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**Testimony Provided for the Ohio Senate Local Government and Elections Committee
November 4, 2021
Submitted by:
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Senator Gavarone and the members of the Ohio Senate Local Government and Elections Committee, good morning and thank you for the opportunity to testify. I am Christine Corba, Executive Director of the League of Women Voters of the Greater Dayton Area.

The League of Women Voters has introduced and supported initiatives to place redistricting reform on the ballot for over 40 years. In 2018, after years of hard work and the overwhelming approval of voters across the state, a long-awaited constitutional amendment that defined new rules for congressional redistricting with the explicit purpose to end gerrymandering was adopted.

This fall, we, and thousands of other Ohioans, believed that the Ohio Redistricting Commission would, in good faith, follow the legal requirements put forth in the amendment as they created district maps for the Ohio General Assembly.

Unfortunately, instead of using a fair, transparent process that would result in maps truly representative of all citizens, the Redistricting Commission approved a highly partisan map that does not honor the spirit of the amendment and its intended goal: To end gerrymandering.

Now, the November 30 deadline to redraw the congressional map is looming. Two deadlines have come and gone for both the Ohio State Legislature and the Ohio Redistricting Commission with no opportunity for citizens to review and respond to maps. The ball is back in the Legislature's court, and it is your duty to ensure that the new congressional maps meet the letter of the legal requirements outlined in the constitution.

We know that it's possible to create fair maps. Last week, Catherine Turcer of Common Cause, and others testified before the Ohio Redistricting Commission and presented congressional maps that meet each of those legal requirements. They are compact, contiguous, limit the division of counties and communities, are representative of the voting preferences of Ohio citizens over the past decade, do not unduly favor one political party over the other and uphold provisions in the Voting Rights Act that prohibit racial discrimination in voting.

The maps presented are very different, and it is clear there is much work to be done to assure that a thoughtful, fair congressional map is produced. On behalf of the League of Women Voters of the Greater Dayton Area I ask that the Legislature do the right thing. Give us a map that follows the letter and the spirit of the law, guarantees that all citizens' voices are heard, and ensures that we are represented by politicians invested in our needs and interests for the next ten years.