

Redistricting Commission
August 25th, 2021
Zanesville Hearing

Co-chairs Sykes, and Cupp, and members of the commission, thank you for allowing me to submit testimony today. My name is Mark Fluharty. I am the Executive Director of the Central Ohio Labor Council and the President of the Central Ohio Area Labor Federation. I vote in the 31st Ohio Senate District, 71st Ohio House District, and 12th Congressional District in Reynoldsburg. I would like to testify today in favor of fairer legislative maps.

In Reynoldsburg, my community is split by the county line. Because I live in the Licking County part of Reynoldsburg, I have different legislators than my neighbors on the Franklin County side, who live in the same neighborhood as I do, just three quarters of a mile from my house.

This effectively means that I share legislators with people who live in Newark, Coshocton, and Zanesville, while my neighbors in Reynoldsburg just down the street have different representatives in the Statehouse and Congress. We vote for the same Mayor, city council, and school board, but we don't get to vote for the same representatives that we send to Columbus and Washington.

The communities like mine that are split between legislative districts highlight the issue that politicians are choosing their voters, and not the other way around. Working people should be able to vote for elected officials that will work on the issues that matter to them, but instead politicians are using gerrymandering to weaken their power and take away their voice.

It doesn't matter which party is doing it, gerrymandering is just plain wrong. I ask you to end the practice of gerrymandering and create fairer legislative maps through a transparent process that keeps our communities whole.

Thank you for your time and consideration of my request.

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