

GOOD AFTERNOON TO EVERYONE HERE TODAY.

MY NAME IS DON THOMPSON FROM HILLIARD, OHIO.

I'M HERE TODAY TO SPEAK IN OPPOSITION TO YOUR S.J.R. # 5 PROPOSAL.

IN ESSENCE . . . I VIEW YOUR PROPOSAL AS . . .

**SIMPLY A SILLY SOLUTION FOR A SERIOUS SITUATION**

AFTER ALL THE TESTIMONY ABOUT CONGRESSIONAL RE-DISTRICTING REFORM THAT HAS BEEN PRESENTED TO . . .

- THE OHIO CONSTITUTIONAL MODERIZATION COMMISSION,
- THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY'S JOINT WORKING GROUP'S PUBLIC INPUT SESSIONS, HELD ON OCTOBER 26<sup>TH</sup> AND NOVEMBER 1<sup>ST</sup>, 2017,
- AND NOW . . .  
THIS WEEK'S SENATE HEARINGS TO PROPOSE A NEW PROCESS FOR CONGRESSIONAL RE-DISTRICTING, STILL TO BE UNDER THE CONTROL OF OHIO'S GENERAL ASSEMBLY,

I COME BEFORE YOU TODAY AS A SIMPLY ASTONISHED REPUBLICAN VOTER WHO IS AMAZED BY HOW MUCH TONE-DEAFNESS MUST EXIST AMONG THE OHIO GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEMBERS AND LEADERSHIP.

I MUST REALLY BE MISSING SOME FUNDAMENTALS OF WHAT A LEGISLATOR DOES WITH PUBLIC TESTIMONY THAT IS SOLICITED AND PRESENTED.

IS YOUR PROPOSAL THE BEST YOU CAN DO TO PROVIDE WHAT OHIO VOTERS EXPECT ON THIS TOPIC ?

I THINK NOT.

***Gerrymandering is certainly taboo;  
Fixing it now is the right thing to do !***

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I FIND IT DIFFICULT TO IMAGINE THAT PUBLIC INPUT TO YOUR MAILBOXES REFLECTS A POSITIVE REACTION TO YOUR PROPOSAL, OR WHEN YOU VISIT WITH YOUR RESPECTIVE CONSTITUENTS, THEY CLAMOR TO YOU . . .

‘ HEY SENATOR, YOU HAVE JUST GOT TO MAINTAIN CONTROL OF THAT CONGRESSIONAL RE-DISTRICTING MAP-MAKING PROCESS ! ’

‘ HEY, SENATOR, YOU HAVE JUST GOT TO MAKE SURE THAT ALL THOSE NON-COMPETITIVE, SAFE DISTRICTS FOR OUR CONGRESSIONAL REPRESENTATIVES IN WASHINGTON, D.C. ARE MAINTAINED ! ’

‘ HEY, SENATOR, WE REALLY ADORE HAVING CONGRESSIONAL CANDIDATES CHOOSING THEIR VOTERS ! ’

HERE ARE (4) SIMPLE REASONS FOR MY OPPOSITION TO YOUR PROPOSAL, AS INTRODUCED . . .

- IT LACKS AN EFFECTIVE REFORM SOLUTION THAT WOULD END THE GERRYMANDERING OF CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS.
- IT FAILS TO REMOVE THE MAP-MAKING CONTROL FROM THE LEGISLATURE.
- IT FAILS TO ALIGN THE CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT MAP-MAKING PROCESS WITH THE OHIO’S GENERAL ASSEMBLY DISTRICT MAP-MAKING PROCESS THAT WAS OVERWELMINGLY APPROVED BY OHIO VOTERS IN 2015.
- IT FAILS TO MEET OHIO VOTER EXPECTATIONS FOR EARNEST BEHAVIOR FROM THEIR GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEMBERS AND LEADERSHIP ON THIS TOPIC.

IT CERTAINLY APPEARS THAT YOUR IN-ACTION DURING THE PAST COUPLE OF YEARS ON THIS TOPIC – AND NOW – YOUR HASTY ACTION TO BRING FORTH SUCH A PROPOSAL AT THIS TIME, IS JUST ANOTHER MANIPULATIVE STEP IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY’S QUEST TO MAINTAIN POLITICAL CONTROL OF THE CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT MAP-MAKING PROCESS.

IT IS CLEAR THAT YOUR PROPOSAL HAS ALREADY DRAWN NOTICABLE NEGATIVE PUBLIC REVIEW, AND YOUR PROPOSAL IS NOT WHAT THE OHIO VOTER EXPECTS FROM YOU AS A WAY TO IMPROVE THE MAP-MAKING PROCESS SO THAT GERRYMANDERED CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS ARE FINALLY ENDED.

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OHIO CITIZENS WANT A FAIR AND TRANSPARENT PROCESS FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS TO BE CONSTRUCTED, BY A FAIR AND INDEPENDENT PANEL, TO PUT AN END TO GERRYMANDERED DISTRICTS – EMPLOYED BY BOTH REPUBLICANS AND DEMOCRATS ALIKE – THAT HAVE BEEN A PART OF THE POLITICAL LANDSCAPE FOR MUCH TOO LONG OF TIME.

I URGE YOU TO DISCARD YOUR STRATEGY-TO-DATE AND YOUR PROPOSAL SINCE IT DOES NOT PROVIDE FOR ENDING THE BACK-ROOM, NON-TRANSPARENT MAP-MAKING ACTIONS THAT RESULT IN ESTABLISHING ‘SAFE DISTRICTS’ – BY CREATING SEVERELY GERRYMANDERED CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS – WHICH ARE A MAJOR CONTRIBUTOR TO THE EXTREME POLITICAL POLARIZATION EXISTING ACROSS AMERICA TODAY.

ONE OF MY COMMENTS TO THE FOUR-PERSON WORKING GROUP ON NOVEMBER 1<sup>ST</sup> 2017, WAS . . .

“AS THE SIGNATURE-GATHERING MOMENTUM CONTINUES TO BUILD, CITIZENS FROM ALL ACROSS OHIO ARE BECOMING MUCH MORE **AWARE**, MUCH MORE **ALARMED**, AND MUCH MORE **ARTICULATE** ABOUT THE BEHAVIOR OF OHIO’S GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON THIS TOPIC.”

IT IS MY VIEW THAT YOUR ACTIONS TO CARRY FORWARD THIS PROPOSAL WILL ONLY **ACCELERATE THE OHIO VOTERS DISTAIN** FOR YOUR SHAMEFUL BEHAVIOR ON THIS TOPIC.

YOUR PROPOSAL IS BEING SEEN BY THE OHIO VOTER AS A CYNICAL, COERSIVE, AND COVERT ATTEMPT TO HOLD ON TO POLITICAL POWER.

YOUR BEHAVIOR IN BRINGING FORTH THIS PROPOSAL, AT THIS TIME, ONLY SERVES TO ‘MUDDY UP THE WATERS’, COMPLICATE THE EFFORTS TO PUT AN END TO GERRYMANDERED VOTING DISTRICTS, AND MAKE IT ALL THE MORE LIKELY THAT LENGTHY, EXPENSIVE LEGAL PROCEEDINGS ON THIS TOPIC WILL OCCUR.

NOW I MAY VERY WELL BE NAÏVE, BUT I STILL BELIEVE, AND I STILL HAVE HOPE, THAT YOU DO KNOW WHAT OHIO VOTERS EXPECT FROM YOU; WHY NOT ACCEPT IT AND PROMPTLY DELIVER IT ?

IT REALLY DOES SEEM SO LOGICAL THAT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY SHOULD SIMPLY ADOPT THE **FAIR DISTRICTS = FAIR ELECTIONS COALITION’S REFORM PROPOSAL** AND PLACE IT ON THE MAY-2018 PRIMARY BALLOT FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL OHIO CITIZENS.

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YOU HAVE THE POWER TO DO THE RIGHT THING FOR THE OHIO VOTER:

CHANGE YOUR ATTITUDE AND EMBRACE THE FAIR-DISTRICTS = FAIR ELECTIONS COALITION PROPOSAL.

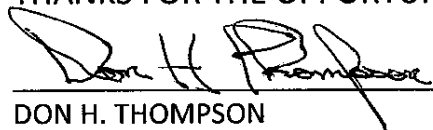
HOWEVER, IF GREED FOR POLITICAL MAP-MAKING POWER IS SO COMPELLING TO YOU AND YOUR LEADERSHIP, AND YOU GENUINELY BELIEVE THAT YOUR PROPOSAL IS BEST, PERHAPS YOU COULD AT LEAST DO AN HONORABLE THING TO EXPEDITE REACHING A CLEAR RESOLUTION.

THROUGH LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVE, YOU HAVE THE POWER TO PLACE BOTH YOUR PROPOSAL AND THE COALITION'S PROPOSAL ON THE MAY-2018 PRIMARY BALLOT AND PERMIT THE OHIO VOTERS TO PICK ONE OR THE OTHER.

SUPPORTERS OF EACH PROPOSAL COULD 'SELL THE MERITS' OF THEIR RESPECTIVE PROPOSAL TO THE VOTERS DURING MARCH AND APRIL, AND THIS 'SERIOUS SITUATION' COULD BE DECIDED BY THE WILL-OF-THE-PEOPLE IN ONE ELECTION, BY THE SAME SET OF VOTERS THIS SPRING.

YOU HAVE IT WITHIN YOUR POWER TO CREATE A **WIN-WIN** FOR ALL THE STAKEHOLDERS IN OHIO'S DEMOCRACY PROCESS. I HOPE YOU WILL.

THANKS FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO VISIT WITH YOU THIS AFTERNOON.



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DATE

BACKGROUND . . .

I'M A LIFE-LONG BUCKEYE – BORN AND RAISED IN WEST MILTON, OHIO.  
MY WIFE, SUSAN, WAS ALSO BORN AND RAISED IN MIAMI COUNTY.

SIX YEARS AGO, WE SOLD OUR HOME IN MIDDLETOWN AND PURCHASED A CONDO IN HILLIARD WHERE WE ARE LIVING OUT OUR RETIREMENT YEARS.

I'M A LIFE-LONG REPUBLICAN AND SUSAN IS A LIFE-LONG DEMOCRAT.  
AS YOU MIGHT IMAGINE, WE SOMETIMES HAVE SPIRITED CONVERSATIONS.  
HOWEVER, IT IS GREAT THAT POLITICS IS NOT AT THE CENTER OF OUR LIVES.

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