

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Eric Morris. I am a retired resident of Peninsula, OH. I am here to testify for fair maps and equal districts.

Today I'm going to speak specifically about HB 479.

There is no bargaining with Ohio's Constitution. In 2015 and 2018, Ohioans voted in huge numbers to create a fair, transparent system for redrawing state district lines. The people made their wishes clear: They don't want anyone rigging the maps to help certain political parties win.

We need to unrig Ohio's maps. Many districts are drawn so everyone knows from day one who will win. That must change in 2021. Don't settle for less than equal districts. A fair map will include 7 Democratic seats and 8 Republican seats. This reflects Ohio's average statewide vote share for the past decade.

In a fair map, Toledo, Akron, and Dayton (Ohio's 4th, 5th, and 6th largest cities) should all be kept whole. They should anchor their own congressional districts. Right now, none of these large cities have their own districts — they're all packed and cracked to weaken the power of voters in those communities.

Ohio's Republican supermajority is currently pushing bills to gut voting rights, punish peaceful protesters, ban schools from teaching an honest history, and more.

These extreme, harmful policies do NOT represent the people of Ohio. They are the direct result of rigged, gerrymandered districts. Lines are drawn so certain political parties always win. Then Ohio ends up with bad, harmful policies.

I ask you to consider my testimony carefully. Do not settle for anything less than a fair, representative map. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.