

**Dear Members of the Government Oversight Committee,**

Thank you for holding this hearing today and welcoming my testimony. My name is Sandy Bolzenius, and I am here to urge you to give democracy a fighting chance in Ohio. You must know how vital it is for a democracy that the people are fairly represented. I am not here to argue for districts that will give decisive victories to democrats or republicans or libertarians or greens or any other party. My focus is ensuring that Ohioans have maps with districts that fairly represent the people and their issues and concerns.

I believe that is possible in SB 237 whose map meets the criteria that Ohioans have overwhelmingly demanded. This includes districts along lines of how Ohioans tend to vote while avoiding a few carved-out token districts for people of color.

I am challenging all of you to do what is right for democracy to thrive in Ohio. I realize that you may feel that your way is the best way for Ohioans, and I congratulate you for your interest in our state. However, if the only way you can accomplish *your* goals is through gerrymandered districts, then what's the point? This legislature is supposed to represent the people, of Ohio, not just the ones in districts organized to deliver the voters who agree with you.

You must be aware that without a fair and democratic process, Ohioans do not have a government of, by, and for the people. I hope you also understand how very dangerous a precipice that for all of us to stand.

Thank you for your time,

Sandy Bolzenius