

## **James M. Trutko Testimony on Ohio Redistricting**

**September 13, 2021**

- Hello, my name is James Trutko. I am a resident of Rocky River in Cuyahoga County. I am a Republican and I am speaking on my own behalf today. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak before you.
- For years, Democrats and liberal supporter groups have complained about gerrymandered legislative districts.
- Blaming the legislative district boundaries for their failure to win elections.
- Let's remember that the new, fair redistricting process became law under a Republican governor and Republican controlled legislature.
- The new process was NOT the result of efforts by so-called "voter-rights" groups to end the gerrymander.
- We now have a fair and bi-partisan process for drawing legislative districts. This process was validated by Ohio voters in 2015 when they overwhelmingly approve the change.
- Common Cause Ohio, the ACLU, and the League of Women Voters of Ohio are little more than front groups for the Democratic Party. Both groups are historic vehicles for lawsuits that favor the Democrat Party and its candidates.
- All have sued Republican Secretary of States numerous times, and yet never found a need to sue a Democrat Secretary of State.
- These organizations in blue states where Democrats gerrymander legislative districts are silent because those maps favor Democrats.
- These special interest groups are NOT acting in good faith and are doing everything possible to undermine the new voter approved, bipartisan process for redrawing maps.
- In fact, their mission is not to draw fair, legal maps. It is to prop up Democrats. You hear them consistently criticize Republicans and their maps.
- This is simply unfair: These maps are difficult to design, and yet, the media and liberal activist group immediately criticized Republicans for so-called "gerrymandering"

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- We should all take a moment to pause and think about the practical implications of redistricting and redrawing lines: Democrats are concentrated in predominantly urban areas and Republicans are spread out, which makes it even more difficult to draw districts.
- It's in the interest of the public to have competitive races, even where it is difficult to draw districts. We have districts in order to hold individual representatives accountable for their actions.
- Dave's Redistricting analysis says the proposed maps will have about twice as many competitive races as the Democrat-drawn maps,
- This is a good and very important thing for the public. We don't vote for some percentage of one party or another in the legislative like in some countries with proportional representation in parliaments.
- I hear a lot of groups talking about how the next election will come out for Democrats and Republicans. But we are voting for individuals, not for the Republican or Democrat party representation in the Ohio Senate or House.
- Let me ask a question about the partisan forecasts: how will the map come out for the No Party voters. In Rocky River—a typical suburb, we have about 16,000 registered voters. About 2,200 Republicans, 3,900 Democrats, and 10,300 No Party voters. Nearly 2/3's of voters are No Party.
- Whether Republicans or Democrat win our district depends on how the candidates appeal to people without a party ID and how they represent us. Voters have the choice and a reason to vote with competitive districts and that's the way it should be.
- In reality, when you compare the current House and Senate maps and the proposed Democrat House and Senate maps, they really don't look that different. The complaints you hear from Democrats and their so-called non-partisan groups just reflect their partisan Democrat interests, not the public's interest in competitive elections.
- The results in Columbus will be determined not by a map but by how well the parties appeal to partisan Republican and Democrat voters and to the large number of people who choose neither party right now.