A N from Akron. Chairman Cupp., Chairman Sykes, thanks for bringing the committee here today and thanks for inviting me to speak. Governor DeWine, Welcome to Northeast Ohio. Welcome to Cleveland. Always happy to see you here. And thanks to the committee for giving me this chance to speak about this important issue. I want to bring up three things in my time. I'm from Akron. I used to live near Lorain. We all know that Akron is divided into four congressional districts. Lorain is divided into three congressional districts. What that means is we in Akron don't really have representation in the Congress. I live in Ryan's district. I'm a registered Democrat. Hey, I knock on doors for Democrats, so why wouldn't I be tickled to be in a pretty safe Democratic district? Mr. Ryan live. Seventy five miles away, Marcia Fudge lived 50 miles away. Dave Joyce lives almost seventy five miles away. So we don't have the representation. We need. All of those representatives, their core constituents are really elsewhere. Their communities are elsewhere in Akron. We don't really have the representation we need because of gerrymandering. And the same is true we know for Lorraine. Jim Jordan lives about 100 miles from Lorraine. We know Lorraine is not getting the representation it needs. So we need, of course, districts where the representatives represent those districts. We need competition. Thanks. I heard a little we need competitive districts. As I said, I'm a Democrat, a Democratic district. Why wouldn't I be happy with a fairly safe district? Because in safe districts, legislators don't have to listen to their constituents. Republican. Representatives, whether Democrat or Republican, when they are in safe districts and when they're in super safe districts, they don't have to listen to me. Even the Democrats don't have to listen to me. They're in a safe district. Competitive districts would help the state. We all know the last time we did this, the last time we went through this, Ohio ranked higher in education and economic. We've moved down the ladder. Noncompetitive districts are part of the reason for that. Primaries shouldn't be the general election. We need general elections, competitive, competitive general elections, competitive districts. We need representatives who are testing their ideas against each other and bringing their ideas to the electorate. Last thing I want to bring up until I get more and more nervous the farther I go, 75 percent of Ohio voted for this to ignore their. To ignore the will of the people you couldn't get, you know, we know you couldnt get seventy five percent of Ohio, you get 75 percent of Ohio to root for the Buckeyes and that's about it. To get 75 percent of Ohio to root to vote for anything is remarkable. Please don't let us down. Thanks for listening to me.

**Co-Chair Senator Vernon Sykes** [00:17:07] Are there any questions? Thank you. I like to remind the presenters that we are limiting our presentations to state legislative districts and in particular to maps and the map that's before the commission. So please leave your comments to the map of the commission map in state legislative districts.

**Staff** [00:17:36] Glen Campbell Ann Caruso, Sylvia Chim Levie.

**unidentified** [00:17:42] In what order are you picking these names?

**Staff** [00:17:52] Alphabetical by who submitted them electronically Deborah Dorcy, Melanie Immig, Rebecca Emsworth.

**Debbie Dalke** [00:18:13] I also have to have copies of this, I cite some of my material, so I'd like to have copies. So my name is Debbie Dalke, D E B B I E D A L K E and I live in Bowling Green in Wood County now Wood County now has too many people for one state House district and so must be split, as I said in the Toledo hearing, in the community must be divided. The people who live there should have a voice in how this is done. So I am here today to raise my voice. The population issue with Wood County could be resolved by carving out a small segment and keeping Wood County largely intact. This is my preferred solution. The commission chose to consider the Huffman map, which divides Wood County in half. The western half of Wood County was lumped into a district with the piece of Lucas County and a slice of Hancock County. This district District 43 would be my new house district. It is not compact and it unnecessarily splits Hancock County. Hancock is small enough to be fully contained within a house, a state house district. The Huffman map also isolates me from my community. I live about a mile southwest of the city, on the other side of the boundary that divides Wood County. And two, I have a Bowling Green zip code live in a bowl. The Bowling Green School District. The vast majority of my business is conducted in Bowling Green and my husband pays Bowling Green City taxes. There is not a valid reason for putting me in a different house district. I am also concerned about the redistricting process. DeRossi, when introducing the Huffman maps, said he was instructed to draw maps without utilizing demographic or racial data. Mr DeRossi also stated that his maps fully complied with the requirements in the Ohio Constitution. I believe these two statements are contradictory, which I will explain. Article eleven Section 6 the Ohio Constitution states that a district Pan District plan should correspond closely to the statewide preferences. If, as Mr. DeRossi claims, voting patterns were not looked at when the maps were evaluated, then the map makers could not know if they adhere to this section of the Constitution. Article 11, Section three of the Ohio Constitution say states that district plan should comply with federal law. A relevant federal law is a 1965 Voting Rights Act. Section two of this act prohibits policies that deny or bridge the right to vote based on race. A Judiciary report that accompanies the 1982 extension of the act specifically mentions the creation of unusually large voting districts as potentially violating this act. And I have a reference for that. Map makers know they can minimize the voting power of a demographic group by packing the district with those individuals. At the Huffman, maps were drawn without evaluating the racial composition of the districts. Then we cannot know if some of the districts violate the Voting Rights Act Act. The League of Women Voters sponsored a mapmaking competition using publicly available districting software. It was evaluated by an emeritus professor on a number of issues. All of the issues that are in the Constitution, the official Huffman maps compared to the contest winners and the Huffman maps maps read noticeably lower on a number of criteria, including compactness and proportionality, fitting the voting patterns of a state. So hopefully you will take the superior lead superior maps into consideration. And I've included a link. In conclusion, this redistricting process is a slap in the face to the over 70 percent of Ohioans who voted for the redistricting reforms. The Republican engineered maps give even more power to the Republican candidates. They are even more politically biased than the ones we currently have. Private citizens were able to to produce maps that better fit the constitutional criteria than your maps, and they did so in a more timely manner and at no cost to the taxpayers. David Winston, a redistricting consultor in the 1990s, said the following. "As a map maker, I can have more of an impact on election than a campaign more of an impact than a candidate. When I, as a map maker have more of an impact to voters, the system is out of whack" and your system is out of whack. Please reject the proposed gerrymander.

**Co-Chair Senator Vernon Sykes** [00:23:22] Again, please please. I'm going to ask again, please hold the applause.

**Auditor of State Keith Faber** [00:23:35] Yes, if if the nice lady would answer a question, I'd be happy to. Yes, ma'am. Specifically looking at the maps, I appreciated your testimony because you talk specifically about things in the maps that I could pull up and take a look at. Have you taken a look at the Democrat suggested maps or any of the other maps on Dave's redistricting?

**Co-Chair Senator Vernon Sykes** [00:23:55] Can you come back to the microphone, please? So it can be recorded?

**Debbie Dalke** [00:24:01] I've taken a look at a number of them specifically, I've taken a look at those that are relate to my own districts and the maps, most of the maps that I I remember that they did take a little chunk out of Wood County and they left most of Wood County intact before. Go ahead. So for the maps. And I looked at then again, living a mile from the city of Bowling Green, that my address would still be included with Bowling Green.

**Auditor of State Keith Faber** [00:24:32] The problem and I appreciate that. And that's why I was looking, because I'm looking at the Democrats proposed maps and they split very similar to what the the Republican the legislative maps did because Bowling Green's Wood County's population is such that you can get a whole state rep district and it has to be part of another depending on where you do the splits. And so those are all about making decisions in the Constitution requires that we keep cities intact and townships intact. And that's why I was trying to figure out if you live outside the city and they're doing splits, depending on how they do those splits because of the population requirements, it makes it kind of tough. And I was just curious if you knew where the Democrats split was with regard to your House.

**Debbie Dalke** [00:25:12] That one I didn't consider I was more interested in in looking at the wood the the maps that were entered into the the contest for the win, the League of Women Voters. I looked at those maps. So the Democrat map. No, I'll be honest.

**Auditor of State Keith Faber** [00:25:29] And many of those that had to split another county somewhere to put that overflow. So it's a question of which we could all just pick, which, you know, one we're splitting next to our house when we live next to a city because I live in a township just outside the city as well. And I know that that gets sometimes tough. But I'm just curious, if you looked at that, it looks like you hadnt.

**Debbie Dalke** [00:25:48] Not the Democrat map. As I said, I looked at the other maps and the maps and I saw pulled out just a little section of Wood County and then added that to a county that was smaller

**Auditor of State Keith Faber** [00:25:57] Thank you so much and thanks for your specific testimony. That's very helpful.

**Debbie Dalke** [00:26:01] Thank you.

**Co-Chair Senator Vernon Sykes** [00:26:04] Thank you very much. At this time, we've been joined by some other state elected officials. We've been joined by State Representative UpChurch State Representative Smith, State Representative Brent and the minority leader of the Senate, Senator Yuko. Thanks for joining Appreciate it. I'm told we also have State Representative Sweeney.

**Staff** [00:26:35] The next witness we have up is Melanie Imake, and after her is Rebecca Emsworth.

**Co-Chair Senator Vernon Sykes** [00:26:50] OK.

**Staff** [00:26:53] OK. The next witness after Melanie was Rebecca, Endsworth and after Rebecca Ounsworth is Elliot Forhan. OK. OK. The next witness is Deborah France, followed by Barbara Friedman Yaksic.

**Staff** [00:27:30] OK. The next witness is Elizabeth Gersten Hober, followed by Brian Glassman,

**Co-Chair Senator Vernon Sykes** [00:27:43] would you please state and spell your name?

**Auditor of State Keith Faber** [00:27:45] Sure. Good afternoon. I am Barbara Friedman Yaksic. B A R B A R A F R I E D M A N and Yaksic is Y A K S I C and I'm so glad you went by the F and not the Y so I could be up here earlier. members of the redistricting commission. Thank you for hearing my testimony today. I retired from the practice of law four years ago. Since then, I've been involved in much volunteer work, primarily focusing on voter access and voter rights. As an attorney, I took an oath to honor and support federal and state laws and constitutions and statutes, as did most of you. Governor DeWine as former attorney general Speaker Cupp, former Supreme Court Justice Senator Huffman and Auditor Faber as attorneys. It is because of that oath and as an Ohio concerned Ohio's citizen, I am testifying today. Each of you, when elected to office, took an oath and this is a direct quote and the sites are in my written testimony, you each promise that you shall support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of this state. Similarly, when appointed to the redistricting commission, each of you and again, I quote, solemnly swore to support the Constitution of the United States and the constitution of the state of Ohio and to fully, faithfully discharge the duties of the office as a member of the Ohio Redistricting Commission on which I serve pursuant to Article eleven, Section one of the Ohio Constitution. This I shall do as I shall enter. Answer unto God respectfully, except for Senator Sykes and Representative Sykes, each of you has violated these oaths today. I ask each of the Republican members of this commission, have you upheld your oath, have you honored your constitutional obligation to create fair districts in state elections in Ohio for the next decade based on the hyper partisan maps produced at the 11th hours it appears that you have acted in violation of the Ohio Constitution for the sole purpose of gaining partisan advantage, thereby perpetuating for another decade the corrupt and corrosive practice of partisan gerrymandering in this state. As you are well aware and it has been testified to today, the Ohio Constitution was amended in 2015 and 2018 to prevent partisan gerrymandering of voting districts. Ohio voters of all parties demanded this, as demonstrated by the overwhelming support more than 70 percent of these issues. While I am not a voting rights lawyer or expert it is clear that at a minimum, the following requirements of the Ohio Constitution have not been met by the proposed maps. Representative proportionality. The fact that the maps should not disfavor or favor one party or incumbents. And again, I quote, No plan shall be drawn primarily to favor or disfavor a political party, given the supermajority in the proposed map. That doesn't seem to be met. And again, compliance with federal law. And as was pointed out earlier, this map violates the federal Voting Rights Act as testimony today and in prior hearings before this commission repeatedly established gerrymandered districts are corrosive to our democracy. It leads to unresponsive lawmakers who refuse to meet with or talk with their constituents or to hold town halls to find out their constituents views. It leads and indeed has led to corruption of public officials. It leads to extremist views, bad policies and policies not responsive to Ohio voters. I urge each of you to honor the oath you have given to the citizens of Ohio. Adapt a fair, proportionally representative map that complies with all Ohio and federal statutes to do otherwise and adapt. The current map will only invite litigation and thus unnecessarily waste taxpayer dollars, which of course should be avoided. Adoption of the current map is an unconscionable betrayal of all Ohioans. And I ask that you honor the wishes of Ohioans. Thank you. [applause]

**Co-Chair Senator Vernon Sykes** [00:32:37] Are there any questions?

**Staff** [00:32:49] Ralph Turek, followed by Elizabeth Gersten Hober.

**Ralph Turek** [00:32:58] How many minutes do I actually have? I'm just curious. Four? Wow. OK, my name is Ralph Turek, I I'm a 41 year Strongsville resident, and I've serious concerns about the maps that you proposed, drawing political maps to divide states into legislative districts, favoring one political party over the other. Run counter to the core of the Democratic principle that we are all entitled to equal representation. Gerrymandering is wrong, and it's in everybody's interest to stamp it out. However, the maps proposed by this commission suggest that perhaps you not prepared to do that more than one week after a constitutional deadline. As we expected at the latest possible moment, you're proposing maps that appear to adhere only marginally to the established criteria for redistricting. And we're drawn entirely, by the way, or entirely entirely without the input or support of the commission's minority members, who, by the way, submitted a timely manner in a timely manner, a map which you rejected on technicalities. Now, according to the reporting that I've read, and bear in mind the unreasonable short time that you've given us to study and understand the proposed maps, these maps not only failed to meet several of the important criteria and redistricting criteria established by federal law, but actually create more highly gerrymandered districts than we currently have. And this is not what we, your constituents had in mind. One criterion stipulates that the district's partisan makeup reflect the partisan makeup of the state as a whole. In other words, in Ohio, over the past 10 years, we've had state elections and have had 53 percent vote Republican and fourty-seven percent vote Democrat, each of which each legislative district would ideally comprise 53 percent Republicans and 47 percent Democrats. Now, I recognize that that is an impossible thing to achieve. Still, a casual look at the proposed House map, for example, reveals very few districts that even remotely approach that ideal with partisan splits in the range of 80- 20, perhaps the most common. I understand that the currently proposed maps would likely award Republicans 67 of 99 House seats and 23 of 33 Senate seats. So I ask in a state where the popular support for the two parties is close to 50 50, how is it fair that we be represented by better than two Republicans for every one Democrat? How is that representative of our population and how is that Democratic? Another criterion that appears to have been overlooked involves racial makeup. Both the Ohio House and Senate map secure to inappropriately impact minorities. Into just two districts, House districts, 24 and 25 in the Cincinnati area, inconceivably, members promoting the map have actually stated on record that they failed to examine the racial composition of their map. This not only disregards an essential criteria for map drawing, it disrespects the Ohio Constitution, the federal Voting Rights Act, minority communities and all Ohio voters in our own northeast Ohio area. The odd sprawl and their regular borders House districts 13, 14, 18 to 22 all appear to disregard the criterion requiring compactness, and they raise questions about the motivation for the jagged boundaries. I wish that these maps had been proposed at least a month ago, as they should have been, to allow more time for study and input. And I suspect that the things I mentioned excuse me, are mere scratches on the surface, that there are other inequities built into these maps. People are generally fair minded. And oh yes, the view was that you'd be fair. Instead, we have to sit down and watch in dismay and disbelief as history continues to repeat itself, as this commission proceeds to cement another four years of electoral advantages that resulted in total control of Ohio's government by the Republican Party for the better part of the last three decades. It's regrettable. It's shameful, it's an embarrassment, and it's a slap in the face of all Ohioans. Thank you.

**Co-Chair Senator Vernon Sykes** [00:38:19] Thank you very much,

**Staff** [00:38:23] Elizabeth Gersten Hober followed by Chris Glassburn.

**Co-Chair Senator Vernon Sykes** [00:38:38] All the. Mr. Co-chair and members of the commission, ladies and gentlemen, and on September the 9th, the commission submitted a map for consideration, and since then our staffs, all of our staffs have been working together over the weekend, Friday, Saturday, Sunday and and some of today on and out of those deliberations, the Leader Sykes and I are presenting an amendment to the commission's map. This is to amend, starting with the commission's map to amend it. To encompass some of the considerations and discussions taking place. This is done also for transparency's sake. Instead of waiting to the end and producing a map, we've produced the map already, one that we thought would be considered. But also we want to submit a map now to let you know for what's being considered at this particular time and the position that we're taking at this particular time. And Chris Glassburn is going to present the map, the amendment offered by Leader Sykes and myself.

**Chris Glassburn** [00:40:04] Thank you Co-Chair Sykes and Co-Chair Cupp and members of the Ohio Redistricting Commission for the opportunity to speak to you about changes that co-chair Sykes just referenced. My name is Chris Glassburn. I own a company called Project Govern and I serve as the consultant and map drawer for the Ohio Senate Democratic Caucus. What we're showing you today is a proposed amendment to the commission plan. The numbering scheme is not designed for the process outlined in the Constitution. It is designed to be an amendment to demonstrate new lines. The amendment first used the commission map as its base. If changes were not made and the map remains, as the commission map outlined. We use the same approach as the commission map, I'll move to northeast Ohio here. Side by side. These are Ohio House districts. We use the same approach as the commission map did to address the drawing of House and Senate districts in northeast Ohio. That is to say, we resolved the pairing issue of two House districts in Trumbull County. Those two districts now will be in the same Senate district as the commission proposed. However, in doing so, we now have been able to restore the city of Solon to be wholly in one district, unlike the commission map, which had split it. I'll go more detail into each of these regions as I go along. But I want to emphasize the overall changes first. Throughout the map, we have enhanced constitutional compliance by reducing splits of cities, counties and a township throughout the state, specifically on the township we eliminated the commission single split of a township in Stark County. So there are now no township splits in the entire state. We Decrease the number of competitive seats, and our map is now closer to the proportionality required by Article 11, Section 6 of the Ohio Constitution, and is closer now that the commission map to that ratio. This amendment should be interpreted as further evidence that Leader Sykes, co-chair Sykes and our respective Democratic caucuses are serious about enacting a ten year map. The map, initially presented by the Senate Democrats two weeks ago, was rated as having 44 likely Democratic House seats and 14 Democratic Senate seats. Our amendment today would result in 42 likely Democratic House seats and 13 Democratic Senate seats. As with our first proposal, the districts were drawn in compliance with the Voting Rights Act to ensure minority communities can select their candidate of choice. I would also like to make one note about the feedback we've received from outside individuals and groups to the commission. We have taken those maps very seriously in our caucuses. We have listened very carefully to what you have said. Specifically want to underline a difference. Many of the maps have been presented to the commission have been dependent upon Dave's Redistricting App. I myself have been a user of the platform for over a decade, a contributor, and very fond of it. It's an incredibly useful tool. However, the platform is not specifically designed for compliance with the Ohio Constitution. For example, one of the maps that won the Fair Districts competition scores very well on competitiveness. However, it also has over 50 splits of cities throughout the state. Dave's Redistricting App was not intended to ensure compliance with the Ohio Constitution, it is a tool for the public to draw maps and to submit maps. I'll now proceed through the rest of the state. So as you can see on the two projectors, the Northeast Ohio region and our Ohio house maps, these maps are colored by the partisanship results in 19 Democratic House seats in northeast Ohio versus the commission's initial proposal of 14. Additionally, the commission had proposed splitting the city of Cleveland seven times with no House districts in the city entirely. The map that is before you today reduces that number from seven to five. And there are two House districts entirely within the city of Cleveland. City of Akron has been reduced from three, being in three House districts to two, with one wholly in the city of Akron. As I alluded to earlier, in Stark County, the township split has been removed. And in, throughout northeast Ohio, again, we have increased the proportionality. This is a little bit of a closer up view of Cuyahoga County. In Lorain County, in specific, we have two Democratic index seats. This slide says one and the commission proposed one. This is another key but minor difference between the Ohio data and Dave's Redistricting App. Dave's takes the elections from 2020, 2016 and some of the elections from 2018. There are three races down ticket races that were missing from that data set in this case. That difference is the difference between the Lorain County seat being determined to be Democratic versus Republican. It's a very competitive seat. In Summit and Portage County, you can see that we have unpacked Democrats as well as we did in Cuyahoga County and there is now a Democratic leaning seat in Portage County. For a difference of two on the proportionality. Again, Stark County, the difference is primarily the township split elimination. In Trumbull and Mahoning County, there are now two seats as opposed to one, and they are more compact. In Franklin County, neighbors, neighborhoods are better held together. We heard extensively about communities such as Clintonville communities between 315 and I-71 and various other areas of Columbus. The new map changes the pairing county from Union to Pickaway and now provides for a more again consolidated neighborhood base map, as well as in generally, a more compact map. In Hamilton County, the proposal creates five Democratic House seats versus four from the commission. But as important, the city of Cincinnati had been split additional times in the commission map, this map provides for two seats entirely within the city of Cincinnati and only one district being paired with suburbs as opposed to multiple. In Montgomery County, you'll see one of the more stark differences. In the center of Montgomery County, the commission map had centered most Democrats for the entire county. This proposal proposes they have two very competitive districts, one that is entirely, I'm sorry, there's a seat entirely in Dayton, a second seat, which has only the remnants of Dayton and a third seat that has the inner ring suburbs of Dayton. The latter two seats are very competitive. This also results in a Democratic Senate seat in the Dayton area. Lastly, in Lucas County, there are few changes, however, as was actually just referenced by someone talking about Wood County, Wood County district and the commission map had portions of three counties that has been reduced to two overall. Again, counties and cities splits have been reduced throughout the state. In the proposal we're offering here, the city of Toledo now has two districts entirely inside of it instead of just one. And so those are some of the highlights of the House version of the proposal. I can continue into the Senate, but I want to stop and allow the questions if Co-Chair Sykes sees fit.

**Co-Chair Senator Vernon Sykes** [00:49:08] Are there any questions at this time? Please continue. OK.

**Chris Glassburn** [00:49:22] Move down from this table. As I say, there was very little changes in northwest Ohio for the House districts, except for the elimination of a handful of splits. This has resulted in a different configuration of counties in northwest Ohio. However, they are now whole counties as opposed to some fragments in different areas. I do want to stress throughout the state there are actually a number of districts, both House and Senate, that are identical. Huron County paired with Lorain County, for example, is one of those. That's the pink district on the far right hand side of each map. Within northeast Ohio, again, we emphasize compactness, preserving communities and reducing splits in the major cities, as well as the proportionality. This proposal would result in five Democratic leaning Senate seats in Cuyahoga and Summit counties, as well as a small portion of Geauga. That foot into Geauga is the same concept as the commission map. And we preserve the two competitive seats identically in Lorain, Huron, as well as Portage, Trumbull. In central Ohio, the proportionality is enhanced by one seat towards the Democratic side, with the county adjoining Franklin now being Pickaway instead of the Northwest Union County. Additionally, with the districts being combined by neighborhood, we have in general much more compact districts with easier to interpret lines, boundaries such again, as Upper Arlington, Morse Road, the interstates, that are easier for residents there to determine. And finally, in southwest Ohio, again, it was a priority for us to reduce splits of cities and to keep communities whole. There is now a Dayton based seat entirely inside of Montgomery County as opposed to being shared with the surrounding exterior counties. And in Hamilton County, the most notable difference is the addition of a seat that is, I believe, fifty point one percent Democratic. So the most competitive seat in the state.

**Co-Chair Senator Vernon Sykes** [00:52:01] Are there any questions?

**unidentified** [00:52:12] I've got a question.

**Co-Chair Senator Vernon Sykes** [00:52:14] OK, you have a question? There's a question.

**unidentified** [00:52:24] (inaudible).

**Co-Chair Senator Vernon Sykes** [00:52:24] The availability of the maps?

**Chris Glassburn** [00:52:26] Are the maps available is the question? To the co-chairs. Yes, they are available. They are live currently on Dave's Redistricting App. One named Sykes, Sykes September 13th, House. And the other named Sykes, Sykes, September 13th Senate. And Ibelieve our our public outreach team will be sharing those links very shortly as well. But you can search for them now.

**Co-Chair Senator Vernon Sykes** [00:52:52] Leader Sykes

**House Minority Leader Emilia Sykes** [00:53:00] Thank you. Thank you to the co-chairs, thank you to the co-chairs and thank you, Mr. Glassburn, for the presentation. One note was also just shared with me. These maps are also on the redistricting.Ohio.gov Web site, in case anyone wants to look at them. For the members of the commission, would like to reiterate my commitment to figuring out how we get to a 10 year map. While we know that we have two days to figure it out. Sometimes that feels like a lifetime and sometimes it feels like just a blip of a second. It is important for both the Senate and House Democratic caucuses to put forth what we deem as something we can continue to negotiate on. And that is why you all are seeing these maps. And we hope that they can be taken seriously. And as we go through the next two days, I do encourage the members of the public, as you see fit to communicate with us where you would like to see edits, because, again, these are ultimately your maps as well. I do believe, and I'm going to continue to hold out hope. I do continue to keep mustard seeds of faith with me no matter where I go, that we can get to a 10 year map. And in doing this and providing this demonstrative activity, let's not only the members of this commission, but the individuals throughout this state who have told us not once but twice and hundreds of testimony, and hours of testimony to continue to be transparent and share how we can update this process. So this is that for our caucuses. So, again, as we continue through the next two days, please share that feedback from members of this commission. We would be well, I can just speak for myself would be open to all comments and criticism as long as they are constructively getting us towards a 10 year map that we can pass before the end of this week or by Wednesday specifically. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Co-Chair Senator Vernon Sykes** [00:55:09] Any additional comments or questions? Thank you very much.

**Auditor of State Keith Faber** [00:55:16] Yes, we need to get a flag down for the endzone.

**Co-Chair Senator Vernon Sykes** [00:55:18] Auditor Faber.

**Co-Chair Senator Vernon Sykes** [00:55:18] Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for your testimony. And and I appreciate. I just want to appreciate working with Vern and I'm sorry, the chair and leader by showing us these earlier today and walking through some concerns. And one of the things that you mentioned, I think I just need to emphasize, because I was one of the people who was out there on Dave's Redistricting trying to figure out why, looking at the wise map and looking a bunch of the other maps. And it's your position that those maps would essentially be unconstitutional if we were to adopt them or work from them. Is that the framework? Is that what I heard you say?

**Chris Glassburn** [00:55:56] So, Mr. Auditor and the two co-chairs, I'm not an attorney. It's not my qualification to do that. But I have on my screen here the Wise map. And I'll just show you an example from Cuyahoga County where I live and I'm more familiar with. So please forgive me, slow Internet connection. OK. So Dave's redistricting utilizes the data from the census, as well as data aggregated by volunteers for 2016 and 2018, and that is, again, a very close and useful number. However, the layer that I have turned on is labeled as city lines. It is the, in terms of the census language, the minor civil division in Cuyahoga County that is cities, but in many other parts of the state, it does not perfectly coincide. But Cuyahoga County is a good example. So, for example. Again, we are currently in the city of Warrenville Heights. In this map, the city of Cleveland Heights, just north of us, is divided twice. The city of South Euclid is divided. The city of North Royalton is divided. The city of Strongsville is divided. The city of North Olmsted is divided. The township of Olmsted Township is divided. And this is a consistent theme throughout the state in this proposal. So just on its face, it is hard to see how this would be viewed as constitutional Mr. Auditor.

**Co-Chair Senator Vernon Sykes** [00:57:43] But, Mr. Chairman, I appreciate it, frankly, your staff pointing that out to me today in our discussions because I was laboring, using the Wise map and other maps to try and look to figure where you find compromise. So I appreciate you guys coming forward with these proposals and we'll be happy to study them and go through. Look forward to working with you to see if we can't figure out how to make them work.

**Co-Chair Senator Vernon Sykes** [00:58:06] There is a question.

**audience member** [00:58:11] Yes I have a question so some the criteria are actually committing conflict, so you want them to be compact, but you also want to keep communities together, and you also want proportionality. So don't, can't you, did your maps did you evaluate your maps on all these criteria to see where they may be better than some criteria but worse on other criteria.

**Chris Glassburn** [00:58:40] So, Mr. Co-chairs, if I can restate the question for the whole audience to hear. The question was competitiveness and the proportionality as well as preservation of communities of interest, are, and compactness are criteria throughout. How how did we in our map evaluate those weighed different conflicts? The Constitution is again, I'm not a legal scholar or an attorney, but the Constitution is fairly straightforward, albeit it's complex. It outlines that House districts are drawn first through Section three and then Senate districts are drawn through Section four. And then you look to compliance with Section six, which includes the proportionality and the compactness. It is entirely possible in the map that we have presented today here on behalf of both the House and Senate Democratic caucuses. Does that it complies with Section three and Section four to the greatest extent possible? In Section six. Once you have reached that threshold of what is what are the most communities you can preserve? Once you're near that threshold, then you look at the continuum of what is the proportionality I can achieve, what is the compactness I can achieve and still maintain the compliance with three and four. Our proposal, we believe, comes very close to meeting those goals, as well as maintaining the compliance with three and four. these don't have to be entirely mutually exclusive goals. So for example, the proportionality called for in the Constitution would be 45 House Democratic seats. Our proposal is forty two, which is partially a spirit of compromise, but partially because it is the maximum compliance with Section three at the same time. I hope that answers your question.

**audience member** [01:00:34] (Inaudible)

**Chris Glassburn** [01:00:50] To the co-chairs, again, I want to emphasize, I don't represent as a legal scholar. The plain reading language of Section six is that you have, in order to comply with it, you must not abridge any of the other sections two, three, four or five and seven while you're complying with six. That does not mean ignore six. That does not mean do not attempt six. It says shall attempt, but you must comply with the other sections at the same time. And that is what we endeavor to do and we believe we have done so.

**Co-Chair Senator Vernon Sykes** [01:01:27] Thank you very much for your testimony. Appreciate it.

**Chris Glassburn** [01:01:29] Thank you. Thank you.

**Co-Chair Senator Vernon Sykes** [01:01:33] Yes, Senator. Senate President Huffman

**Senate President Matt Huffman** [01:01:36] Thank you. Co-Chair is did you consider competitiveness when preparing this amendment in this map? To the co-chairs and to the Senate president, competitiveness is not an explicit criteria in the Ohio Constitution. With that said, it's clearly a item that was considered in the spirit of the reform that was passed. To the extent that competitiveness could coincide. And again, the other provisions, one through seven, were complied with. Yes, it was something that we looked at, but no, it was not superior to any of the other explicitly named criteria in the Constitution.

**Senate President Matt Huffman** [01:02:19] Thank you could have a follow up question, co-chair?

**Co-Chair Senator Vernon Sykes** [01:02:21] Yes.

**Senate President Matt Huffman** [01:02:21] Thank you. Is the the the concept of drawing is, as you did, to ensure I guess and maybe ensures not the right word, but to draw 57 Republican districts and 42 Democratic districts? I mean, I guess the result of that is that I mean, the intent or likely result of that is what you've drawn to have a 57, 42 Republican majority in the House. And how does that square with the concept of competitiveness, since if you have a Democrat district, a Democrat's going to, whoever wins the primary is going to win and and vice versa regarding the Republican districts?

**Chris Glassburn** [01:03:09] So, again, to the co-chairs and the Senate president, the map that we have proposed has, again, the index of the nine races that are provided in the Ohio dataset is slightly different from that within the Dave's Redistricting App. But within the Ohio dataset, averaging those nine races, we have 20 seats in the House that are between 55 and 45 for the respective parties in a two way analysis. The commission map has 18. So to that extent, yes, we were looking to see if, again, all other provisions were addressed. Look at competitiveness.

**Senate President Matt Huffman** [01:03:48] I'm sorry. One more follow up.

**Co-Chair Senator Vernon Sykes** [01:03:50] Yes.

**Senate President Matt Huffman** [01:03:51] And I appreciate it, this is fantastic work that you've done and your explanations are helpful. So if I have it. I'm gonna try to restate it. You tell me if I get this incorrectly. So 20 of, in the house, 20 of the 99 districts are between, have an index between for the Democrat, well for both, for all ninety nine seats.

**Chris Glassburn** [01:04:13] Yes.

**Senate President Matt Huffman** [01:04:13] Between 45 and 55.

**Chris Glassburn** [01:04:16] Yes.

**Senate President Matt Huffman** [01:04:16] And which would mean 79 districts are on either side of that and probably likely difficult for one, a Democrat to win and a 56 or above Republican district and vice versa. Is that right?

**Chris Glassburn** [01:04:31] Yes.

**Senate President Matt Huffman** [01:04:31] So we'll have about 20 competitive districts and under this proposal, about 79 noncompetitive districts. Is that fair?

**Chris Glassburn** [01:04:42] I believe so.

**Senate President Matt Huffman** [01:04:43] OK, that's all the questions I have Mr. Co-Chair.

**Co-Chair Senator Vernon Sykes** [01:04:45] Auditor Faber.

**Auditor of State Keith Faber** [01:04:48] Thank you. Just just as a follow up to that, I think it's important and I can't tell you how much I appreciate you being here. And again, you educated me earlier and you're continuing it. On this process. One of the reasons that you end up with only 20 competitive districts, and that's with a fairly broad definition of competitive, 10 points, is because Ohioans tend to live in clusters. They tend to live around people who think like them and vote like them generally. So it makes it more difficult if you're going to draw compact districts and not draw what we used to call spiderwebs out, to pick people up, to unpack those districts. Is that essentially what you explained or what has been explained to me as to why those so many districts seem to be noncompetitive?

**Chris Glassburn** [01:05:36] So through the co-chairs to the state auditor, the reality of the political geography of Ohio is that, yes, either party can win a majority, reasonably expect to win a majority in a House or Senate map that is drawn that follows all of the rules of the Ohio Constitution. But there is also the reality that if you follow those rules, you will draw in the Ohio House a very high number of Republican safe seats. And you do not have a choice but to do that. If you follow that to its logical conclusion to go very far in terms of just maximizing competitiveness, you will disproportionately go in one direction, which is towards the Democratic seats. So there is a limit to where within reason, if you are trying for proportionality, that when you start making more competitive seats beyond a certain point, you start actually undermining the entire map. I hope that answered your question.

**Auditor of State Keith Faber** [01:06:39] I think it did. But I just want to make sure I'm clear. That's in large part because certainly in areas of the state, it is very different to draw a competitive district because the people who generally live in that area, let me give you an example that's not too far from here. If I pick the city of Cleveland, it's going to be tough. I mean, I looked at some of your numbers and I looked at some of your districts. You've got a couple of districts that are drawn with over 80 percent Democrat voters. I assume that's not because you're gerrymandering, but my guess is that you would like to unpack that. You're the Democrat map drawer so you'd like to unpack that. But there are other reasons why you put that concentration in. Maybe one of them is really there was nowhere else to go because they're concentrated in a limited area.

**Chris Glassburn** [01:07:27] So through the chairs to the auditor, if there were no rules, could there be in excess of fifty five Democratic House seats? Yes. Did we attempt to do that? No, because that would not remotely follow with the preservation of communities and city boundaries, township boundaries, et cetera. Could you do more than 42?. Yes, we demonstrated that with our first map. This map that we are offering today, again, is in the spirit of demonstrating compliance with three and four in the Constitution, very literally, as well as to try to get proportionality and to demonstrate a good faith effort to be to to present a ten year map for this board to consider.

**Auditor of State Keith Faber** [01:08:11] Thank yo,.

**Co-Chair Senator Vernon Sykes** [01:08:12] Secretary LaRose.

**Secretary of State Frank LaRose** [01:08:13] Thank you, Co-Chair. And Mr. Glassburn, I want to echo what my colleague Auditor Faber said that I appreciate the chance to learn from you and from your expertise, because I think one of the things that your testimony has made clear to everyone is truly how complex this process is. Right. And I really appreciate that you all have made what I consider a good faith proposal here, one that leaves some, some room to do some work together. I sincerely appreciate the passion that we've heard in testimony all over the state and that we've heard today. And I share that passion. That passion comes from a place of genuinely caring about trying to make this process work better, and I got to say, I was a redistricting reform warrior from the very beginning when I started in the state Senate in 2011, telling people about Elbridge Gerry from 1812 and all of this. And we worked together, many of us, to get this proposal in front of the voters that they overwhelmingly supported. So I share that passion. But what I don't share is some of the pessimism that we've heard, because what I've seen is that our teams are working collegially and trying to work in good faith. And so I just wanted to say I appreciate that. All right.

**Co-Chair Senator Vernon Sykes** [01:09:35] Please, please, please, we have to respect each other. Please. Are there any additional questions? Seeing none, thank you very much for your presentation.

**Chris Glassburn** [01:09:46] Thank you very much.

**Co-Chair Senator Vernon Sykes** [01:09:53] Yes.

**audience member** [01:09:57] (inaudible)

**Chris Glassburn** [01:10:17] So to the co-chairs.

**Co-Chair Senator Vernon Sykes** [01:10:18] Let me let me state this to this be the last one we can we have to move on. We've got a few hours left. Would you please answer this one? And this would be the last one, OK?

**Chris Glassburn** [01:10:30] Absolutely. And again, thank you to the co-chairs and the commission for the opportunity to speak. As I stated in my testimony, yes, the Voting Rights Act, as well as proportionality that is called for proportionality in Section 6 and the adherence to federal law elsewhere in the Ohio Constitution. Voting Rights Act is federal law. And so, yes, that was a factor. Our consideration, though, was in, again, the preservation of minority voters having the opportunity to choose their candidate of choice. If you look at the statistics and look at these communities, I think those communities would in fact be pleased with this map. I believe our House and Senate caucuses value very much the minority communities that are served in those districts, as well as I believe the other party seeks to do so as well.

**Co-Chair Senator Vernon Sykes** [01:11:28] Thank you very much.

**Chris Glassburn** [01:11:29] Thank you.

**Co-Chair Senator Vernon Sykes** [01:11:29] Thank you. Appreciate it.

**Staff** [01:11:32] The next witness.

**audience member** [01:11:38] Vote on amendments. Vote on amendments.

**Staff** [01:11:44] Next witness is Brian Glassman, followed by Mark Griffeth.

**Co-Chair Speaker Robert Cupp** [01:12:47] Well, while we're waiting for the disconnecting of the computer, if you would, go ahead and state and spell your name for the record, please,

**Brian Glassman** [01:12:57] Representative Cupp, Senator Sykes, as co-chairs and to all members of the commission, my name is Brian Glassman, G L A S S M A N. I'm a professor emeritus at the Cleveland Marshall College of Law. I'm here today to comment on the proposed General Assembly district plan, not as a Republican or as a Democrat, but as an advocate for voter participation. Such participation is essential to the health of our representative democracy. Simply put, gerrymandering stifles participation. Many will conclude that there is no point in participating since their voice is not being heard in our representative democracy, our voice is our vote again. Many will conclude that there is no point in voting if their votes don't count. That is effectively the case where voting districts are gerrymandered. When I testified on August twenty third, and even when I provided supplemental testimony on August 27, there was no map to analyze or discuss. Finally, on September nine, the Senate president proposed a General Assembly district plan. I was disheartened to see that compared to the current maps, the proposed maps offered little or no improvement on the key criteria of proportionality and competitiveness and even worse, scores than before on the criterion of minority representation based on scoring by Dave's Redistricting App. The nonpartisan Princeton Gerrymandering Project reached similar conclusions, including an overall grade of F. advantage to the Republicans and also a grade of F on the criterion of partisan fairness for the proposed Ohio State House map. However, I'm encouraged that others have proposed maps that produce significant improvements on the Keys key criteria previously mentioned, while still satisfying other requirements such as contiguity, compliance with state and federal law and equal population. My comments focus on proportionality and competitiveness because those are tools available to improve representational fairness by fixing gerrymandering and are either explicitly or implicitly made part of this commission's toolkit in Ohio Constitution Article 11, Section six with a map that better reflects partisan voting patterns in our state, roughly 54 percent Republican and 46 percent Democratic participation is more likely to rise. Similarly, with a map that contains more competitive districts, participation is again more likely to rise as voters see political races in which their votes will count. That will produce better candidates and better ideas, critical elements of a robust representative democracy. One duty of legislators is to be responsive to the will of the people. When well over two million Ohioans voted for the 2015 ballot initiative, over 71 percent of all votes cast, we sent you the strongest possible message that the current system was broken and that a transparent, bipartisan process through a transparent, bipartisan process. We wanted you to create maps for the state, House and Senate that better reflect who we are.Adoption of maps by purely partisan vote was not what Ohioans wanted and was a procedure only to be used as a last resort in the interest of voter participation so essential to our representative democracy at its best. I urge you to reject a partisan result and instead agree on one that is responsive to the will of over 71 percent of Ohio's voters. Thank you for the opportunity to address the commission today. [applause].

**Co-Chair Speaker Robert Cupp** [01:17:15] Thank you, Professor Glassman are there any questions for the witness? Seeing none Thank you. Next witness.

**Staff** [01:17:25] Mark Griffiths, followed by Jennifer Hagga.

**Mark Griffiths** [01:17:31] Good afternoon. My name is Mark Griffiths. That's spelled G R I F F I T H S I live in a House District 57 and Senate District 13, and I thank the members of the commission for the opportunity to submit testimony at this hearing. I'd like to amend briefly my testimony that I prepared in reaction to the information that we just received. First of all, it's difficult to for me to evaluate the maps because as was pointed out last Thursday, when when you presented maps and there was no city information listed, I didn't realize apparently if you go to Dave's redistricting dot org, you can put get city information to show up. But I didn't realize that that was the place that we should look for that. I've been looking at the at the commission's website, so I'll have to work on evaluating that. I also have to say that while I appreciate the the presentation today and I appreciate Leader Sykes, your expression of hopefulness or optimism that the you expressed, I'm stuck with some of the things you said last Thursday when the Republicans presented their map, and that is, have we kind of seen this before? Where a really egregious map is presented and then compromises are made. And that is not quite so bad. But in reality, it's still a pretty bad map. So I, I have that skepticism still. I must state that I think you've failed the voters of the state of Ohio with this Republican backed map that's been proposed by the commission. The map is more gerrymandered than the current map. The sponsors of the map admitted that they did not consider either proportional representation or the Voting Rights Act when constructing this map. Such considerations are required by the Constitution. Why would this commission adopt, albeit as a starting point, a map that fails to comply with the Constitution? A volunteer group of Ohioans formed the Ohio Citizens Redistricting Commission, they created proposed maps along with a report detailing the methodology prior to September 1st. None of the members of this citizen's commission are state office holders. What they have done is produced fair maps that comply with the legal requirements through an open and transparent process. This group has no vested interest in maintaining the status quo and therefore have produced maps that comply with the constitutional requirements. The OCRC has shown that the goal of proportional representation is not aspirational, but attainable. This commission should immediately adopt the maps proposed by the Ohio Citizens Redistricting Commission. There's certainly more in compliance with the Constitution's requirements and would provide a more balanced starting point than the maps being proposed by the Republican majority of this commission. My wife and I collected hundreds of signatures on the Fair Districts Fair election petition effort a couple of years ago, this effort allowed us to speak to hundreds of voters on this topic. Voters told us over and over again that voters need to pick their representatives and not the other way around. As citizens of this state, we demand better. Supreme Court Justice Kagan said, and I quote, If there's a single idea that made our nation, it's this one. The people are sovereign. The people get to choose their representatives and then they get to decide whether to keep them. Election Day is what links the people to the representatives and gives the people their sovereign power. That day is the foundation of democratic governance, and partisan gerrymandering can make it meaningless. Thank you.

**Co-Chair Speaker Robert Cupp** [01:22:22] Thank you for being here to testify. Any questions for the witness? Go on to The next witness name is Jennifer Jennifer Haaga.

**Staff** [01:22:46] The next witness is Mark Hennessey, followed by Robert Howard.

**Co-Chair Speaker Robert Cupp** [01:23:03] Please come and state and spell your name for the record, please.

**Co-Chair Speaker Robert Cupp** [01:23:07] Yeah. Thank you.

**Robert Howard** [01:23:17] My name is Robert Howard, H O W A R D and I appreciate the opportunity to contribute to this effort and I was very interested in that lesson in mapmaking. It is. It's good to see. It's good to be part of this. I live and vote in the 75th House and 18th Senate District in Franklin Township near Kent. I would like to comment on the issue of redistricting specifically to oppose the first draft maps recently released by the commission and to call for maps that do a much better job of representing the voters of Ohio. I've spoken with several of my friends and neighbors about both the process and the need to respect Ohio's voters, the newly issued maps are designed to promote the interests of the existing legislators and their sponsors, rather than to allow Ohio's voters to have their votes counted with equal weight. That is one person, one vote. Specifically, the House and Senate districts should respect Ohio's constitutionally required characteristics as previously defined. And I won't go into the rest of that. The maps, as proposed by the Republican members of the commission, do not represent Ohio's voters fairly or reasonably, nor are they likely to produce representative legislative bodies to help shape both the government and the economy of Ohio to benefit all of us. Instead, these maps are designed to shape the environment, to favor some voters and ignore others. I believe these proposed maps embody gerrymandering. This effectively means that the legislators will continue to choose their voters rather than be chosen by the voters, all the voters, not just those they expect to support them, as you might deduce from these remarks. I don't think Ohio and its citizens are well served by a system based on distorting districts in order to distort outcomes. I believe in fair elections even, or especially those that result in the elections of a group of legislators who fairly represent the values and interests of the whole of Ohio, not just select interest groups. The future of Ohio is in the balance and these are difficult, demanding and trying times. We will all benefit from a legislative process that draws from the entire population, where representatives of the great variety of interests, knowledge bases and potential solutions can be fairly debated, and where legislators are incentivized to fashion workable compromises rather than narrowly defined benefits targeted to meet the specific interests of individual companies, groups or individuals. Ohio's legislative districts at all levels should strive for a balanced and competitive districts which can foster contests which will improve the chances for innovation, growth and adaptation that will yield better ideas, better laws and better outcomes for all of Ohio. I ask you to reconsider and to produce maps that have a chance to lead to such systematic improvements that will benefit all Ohioans. Thank you. [applause]

**Co-Chair Speaker Robert Cupp** [01:26:43] Thank you for testifying are there questions for the witness? Seeing no questions. Thank you.

**Co-Chair Speaker Robert Cupp** [01:26:51] Next,.

**Staff** [01:26:52] The next witness is Tommy Jackson, followed by Randall James.

**Co-Chair Speaker Robert Cupp** [01:27:13] Thank you. Please state your name and spell it for the record, please. Sure.

**Tom Jackson** [01:27:20] Good afternoon. I haven't been called Tommy since my cousins called me that when I was about seven years old. My name is Tom Jackson, J A C K S O N and I'm from Solon, Ohio. and Ohioans overwhelmingly voted to fix our broken system of mapmaking. Ohioans are tired of the status quo of rigged partisan maps that protect super majorities and interfere with good governance. Ohioans overwhelmingly voted for fair maps. And as it's been demonstrated here, I recognize the complexity of creating truly representative maps, but it doesn't appear to even try. There's no fairness and no progress on your map. I'm outraged that you put forward maps that are worse and not better than the current ones. This so-called working document needs significant improvement to clear the lowest threshold of being constitutional and consistent with what Ohioans voted for. And in evaluating the map, I consider three factors that I believe are essential to have a legislature that can produce good public policy first to keep core communities together. There's no valid reason to divide towns and small cities. And second, the maps must be lost proportionally, represent the diverse views of our state. And finally, and most importantly, the maps must allow for and incentivize competition, collaboration and compromise to bring forth the best people and the best ideas. And in all three areas, the proposed maps are even worse than the status quo. And I'm asking you to do better. As a Solonresident, I resent that my community is one of those selected to be divided and cracked, but maybe I should be proud. I moved to the city in part because of the diversity and strong sense of community that brings together people from all types of backgrounds we share a top school district, public library, a wonderful community center and municipal services. We have shared interests around public public safety, good roads, quality schools and strong local economy. We have a proud history of working together and coming together as a community. So why would you divide the city in half other than to crack the growing maority of Democratic leaning voters? I can only assume that you're upset with the results of current elections. By all measures, Ohio is a slightly Republican state Governor DeWine received just 50 percent of the statewide vote in 2018, but the proposed map is even more disproportionate than the current lopsided makeup of the legislature, roughly 55 percent Republican and 35 percent Democrat. Supermajorities like this are bad for democracy. They lead to corruption, stale or backward ideas. Extreme legislation that's often bad policy and simply bad lawmaking. The new map, as proposed, will likely expand the Republican supermajority. And that's not the progress the voters demanded and that Ohioans deserve. Analysis of the proposed maps shows just one competitive district in the house and just two in the Senate. And worse, the proposed map targets the House districts where the Democrats gained votes or flipped seats in the last three election cycles. I was actively involved in the campaigns to elect my state representative, Phil Robertson, and ahead of the 2018 elections, we were told it would be impossible to elect a Democrat in this district because it was carefully crafted to be a safe Republican seat. But the district demographics are shifting, and we knew this seat had become more competitive. Representative Robinson, won in 2018 and again in 2020 by close margins, which means we're in a truly competitive district. The voters actually had a choice and as a result, we elected one of the best young lawmakers, someone who is highly regarded in this community, the district and the statehouse. Why would you want a map that eliminates these types of competitive seats? Phil Robinson and the other Democratic Reps that this map tries to root out, the very kinds of lawmakers we desperately need in our legislature, those who have innovative and competitive ideas, those that I've listened to and work with a variety of interest groups and points of view and have demonstrated a commitment to getting things done. These lawmakers can't take votes for granted. They know their margins and they work hard for every vote.

**Co-Chair Speaker Robert Cupp** [01:32:43] Mr. Jackson, your time has expired and actually exceeded that. If you could take 30 seconds to wrap up, that would be great.

**Tom Jackson** [01:32:53] No matter how much your budget tries to market Ohio as a progressive state. No, our advertising campaign will offset the backward policies that are the direct result of gerrymandering. You said at the September 9th hearing. This is just a starting point and working document. I hope you stay true to those words. [applause]

**Co-Chair Speaker Robert Cupp** [01:33:12] Are there any questions for Mr. Jackson? Seeing no questions Thank you for your testimony.

**Co-Chair Speaker Robert Cupp** [01:33:23] Next is Randall James, I believe it was called.

**Staff** [01:33:28] the next witness is Barbara Kaplan, followed by Andrew Katerson.

**Co-Chair Speaker Robert Cupp** [01:33:44] I am going to echo what Co-Chairman Sykes asked at the beginning, if we could avoid applause or either side, we've also been informed that people have assisted, assistive listening devices and it does interfere with that. So I would ask you to be respectful of that. Thank you. And you may proceed. Please state your name and spell it for the record.

**Barbara Kaplan** [01:34:08] OK, thank you. Members of the redistricting commission for giving me this opportunity to speak to you. My name is Barbara Kaplan. That is spelled with a K A P L A N I am a resident of Summit County. And as you have heard from many other speakers today and previously, I'm sure this map, as proposed, represents an abject failure to comply with the Ohio Constitution. I'm not going to tire you or bore you, apparently some more with repeating what has already been said. I live in Peninsula Village. It's really little. Some of you know where it is. Many of you don't. It is the most gorgeous place on Earth surrounded by the Cuyahoga Valley National Park. We are totally landlocked in that regard. So we're small, but we service over three and a half million visitors a year, most of whom are actually residents of the county and surrounding counties. I live 10 minutes from Hudson. I live 10 minutes from back. I live five minutes from Richfield. I live 40 minutes from New Franklin. As the current district and the proposed district are drawn, all of not all of those are within my district. The district is being drawn is a long, long, narrow stripe down the western side of the county. And it just doesn't work. It didn't work. For the last ten years, I have not been represented demographically, culturally, economically. My village most resembles Hudson, Bath and Richfield. It does not economically resemble the southern part of the county. It just doesn't. In addition, my district works closely with Bath and with Cuyahoga Falls because we share an interest in the Cuyahoga River watershed, which neither Franklin nor Norton have any interest in. So it doesn't matter whether I have a Republican or Democrat representing me. They are not going to represent the interests of my community or the communities that are adjacent to me. It just doesn't work. I will say that at least at first glance, the Democratic amendment may, in fact address some of those issues. So I do hope that will be considered looking at this map in conclusion, as it exists right now, the only thing I can think is it's the result of either incompetence, indolence or deliberate malfeasance, because it is cracked. It is packed and it's a mess. It's a gerrymandered mess. Lastly, I will just add, I really do hope that there will be a cooperative spirit. I can make that minute, but I will tell you that I called Leaders Sykes's office today and Senator Hoffman's office, and I was told that there were no meetings working on these maps over the weekend. Perhaps their aides were were wrong or misled or just didn't get the information. But that is what I that is what I believe to be true at this point. Thank you for hearing me

**Co-Chair Speaker Robert Cupp** [01:37:46] Are there questions for the witness.

**Co-Chair Speaker Robert Cupp** [01:37:49] Seeing none.

**Co-Chair Speaker Robert Cupp** [01:37:49] Thank you for testifying.

**Staff** [01:37:54] The next witness is Andrew Kontusion, followed by Stephen Kellat.

**Co-Chair Speaker Robert Cupp** [01:38:35] Thank you for being here. And if you state your name and spell it for the record, please. Thanks.

**Stephen Kellat** [01:38:39] Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My name is Stephen Kellat. That is spelled S T E P H E N K E L L A T. I'll confine my remarks to issues with boundary lines on the proposed map. That would be the most profitable use of time. To redraw the lines to the 32nd senatorial district creates problems. Although the lines were redrawn to include the majority of the district's population, they presently exclude the currently serving senator, Sandra O'Brien, who has more than two years remaining on her term. The redrawn lines dividing people in the newly drawn 30 second district of the services of a state senator. As the Republican Party would need to decide how to fill the vacancy that was created as no other senator would be living nearby to plausibly represent that district. Senator O'Brien's currently neighboring senator, Senator Jerry Cirino, lives in Lake County and faces a redrawn map that sharply changes his district to the point that he would become the new senator representing not just Mrs. O'Brien but me. That the Republican Party is depriving itself of the services of one of its first term state senators is baffling. Turning to the proposed map for the House, we see an unusual tentacle slithering into Ashtabula County. This particular line loves communities like Harpersfield, Austinburg, Eagleville, Rock Creek, Geneva and Geneva on the lake into a district of Lake County communities instead of being included with neighboring communities in their own county. Part of the problem with this horrible tentacle is that while it includes the village of Rock Creek in that Lake County based district, at least Chumlee Township to its west between it and the Geauga Ashtabula County line in a completely different district. Overall, this does not help community cohesion in the largest county in our state. All the maps that have been proposed have frankly taken a jigsaw to Ashtabula County. The current working proposal snakes a tentacle from Lake County into it. The Senate Democratic caucus map chopped the county into an east west split. The winners of the public mapmaking contest took an approach, splitting the county diagonally with a split running from Orwell, pardon me from Orwell in the southwestern corner to Conneaut, in the northeastern corner of Ashtabula County, has its own more natural split. Main population centers and affinity communities are the cities of Geneva, Ashtabula and Conneaut. All three are north of Interstate Route 90. The National Weather Service splits the county using I-90 as the dividing line when it gives forecasts for Ashtabula, Lakeshore and Ashtabula inland. I urge you to consider sticking with the more natural split used by the National Weather Service. Our population follows split just as much as our weather does. Our county isn't large enough to support a single house district, but you can at least break us up in ways that respect our traditions, history and culture. Thank you for your time consideration. And I yield, Mr. Speaker, for any questions or comments from our members.

**Co-Chair Speaker Robert Cupp** [01:41:54] Are there questions from the commission? But thank you for testifying.

**Stephen Kellat** [01:42:00] Thank you, sir.

**Staff** [01:42:06] Next wit, the next witness is Katelyn Johnson, followed by Jay Katchaver

**Caitlin Johnson** [01:42:28] Hello, my name is Caitlin Johnson and I am the communications director of Policy Matters Ohio. Thanks for having me here today. And we're research-

**Co-Chair Speaker Robert Cupp** [01:42:37] If you would, could you spell your name for the record?

**Caitlin Johnson** [01:42:39] Sure. C A I T L I N J O H N S O N

**Co-Chair Speaker Robert Cupp** [01:42:39] thank you.

**Caitlin Johnson** [01:42:45] And I'm a resident of Shaker Heights, which is House District nine and Senate District 21. So I'm here representing my organization, which a lot of you are probably familiar with. And we do research and analysis. And our hope is that we're going to provide you, our policymakers, with the best information possible so you can write laws and rules that make Ohio a vibrant and healthy and prosperous place for all of us. No exceptions. But I'm also speaking today as an Ohioian and whose family came here from Ireland in the 1920s in search of political freedom and economic opportunity. I live in Shaker Heights, like I said, with my husband, my son and my and my stepchildren. And I want Ohio to live up to the promise. My grandparents came here, for and since I'm mentioning my family. I just want to say to Governor DeWine, you know, my cousin was Pat Sweeney. He was the great legislator from Cleveland. A lot of you probably know him. And I was so touched last year after he passed when you and Lieutenant Governor Husted went on TV and talked about him. And I think Pat really kind of embodies that spirit of working across party lines and putting Ohio in the community that he's serving first. And I hope that you can kind of you can remember my cousin and the words that you said about him when you're making this decision, because I know that he would want us to do what's best for all the people in Ohio and not just corporate donors and doing what we can to hang on to power. So that said, all Ohioans deserve the freedom to choose the elected leaders who are accessible and accountable to the people, we the people, no matter where we live or what we look like or what political party we support. And that's fundamental to our American form of government. But today, certain political interests are rigging the rules to divide communities and minimize the power of black and brown Ohioans just so they can hang on to power and wealth. And Ohioans know what's happening. We can see this very clearly. And when we don't believe in the people elected to represent us and we don't believe that those people care about our families and our communities and our future, we're going to lose faith in our government and in a state and in a nation that is so intensely divided that I think we all can recognize how damaging that is. The consequences of that are really painfully clear. So you all the members of the redistricting commission have a chance to show Ohioans that the politicians aren't concerned about how to keep their party in power or how to appease their donors, that you want us all to live in a thriving state where we can make our voices heard. But instead, we're seeing the opposite. The maps approved by the commission along party lines make a mockery of the constitutionally mandated process. Voters approved and affirmed the worst stereotypes about politicians. And as you mentioned, as I mentioned, politicians in my family. I like politicians now. I work at a research institute, so I know the data about Ohio really well. And we just released our State of Working Ohio report that shows more and more of the wealth that hardworking Ohioans create is in the hands of the wealthiest few and the highest paid people whose wages are being held. The rest of us, our wages are being held down. Ohioans have suffered under districts that are drawn to deliberately silence our voices. We haven't had good outcomes in nearly every measure that matters. We are underperforming the nation, whether it comes to infant mortality rates and especially in the case of black babies, we're underperforming. Our college accessibility and completion rates are behind the nation. This system has not worked well for the people and it's not serving us now. Like I said, I live in Shaker Heights. I'm a third generation Clevelander. Anybody knows that lives in Cleveland, that when you draw district that stretches across the city, that what you're from west side to east side, what you're really doing is diluting and silencing the black vote. We all know that. We all know. So I know that my time has come to an end and, you know, I have a lot to say, but really it's disingenuous to do anything beyond trying to keep our communities together. You know, Ohio and you all have a chance to show us that we can do something, we can do something together as a state. We can come together across party lines and you can show the nation that that's possible, too. Let's be an example. Let's hold a. Let's do what Governor twined said. Show that this is a state, a progressive state that people want to come to. And if you all take your job seriously and make your choices based on what's best for the people, we can have that. So thank you.

**Co-Chair Speaker Robert Cupp** [01:47:29] Any questions for the witness? Seeing none.

**Staff** [01:47:37] Jay Katchaver followed by Marion Krieger.

**Jay Ketchaver** [01:47:43] Thank you for your time today. I hope you can hear me through this mask. My name is Jay Ketchaver. That's Ketchaver and I live in Lakewood in 2015 and 2018. Ohioans across the political spectrum overwhelmingly voted in favor of fair districts. I spent countless hours gathering hundreds of signatures for these reforms and I talk to Democrats, Independents and Republicans. Everyone agreed that the people of Ohio should pick their politicians and not the other way around. Now the following comments are directed solely at the Republicans on the commission have approached this entire redistricting process in bad faith. The truth is that the vast majority of Ohioans voted for fair districts and reforms. Republicans are lying when they claim that they couldn't do anything because the census data was delayed, that their maps are fair, that they're following the Constitution or whatever other excuse they offer for their machinations. The truth is, Republicans are trying to commit an even more egregious gerrymander because they only value political power. They have nothing but contempt for the people of Ohio, the constitution and democracy. We know what you know, what you're doing. We're not going to stand for it follow the Constitution, respect the will of Ohioans and do your jobs.

**Co-Chair Speaker Robert Cupp** [01:49:07] Thank you for testifying. Next witness,

**Staff** [01:49:12] Marion Krieger, followed by Katherine LaCour.

**Catherine LaCroix** [01:49:35] Hi, good afternoon, co-chairs and members of the commission. My name is Catherine Lacroix, that c a t, h, e, r, i n e Lacroix like the water l a capital c, r, o, i, x. I am co president of the League of Women Voters of Greater Cleveland, which is an all volunteer organization. I live in Shaker Heights and I voted Ohio House District nine, Ohio Senate District 21 and U.S. Congressional District 11. I have several comments about the commission maps under discussion today that were introduced last week on September 9th. On September 10th, Friday morning, we sent the best information we could get to our over 700 members and many other volunteers for them to review. Many commented that the information on the maps was too limited for them even to tell whether their community was kept whole. There were many deficiencies. No one could understand what the maps even did. Clearly, we all needed a tutorial on Dave's redistricting. Other league members commented that once again the time and location of the hearings did not permit them to participate during the workday. So I and other regular citizens very much appreciate the volunteer map experts and other concerned citizens who are appearing at these hearings with detailed analysis. And in that spirit, I would like to offer some specific observations on the maps that are currently proposed by the commission. A few features on the East Side at least, can be seen by anyone in the district, including Shaker Heights has an odd additional piece. The Village of Woodmere, a largely black populated village connected with the rest of the district only by a bridge over a highway, the thereby separating the residents of Woodmere from the school district to which they belong, which is on their side of the highway, and taking that largely minority population and packing its residents into a district that already is quite diverse. The cities of South Euclid and Lyndhurst are separated into different House and Senate districts, even though they share a school district and other services. The city of Solen, as has been observed, is split between two districts. The city of Pepper Pike is separated from its neighbors to the east and west, which are the neighbors that with whom it is, has most in common and placed in House and Senate districts that wander across the county to distant points and communities that have nothing in common with Pepper Pike. Also obvious from the shapes on the congression proposed maps. Many of the districts violate the Ohio Constitution, as has been observed, because they are not compact. Any previous witness specified the same ones. I picked out Senate District 27, House District 22, House districts 14 and 18, and so little snake on the Lake House District 13. In addition, the data appear to show that Democratic leaning House districts in Cuyahoga County are as much as four percent over the average population number for a district. In other words, more people are packed into each district, reducing their leverage and representation. I could not understand why these districts were so long and meandering and so over packed with people until I saw the analysis by fair districts showing the partisan imbalance of the maps. So, as has been observed, there are constitutional violations. The commission districts ignore the compactness requirement in order to build a map that as a whole was drawn to disproportionately favor a single political party. There is no excuse for this, and I'm not even touching on the Voting Rights Act issues. The commission proposal is based on an unconstitutional approach to map making. We urge it to be rejected. Based on today's testimony, I'm tempted to feel encouraged by the proposal, most recent proposal of the Democratic caucus. But how do I know? The ground keeps shifting. This entire process has been disturbing, but I choose optimism, as I stated in my first testimony on August twenty third, I hope that you will rise to the occasion, listen to the voters of Ohio and approve fair maps that fully comply with the Ohio Constitution and federal law. Thank you.

**Co-Chair Speaker Robert Cupp** [01:54:12] questions for the witness? Thank you for testifying. Next witness.

**Staff** [01:54:20] Karen Leeth, followed by Dale Miller.

**Dr. Karen Leith** [01:54:33] Members of the redistricting commission I am Dr. Karen Leith Karen spelt with a K. Leith l e i t h. I reside in Hudson, which is House District 37 and Senate District 27. I spoke at the Akron hearing on August 27. My comments are based on two broad experiences they have mentioned before. At the August 27, as a League of Women Voters member for the last 41 years, I have been part of the campaigns that put these issues on the ballot, having gathered signatures, managed volunteers and worked hard to get out the vote, I cannot ignore the incredible gerrymandering on the current presented map of both the Ohio House and Senate districts. Second, as a retiree of the Catholic Commission of Summit County, I spent 30 years the last seven as executive director, bringing the most vulnerable voices to the table. Our mission was to make sure all voices were heard. And I look at the map you have presented and see more voices silenced. I have spent too many years bringing underrepresented voices to the table to let this go. In my various positions, I have remained an independent voter willing to work with any and all elected officials. The issues have always been my focus. In the last few years. I have definitely felt that elected officials no longer listen, and these maps are definitely evidence of that. I do not understand how you can present maps such as these when 71 percent of all 88 counties want fair maps. Those voices are Democrats, Republicans and independents for the comments. Listening to the commission meetings and I have been observing all the hearings and commission meetings, I was shocked to hear that the racial data was not used to make sure there was compliance with the Voting Rights Act. I am now part of the League of Women Voters committee called Real Talk that highlights the very issues of people of color. Ohio's communities of color must be considered informing districts and let's not by packing districts with people of color. Next, as a resident of the District 37 of the House, I am horrified to see what you've done to it. It has moved for a very compact, very competitive district, one that has flipped back and forth to something that is sprawling. Look at it. It's district twenty three up there. Basically, something is wrong when the redistricting committee takes a good district that respects communities of interest, that is both compact and competitive and turns it into a sprawling district covering three counties. Having worked with and for the people of Summit County, I know the importance of keeping communities together, of respecting communities of interest and for the sake of time. My last comments have to do with the lack of bipartisan and transparent procedures. Both partisan maps, those presented by the Republicans and the earlier ones presented by the Democratic caucus are unacceptable. Also, the fact that this Republican map is so bad that there's no such thing as fixing it. Throw it out. start Again. Not providing a script to explain the choices is not helpful. I'd like to know why District 23 has to meander through three counties when it was once and is right now a very compact and competitive district. And jamming these hearings in before you intend to produce the final map tells us that you're not listening to us. You're just going by the letter of the law. That's not what we asked of our elected officials. We want fair maps. Please consider what you're doing. Listen to the people of Ohio and give us fair maps. Be leaders, Be statesman thank you for your consideration.

**Co-Chair Speaker Robert Cupp** [01:59:49] Any questions for the witness. Seeing none.Next witness, Dale Miller, I believe. Former member of the Ohio Senate.

**Dale Miller** [02:00:11] Speaker Bob Cupp Senator Vernon Sykes, members of the redistricting commission, thank you for the opportunity to address the Ohio redistricting commission. My first comment is that the available maps and block lists are not well designed for public use. More detailed maps, along with precinct lists, which can be cross-reference against publicly available maps, would be more helpful. I'm speaking this afternoon to call your attention to the egregious deficiencies in the draft map for Cuyahoga County. The proposed map is not at all compacted mercilessly, chopped up Cleveland into disorganized little bits and distribute those bits to numerous districts with no regard whatsoever to natural communities. Proposed districts such as number 13, 14 and 18 would serve well as instructional examples for gerrymandering. I call your attention in particular to the plight of the West Park community, which comprises Cleveland's wards 16 and 17 on the far west side of the city. As I understand the proposed map, each of the two ward to be chopped up and distributed among at least three different state representative districts. The West Park area has been a coherent and well defined neighborhood for at least 100 years. It is geographically small in size, with a population of about 45000 people, less than 40 percent of the target population of state of a state representative district. There is no valid reason why it should not be included in a single state representative district. My colleague Marty Sweeney also extends his greetings to you and also asked that the West Park area be kept whole as a single district. The voters of the state of Ohio overwhelmingly passed a constitutional amendment designed to make state representative and state Senate districts compact and politically fair. This proposed map does neither. It draws lines that split up communities and organizes districts in ways that make no sense from the perspective of easily understandable community representation. And it creates a state of districts, a set of districts that statewide will likely have a political result that differs widely from the overall division of popular votes among candidates of the two major political parties. I call upon you as a redistricting commission to fix this map and create districts that reflect the popular will and reforming the redistricting process. Districts that are compact respect natural communities are politically fair and will be good for 10 years. I close by reminding you that even if you cannot bring yourself to be politically fair, you can at least create a map that is advantageous to the majority party while still cleaning up the distorted shapes and dismembered communities found in the current map. Please do at least that much. Thank you very much for your attention and consideration of my testimony.

**Co-Chair Speaker Robert Cupp** [02:03:44] Thank you are there questions for the witness? Auditor Faber

**Auditor of State Keith Faber** [02:03:50] Thank you. It's good to see you.

**Dale Miller** [02:03:53] Thank you,

**Auditor of State Keith Faber** [02:03:53] Representative. Senator. Specifically, if you had a chance to look at the Democratic maps that have been proposed.

**Dale Miller** [02:04:02] I have not. I just saw them presented earlier in today's meeting, and I don't know much about them.

**Auditor of State Keith Faber** [02:04:12] So you don't know if they take care of the issue you identified with that community?

**Dale Miller** [02:04:18] From the quick look, it looked like it certainly was an improvement. But whether it completely addresses that or partially addresses that, I only saw it for a few seconds. So I couldn't give you a definitive answer

**Auditor of State Keith Faber** [02:04:33] where, and again, trying to get a better answer. Where is that exactly?

**Dale Miller** [02:04:41] This is in the far west side of the city. It's it's near the Cleveland Hopkins Airport. It runs from approximately west 140th street to the Rocky River border.

**Auditor of State Keith Faber** [02:04:59] Staff guy just tells me that they think they took care of part of it, but not all of it. OK, thank you. Again, these are the kind of things that are helpful for us to hear. Thank you. OK.

**Co-Chair Speaker Robert Cupp** [02:05:12] No further questions. Thank you for coming.

**Dale Miller** [02:05:15] OK, thank you.

**Co-Chair Speaker Robert Cupp** [02:05:16] Next witness.

**Staff** [02:05:17] Representative Kent Smith, Representative Kent Smith.

**Co-Chair Speaker Robert Cupp** [02:05:28] (Inaudible)

**Representative Kent Smith** [02:05:34] So we uh am I on?

**Co-Chair Speaker Robert Cupp** [02:05:38] Yes. Would you spell Smith for us, please?

**Representative Kent Smith** [02:05:40] So I was a little surprised that we jumped from M to S in the last names, but so my name is Kent Smith, K E N T Smith. I want to thank the commission for being here. I currently represent House District eight. I think I would be in House District 19 based on the current map being considered by the commission. The ballot referendum language spoke to the importance of keeping communities together and also representative fairness. The but it's also just plain and simple. It's about math. The map that is before us display in Cuyahoga County has Cuyahoga County split between districts thirteen through twenty two, which represent with District twenty three going over into both Cuyahoga uh both Geauga and Summit County. Now the population of Cuyahoga County, according to the last census, the most recent census is one million two hundred sixty four thousand eight hundred and seventeen. The average district size, if you take the Ohio State population, divide it by 99 would be one hundred and nineteen thousand one hundred and eighty six. So if you do the math of Cuyahoga County, we should have 10 districts. If you just take the one hundred nineteen thousand one hundred and eighty six and divide it, and that would actually leave you a surplus of seventy two thousand nine hundred and fifty seven voters, which is more than half of what the average district would be. So the issue of rounding gets Cuyahoga County to 11 complete districts that would be within the the five percent variance of, again, the margin of one hundred and the average of one hundred nineteen thousand one hundred and eighty six. So I'm concerned that Cuyahoga County will lose its represent representedal fairness because it's it will lose districts that it shouldn't lose. If you just do the basic math of the average population of Cuyahoga County divided by what should be the average population of state House districts. Again, this is a state that has voted for Barack Obama, Sherrod Brown, Mike DeWine, good to see you, Governor, and Donald Trump. In the last presidential election. As you all know, the state went 53 to 45 in favor of President Trump and the Democratic. And the counties that voted majority Democratic were Franklin, Cuyahoga County Summit, Lucas, Montgomery and Hamilton and also Athens County. So, again, if the spirit of representative representation representedal fairness is important to the members of this commission, as I believe the voters dictated in both 2015 to 2018, then keeping Cuyahoga County and 11 districts I think is one of the ways to meet that goal. Anticipating the question about did I take a close look at the proposed Democratic map and would it meet this criteria? I couldn't tell. Based on the map that was displayed, I would also suggest that this will lead to better legislative outcomes. I'm going to play a little bit inside baseball now, but I think you all on the commission are going to understand what I say when I say that there's a discharge petition in the Ohio House for House Bill 248 that just Friday the Ohio Chamber were warned all of us would be a terrible bill for business. And we couldn't get a discharge petition on House Bill six after the former speaker had been arrested by the FBI. So the notion of. So, again, I think we have to beware of what a gerrymandered map will do, not only to unfairly affect Cuyahoga County, but with the legislative outcomes that the members of the General Assembly will in turn produce. Thank you very much for your time and attention.

**Co-Chair Speaker Robert Cupp** [02:09:57] Further questions for Rep. Smith? Seeing none. Thank you.

**Staff** [02:10:08] Marvin McNicoll, followed by Kevin Konwell.

**Rev.Marvin McMickle** [02:10:23] Good evening. My name is Marvin M A R V I N McMickle M C M I C K L E. I am pastor emeritus and also am a pastor at Antioch Baptist Church in the city of Cleveland, Ohio. However, I live in Shaker Heights, House District nine. Senate District twenty one. I wish that this process was only about lines and maps. I wish that lines and maps were the end of the process. What I believe is that lines and maps are a means to an end and the end is reducing full and open and competitive political engagement in the two party system in the state of Ohio. I think that lines and maps are designed to turn African-American and other minority voters into collateral damage on the road to a political power play that is happening not just in Ohio, but to be honest, it's happening all across the country. While many of us focus our political attention and understandably so, on what is happening in Washington, D.C.. The truth is the things that frighten me the most are not happening in Washington. They're happening in state legislatures all across this country. It is state legislatures that are attacking voting rights. It is state legislatures that are trying to limit what can be taught in public schools in Ohio and across the country, it is state legislatures that are busy at work to create safe districts in which one party rule can be established in the state of Ohio, Texas, Wisconsin, Arizona, Pennsylvania, North Carolina and many other states as well. And so I appeal to this commission to ask itself whether or not it has an agenda. The agenda is not maps and lines. The agenda is the accumulation of political power for the perpetuation of a political agenda which does not have at its heart or its mind apparently the best interests of all the persons who live in the state of Ohio. I am here to speak for those whose voices are seldom heard, whose voices and votes are often taken for granted, and who wonder whether or not the end result of this process makes them more or less citizens of the state of Ohio. I oppose the maps and lines as they are currently being presented because I do not think this is at all about maps and lines. This is entirely about agendas and plans and intentions, where one party will continue to impose its will on the remainder. I just finished a panel discussion about what's happening in public education in this state. We need representation to be sure that the voices and views of all persons of all political persuasions are heard. That is not what is being accomplished with these maps and these lines.

**Co-Chair Speaker Robert Cupp** [02:14:59] Questions for the witness. I hear, none, thank you for testifying.

**Kevin Conwell** [02:15:10] Thank you very much. I just received this e-mail,.

**Co-Chair Speaker Robert Cupp** [02:15:17] If you could state.

**Kevin Conwell** [02:15:17] Council member, Kevin Conwell from the city of Cleveland. I've been down to downstate matter fact, a lot of times I've been at your committee meetings battling against Stand Your Ground. I've been down, downstate battling against House bill. Twenty two. I've sent you several letters and disagreements and I've walked my neighborhood time and time again. Matter of fact, I even sent a letter to the Governor himself and texted to him, my opposition against Stand Your Ground. So I received this this morning and I'm not happy. And if a councilman just received this about this hearing here, my residents who are your residents don't know anything about this. And I represent a majority African-American ward. And when you look around here. You don't see African-Americans not even in attendance here, and they're your bosses is also because, you know, the voters are the bosses, they're your board of directors. So I reached over to my great state representative Upchurch, and I said they need to come to our ward and face the African-American community at Glenville High School. He said, I'll reach out to them and ask them to come to Glenville High School so that the children also at Glenville High School will see this process and learn about this process and what you're doing to our community. We need you to come there. And I reached out to you Churchill. You said it's no problem for you guys to come. Now was there a problem for you to come to the African-American community? Because when I look at this map, it's not a good thing. It's not a good thing for us. You split it in half. We would not be represented. We probably won't even. I got to tell you, Representative Sykes, we probably won't even have an African-American representative. And Churchill is good, he writes me, tells me what's going on down there, you're disenfranchizing my community and my people, you're hurting us. You heard the great Reverend McMickle talk about the lines. This is more than lines. I feel for my residents when we talk about drive by shootings and and gun legislation. And when we talk about infant mortality in the community, we need someone from the community. And is for the community, they have the goodness of the community at heart. But when we see these districts broken up, look, look here. District 20, you have ward 9 Ward six and Ward four and East Cleveland there in District 20 as well. You have Cleveland Heights and University Heights. It's not connected. Right. The demographics there is not right. Because when you feel the infant mortality that's in ward 9. The drive by shootings is in Ward nine, we're hurt. We need to have when you look at District 19 as well, Cleveland eight and 10 must be with wards six and nine and four. They got to be in there together. And you have to reach out to the community. You have to do a survey analysis in our neighborhood, talking with my residents, your bosses, the black clubs, the street clubs to pastors as well, and how this will benefit us this way. This map is drawn right now. It's going to hurt my people and I'm going to go door to door in my neighborhood, write a letter and, you know, I will Governor, to my residents and tell them about what's going on and tell them to write to you. And we will be at every meeting. But I need you. And I yell real quick. Because I believe for my residents, I need you to come to the mighty, to Glenville High School and talk with the people there so that they can have an up close view, a genuine concern, and so that you have a sensitive ear to help the African-American community. I yeild for

**Co-Chair Speaker Robert Cupp** [02:19:45] Thank you any questions for the witness? I see none thank you for testifying.

**Secretary of State Frank LaRose** [02:19:45] Speaker?

**Co-Chair Speaker Robert Cupp** [02:19:45] Oh. I do? Secretary LaRose.

**Secretary of State Frank LaRose** [02:19:45] Thank you Speaker.

**Kevin Conwell** [02:19:47] Hey How you doing Secretary?

**Secretary of State Frank LaRose** [02:19:47] Good sir, good to see you. Thank you.

**Kevin Conwell** [02:19:54] You came to my neighborhood.

**Secretary of State Frank LaRose** [02:19:55] yeah I have.

**Kevin Conwell** [02:19:55] Yes.

**Secretary of State Frank LaRose** [02:19:56] How are you doing?

**Kevin Conwell** [02:19:57] I'm doing great. I'm doing well, but not by this map.

**Secretary of State Frank LaRose** [02:19:58] Yeah.

**Kevin Conwell** [02:19:59] I'm not a happy camper.

**Secretary of State Frank LaRose** [02:20:01] Well, I appreciate the passion and the love that you have for your community, and that's evident.

**Kevin Conwell** [02:20:05] I'm in love with my community. I'm in I'm in love.

**Secretary of State Frank LaRose** [02:20:08] amen. amen.

**Secretary of State Frank LaRose** [02:20:10] Is is the Democratic proposal that you saw an improvement? And if you need time to take a look at, I'd love to hear your feedback and you can call me or whatever. Let me know if that proposal that you saw from from the Senate and House Democrats just now is a is an improvement in your opinion.

**Kevin Conwell** [02:20:30] You'll get a letter from me. You will get a letter from me and everybody here will get a letter from me.

**Secretary of State Frank LaRose** [02:20:35] A letter may take too long.

**Kevin Conwell** [02:20:37] No, you'll get that from me and the Governor, no. I'll text you my letter, governor about, what's going on with this right here? I'm not happy.

**Secretary of State Frank LaRose** [02:20:43] The letter may take too long. If you could if you could email me or call me, that'd be that'd be wonderful.

**Kevin Conwell** [02:20:48] I'll Email you I'll call you. Even if I have to drive down to Columbus to see you. I'll do that as well.

**Secretary of State Frank LaRose** [02:20:53] Thank you, sir.

**Kevin Conwell** [02:20:54] Thank you very much.

**Co-Chair Speaker Robert Cupp** [02:20:56] Any other.

**Kevin Conwell** [02:20:58] As well as you, Mr. Sykes. Thank you.

**Co-Chair Speaker Robert Cupp** [02:21:01] Thank you for testifying. Next witness

**Staff** [02:21:06] Terrence Upchurch. Followed by Andrew Motlack.

**Rep. Terrence Upchurch** [02:21:18] Good evening, everyone. Speaker Cupp, Senator Sykes Leader Sykes, governor. Secretary, good to see all of you. I just want to echo the sentiments of Councilman Conwell his ward is in my district and it's very important that we don't break up Cleveland neighborhoods. When you break up through the neighborhoods, Cleveland loses its voice, particularly on the northeast side, which has been at a disadvantage for decades. And these maps will continue that disadvantage and they will leave neighborhoods behind. So I'm going to be brief. I'm happy to answer any questions about the neighborhoods that are being broke up and the communities are being torn apart. So that's all I have to say. I just wanted to echo the sentiments of my councilman, who I brought down here to speak in front of this committee.

**Co-Chair Speaker Robert Cupp** [02:22:10] Leader Sykes.

**House Minority Leader Emilia Sykes** [02:22:16] Thank you, chairs. Thank you, Representative, for joining us and hosting us in your county today, can you talk a little bit more specifically about what communities you like, whether it's by ward names, by community names or institutions, landmarks, just kind of help us understand better what it is that you like to see?

**Rep. Terrence Upchurch** [02:22:36] Sure, absolutely. So if you all look here to the map, the district that I live in would be the proposed District 19, which is Cleveland Ward eight and 10. This is considered North Palo and South Palo, which is one community that has always been together, whether you look at state Senate district or state House districts. Senator, you go there to see I know you're familiar with that area. You've represented that area before. now, just going further southbound you hit the Glenvil neighborhood, which is where Councilman Conwell was from, which is where I represent the historical African-American neighborhood. And these communities have always been together and they've always been a consolidated block of the northeast side of Cleveland. They've always spoke with one voice. Right. And they've always had the same representation in the House and in the Senate. This is something like I've never seen before where you've got a line being drawn right in the middle of a community. Even though there are different neighborhoods, there's still one community and they're still on the same and they're still fighting for the same resources at the local level. And if you go further west, I cover this. I covered downtown Cleveland, which is its own neighborhood that's also being carved. It appears, it looks into a third district that goes all the way to Lakewood, if I'm looking at that, correct? Yeah. I don't know how that's going to work. I mean, there's there's competing interests. You know, Cleveland, downtown Cleveland has its own unique set of issues and its own unique set of interests and not taking anything from Lakewood, Ohio. But they've got their own unique set of issues in their own interests, and they have those interests competing with one another. When I imagine that district is already going to be part of a caucus that is in the super minority, it's going to it's really going to just leave out not just the people in downtown, but the people in Lakewood also. So, I mean, these are just some of the things that I'm noticing. And I haven't had an opportunity to look at this map in depth. But these are just some of the things that I'm noticing that could be detrimental with these maps

**Co-Chair Speaker Robert Cupp** [02:24:45] Representative Upchurch, are these communities together under the current map?

**Rep. Terrence Upchurch** [02:24:50] They are under the current map.

**Rep. Terrence Upchurch** [02:24:51] My district has the Collinwood community and the Glenville community. So that would be comprised of three Cleveland wards, eight, nine and 10, the entire northeast side of Cleveland I represent right now.

**Co-Chair Speaker Robert Cupp** [02:25:03] Thank you.

**Rep. Terrence Upchurch** [02:25:04] You got it. And just point of clarification, I know my councilman has had a long day, it is up Upchurch, not Churchill. All right. That's all right. That's all right. It's a long walk from here to Glenville bro all right. I'm just kidding.Thank you, everybody.

**Co-Chair Speaker Robert Cupp** [02:25:22] All right. Thank you. The next witness,

**Staff** [02:25:29] Andrew Motlack, followed by Anthony Small.

**Rev. Anthony Small Sr.** [02:26:00] Good evening. Good to see you. Good evening to you. Staff the board here, we are so glad to have you. My name is Reverend Anthony Small Senior. I am the senior pastor of the Starlight Missionary Baptist Church. I am also the president of East Cleveland Concerned Pastors. My history is I am a 35 year veteran of the Cleveland Police Department as a detective. I'm here about East Cleveland. The way you got it now is three cities are split and we would like to work together if you go by the census, remember the people I represent seventeen thousand five hundred people in the city of East Cleveland. That census did not say that. And I'm here to represent them as a preacher, as one that cares for the people. I need to make sure they get they just do. I talk to the governor. Thank you for this representative that he sent to us, to the preachers. We preachers must stand together for the people of God, those in and out of the faith. That's what we're here for. If we're going to do it right, let's do it right and fair. I've been an Ohioan all my life. I lived in Cleveland all of my life. The Governor knows my dad, Reverend, Dr. Edward Small that stood with the Stokes boys that elected Carl Stokes, one of the first African-American presidents. And I look at his picture every day. Governors say, why me now and now I know because the rights of the people of God are being violated. When I looked at the 2016 map, it said was unconstitutional. I like what you're doing, but let's make sure we'd be fair because it's not the people you have to answer to. Its God. Thank you. Any questions?

**Co-Chair Speaker Robert Cupp** [02:28:08] Thank you. Are there questions for the witness?

**Rev. Anthony Small Sr.** [02:28:11] God bless you.

**Co-Chair Speaker Robert Cupp** [02:28:12] Thank you. Um, Auditor Faber.

**Rev. Anthony Small Sr.** [02:28:12] Sure, I'm sorry.

**Auditor of State Keith Faber** [02:28:17] Thank you. Did you have a chance to look at the Democrat proposed

**Rev. Anthony Small Sr.** [02:28:18] Yes, I did.

**Auditor of State Keith Faber** [02:28:19] Did that fix the East Cleveland problem?

**Rev. Anthony Small Sr.** [02:28:21] No, we're still if you look at it right now, you've got East Cleveland and you've got south Euclid. Then you've got Cleveland Heights, the one that you had that was upstairs, the one previous to the one he had. It comes close, but you bring, there's what some cities that are split in half, what I would like to do to tell you the truth is what they did in Warrensville. get all those cities that border one another for us to work together. And my job as the president of East Cleveland passes is to bring all municipalities together. That's why I've been working so close with the governor's office and with Mr LaRoses's office to make sure things are done decent and in order. We need to stop working in silos and work together. That is my purpose.

**Co-Chair Speaker Robert Cupp** [02:29:14] Go ahead, go ahead.

**Auditor of State Keith Faber** [02:29:15] I was just going to say, if we can if I were to give you the proposed maps of northeast Ohio,

**Auditor of State Keith Faber** [02:29:22] the Democrat maps, could you tell me where you would think we need to merge or make changes to take care of it?

**Rev. Anthony Small Sr.** [02:29:27] Sure.

**Auditor of State Keith Faber** [02:29:29] I'll just give you this, you bring it back up to me when you're when you get a chance to take a look at it. And I appreciate it more than you know..

**Rev. Anthony Small Sr.** [02:29:34] All right. Thank you so much.

**Auditor of State Keith Faber** [02:29:36] And thank you for your service.

**Rev. Anthony Small Sr.** [02:29:37] no problem sir.

**Auditor of State Keith Faber** [02:29:38] Secretary LaRose

**Secretary of State Frank LaRose** [02:29:43] The Auditor Took my question, but I look forward to seeing your work on this. And I enjoyed worship once with you all a while ago before Covid and look forward to coming back. It's a thank you for for all that you do, you know.

**Rev. Anthony Small Sr.** [02:29:55] No problem. Thank you. God bless you. Governor. Take care. I feel like I'm in church now. Go ahead, sister, good to see you.

**House Minority Leader Emilia Sykes** [02:30:09] Thank you Reverand Small I'm a church girl so I know what you got to do to get people's attention. No worries. So you talked about East Cleveland, that there were seventeen thousand people, but the census did not count them. Is that what I heard correctly?

**Rev. Anthony Small Sr.** [02:30:21] No, it does not show it. Its seventeen thousand five hundred and twenty seven. I believe.

**House Minority Leader Emilia Sykes** [02:30:28] That is the population that you know it to be, but not what the census

**Rev. Anthony Small Sr.** [02:30:30] In East Cleveland, correct.

**House Minority Leader Emilia Sykes** [02:30:30] But not what the census calcutated

**Rev. Anthony Small Sr.** [02:30:31] that's not what the census counted Unfortunately, my people are scared of government.

**Secretary of State Frank LaRose** [02:30:39] So are we.

**Rev. Anthony Small Sr.** [02:30:40] And it's been happening ever since I was a police officer. Even when I go to the neighborhoods, they thought I was going to take their goods. No, I've been explaining, just like the governor's office, that you guys send out to us. It's just about accounting your family. That's all it's about. And they were scared that you were going to come in and take from them. Now, if this was another Senate, I would ask you to help me show them that you're not going to do that. It's almost like the same thing with dealing with the shot. They think you are putting a chip in there for some reasonwe got the same fight help us with that fight. But this here, we need to get rid of this. We need to come together, do what we need to do. But there's over seventeen thousand people in East Cleveland and if you looked at the last voting, less than six hundred voted because they believe their vote did not count. And that's what I have to deal with as a pastor. But I got the faith that one day I'll get them where they need to go. Any other questions? God bless you.

**Co-Chair Speaker Robert Cupp** [02:31:49] Thank you.

**Secretary of State Frank LaRose** [02:31:49] God bless you

**Co-Chair Speaker Robert Cupp** [02:31:50] We're going to take a five minute break now and then we'll reconvene.