**Ohio Redistricting Commission - 9-9-2021 - part 2**

<https://www.ohiochannel.org/video/ohio-redistricting-commission-9-9-2021-200pm>

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [00:00:00] The meeting of the Ohio Redistricting Commission will now come to order. First item of business is the roll call. So I ask the staff to please call the roll.

**Staff** [00:00:14] Co-Chair Speaker Cupp.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [00:00:14] Present.

**Staff** [00:00:14] Co-Chair Senator Sykes.

**State Senator Vernon Sykes** [00:00:18] Present.

**Staff** [00:00:18] Governor DeWine.

**Governor Mike DeWine** [00:00:18] Here.

**Staff** [00:00:21] Auditor Faber.

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

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

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

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

**Secretary of State Frank LaRose** [00:00:26] Here.

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

**State Representative Emilia Sykes** [00:00:26] Here.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [00:00:30] Quorum is present and we will meet as a full commission. The order of business for this afternoon's meeting will be as follows. We didn't adopt the minutes from the August 31st meeting this morning, so we'll do that first. Then we would entertain a motion, set a schedule for the upcoming hearings and meetings of the redistricting commission and then consideration of selecting a map for the commission to introduce to start the hearing process. And then public testimony, as was in the notice, will be limited to statewide General Assembly proposed maps, either the sponsor or member of the public wishing to testify to a map. At this time, in the interest of providing advance notice, and I will say that Senator Sykes and I have been discussing this for at least a week or more. So we have been working on this about setting in advance schedule so everyone knows when the upcoming hearings will be. I would move that the commission adopt a schedule for public hearings for the commission's introduced map as follows: Sunday, September 12th, at 4:00 p.m. in Dayton, Monday, September 13th at 4:00 p.m. in Cleveland, Tuesday, September 14th at 10:00 a.m. here in Columbus.

**State Senator Vernon Sykes** [00:02:01] I second the motion.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [00:02:03] It's been moved and seconded. Are there any objections to this hearing schedule? Seeing and hearing none the scheduled is adopted without objection. At this time I'd recognize Senator Huffman for motion.

**Senate President Matt Huffman** [00:02:21] Thank you, Co-Chair Cupp. Mr. Co-Chair, pursuant to Section 8 (A)(1) of Article 11 of the Ohio Constitution, I move that the commission introduced the proposed General Assembly district plan that I presented earlier and through the testimony of Messrs. DiRossi and Springhetti.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [00:02:39] There is a motion. Is there any objections to the motion?

**State Senator Vernon Sykes** [00:02:44] Object.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [00:02:44] Chair hears an objection. Any discussion? Without - I can go ahead and call the roll? Leader Sykes?

**State Representative Emilia Sykes** [00:02:53] Thank you, to the Co-Chairs and to members of the commission. Thank you for allowing me to express some concern and speak to the objection that is before us on adopting the maps that Senate President Huffman has just offered up to us. You know, we've gone through this before as a legislature, where we see a proposal put forth. It is very detrimental. It is very extreme. And it is usually used to shock the sensibilities of the members of the legislature, for example. Through the process, it tends to get marginally better with the attempt that perhaps there would be some support from the minority party, suggesting that it could have been as worse as the first option. And that is what I view as the maps that we saw today. However, this is a much different process. This is a constitutional mandate that voters have told us not once but twice that they want us to do something different. And the status quo, which we see in the legislative process of offering something really shocking and then pulling it back marginally is just not going to work here, in this scenario. We were able to raise the concerns of lack of consideration. Or I think more appropriately, no consideration of the Voting Rights Act. We heard that the constitutional mandate and requirement that uses shall language of the proportional representation or representational fairness, which is the colloquialism that folks have been using over the past week, was also not considered and would likely not be considered. And those two issues alone, I think, are reasons that we may need, well, at least that I will not be willing to fully support this contention, although I do know it is very important for us to move forward. We've heard often that the Census Bureau is delayed us and it is the reason why we are where we are. And I take exception to that for multiple reasons, particularly because we knew in January of this year that the census data would be late, yet there was little to nothing done in order to rectify that issue. We could have done a lot more. Our Attorney General filed a lawsuit to help and the commission additionally, could have been much more resourceful and reasonable in its attempt to make its deadlines. So I imagine that this map will still be adopted so that we have a place to continue to move forward so we can start this process. But I do hope that the members of this commission are taking a good faith effort to make adjustments to eliminate the cracking and packing that we have seen in the preliminary observation and analysis of this current map, that people do not want to continue to see the status quo. And I think that we have not lived up to that in this so far. So I am encouraged by the spirit of bipartisanship that I've heard from every member on this commission, that we can get to a 10 year plan by Wednesday. It is a tall task, but if I can have faith in these members of this commission, and I hope you all don't let me down, we can find our way to get there. And I am confident that we are all committed to that process. And I assure you that I will be equally as committed to it as well. So as we move forward with this map and of course, they can't predict the future, there is a lot of room for improvement, but I am happy to be a part of it. And I look forward to working with all the members of this commission to make sure that we fulfill our constitutional duties and we provide a 10 year map for the people of the state.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [00:06:43] Thank you, Leader Sykes. Senator Sykes.

**State Senator Vernon Sykes** [00:06:46] Thank you, Chair, Co-Chair. We had an opportunity to look and to analyze the proposed map during our break. And in reviewing it, it seems that the partisan proportions are worse than what they are existing today. And for that purpose, I think that purpose alone, is enough for me not to be supportive of this and would hope that we could work together hand in hand, hopefully, over the next few days to come up with a much better proposal.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [00:07:24] Further discussion? Auditor Faber.

**Auditor of State Keith Faber** [00:07:28] Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to see us hit a 10 year map and I'd like to see us work in a bipartisan fashion to do it. So, without regard, my vote today will be contingent on this. I would really encourage that between now and certainly the first hearing on Sunday. Our staffs and us, if we're available, certainly work in the background to compare the maps, to look at areas of compromise, to find a bipartisan solution. And I am willing to offer up my staff. I'm willing to offer up our team's conference calling system to make that bipartisan discussion in the background available. And certainly I want to echo the conversation I had with Senator Sykes, Co-Chair Sykes, when he was kind enough to let me go through their map with great detail, district by district. And we found a lot of areas I thought we could reach compromise on just between the two of us. And I know you've had similar conversations with other members, when I asked to sit down and go through your maps in great detail. And so I want to encourage that. Initially, it does not look like we're all that far apart, although there are concerns, candidly, that that I have with regard to certain areas in the map that have nothing to do with partisan issues, that have more to do with communities of interest and keeping communities together and shared ideology. So one of the things my staff did quickly pulling off the Dave's Redistricting site, which now has them up there to compare, is pointing out that between the Senate Democrat map and the GOP House and Senate map, you're within a couple of districts on the competitive side in the House. And actually the Senate version, sorry, the GOP version, when you look at the Senate actually has more competitive districts in the Republican produce map than the Democrat map. But, you know, you do have a difference in what are the solid leaning Republican and solidly Democrat districts in both maps. But it doesn't look like they're that far off. You're talking about a couple of districts here and there. So it seems to me that there is ample area of compromise and I will commit my team and myself to that, certainly tomorrow and Saturday and Sunday and on past that as we go forward. But I do think it's important that our staffs start sitting down collectively and going district by district and looking at where we can find compromise. And with that, I will agree to move this forward for a discussion point. But I really, really would like to see a 10 year map. I really would like to see us to have bipartisan buy-in on it. And from from that perspective, I think it's a place for us to start.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [00:10:09] Any discussions? Secretary LaRose.

**Secretary of State Frank LaRose** [00:10:13] Thank you, Co-Chair Cupp and- there you go. For the-. [audio feedback]

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [00:10:34] Try that.

**Secretary of State Frank LaRose** [00:10:40] All right. Thank you, Leader. So for the, for the folks that have been so good to come and offer testimony not only here, but at all of the different remote sites that we've been to, I really share- I can talk louder. For those that have had the opportunity to come and offer testimony. I sincerely appreciate your engagement in the process. And I share a lot of the passion and a lot of the concern that you have. Remember that I worked very closely with many of you as we got this process enacted many years ago. I remember the all nighter that we pulled to get this initial proposal on the Senate floor. And I think it happened at about 4:00 a.m. by the time the compromising was done. And so while I share the concern, I guess I don't share the pessimism. And here's why. I think that now is when that real collaborative process can can get started. Now, we are weeks and weeks behind thanks to the delay in the Census Bureau data. But we have the opportunity now, the seven of us, to do the thing that lies at the heart of this process, and that is collaborate and compromise and find the middle ground. And the auditor and I did the same analysis over the little break that we just had just now. And I got the information off of davesredistricting.org As well. What I see is that the two maps aren't as far apart as some might think they are. Just again, this back of the envelope analysis here shows that there are, you know, in the Republican map, there are 20 competitive districts in the in the in the House, in the Senate Democrat map, there are 22. So that's a difference of two competitive districts. In the Senate there's eight competitive districts on the GOP plan and there's four competitive districts on the on the Democratic plan. A difference of four. There's a difference of zero between the Republicans and the Democrats on how many Republican leaning districts there are, a difference of four on how many Democratic leaning districts in the Senate. Again, we're talking single digits here. This is that time that we now need to roll up our sleeves as a group, though, the seven of us, and find those compromises over the weekend. I am prepared to allow this map to go forward as the work in progress, as the first draft. But I think it needs substantial work. One of the other things that I was looking at is the majority minority districts or minority opportunity districts. I think that that's something that's important. The Republican map that was introduced this morning, again, according to Dave's show 11 majority minority districts in the House and two majority minority districts in the Senate. So room for progress on there. My objective has been from the beginning, a 10 year map. I think that that can only happen if we work diligently tomorrow, Saturday, Sunday and throughout the next few days. And again, I echo what the auditor said that I, for one, am willing to put in the hours this weekend and tomorrow to get that done. I know my staff shares that, and I think that we have a real opportunity here to reach a 10 year map with this map that was proposed this morning as the starting point for that conversation. But just the starting point, by no means a finished product. Thank you.

**Auditor of State Keith Faber** [00:14:14] Further discussion? Senator Huffman.

**Senate President Matt Huffman** [00:14:17] Thank you very much, Senator Cupp. And a little bit of history, when this was, the proposal was negotiated in 2014 with Senator Sykes and I from the House and President Faber and I think Minority Leader Schiavoni, if it memory serves right. Of course, Senator, now Secretary, LaRose was there. The concept was that when we got the data on April 1st and it took some time to put this in the political finish, and that usually was a two month to 10 day or 10 week process. And somewhere at the end of June, we would have it and we would have a full two months plus to do the negotiation that we're now going to try to do in six days and try to come up with a 10 year map. And negotiating these things is difficult. It's not just a matter of, you know, pressing one button and it all falls into place. But we didn't get that 60 day to 75 day period. And actually longer that that. We didn't get our six or about five month period that we had, because as we know, there was a pandemic. The Census Bureau did whatever they could do and here we are. So now we have seven days. Frankly, and I have to say, this is one of the reasons why I asked that we get a 30 to 60 day extension in April and asked to take that to the voters. And many folks, probably some people in this room, opposed us doing that. And so here we are with the September 15th deadline. I'm optimistic because I know everyone on this panel and I know they're all intelligent people, people of goodwill, that we can substantially, have substantial negotiations, substantial conversation, to get to a 10 year man and a six, in the six day period that we have left. I wish it were 60 days, but it is what it is. A couple, and as I mentioned, I think a couple folks have mentioned, but I mentioned in my comments to the media, you know, we met yesterday with Senator Sykes and Leader Sykes and we reviewed the map that you saw today. And then two days ago, I met with Senator Sykes and his staff and reviewed the Senate Democrat map in detail. So there have been ongoing conversations from both sides. And I think what we walked out, and what I think the Secretary and the Auditor are suggesting is an excellent plan. Because of the detail involved in this, it's let's take these two days for our staff to get together and begin making suggestions on how to make this a comprehensive collective commission product. And so, again, a couple of things I did want to say. There's, and I think for the public, you know, these terms aren't particularly important and maybe not relevant, but in fact, constitutionally they are. We have maps that are presented formally and we have that this morning with one map, a week or so ago with another. But the Constitution calls for the commission to introduce a map. Now, in the olden days, what happened was a map was introduced to what was then called the reapportionment commission. They'd walk in, set the map down, there'd be a couple of hours of conversation and they would pass it. The reason we came up with this process, where long negotiation period but deadlines. And we had a deadline, by the way, of September 15th for the General Assembly so that nobody could get redistricted out of their district after a year because that's the constitutional requirement, you know, so September 15th, and then we work on the congressional lines after that. But we changed that process and said we have to have hearings on the map separate from the when the time the map is being introduced so the public can digest it, people can make objections, supporting comments, whatever it may be. This commission, although the Constitution only required one hearing in the September 1st to 15th deadline, added two additional hearings and some would argue, some would argue added another hearing. But the point is that in the contracted timeframe, the commission is not only adding hearings, but doing all of the things that the Constitution requires, including introducing a map. The Secretary is correct, this is a working document that can be changed and we're going to have hearings. That's the point of having the hearings so that the public not just through this microphone, but through the website that's established, through all the other ways that people communicate, can do that and there can be due consideration. I do want to say a couple of things. I want to thank Ray DiRossi and I'll let Speaker talk about his staff. Ray has worked since the data was received about 16 to 18 hours a day, maybe more than that, for about the past three weeks straight, to try to produce the map today, which is a map which meets all the constitutional standards. So he's working very hard and he's going to work very hard for the next eight days straight, also, in negotiations and making all the changes. And finally, Mr. Chairman, I want to thank the Co-Chairs with working with this extraordinarily truncated time period, trying to get the hearings done, and especially Senator Sykes and you have been a great working team and managing this difficult schedule. So thank you.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [00:20:35] Thank you. I am encouraged by the optimism that I hear in this, on this commission today. So I would just echo that the introduction of a map is not the end of the process, it's the action necessary to commence the next set of hearings, which we have already set. And that does create the opportunity for bipartisan discussions. And certainly the the House majority staff is available the next three days and throughout the hearings. And Blake Springhetti is the staff person that has been working on this, which we've previously acknowledged and stated, and again, many, many times of sleepless nights. And I would also add that the software and the equipment was all set up way in advance, not way in advance, but in advance of knowing, of getting the census data so it would be ready when it came. So there was really no delay, but rather, on the contrary, an opportunity to move this along as fast as possible, understanding the truncated process. So I would also say that having these hearings provides a greater opportunity for the public to understand. I mean, some are, you know, very interested in the map. Others are very interested in the concept. And we hope that many members of the public will actually tune in, log on and look at the maps and see the contrast and understand what the discussion is that is going on. So public education is also a part of this process. I would also add that in these hearings to come, experts are welcome to come and testify. We've heard, you know, the need for some of that. This is an opportunity for experts to come and to provide their expertise, whichever side of the equation they're on. Maybe they'll all be on the on the same path, which would, that would really help things a lot. And so this is a great opportunity. So no further discussion? I have the staff call the roll.

**Staff** [00:22:59] Co-Chair Cupp.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [00:23:00] Yes.

**Staff** [00:23:01] Co-Chair Senator Sykes.

**State Senator Vernon Sykes** [00:23:02] No.

**Staff** [00:23:04] Governor DeWine.

**Governor Mike DeWine** [00:23:05] Yes.

**Staff** [00:23:06] Auditor Faber.

**Auditor of State Keith Faber** [00:23:07] Yes.

**Staff** [00:23:08] President Huffman.

**Senate President Matt Huffman** [00:23:09] Yes.

**Staff** [00:23:10] Secretary LaRose.

**Secretary of State Frank LaRose** [00:23:11] Yes.

**Staff** [00:23:13] Leader Sykes.

**State Representative Emilia Sykes** [00:23:13] No.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [00:23:18] The vote is five to two, the motion passes, the commission has now introduced its map, which is publicly available. In addition to the hearings, I also, we have agreed that the next meeting of the Ohio Redistricting Commission will be at 10 a.m. Wednesday, September 15th, 2021, and it will be, go back to the House, it will be in room 313, the known as the House Finance Room. All right, at this time, then, we're moving into the witness testimony. Again, this testimony, as provided in the notice, is limited to comment on statewide General Assembly proposed maps. And if there is a map that someone which is yet to propose, you would have 10 minutes, more or less, to do that. If you just wish to comment on one of the proposed full statewide maps, the rules provide for five minutes to do that. If you testify, we'd ask you to state your name, and if you are testifying to a complete statewide map and whether you are a plan sponsor or a general witness. So do we have any witnesses slips? All right, first witness is a Gerald, let me find your name up here, Gerald Barna? Right. He has provided witness or written testimony. Our next witness are Ariunaa Bayanjargac. I'm not saying that right, so we're going to have you come and spell your name and and pronounce it for us. And I would ask, are are you testifying to a complete statewide?

**Bayanjargac** [00:25:50] I'm sorry?

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [00:25:51] Are you testifying to a complete statewide map?

**Bayanjargac** [00:25:53] Yes. Hello, Commissioners. My name is Ariunaa Bayanjargac. I'm an MD PhD candidate at the Ohio State University, studying biology of pediatric cancer. I moved to America when I was 18 years old with three hundred dollars in my pocket. Even then, I was able to recognize the potential and the promise of the United States of America, where an immigrant can aspire to participate in democracy. I watched American democracy from the sidelines for more than 10 years, until I became a U.S. citizen. The importance of exercising our votes as citizen had been strongly emphasized while I was preparing for the civics test and when I became the US citizen. I knew I was joining an imperfect country, but I also knew I was joining a country that aspires for a more perfect union. When I cast my first vote at the ballot, I saw many of these imperfections at the ballot box, of our American political system. The issues I care personally and professionally, is not, has not, been the topic of any discussion or policy. Instead, Ohio politicians pander to the coal industry corporations and powerful few. Despite the disappointment I felt with my options at the ballot box and beyond, I still firmly believe the way to participate in American democracy is through voting, through fair and transparent elections. As our elected officials, you have a duty to ensure we Ohioans are fairly represented at the state and at the federal level because we spoke up. We want fair maps and fair representations that reflect who we are and what our values are. The current process, which we hold hearing today, is not neither fair nor transparent process that Ohioans wanted. Here are some examples: waiting until the last minute to assemble the commission and blaming the timeline is not a fair or transparent process. Giving the public less than twenty four hours to prepare testimony is limiting who can voice their voice. Proposing a map late in the process and blaming the census data when more than 20 organizations were able to draw maps from easily accessible data to lawmakers. GOP prepared map doesn't meet the VRA requirement. They looting down the BIPOC community's political power and also does not ensure fair representation of partisanship in Ohio. This blatant effort to limit and dilute people's political power is anti-American. The beauty and promise of America, that depends on the fact that my vote counts just as your vote. As our elected official, now is your time to stand up and fulfill the promise of America by ensuring Ohioans have fair maps and representation through a transparent process. And thank you for your time.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [00:29:06] And thank you and I would just remind future witnesses today that the testimony is limited to a plan, a statewide plan, not general comments. So we can move through this and we have, there's the next six days to testify on these maps. Is there an additional witness? Next to Shela Blanchard from Columbus, Ohio. Miss Blanchard, are you testifying on a statewide map?

**Blanchard** [00:29:56] At this point, yes, yes.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [00:29:58] And you a sponsor or witness, a general witness? Are you testifying as a sponsor or a general witness?

**Blanchard** [00:30:04] A general witness.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [00:30:05] Right. If you state your name for the record, you may proceed.

**Blanchard** [00:30:08] Yes. Sheila Blanchard, S-H-E-L-A, B-L-A-N-C-H-A-R-D. And thank you for allowing me to speak today. I am looking at reviewing the proposed maps and that is what I am here to speak to on today. I initially wanted to speak about the effects of it and how it, a lot of people don't understand the effects of an injustice map, an unfair map. But as I'm looking at this map that was presented this morning, I am wondering and my question is, down here in District 8, 9, 7, at the bottom - is that clear? I see overlap. Just not understanding that overlap and it just, I don't know, just looks, I don't want to say the word junk, but just unfair as to how are the people that can be fairly represented. And this section of our state, 8, 9, 7, then you have 14, which I've never really understood, because in the Cincinnati area down there on the border of Ohio, you have this large, and I don't have the statistics with me of how many people are here and in District 14. Why is that split between the 14 all there right there on the river? Is there, I'm real confused about that, so maybe that's something that could possibly be addressed. Also here, it just does not stand in 17. That - do you follow me? So anyway, today I wanted to speak to the map, but I also wanted to speak to you individually and say that as a african-American, that these maps do not represent the effects that the unfair just drawn maps affect everything from prison reform, criminal justice, our education system, our budget system, common sense gun legislation. And it affects me when I go to the gas station. It affects me for any and everything, not just me, but all people of Ohio. And from Lake Erie to Cincinnati, these maps are not fair. And so I just ask from my perspective and from the people of Ohio to revisit, and that's what you're planning to do over the next few days. I don't know how you're going to do it within seven days, but I'm praying that you are able to come back with something that is more fair and just for all people of Ohio, not just for the one percent, but for 100 percent of the state. We went to the ballot box, we requested fair maps. And so we just, following the Ohio constitution, that's what we deserve. And so as I look at this, I'm just looking at one. And it just does not, I'm just asking for more. Thank you for your time.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [00:34:10] Thank you for your testimony. Any questions for the witness? Yes, okay. Leader Sykes?

**State Representative Emilia Sykes** [00:34:20] Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I apologize. I don't have a question for you, but thank you for testifying with us. Just as your testimony did illuminate something I think might be helpful for all of us as we're just taking in the feedback. I mean, the maps that we have, we have a PDF form and in various colors, in lines and numbers, the house maps are incredibly difficult to see, especially in the urban areas where they're very tight. So is there any way that we could have either staff support, help us explain or understand some of these issues? For example, as I just heard, the testimony about the Senate districts, 8, 9, and 7. I don't know what communities are even a part of these districts. I know the map pretty well, and the counties pretty well. So is there some way that we can have either staff support so we could identify exactly what people are testifying about? I know we all just got this information this morning and we're struggling to do our best to adhere to the the question about what, of testifying solely on these state legislative maps. But it's a little hard to get quality feedback when the maps aren't labeled by county, by city. And it's just some of that detailed information we just don't have yet. So I don't know if I have an answer to the question, but perhaps someone on the commission does.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [00:35:49] We will work to have a larger, and the problem is these are large maps that are condensed, real small, and you can't see them. And I was having the same issue. So we'll try to figure out a way of getting additional information, maybe larger, larger maps in some way so it can be better elucidated. So. All right, next witness is Steven Castro. He says no testimony on. Welcome welcome back, Stephen.

**Castro** [00:36:21] Thank you.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [00:36:22] Are you testifying as a, on a statewide map, complete statewide map?

**Castro** [00:36:27] I am.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [00:36:28] Alright.

**Castro** [00:36:28] I am commenting on maps, multiples.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [00:36:30] All right. Very good. Are you a sponsor or a general witness?

**Castro** [00:36:33] General witness.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [00:36:35] Well you may proceed and state your name for the record, please.

**Castro** [00:36:37] OK. Thank you, Co-Chairs and commission members. My name is Steve Castro. I'm coming from Reynoldsburg. I testified in Zanesville. Previously, I testified on measuring compactness. It's something I consider really important personally and is in the Constitution. So first of all, I just want to say thank you so much for providing the digital files. That was one of the things I requested. So both the Democrats and the Republicans have released the digital files on the redistricting website. And I'm very thankful for that because I was able to analyze both the Democrats and the Republicans maps. I scrambled to do that this morning in time to be here today. So I want to talk about three maps and two principles. First, I want to say the Democrats and the Republicans proposals are actually very similar in terms of compactness. They are better in terms of compactness than the current maps, which is a good thing. Their averages are pretty much similar, almost identical. We're talking about, now, I'm talking, I'm using the measure convexity coefficient. So we're looking at seventy five percent average convexity for the House maps for both the Democrats and Republicans, so very, very similar. Now, the Republicans, the minimum is a little bit lower. So the median is a little bit lower. And there are, there are more lower compact districts on the Republican side. But at the same time, there's there's a lot fewer, when you start going up to like 60 percent, it's actually a little better for the Republicans map. So basically, in terms of compactness, they're both very, very similar. However, the Ohio Citizens Redistricting Commission, who has submitted a proposal, their maps are far more compact than either one of these maps. So we're talking about eighty one percent on the House side and 83 percent on the Senate side. So far, more far more compact. And so I'll just say that, you know, when I testified before, I said that less than 50 percent convexity, I consider kind of a red line. You know, a glass less than half full is objectively not full by any by any standard. So. With the current map, let's start with the house, with a current map that we have right now, we have fourteen districts under 50 percent. The Democrats have proposed eleven a little better, could be better, but it is better than what we have now. Republicans and even better, nine, the OCRD has two, two districts less than 50 percent compact. That is highly compact. And on the Senate side, we're looking at four for the Democrats and two for the Republicans, both better than what we have right now. And the OCRC has zero districts, zero Senate districts below 50 percent. The OCRC has produced a highly compact map. And so showing that it is possible and that we should consider looking at the OCRC's map. Now, the second principle I want to talk about is Section 6B. Now I'm going to use the term proportional party favoring districts. I think the term representational fairness, it was left out of the Constitution intentionally. I think proportional party favoring is much closer to, you know, what the Constitution actually says. Now, and when we, first we'll start with the Democrats and Republicans maps. The Democrats for the House, they've achieved 55 to 44. That was from their presentation. That is, I haven't heard anyone argue that that's not correct. I mean, that's very roughly what it should be. Now, the OCRC has also achieved 55 44 in the House. So the OCRC and the Democrats have achieved very similar proportional party favoring, as the Constitution expects. However, the Republicans maps that they've submitted this morning are not near that at all. So instead of, so if 55 is somewhere ideal, they've given 56 safe districts to the Republicans and only 23 for the Democrats. So they've given themselves more safe districts than what to the Republicans than what the target is and half as many for the Democrats. And that's just safe seats. Now, as far as the competitive districts. Competitive districts, I believe, are fully constitutional, I don't think every single district has to be party favoring, but if you look at the way they still lean, now you're talking about 66 districts for the Republicans and 33 for Democrats. This is nowhere near the constitutional expectation of proportional party favoring and some people have characterized this section as aspirational, and I want to push back on that. Because I think, yes, it says, you know, you shall attempt, that is a constitutional requirement to try. And when you have a failure, and as Senator Sykes has pointed out, this is worse than what we have now in terms of Republican favoring districts on the House side. And I just want to point out, the aspirational should not be confused for optional. This is something that the Constitution expects this commission to strive for. And so, and I also say that proportional party favoring, I disagree with the assessment that it's in somehow in conflict with Section 6A. I believe, you know, we can't be making maps to favor one party. And I think Section B saying that the that need to be proportionately party favoring is specifying this is the way that you avoid favoring one party over the other. It is not in conflict. It is how you do it. And so, and I'll also say that if when the Democrats produce a map that still keeps the Republicans in the majority, you can't rightly say that that is somehow favoring the Democrats. They could have made a map that, you know, gave the Democrats a majority, but they didn't. They did it according to the Constitution. So I just want to say that in terms of compromising between the Democrats and Republicans maps that have been proposed, I believe the Democrats maps are much closer to where the compromise should be and that the Republicans maps, I'd really like them to go back to the drawing board. I think it's very far from what the Constitution is expecting in terms of this proportional party favoring Section 6B. And I think that at some point, if it's not proportional party favoring districts, which such as the one that's been proposed, that I would say that they have demonstrated a failure to attempt to adhere to this. And so I consider that unconstitutional. So finally, I would just say I highly advocate this commission to accept the OCRC's proposed map that has been submitted, it's available on the redistrcting site. If there is a compromise that doesn't consider the OCRC, I think the Democrat's is much closer to it. And as far as Republicans, I think it's far too far away from the constitutional expectations to be considered something you should accept.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [00:43:54] Mr. your time has expired.

**Castro** [00:43:57] OK, I'll say one last thing. The Republicans map on the Senate side has the lowest.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [00:44:01] I'll give you one minute to conclude.

**Castro** [00:44:02] I'm sorry, has the lowest district convexity the last several decades of any of the maps at twenty five percent. Are there any questions?

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [00:44:12] Questions for the witness? Thank you very much. Interesting testimony. Next witness is Tala Dahbour. Welcome, are you testifying on a map today?

**Dahbour** [00:44:38] Yes.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [00:44:40] Alright. And are you a planned sponsored or general witness?

**Dahbour** [00:44:42] General witness.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [00:44:45] Spell your name for the record, if you would, and then you may proceed. You have five minutes.

**Dahbour** [00:44:49] Sure. T-A-L-A. Last name D-A-H-B-O-U-R. Good afternoon. Co-Chair Cupp, Co-Chair Sykes and members of the Ohio Redistricting Commission. My name is Tala Dahbour and I'm here today testifying on behalf of the Ohio chapter of the Council on American Islamic Relations, known as CAIR Ohio. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you to present testimony in support of the Ohio Citizens Redistricting Commission proposed Unity Maps. As a civil rights and advocacy organization for Ohio Muslims and a proud member of the Equal Districts Coalition, CAIR Ohio has been working for several months to fight for fair maps. Muslims. Who are often the subject of political discourse, rarely have the opportunity to advocate for themselves. As it stands, Islamophobia, racism, xenophobia pervades our political system, leading to the creation of discriminatory policy. This emphasizes the need for diverse representation among our elected officials. At the very least, Muslims should have adequate representation in government that will be accessible and responsive, much less advocate for our needs. The redistricting process is crucial to establishing proportional representation and ensuring that all Ohio Ohioans have a voice at the ballot box. This is why Ohioans overwhelmingly voted for these reforms. Also, part of these reforms was for this process to be fair, transparent and provide ample opportunity for public input. Thus far, we have seen this commission seriously challenge the spirit of the redistricting reforms Ohioans were promised. Today's hearing was announced with one day's notice and during work hours for most Ohioans. Fair maps come from a fair process, and we are deeply concerned that that is not what we are getting here today. The Ohio Citizens Redistricting Commission has accomplished what this commission has failed to do. The OCRC has been regularly soliciting public input from across the state during the biweekly meeting since May of this year with ample opportunity for public testimony. The OCRC has made a concerted effort to get perspectives from minority groups such as our Muslim community. For example, one of our Muslim community members [indecipherable name] testified about her residential community around the Noor Islamic Cultural Center, one of the biggest mosques in central Ohio. She testified about how her neighbors are split between two congressional and two state House districts, therefore diluting their collective voting power as a community. The OCRC was able to take Hadia's testimony into account when drawing the proposed unity maps. These maps meet all of the relevant constitutional requirements and mostly, and most importantly, reflect representational fairness. To reach representational fairness, we strongly believe this warrants 15 state Senate Democratic seats and 40 for state representative Democratic seats. Over the last decade, Ohio Republicans have only captured about fifty five percent of the statewide vote. Our maps need to reflect that reality. Such an important task that implicates all Ohioans and has the power to dictate policy reforms demands a substantial amount of time care and attention. With looming deadlines and hearings announced with such short notice, the commission clearly does not appreciate the great responsibility that has been assigned to them. We need to ensure that Ohio voters are fairly represented in Ohio government seats for the next 10 years. These maps will shape our lives, laws and policies for the, for at least the next decade. We need fair maps to make sure all of us, especially immigrant communities like mine and other communities of color, are fairly and equitably represented, no exceptions. Thank you for your time today. This concludes my testimony.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [00:48:55] All right. Thank you. Any questions for the witness? Representative, Leader.

**State Representative Emilia Sykes** [00:49:01] Thank you to the Co-Chair and thank you for your testimony today. I do recall, Hadia's testimony in Cleveland and she discussed how the mosque that she was a member of has members who live nearby but separated in plenty, and numerous committees- or excuse me, state legislative districts, as well as congressional ones. Based on what you know about the map that was just adopted, I know you talked about the the unity maps, but based on the maps that were just adopted today, does, would the mosque in the community that it serves be treated fairly, as far as you can tell, under what it was just adopted this afternoon?

**Dahbour** [00:49:41] Thank you, Leader Sykes, for your question. Unfortunately, I have not been able to make that determination just based on the amount of time I was given in order to come here prepared. So I hope that that's something that we'll be able to discover. Thank you.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [00:50:02] Thank you, I appreciate that. I was just informed we have twent - No, I'm fine, thank you very much. Twenty seven witnesses to go. So what I would again ask you to limit it to five minutes each and if you could try not to be repetitive. So if you have a new point to add in talking to the map, that would probably be most helpful to the commission. The next witness is. Tony D'Ambrosio from Cincinnati. Is Tony here? The next witness then is sue Dyke. Is Sue here -.

**Dyke** [00:51:02] [Indecipherable].

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [00:51:08] Then you may may proceed. Please limit your comments to the map.

**Dyke** [00:51:17] I will. I had my chance to speak. I just had a couple of questions. You know, it's really hard to comment on the maps when the counties and the communities aren't labeled. Really hard.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [00:51:30] Well, that'll be coming. These are little tiny maps, but that'll all be labeled.

**Dyke** [00:51:36] But that speaks to the rushed process and the fact that, you know. So I think that, like I said, it's difficult to comment on, when the proper preparations have not happened. Any map has the cities and the counties identified and the communities. Otherwise, it's just it's just a drawing on a piece of paper. And also the maps, I notice, were taken away. So we can't even really look at them. And we asked for them to be put back and they said that they didn't know if they had them anymore. Where are they? Where they'd go? Don't know? I mean, I would really like to take a closer look, but I can't. And so if you're out, if you're being very, very a stickler about commenting on the maps, you're not providing the resources that are needed for people to make good testimony about the maps. And the one thing I would like to mention, because President Huffman over here mentioned earlier that he was not running the process, then my question is, is why is his name the only one that's on the map that was submitted by the GOP? Those are my comments. Thank you.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [00:52:47] Thank you.

**Dyke** [00:52:50] Questions?

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [00:52:50] Next witness. Next witness is Richard Gunther from Worthington. Is Richard here? All right, next witness. Is Stanley Hertel from Dayton, Stanley here? Next witness. Christopher Hicks from Cincinnati. Welcome, Mr. Hicks.

**Hicks** [00:53:40] Well, thank you. I'm a general witness, and I think on the full map.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [00:53:44] Very good may proceed.

**Hicks** [00:53:45] So thank you for the opportunity to speak. I'm going to try to be brief and take less than five minutes. My comments eventually are going to be specifically on the distribution of seats in the maps and of what I know and what I've read in the press so far. I just want to precursor to them by saying I think I'm more conservative than any person sitting up there. I'm a conservative right wing Republican and I wish most of my Republican friends up there would be more conservative. OK, so, but I just wanted to comment before giving you the distribution that we're here because the Constitution requires you to be here. The Constitution requires you to be here. You know, it also requires that this meeting is electronically streamed. It also requires that there be citizen input. And I just like to ask the question, why isn't that the standard for all public meetings in Ohio? Why isn't that the standard for all public meetings in Ohio? Now, specifically starting to move into the district maps. There's two things I want to hit on. What do districts matter if the legislature does not meet and get the business of the citizens done? If the legislator is not meeting, acting and being on the record, taking up and down vote on things that the citizens are clamoring in the streets about, whatever they be, Republican things, Democrat things, but that the citizens see their legislature acting, districts mean nothing. What's the point of electing people that don't meet and act on the business of the citizens? One of those things, for me as a conservative, I know some people here might not agree with me, would be House Bill 248. At least there should be an up and down vote on whether there should be vaccine mandates allowed in Ohio. Why doesn't our citizen, why doesn't our legislature meet to even allow those votes to take place and what do districts matter? Second point I want to make before talking about the specific distribution is, what the districts matter if dark money controls our elections in Ohio? I just received a piece in the mail from Mike DeWine's people, I guess, from Ohioans for Free and Fair Elections. Do we really need another dark money PAC trying to buy elections in Ohio? I notice that that PAC is not registered with the Federal Election Commission. It is also not registered with the Secretary of State. Even Larry Householder registered Growth and Opportunity PAC with both of those things. Even Larry Householder had the decency to do that. But one thing that is common to them is Ohioans for Free and Fair Elections is incorporated in Delaware, just like Larry Householder incorporates his dark money operations.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [00:56:15] Do you have comments going to the map?

**Hicks** [00:56:18] Now I'm going to speak specifically about the distribution on the map. So I already told you I'm a right wing conservative. I would love right wing conservatives in our government offices and in our legislature to feel some heat. So that they would get the business done. I don't like the idea, if I believe the press reports I read, of a map that increases Republican control and I'm a conservative Republican. I want there to be debate. I want there to be legislative sessions. So I'm very concerned with a map that increases control, even though I'm a right wing Republican, I want you guys to keep control. But I want our government to work for the people. I want to remind people here, and Mr. Cupp, this might be something you'll remember, that in 2012, the map process went to the Supreme Court. At the time, that was a six to one Republican majority on the Supreme Court, six - one Republican majority on the Supreme Court. At the time, Justice O'Connor voted with the Democrats on the map. Now it's a four three majority. Now Justice O'Connor's Chief Justice O'Connor, you might remember this because you were on the Supreme Court when this took place, which is another thing about fair districts, competitive districts is we have a revolving door system in Ohio. You're on the Supreme Court, you're in this, you're in this, you're in this, you're in this. And I think Republican and Democrat people are sick of this. We want districts that allow for vibrant competition, that get the people, that get our legislators and our elected officials focused on at least meeting to get the business of the citizens done. Heck of House bill 248 doesn't pass in an up and down vote, at least that had a vote. At least it got taken care of. So I would encourage that you really think about the map that's been proposed, because I see it landing at the Supreme Court again. And that's, the makeup of the Supreme Court's different than it was back in 2012. Mr. Cupp, you would know that. So the map that's been proposed and the notion of gerrymandering to increase control, I don't think as a conservative Republican is the right answer. Frankly, I want my Republicans to feel some heat, to feel some heat so that they would get the business done that I think a lot of grassroots Republicans want to see get done. Instead of hiding behind big majorities to not get anything done. I thank you very much for the time to address you today.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [00:58:41] Thank you, Mr. Hicks. Are there questions for the witness?

**Hicks** [00:58:52] Hearing none?

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [00:58:53] Hearing none. My five minute marker went off, I was trying to shut it off, so. The next witness is Susan Jolly. Susan is from Springfield. OK. Next witness. Benita Kahn from Bexley.

**Kahn** [00:59:32] Good afternoon, general testimony on the, I guess, the map that was presented this morning. It wasn't really designated as the Redistricting Commission map, so but that is what I would like to talk about.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [00:59:47] Very good. You may proceed. You have five minutes.

**Kahn** [00:59:49] Yep. I'm from Bexley, Ohio, which is currently House District 18, Senate District 15, Congressional District 3. I'm testifying today because of the history of unfair practices, lack of transparency and failure to allow, much less accept, public input when drawing maps after the 2010 census. These unfair practices resulted in Ohio voters passing, by seventy one percent and seventy five percent, amendments to the Constitution for redistricting commission to draw new legislative and congressional maps. And in spite of this history and the adoption of Articles 11 and 19 to the Ohio Constitution, this process is still broken. Ohio voters wanted to ensure transparency and real public participation in the redistricting process, and of particular importance is the map proposed by the Redistricting Commission. From what I indicated, I thought was this morning's. We voted for the creation of districts that are compact, contiguous, do not favor or disfavor either political party, have limited splitting of counties, municipalities and townships. And I will add here, the map that I was able to pull up from the website, there's no way I can tell whether counties, municipalities or townships are split on that map. So we definitely need something better to be able to look at to determine that. They're also supposed to correspond closely to the preference of Ohio voters over the last 10 years. This is what the Redistricting Commission's map should reflect, but since that map was submitted at 9:30 this morning, certainly there's not adequate time, especially for us to review that issue, whether it corresponds to the preference of Ohio voters. But against the clear will of the voters, the transparency and true ability of public participation have not been met, as has indicated, that's indicated by the significant delay in appointing members to the Redistricting Commission, Redistricting Commission, getting it started, the failure to timely introduce maps to the public by September 1st, so at least there would be some time to review the proposed ninety nine House districts and thirty three Senate districts prior to hearings. And the requirements under our Constitution have complexity, which requires time for the public to review and provide real input. That's not what's happening here. So in spite of this clear September one requirement to provide the maps, the commission submitted its map this morning at 9:30. The impact of the 2010 unfair districts has been clear. And I think, while we are on opposite sides of our political views, the last witness and I are in agreement on one thing, the gerrymandered districts have skewed heavily in one political direction, and that's resulted in Ohio voters, including myself, having their voice and their vote limited or lost at the Ohio legislature. Their House Senate is currently seventy five percent Republica, twenty five percent Democrat, the House is sixty five, thirty five split in favor of Republicans. And in particular, the public must have time to review the repos, the proposed maps, to ensure that they shall correspond closely to the statewide preference of Ohio voters based on, quote, "statewide, state and federal partisan general election results during the last ten years". I would ask, what process did this commission go through to determine if that map complies with this statewide preference? I would also ask, at some point you will have to submit a statement as to how you came to that conclusion. And I want to know who's going to write that statement and what you think that statement is going to be. Ohio's gerrymandered districts have resulted in politicians making extreme positions to win primaries, knowing they don't really have to do anything in a skewed district in a general election. That's eliminated the incentive to compromise at the legislature on issues that are Ohio, are important to really almost all Ohioans. They're just not taken care of. Rather than voters having the freedom to elect officials who represent them, this once again looks like the officials have created districts to select voters that represent the officials position. So in closing, I want to emphasize the importance of having a transparent process with time for real public input that is recognized and taken, that there is time to do that, and that the districts must be compact, contiguous, not favor or disfavor either political party and correspond closely to the preference of Ohio voters over the last 10 years. We cannot have fair representation if voters voices are silenced. Any questions?

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [01:05:12] Thank you. Are there questions for the witness?

**Kahn** [01:05:15] Thank you.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [01:05:16] Seeing none, thank you. Deborah Krantz from Columbus, Deborah? Next witness. Linda Mackoff. From Worthington. Lucianne McCloskey from Dayton. Welcome.

**McCloskey** [01:05:58] Hi, Speaker Cupp, Senator Sykes and members of the commission, thank you for this opportunity to speak. My name is Lucianne McCloskey and I'm a resident of Washington Township, Montgomery County. I'm speaking today, I would like to speak in support of the Ohio Citizens Redistricting Commission map. As previous witnesses have stated it leads the other proposals in compactness and representational, proportional representation. Both of these criteria are essential and of utmost importance to the voters. I cannot comment on the Republican plan because unfortunately, it wasn't available until after I had to leave home this morning. From what I understand, it lags the other plans in the important considerations of compactness, competitiveness and representational fairness. The fact that it doesn't show political subdivisions makes it impossible to evaluate on the criteria, criterion, of not dividing political jurisdictions and suggests that it was not submitted in good faith for public input. When the people of Ohio went to the polls in 2015 and again in 2018 to pass constitutional amendments to reform the redistricting process, the people spoke loud and clear. We want an end to gerrymandering. We want to choose our representatives and we want them to work for us. We've seen the results of gerrymandering over the last 10 years. Uncompetitive districts are represented by unresponsive legislators. The legislature has time to pass laws on hot button issues that are actually supported by only a minority of citizens. But they fail to act on significant issues and pass legislation that has the support of a majority of Ohioans. Special interests wield unprecedented power, and unprecedented corruption has followed. Now, it is up to this commission to implement the new requirements, how you do this will tell the people of Ohio much about you as leaders of our government. Will you produce a map with fair districts? That give voters real choice and their representatives are will you use all the wiggle room you can find to produce maps that deserve partisan advantage and ensure that incumbents will be reelected? If you choose the first course, you'll show the world that you are statesmen who serve the people and who work to strengthen democracy. If you choose the latter course, you'll reveal that you serve the interests of your party and yourselves and that you value control more than democracy. We understand that you're laboring under constraints brought on by the delay in receiving the census data, but we also know that you delayed in organizing the commission and lost valuable time that could have been used to lay the groundwork for a fair mapmaking process. We appreciate that you're holding public hearings, but hearings convened with only one day's notice don't give most Ohioans the opportunity for meaningful participation. The maps you draw will bind all Ohioans for years to come. They will affect our health and safety, our children's education and our elders well-being. The people of Ohio want a legislature that represents us and passes laws that support our priorities. The people are watching. We know what was done 10 years ago, and we have made it clear at the ballot box that it should not happen again. It's in your hands now. Show us that you are statesman in service to the people of Ohio and give us fair and competitive districts. Thank you for your time and for consideration of my words.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [01:10:45] Thank you. I assume that you know, as we announced in the hearing date that Sunday there's a hearing in Dayton, so you won't have to drive so far next time.

**McCloskey** [01:10:57] Thank you.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [01:10:59] The commission will take a five minute recess and then we'll reconvene.

**Recess** [01:11:06] [Recess].

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [01:11:06] Back to order, the next witness that we have is Diane Meeves from Columbus, Ohio. Diane? Diane Meeves? Meryl Neiman from Bexley. Meryl and I see you marked here you want to talk about the Senate Republican plan, so

**Neiman** [01:11:33] I'm sorry I missed what you just said.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [01:11:35] And I see you've marked here you want to talk about the Senate Republican plan.

**Neiman** [01:11:40] Yes.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [01:11:40] You have five minutes.

**Neiman** [01:11:43] Sorry, I'm just throwing this up here, so my apologies and thank you.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [01:11:48] That's all right. We understand technology and it's harder for us to probably do it than you.

**Neiman** [01:11:54] I had major printer problems this morning, so I'm working off my phone here, but thank you for affording me this opportunity. My name, as you mentioned, is Meryl Neiman. I'm in Bexley, which is part of the Columbus area. I'm disappointed that we've already lost several members of the commission. It was nice to actually see all of you for once here at one place as part of this process. I previously testified at the hearing in Mansfield. I'm testifying once more because I am dismayed by how the majority members of the commission have been advocating their constitutional responsibility. And I think that that's been manifested in the map that was so quickly introduced and then voted on to move forward as your working proposal. But before I get into the substance of that testimony, I wanted to again point out what a privilege it is for me and others to be here today. And I don't mean like what a joy it is. I mean like an actual privilege. Most Ohioans, as you know, don't live in the Columbus area like myself or have the ability to travel somewhere else like I did to go to Mansfield. Most don't have the luxury of being able to attend a hearing during the day. I noticed that once again, it's a challenge for even some of you all to be attending a meeting during the work day. Most people don't have the ability to stay so on top of this process that they even know that a hearing has been scheduled with less than 24 hours notice. Many people don't have Internet access or a printer or they have a bum one like I did this morning to be able to download and complete the witness slip. And others may be understandably uncomfortable about being indoors in a large group during our fourth covid wave that's overtaking Ohio. And again, especially with, you know, members of the commission and others, not even sort of demonstrating the courtesy of wearing a mask to protect those who might be vulnerable. So I had asked in Mansfield for hearings to be offered virtually and to be offered in the evening so that all Ohioans who want to participate would be able to access the process. But but they can't under these conditions. I find that disappointing. And at least in the spirit of the Constitution, I find that, you know, really upsetting, right, that you would not want to deny, that you would not want to print it everyone took to participate and that's been manifested again by the schedule going forward for the next few hearings, have the same problems. But so now for the substance. So, you know, obviously, we're all here today, and as I said in Mansfield, because no matter our color or background, our zip code, most of us can agree that voters should pick their leaders and leaders shouldn't pick their voters. And that's why every decade we have this process. And that's why Ohioans went to the polls and voted in vast numbers for the constitutional amendments to reorient the process from where it had been in the past in terms of how we got here to a gerrymandered state. The electoral maps are supposed to ensure that each of our votes have equal weight, each of our voices are equally heard and each of our communities has equal access to government resources. And that's what was supposed to happen and it wasn't. And so that was what was supposed to be corrected through these amendments. But now we're seeing with this map that just appeared today, I'm really disappointed that Senator Huffman is not here because it seems to be his baby, this map. But it's you know, from the testimony that I saw this morning, they did not meet. It does not even on its face attempt to meet the constitutional requirements. Someone, I was wanting to ask him, but presumably Senator Huffman, advised the map drafters as they testified not to even look at the demographic data when drawing their maps so that we know on its face that there's no way it can be compliant with the Voting Rights Act because they were directed, improperly, not to look at that. They also testified that they have not assessed their map to see whether it complies with Section 6 for representational fairness. And now from the brief time that people have had to review the maps, it's clear that it does not. So how you could be voting to move forward a map that on its face, although someone said again, I think it was Senator Huffman, that it's constitutionally compliant. It is not. And so it's one thing to say we're going to all huddle together and work to come to agreement among the parties. But you put forward a map that we didn't have time to talk about, that we had all these hearings about nothing but the process, which is the same thing we all voted for already. And now we have this no opportunity-

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [01:17:53] Your time has expired.

**Neiman** [01:17:55] OK, well, just to finish up, we've had no opportunity to speak. You then, at the beginning of the second hearing - so it was strategic, right? - the first hearing you throw out the map and then at the beginning of the second hearing you vote. So in no way were you even pretending to take feedback on whether the map that you are really working on was something that the people are comfortable with. And I think it's really appalling that you knew on its face that it wasn't constitutionally compliant. And I'm just going to remind you all, as I did in Mansfield, that we are still watching that even if you attempt to do the same thing that was done, you know, even worse, perhaps with regard to the rigging and the cheating and the gerrymandering, this is in the Constitution and we will continue to watch. We will be on social media. We will be here. We will be at the courthouse, the Supreme Court.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [01:18:51] Your time is expired.

**Neiman** [01:18:51] And we'll make sure that our our rights as voters, all of us, Republican and Democrats, are respected. Thank you. Do you have any-.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [01:19:01] Are there any questions?

**Neiman** [01:19:02] Questions for me? I really did want to ask questions of some of you, but they disappeared.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [01:19:08] Thank you. I would note that Senator Antani is sitting as a designee for Senator Huffman, the rest of the afternoon. Next witnesses is Meryl, Meryl Neeman. That was. Oh, did I? OK.

**Neiman** [01:19:36] You know, Senator Huffman, the person who directs the drafters of the map to ignore the Voting Rights Act and not consider demographic information, since you're his designee, what do you know that?

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [01:19:53] All right, let's let's move on to the next witness.

**Neiman** [01:19:55] [Indecipherable]

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [01:19:58] Well, let's move, let's - Harriet Silv- Silva. Frederick Smith Jr. from Euclid. Frederick Smith. Zara Smith from Bellbrook. Probably not being very loud, I mean, Zara Smith from Bellbrook. Charles Spencer from Cincinnati. Are you here to testify-.

**Spencer** [01:20:43] I'm Charles Spencer from Cincinnati and I bring my warm greetings and respect and gratitude to the Ohio Redistricting Commission. This is difficult work you're doing and it's critical to the well-being of all Ohio citizens. I was fortunate to be born of the son of an Eisenhower Republican dad and Stevenson Democrat mom. They were both committed to civic engagement and they knew they needed strong relationships with the diverse groups of neighbors they each worked together with to improve our communities. Their voices and the sight of them gathered with neighbors at the kitchen table in our home are with me today. In my adult years, I became a strong advocate for social and economic justice and racial equality, but I always considered both the conservative instinct and the progressive instinct to be the lifeblood of our country. It always seemed plain as day to me. That if either party commits itself completely to crushing the other party, it will be a disaster for both parties and for our country. So it is natural for me to be an advocate of the Ohio Constitution's Articles 11 and 12 and its standards for redistricting. I'm speaking today in support of the Ohio Citizens Redistricting Commission's plan and maps as much as I could read in the time allowed. My district, my House of Representative district and where I am in Cincinnati, is a lot better than what we have now in that plan and I will do more reading as it becomes available and now that I know where to find everything. We have a good set of guidelines in the Constitution, to the extent that they push us towards fairness, logical ground rules and a transparent process designed to give citizens a chance to review and comment on the commission's progress. It's not surprising that this commission has had a hard time meeting deadlines. That is common. I've studied several redistricting efforts and it's a lot to do, it's complicated, if you made, move peg A, peg B falls out, so on and so forth. But neither sacrificing public engagement and transparency nor shoddy work should be justified by having to meet deadlines. And I know you all know that, you've been working hard for it on it, as I've heard today, and I know you will continue to do. The commission needs to get it done and according to the Constitution. I urge that the Ohio redistricting commission especially to strive for compact, compact and contiguous legislative districts, to base district boundaries to the extent possible on county, municipal and township boundaries, to seek maps that do not favor one party over the other. And to provide representational fairness that matches the overall percentages of votes the parties have received over the past 10 years and to avoid partisan gerrymandering in all districts, all maps. Now is the time to burn the midnight oil and spare no effort at fairness and an on redistricting plan that will make all Ohioans proud. Thank you. Any questions?

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [01:24:45] Any questions for Mr. Spencer? Thank you for coming. I would also note that Senator Faber's designee for the rest of the afternoon as Alex Bilchak. Next, witness, Melissa Saul. I think she testified this morning, I believe, yeah. All right, Ralph Turek from Strongsville. Ralph here? Reverend Joan Van Becklier, from Columbus. Renee Westermeyer from Springboro. Jeff Wise from Wyoming, Ohio. Sure, sure. So we have some technical people here that can set that up.

**Wise** [01:26:24] Also have physical maps I can handle out that would be helpful; should I distribute those?

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [01:26:30] Sure. Anything that you have you want to submit to the commission, you should do so.

**Wise** [01:26:34] Let me get those. So hopefully this is going to turn on. And I apologize if it doesn't come through clearly.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [01:27:12] We do have some folks from IT coming to look at getting this working.

**Wise** [01:27:17] So, yeah, I had warned ahead of time. So, I mean, I can start talking or you want me to.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [01:27:23] Go ahead and start talking and then we can-.

**Wise** [01:27:26] All right.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [01:27:26] Get all this covered.

**Wise** [01:27:27] So my name is Jeff Wise, I live in Cincinnati. I attended the 8/24 hearing. Some of you were there. I did a little bit of a kinda dramatic thing here. I'm not doing anything dramatic here. I want to be I want to be serious. And I recognize that the task in front of the committee is pretty, pretty daunting. And what I was prepared to talk about before this morning was how we can do better than the plan that Co-Chair Sykes introduced as well as the OCRC, because at that time I thought there would not be a Republican plan to compare to. And so that's all changed this morning. I looked on the website at nine o'clock and it still wasn't there, but it is now. So that's that kind of changed the dynamic here. But I heard very clearly that the two sides want to come together and form a compromise that's going to work for Ohio. And I think that's great. And if you can listen to me for the next 10 or maybe 15 minutes, you guys can get your weekends back. You're going to meet a compromise with the plan I have to save everyone the time. I'm serious. And this is going to require compromise from both sides. So you need to listen and hear me out and give me a little gift from this tiny little gift from that side. We're going to get to a plan. And and that's the that's the hope that I have here today. So what I initially planned to share was a comparison of my plan to those the two plans from from the Democrats and the OCRC, which other people have already talked about today. We all already know that we missed the 9/1 deadline and we've got six days to the 9/15 deadline. And the map has to be compliant with Article 11 or else we gets pushed to the courts and might get rejected. And then we're back to where we started, square one. So what I was hoping to share was the comparison of the Sykes and OCRC plans on things like how compact they are, how much people of color get voting, power, competitiveness, fairness, and if there's time, I want to talk about the issue of Senate incumbency, which if Senator Huffman were here, he I know he has a lot of passion for that. So I do address that in my plan. I haven't, I didn't see that in the two planes that were posted before this morning. At this point, I don't think I really need to wait for someone to be able to turn on the monitors.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [01:29:46] Yeah, we'll the stand at ease-

**Wise** [01:29:47] I'm sorry.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [01:29:49] While we get hooked up. No, it's not a problem.

**Wise** [01:29:55] Are they're on? OK?

**At Ease** [01:30:00] [At Ease].

**Wise** [01:30:01] Apologies for the delay. Again I'm from Cincinnati. This is adapted from my 9/15 commission and I'm trying to do a comparison because I think we need to meet in the middle between the plans from one side versus the other. OK? And I just want to be transparent on the process that I use for generating these maps. The team consisted of me, myself and I, and I got a late start. Questions?

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [01:30:24] Mr. Wise, if you would just direct your comments to the commission.

**Wise** [01:30:27] Yes, sure. So I started, I started. I got a late start. I saw a sign in someone's yard on the 10th. So I spent about two, three days and equivilent of that on background material and getting ready. And then I was ready to use the census data and it took me about maybe five total days to put together a map, as well as this analysis and presentations, about nine working days total for me from start to finish. So just to get, I don't know how it compares to what's going on here, but that's where it came in. I'm pretty exhausted after doing that. So I'm not going to go through the details of what the maps look like. But I have those comparisons. I did use Dave's Redistricting, which other people are using, which is great. I don't have to explain the methodology, but for those here, it uses the 2020 census data as well as like the past three or four elections. And that leads to about a fifty six - forty four split for the Republicans versus the Democrats. So the analysis I always going to go through - a little bit on, you know, are we compact or not? Are we sufficiently empowering minorities? Is a competitive? And the real thing is, you know, how do we translate votes into seats? That's very important. And if we have time, I want to talk about incumbency. So the first thing I want to look at is are we unnecessarily splitting some cities. Now that certain cities that you cannot split, and those are the last four, the last five or so, in the table and all these are compliant for that. For the larger cities, we're trying to minimize splits. And the OCRC plan slices and dices a couple of the larger cities more than you'd like. Honestly, Co-Chair Sykes' plan is the best for that. I had a little bit of a piece of Cincinnati I put in the eastern Hamilton County to make a more competitive district there. But those work out well. The other thing you want to do is not overly split urban county, I'm sorry, not urban counties. The rural counties. You know, there's some that you have to split from population, but minimizing that's important to avoid confusion for people there. It's unnecessary to split them too much. So, again, the OCRC plan'ss a little bit, non desired on that. And then you can look at compactness with very various measures. What I was using is that I know it when you see it measure. A little bit lower than the others on the Senate. And I think it's the way I stitched to it, stitched some things together. On the Senate side as far as, I had this long South Ohio piece. And I've got to, and then I brought Delaware into northern Columbus. We can change those things if people think those are problematic. But otherwise things look look pretty good from compactness for all of them. The thing I really want to focus on here is minority power because, and competitiveness, because I think these are two primary measures that people look for. So in those, I'm pretty comparable to the OCRC plan, at least for the House, for the minority power. For the for the Senate, the OCRC does a little bit better, but that's because of what I've done with Dayton, which I can go into that detail later if we need to. The big deal is competitiveness. I've really raised the bar on competitors as far as the number of districts that are competitive, which I think is a really important part of this. So people get quality representation. So I probably glaze over some people here and I just want to cut to the chase here in terms of, you know, how many seats does each party get? I think people really focused on that. How many do we get? How many do we get? And the answer is you don't get seats. You get the opportunity to compete for seats. And I try to make this as competitive as possible. And I try to put as many seats in this box of competition between forty five percent for one party and fifty five percent of the other and vice versa. So by boosting the number of competitive seats, I think we get higher quality government because people are competing across party lines for votes and they're going to resonate more with other voters. So that was really the objective of what I was trying to do. And you can see I got much higher numbers of seats in that box for the Ohio House and also for the Senate. The other thing to notice here is that what that does is that means the swings are going to be bigger than they would be otherwise. If you look at the Ohio House plan for OCRC and Sykes, those numbers don't even get up to 50 percent until you know, you know, all those, all those top friendly seats in that light orange actually go up and then some. So they're never going to get to 50 percent of the of the control of one of those houses, until they get a substantially large portion of those, that didn't even make sense to me why they did it that way. But that's that's the basis of my work here. I'll skip this side here. I just want to talk a little about proportionality, because I think there's a lot of people here who think, OK, if you have fifty five percent seats, votes, that should be fifty five percent seats. And I want to look forward to the congressional districts and thinking this through because the math really easy here. So if you think about congressional districts, we've got 15 of them. If it's about 50 50, that means seven to eight or eight to seven and 50 percent should be that lying or that seat flips. And then the Ohio Republicans tend to do a little bit better than Democrats. So they have a chance to win another seat at about the fifty seven percent threshold. It's going to be very rare for the Republicans to get up to a sixty three percent threshold. It's going to be very rare for the Democrats to have a blue wave and they gain, you know, and they get fifty seven percent and the Republicans get forty three. So if you do something proportional, there's really only two seats in play and that means there are seven safe red seats and six safe blue seats. And when you get that sort of dynamic, you get these types of people on the extremes as you're representatives that you send to Congress, all right. And I don't think we need to send seven of those and six of those to Congress and the same thing for the Statehouse. So I think there should be some communities where you've got homogeneity and it makes sense to send people on the extremes. But I don't think we should be only sending two people who have to compete for seats across party. So that's a consequence of proportionality. I think we really need to think through before we decide on the final map. And then if you only have two congressional seats that are up for grabs where do we put them? You know, does Cincinnati take a turn for 10 years and hand it off to Dayton? You know? We've got lots of spots in the space in the state where we have, um, we have opportunities for competition. Let's use them to cultivate our political talent and get better results. So we go into a little bit of, a little of the technical detail here, because to really understand how you translate votes into seats, you have to actually look at the seats to votes curve. And so the x axis here is the fraction of votes. In this case, the software says Democratic votes are positive. I know that's a problem for some people, just let that go, okay. But how many seats they get. And most important thing to do is say is that 50 percent votes, you should get 50 percent seats. All right. I think that's that's like a basic thing to you need to do. All right. And if you look at the plan from OCRC and from Sykes, in order to force that proportionality, they actually actually missed that a little bit. And the Democrats don't get quite as many seats when they're having a good year because they're forcing that proportionality. That doesn't make sense to me. Now, in my laptop versus the presentation I pulled in the Huffman plan. I was about to leave here from Cincinnati and I saw them posted. So I ran up into that. The the difference from that fifty - fifty line is much greater for the Huffman plan. It's a really strong partisan bias. In my opinion, it's a nonstarter. We cannot get that sort of a map through the courts. All right. It's just it's just too biased. It's not going to work. I think we need to recognize that we need to make a map that's fair enough that people are going to accept and it's going to get through the courts. So that's the House. And the Senate, it's the same sort of thing. You should be able hit that fifty - fifty line. I can see how I'm really hugging that line of - this is the natural slope of the seats versus vote curve. I know this is technical stuff, but you can just see how they've done this line and they've done that just by switching precincts until they get to a proportional thing, that's the thing you have to distort to get for proportional. So for all those years.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [01:38:48] Mr. Wise, Mr Wise?

**Wise** [01:38:49] Yeah?

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [01:38:49] Can you point out which line you're talking about?

**Wise** [01:38:52] Sure. I don't know if this thing have a- I'll go over to. Can you see the mouse OK? Yeah, sorry. So here, you see how this green line, you see how it's staying on the curve. With that saying is the response of seats to votes is smooth. But if you look over here, the slope of this line here exceeds the votes, it has to be bent, they have to bend it to make it, to make it proportional. So they're they're artificially contorting the districts so that they get to proportionality. And what, in order to do that, they have to drop districts out of the competitive zone to make that work. All right, so I know this is a technical point, but that's that's the basis of the problem here, is that you're making fewer competitive districts in order to meet this arbitrary standard of proportionality. The Constitution says it has to closely correlate. It doesn't say that has to be exactly proportional. I checked that with LSC Ohio. OK, all right. So I'll skip this, I want to talk a little about incumbency before we go, and that's we have to find a home for all the senators. And Senator Huffman really pointws this out well, last week. There's really, the big problem area is the fact that we've got this mini snake near the lake, I wouldn't say it's on the lake, as far as a House dis- Senate district for number 24, Cuyahoga County. And that creates some problems that I'll show how we can fix that. So overall, on my map, there is one orphan seat near like the Bellefontaine / Wapakoneta area, because there isn't a natural center to put there. But besides that, everything kind of matches up well, as far as you look at the old districts versus the new districts and where they line up and this is comes out better on my laptop than it looks like here. But I can actually match things up, even though you've got some really spidery shape districts now. So all that works, the only problems we have to do is between these two distinguished gentleman here. We have to figure out who stays in twenty six and who moves to twenty two. I don't know if they're going to thumb wrestle or rock, paper, scissors or dance off. However they're going to figure that out, they can figure it out. And then we have to have Senator Dolan figure out which of these four districts from 2011 is his home. And the other three are odd numbers, so they're going to be open seats. So that, the Senate incumbency problem is solved. The OCRC, I really push those folks to declare what their Senate incumbency plan. I haven't heard from them what that is. I'm not sure if it's clear on Senator Sykes' plan. Obviously, I haven't looked at it for Huffman's, but I have solved that for here. So in summary, you know, you guys can go hash things out for three days and try to meet in the middle. I just try to make that work done for you with realistic compromise between the two parties and I think it's worth taking a look at. I'm happy to take any questions or even later on from the group offline. My contact information is listed on my slides.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [01:41:58] Any questions for the witness?

**State Senator Vernon Sykes** [01:42:04] Thank you for your testimony. I would just be interested in your complete analysis with the Huffman plan too, so that we could see a total comparison. That would be great.

**Wise** [01:42:16] Yeah, tonight I'll go back and I'll post that as an update to my public input.

**State Senator Vernon Sykes** [01:42:21] OK, thank you.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [01:42:23] Mr. Wise, I know your time has expired.

**Wise** [01:42:26] Yes.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [01:42:26] But in a very brief nutshell, what generated your interest in this topic?

**Wise** [01:42:31] Oh, I've done some research into reforming the US Electoral College, and I could see that there was a gap in really applying the partisan bias ideas here. And I reached out to many people on this committee saying I have this expertize. I'd love to help with this. And I got nowhere, I'll be honest with you. I wanted to help on the inside and help and get this to be a process that would work well. And I just got stonewalled. And so I said, I have to do this by myself.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [01:43:03] Well, thank you for your interesting testimony and for your initiative and in coming here and doing that. Thank you.

**Wise** [01:43:09] You're welcome.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [01:43:16] Next- I've got some here. Next witness is Sarah Yuronka. From Akron.

**Yuronka** [01:43:38] Good afternoon and thank you. First off, I wanted to, before I talk about the maps, I wanted to thank Senator Sykes and Leader Sykes for wearing their mask. My daughter has been an ICU nurse since the beginning of COVID, and I have never seen her more stressed as she is now. And I strongly encourage everyone to wear a mask at all times. This has not been a fair process. We voted on it. We want a fair process. You all have not shown up to every public hearing except Senator Sykes. You blame the census, yet OCRC drew fair maps. You did not have hearings during times that people can attend. This map process has not been your priority, and it shows to all of us here in Ohio. I have been working in politics for many decades and in the history of Ohio politics, has there ever been a vote where all 88 counties vote in favor of one thing? We did, twice. Our votes should matter. We deserve better from you. We deserve to be represented by competitive districts. We deserve to be heard. We deserve districts to be competitive and representative of who we are. The proposed maps divides marginalized communities and people of color, especially in Cleveland and Akron, because that's where I'm from, Akron. The map should represent us and the elected officials should be accountable to the voters. Every voice in Ohio should be heard. Yet you want us to comment on these maps and answer questions about these maps, but yet you gave them to us a few hours ago and they're not even labeled. So you want us to do something and be here, but not give us the tools to be educated about it. Thank you for your time.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [01:45:40] All right. I see no questions. So the next witness is Mindy Hedges, I think you testified this morning. All right, Susan Cavanaugh from Columbus. Welcome.

**Cavanaugh** [01:46:12] Thank you very much. Thank you, Co-Chairs, members of the commission and those of you sitting in for members of the commission. My name is Susan Cavanaugh. That's Cavanaugh C-A-V-A-N-A-U-G-H. I'd like to first comment on the Republican map introduced this morning. I haven't had an opportunity to review it in detail, but I was struck by two things. First, according to the person who introduced it, it did not address Section 6 of the citizen's constitutional amendment. Section 6B states, "the statewide proportion of districts whose voters based on statewide, state and federal partisan general election results during the last 10 years favor each political party shall correspond closely to the statewide preferences of the voters of Ohio." Second, the Republican plan does not address the Voter Rights Act, and the presenters said that the Republican leadership told them not to. I was appalled by that. Now, the OCRC map shows that fair maps are possible. Instead of starting with that, the commission voted just a little while ago. And they voted on partisan lines to start with the highly partisan Republican plan. That's disappointing. I also came to the last meeting of the commission on redistricting, last week, hoping to hear something substantive regarding the work of the commission that would lead to fair redistricting. I left disappointed. When I read the constitutional amendment that created this commission, I read about what the commission shall and shall not do. I read shall as a directive, in the biblical sense, not as a suggestion that the commission might or might not choose to consider. I also came to that meeting with a background that tells me that if a bipartisan plan were to be developed, the first order of business would have been to form a bipartisan subcommittee to start work immediately. I've been around a while, and nothing gets done without that kind of thing. And that still, to my knowledge, hasn't been done, although there's talk about working together over this weekend. Much has been said about the short time span. I, with very limited computer skills, managed to create maps and upload them to the Fair District site eight days ago. I don't accept that people, being paid by the citizens of Ohio, to do this work, don't have the time to do it. At the last meeting, a Democratic plan for maps was submitted. The main objection I heard from a member of this commission, who's not here at this moment, was that it didn't include the constitutional provision that his job as a senator be protected. I now have no confidence that the commission plans to follow the directive of the citizens of Ohio in drawing bipartisan maps. I really hope I'm wrong, but my only hope at this point is that there are citizens currently working on the next constitutional amendment that could be voted on in twenty, twenty four, and that would take the process away from the legislature and the governor. I'd also like that next amendment to strike Section five of the Ohio Constitution. I see no reason why senators who have their jobs because of gerrymandering, and who have no intention to follow the citizen's constitutional amendment, should have protection. I'm really tired. I didn't like standing on corners, getting signatures, but I am ready to collect signatures again in support of fair elections. Thank you.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [01:50:51] Thank you.

**Cavanaugh** [01:50:52] Any questions?

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [01:50:52] Questions for the witness? Hearing none, thank you. Sandy Bo- yeah, yes, that's it. From Columbus, welcome.

**Bolzenius** [01:51:09] Thank you.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [01:51:12] I'll have you pronounce and spell that for the record.

**Bolzenius** [01:51:14] Oh, Bolzenius, at least that's how I say it. Others in my family say differently. B as in boy, O-L-Z as in zebra, E-N as in Nancy, I-U-S as in Sam.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [01:51:33] All right, yes, you may proceed.

**Bolzenius** [01:51:35] Hello, everybody. I have to say, I was barely able to make it here today. I only found out about this hearing last night from a friend who heard about it on some other way. She also wanted to come, as did a few others, I found out last night, and I'm sure many, many others in town. But she was not able to change her plans around. It was difficult for me. So I just, I mainly have questions. Why, these have been brought up today, but not answered. Why was this hearing not announced earlier, giving people proper time to prepare, prepare themselves and attend? Why are there not evening hours for Ohio, so more Ohioans may attend? Why is this not available virtually especially for people susceptible to COVID? I'm really worried about it and I'm not even that susceptible. What's the deal with this newly proposed map that missed the September one deadline, went up and then down this morning, and is not even available to us in this hearing today? I would have thought it would be here in paper form. Why is the author, Senator Huffman, not here today? To me, that makes absolutely no sense, if we're treating this seriously. Which begs the question, how serious is this panel about this overwhelmingly popular opinion among Ohioans to have fair elections and fair districting? In fact, let's face it, we all know the answers to these questions. The one thing I cannot figure out is given how essential that fair maps that accurately represent Ohioans is to the democratic process, why are most of you OK with the avoidable delays, lack of needed materials available and absent members during public hearings? Among the other things I mentioned. How in the world does this build public faith in the commission? I'm scared to death about being a banana republic. And I really, really want to know from the people here how you feel about this. This is not just about one districting. This is about the future of Ohio, the future of the country, and might I say, the global world. I have to say that I find it curious, I find curious to talk about desiring bipartisanship among representatives who have wildly, wildly, wildly exploited the skewed three fourths majority of the state that is more or less split 50/50 between parties, and gives no room to other parties. Right, left, whatever. It's really scary to me. I am a historian. I have taught overseas. Mostly overseas, but also in this country, in middle school and high school students about how important democracy is. Genuine democracy, not fake democracies. So I will conclude with this. All the people of, all people of Ohio, I would hope you, all of you, want a genuine democracy. If you're not so concerned about it today, like, oh, we can mess around a little bit here, just as long as we keep our seats, OK. Please think about your children, the future. Because you either use democracy or you lose it. And I'm a history teacher, I can give you lots of examples of that. This, so in order to have a genuine democracy, this requires representatives who are sincerely committed to genuine democracy, one that represents the people not guaranteed seats to one party or candidates over others. I'm going to leave it there. Please look beyond how this is going to affect your elections. This whole idea of having safe seats, or equal safe seats, I don't even understand that concept. Shouldn't we just be looking at maps that will make sure that people in a particular area have a representative that they can call on to represent their interest in connection with the rest of the state? And country? This idea, we have to somehow find safe seats and some competitive that mostly this or that. This is not democracy, folks. So before I go off any more, I'll be quiet.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [01:56:30] Are there any questions for the witness? Hearing none, thank you for coming to testify.

**Bolzenius** [01:56:35] And thank you for those of you who are sincerely thinking about democracy. Thank you.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [01:56:43] Tamie Wilson. From Delaware. You'll be testifying on a complete statewide plan for the General Assembly?

**Wilson** [01:56:54] Yes.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [01:56:55] I know you have an interest.

**Wilson** [01:56:57] No court [indecipherable]. I just wanted to, I did study the map, that's why I was a little late. So my concerns, I'm not going to say that they favor the Republicans, because you asked us not to repeat things. I heard that. But what I will say is repetition's key, right? Republicans have taught us that. But so, I am really concerned because you guys have such an enormous responsibility for what you're doing. And it is appalling to me as an Ohioan, as an Ohio voter, that not everyone's present. You guys are here to represent 11 million lives. It's a big deal and it is appalling that not everyone's present. The other thing that really disturbs me is that if you really wanted to really represent and give fairness, why don't you have fair representation in the committee? I mean, I this is Buckeye Nation. And if we had a committee that was all Michigan football players and there were two Ohio State, I mean, I'm sure we would all think that was pretty unfair. Right? So I just have major concerns and especially, I'm running for Congress. It is extreme concern for me, my district, the way that the Republicans have redrawn the lines. I don't feel that represents equal representation to the citizens of those counties. The way that they have redrawn the lines, they included Holmes County, I believe it is, and they are not representative- I'm of, I'm from Delaware and Delaware is really close. It is a suburb of Columbus. We have a lot of people that work in Columbus. It's a big city, and those other areas are more rural. So I really feel that you need to take into account that people should have people that can represent their district rather than having, you know, such a big portion of a big city mixed in with, like rural areas. It just doesn't make sense to me. So I just thought that that was really unfair. And also the way that the lines are drawn, they do favor incumbent Republicans. And I just think that you guys should really take it more seriously. I just, you know, you have such a huge responsibility and you should really redo the committee and have fair representation on the committee. I mean, I think it's a joke, too. I mean, it's nice that you have these hearings, but it's like you're just going through the motions and like, yeah, sure, but there's people not even here. I mean, it's just ridiculous. So it's all I wanted to say. Thank you.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [02:00:02] Thank you. Any questions? I just point out one thing that the members on here are, many of them, are required by the Ohio Constitution. So it's not just kind of pick and choose.

**Wilson** [02:00:17] But then we saw the map this morning, though right? So, yeah, it's still not, it's still not drawn fairly. So that's something to think about. Thank you.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [02:00:26] Thank you. Next witness is Bailey Kulp, student at Ohio State University. The Ohio State University. Ryan Goodman. From Orient, Ohio. Paul Hebling. From, doesn't have a city. Paul Hebling? All right, is there anyone else that, those are the ones that we have witnessed slips, or anyone else to testify? I know you testified this morning, you have something additional to say, that's not a repeat of this morning's testimony?

**Hedges** [02:01:14] I have a witness slip for you.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [02:01:14] Yes. Do you have something additional to testify other than what you testified? Come on up.

**Hedges** [02:01:22] And I also have a witness slip.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [02:01:23] Yeah, I think you were out when I called.

**Hedges** [02:01:24] Thank you. Co-Chair Senator Sykes and House Speaker Cupp, and members of the Ohio Redistricting Commission, again, my name is Mindy Hedges. I'm from Radnor, Ohio, in Ohio House District 67, Senate District 19 and Congressional District 12. With regards to proportional party favoritism, today in the Columbus Dispatch, and I think you all need to read it and hear this, republicans could retain67 of 99 seats in the Ohio House and 25 of 33 seats in the Ohio Senate. You just have to realize that currently they have 64 of the 99 seats. So they're going to gain from the current map three more seats in the House and, hold on a second. And they have 24 of the 33 seats in the Ohio Senate, currently. They would be gaining one more seat in the Ohio Senate, in the current map. Now, it was my understanding that this map was supposed to be more fair and equal to be currently, at least from what the Ohio voters voted for the last gubernatorial election, which is, I believe that was a 45 to 55 percent. That is not what this map represented. Very disappointed. And this was according to Dave's Redistricting application or app, a commonly used redistricting website that assigns partisan designations based on recent election results. Based on that website's analysis, 16.5 Percent of House districts and 19.8 Percent of Senate districts would be competitive, defined as a partisan lean between forty five percent and fifty five percent. Voter approved changes to the Ohio Constitution added guardrails to how mapmakers draw districts for the Ohio House and Senate. The commission must try to draw a map that does not favor a political party, is compact and corresponds to the statewide breakdown of Democrats and Republican votes. And the reason I got up here right now is because I just didn't have time to do any analysis on that map that was represented or that was, excuse me, proposed to us this morning because I was on my way to drive here when that map was shared. So I apologize for having done two different testimonies today. So I appreciate the fact that you allowed me to speak again. And I thank you. So are there any questions?

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [02:04:10] And I appreciate the fact you had two different testimonies. So they weren't the same one twice.

**Hedges** [02:04:16] No, I would not have done that to you. That would've been awful.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [02:04:18] Any questions for the witness? Hearing none, thank you.

**Hedges** [02:04:22] Thank you.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [02:04:23] Any one-.

**Hedges** [02:04:26] I'll submit that in writing to you.

**House Speaker Bob Cupp** [02:04:26] That'll be fine, thank you. Any further witnesses today? If not, that will conclude our hearing today. And we will then convene on Sunday. Let find my list again. Sunday, September 12, 4:00 p.m. in Dayton. That is a weekend, it is not a workday for most people and it is later in the afternoon, so. Commission adjourned.