

Josh Flory



September 11, 2021

To the Members of the Ohio Redistricting Commission:

I am writing to share my thoughts about the proposed State Legislative Maps as proposed by the Commission. I am disappointed to see a continuation of the same gerrymandering practices that are present in our current maps. The voters of Ohio have spoken clearly that we want fairer more balanced maps to ensure competitive elections.

In looking at the proposed maps, they do not meet the requirement to align more closely with Ohioans' voting practices. Over the past decade, around 54% of the state residents vote for Republican candidates while 46% vote for Democratic candidates. After analyzing the likely outcomes from the proposed maps, it is possible that almost 70% of the House and Senate would lean Republican while 30% would lean Democratic. These proposed maps exacerbate the current problem.

Most concerning to me, however, is the type of races and representation that may result from these maps. When a party knows that a district may fall in its favor, numerous candidates throw their hats in the ring knowing they have a high likelihood of winning that seat. In a crowded field from one party, the candidates must make a name for themselves and stand out from the crowd, so they take more extreme stances on issues to attract attention and overshadow more moderate candidates. This leads to the hyper-partisan environment that we see today. I have experienced this in my own district. Instead of listening to all constituents within their district, minority voices are overlooked because they will not swing the outcome of the next election.

It is time to adhere to the will of all Ohioans as expressed at the ballot box. We want fair districts that give all Ohioans a voice and access to responsive representation. We can do better than these proposed maps.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Josh Flory".