I’d like to thank the committee for giving me time to speak today.

My name is Keith Rosnell, and I live in Hamilton Township in Warren County.  For the last 22 years, I’ve owned an Engineering Company in the Cincinnati area, employing about 80 people.  For the past 6 months or so, I’ve been working with Fair Districts Ohio on their effort to put meaningful congressional redistricting reform on the ballot in 2018.

Along with others who have come to speak today, I am disappointed with SJR-5.  Not only would this resolution codify gerrymandering in the Ohio Constitution, it is also a political maneuver meant to deny Ohio voters the chance to vote for meaningful congressional redistricting reform, as they did when they overwhelmingly backed Issue 1 in 2015.

Like most Americans, Ohioans are tired of the politics of polarization that results from safe, gerrymandered districts.  This is not a partisan issue—it’s a matter of fairness.  Our Republican governor, John Kasich, has acknowledged the need to end gerrymandering in our state.

 Fair minded Ohioans want the following things:  First, they want a truly bipartisan redistricting commission.  Second, they want restrictions that keep any one party from packing and cracking districts in order to choose their own voters.  There is no reason to split any county in Ohio more than once.  The only reason to do so is to gain partisan advantage, and state legislators were sent here to be advocates for Ohio citizens, not political parties.

SJR-5 may be clever politics, but it’s bad government.  I’m asking that this committee recommend that this resolution be revised in the name of fairness, or withdrawn entirely so that Ohio voters can have an opportunity to vote on genuine reform in November 2018.  Thank you again for the opportunity to speak.