

Written Testimony in Opposition to HJR 6
Government Oversight Committee
Ariel Miller
Dec. 7, 2022

Dear Chairman Wilkins, Vice Chair Swearingen, Ranking Member Brown, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for allowing testimony of all kinds on HJR 6. It is crucial for you to let citizens speak. I am writing as a 70-year-old white Christian voter and lifelong lover of participatory democracy to ask you to defeat this bill.

HJR 6 seems designed to prevent voters from again amending the Ohio Constitution in an attempt to stop unfair partisan gerrymandering after this year's colossal failure by the Redistricting Commission made up of elected officials who proved their conflict of interest. The resolution also seems timed, and the 60% hurdle set, to block a likely citizen initiative to make abortion a constitutional right in Ohio, even though this fall's Ohio Pulse Poll by Baldwin Wallace University Community Research Institute found that 57.2% of Ohio voters favor keeping abortion legal, 30.1% of them with some limitations (see p. 33), a principle which *Roe v Wade* also embodied.

I voted gratefully for both constitutional amendments passed by Ohio voters to set limits on partisan gerrymandering. This year I reported month after month for the Episcopal Diocese of Southern Ohio on how the Speaker and Senate President disregarded *all* of the rulings by the Ohio Supreme Court, running out the clock so they could use unfair maps to protect and expand the Republican supermajority. This contempt for Ohio voters has brought national attention and tarnished our state's reputation. Ohio voters are getting the message that their votes don't matter. I don't think it's an accident that turnout in this midterm election, after the redistricting debacle and the extra primary, was worse than in 2018.

If you pass HJR6, more voters will lose faith that their vote counts (because for many of us, it doesn't). This resolution, combined with Sub HB 294 and SB 178 taking away most of the policy-making power of the State School Board (to whom we elect some of the members) is part of a serious attack by the legislative majority on the separation and balance of powers which is central to the accountability of our democratic institutions to all of us, the People, which they are supposed to represent.

Sincerely,
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