

Hello, Commissioners. My name is Carrie Coisman and I'm the Ohio Digital Organizer for All On The Line, a grassroots advocacy organization that's working to end gerrymandering.

I'm here today, testifying on behalf of myself, but also on behalf of all of All On The Line's volunteers and activists who could not attend today due to the timing of today's hearings and the short notice of when they'd be happening.

I'm grateful to be able to do this work full-time. I'm not a parent or a family caregiver. I'm fully vaccinated and am not immunocompromised. I live 10 minutes away from Cap Square. All of these factors make my testimony today possible. But the way these hearings are being conducted excludes the voices of thousands of Ohioans.

Over the last 6 months, I, All On The Line, and numerous partner groups, have trained thousands of Ohioans about this new redistricting process and how they can engage with this body. I spend hours every week talking with Ohioans who feel like their government and elected officials do not serve them as constituents, but rather serve special interest groups and elected officials' own self-interests.

Every day I get calls, texts, emails, and social media messages from people around the state asking the following questions:

Why is this process not fair and transparent when Ohioans overwhelmingly supported the reform measures that promised just that out of our process in 2015 and 2018?

We voted for this process to be different, but where are the maps?

Why is this Commission keeping Ohioans in the dark?

Why are meetings being scheduled at the last minute?

Why does this all feel similarly to a broken process in 2011?

Are members of the Commission going to gerrymander my community again?

Will my neighborhood be cracked apart?

Will my urban neighborhood be pulled into a sprawling rural district?

Will my voice count for the next decade?

An All On The Line volunteer and proud union member, Erika White, said this at your hearing in Toledo: *"Gerrymandering further distances representatives from accountability at the ballot*

*box. But there is hope. Gerrymandering is fixable. Citizens across Ohio are fired up about fair maps for redistricting. This could be the political moment to solve these problems and get our Ohio back on track for fair representation. Let's fix this today and stop this strain on democracy, and together try to strengthen the pillars of our democracy."*

Erika could not be here today because of work obligations and because the Commission has failed to live up to the promise of a fair and transparent process by not allowing virtual testimony options. However, her words still ring true and I thought it was important to bring them back to you today.

Gerrymandering is political cheating, but it is solvable. And that is your duty.

Hiding behind excuses of the Census data delay is no longer valid when this Commission has received dozens of maps from Ohioans and organizations who were all able to produce maps in a timely manner using the same data set to which you all have similar access.

If we have any hope of maintaining our promise of democracy, Ohioans deserve maps that reflect the true partisan makeup of this state which means our future maps must include at least 44 Democratic House seats and at least 14 Democratic Senate seats. We deserve maps that keep our communities together as much as possible. And especially our major metropolitan communities and Ohio's communities of color deserve to be uncracked and unpacked to ensure that all Ohioans have a real pathway to political representation.

I'm disappointed that this Commission has failed to provide a map for Ohioans to review until days after the first deadline. This process did not have to be so rushed -- running up against the final deadline. I hope that when all the hearings are done and you're prepped to adopt a final plan, this Commission will have done its due diligence in ensuring that all Ohioan voices are heard and fairly represented, not just the ones that you have picked for yourselves and your colleagues.

Thank you.