

Chair Gavarone, Vice Chair O'Brien, Ranking Member Maharath, and members of the Ohio Senate Local Government and Elections Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify regarding redistricting and Senate Bill 258.

Gerrymandering has been an extremely important issue for me since learning about it in high school government. It's the main reason I've been an Independent for most of my life. Both parties want to claim me.

I'm a life-long resident of Ohio, born in a small town, grew up on a small farm, lived in a medium-sized city and for the past 45 years I've lived in the downtown Columbus zip code of 43215. For many of those years I lived in Victorian Village in District 3, 2.1 miles from where I'm now standing. Then I moved to the Short North, a half mile closer. Imagine my surprise when a farmer outside of Chillicothe and a city council member from Athens, Ohio, started writing to me, wanting to be my congressional representative. I had moved to their district. Now I live about a 12-minute walk southwest of the Capitol. And I'm back in District 3. I refer you to [Addendum 1](#) to see these current gerrymandered districts. The shapes speak for themselves.

I was among those who worked hard on redistricting, collecting signatures. The S.B. 237 proposed map is totally dismissive of the thousands of volunteers who worked to end gerrymandering. It is totally dismissive of anyone living in any Ohio city. It is totally dismissive of the 75% of Ohio voters who voted for the Constitutional amendment to end gerrymandering. Think about how angry Ohioans were with the current map to evoke that kind of action. And your response is to put forward S.B. 258, a map that's even more unfair?

Now the population of Franklin County is over 1.3 million. That could equal 1.8 representatives in Congress. The Columbus, Ohio Metropolitan Statistical Area is over 2 million. It would be very easy to create two compact districts and [Addendum 2](#) shows a possibility.

Let's move on to [Addendum 3](#). It shows how S.B. 258 divides Franklin County into three districts. District 3 is wholly in Franklin County. The rest of the county is divided between Districts 4 and 15.

Now let's look at those more closely in [Addendum 4](#). Districts 4 and 15 stretch west to near the Indiana border in Mercer County, south to Ohio's southernmost tip in Lawrence County, and southeast along the Ohio River and Ohio's border with West Virginia. This is gerrymandering. And I do wonder how you could have such total disdain for, if not hatred toward, your fellow Ohioans who live in your state's Capital.

I heard some Republicans in the House Government Oversight Committee talk as if they really did not understand gerrymandering. I was reminded of an important lesson from Sunday School. "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you." And I thought that perhaps you would understand how unfair this is if you saw what it might look like if some of your communities were treated this way. I refer you to [Addendum 5](#) showing parts of North Ridgeville, Ashtabula and Kirtland put into predominantly urban districts in Columbus.

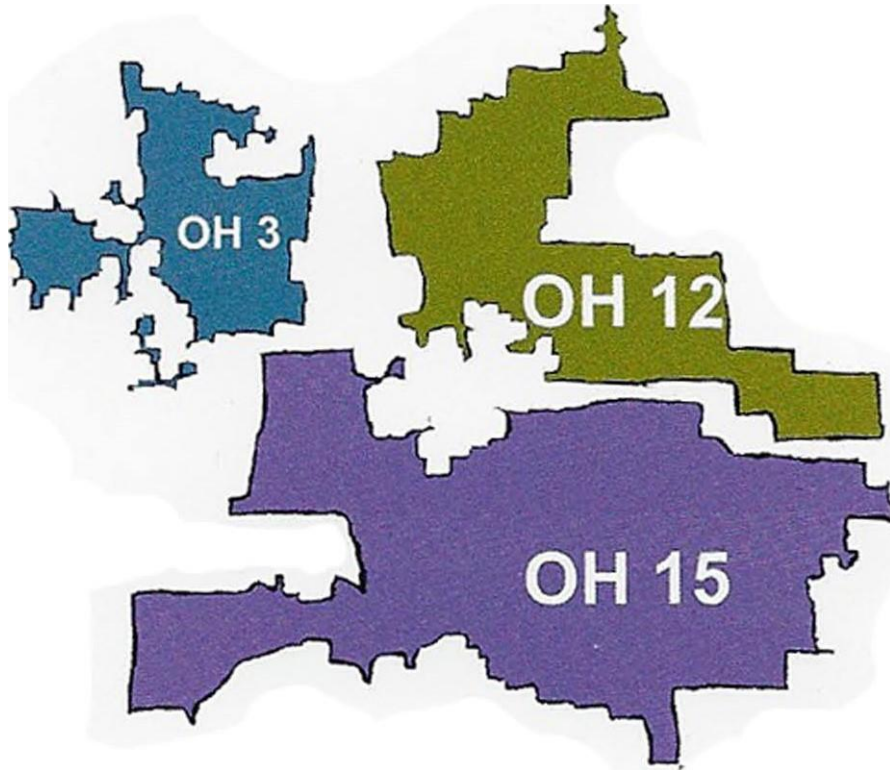
I would not want to do this to you. And I'm astounded that you want to do this to me.

Now if your real goal is to make Ohio so unfriendly to 45% of its population that they continue to leave, then I think your on to something. Perhaps your legacy can be to move Ohio from a state with 16 districts to one with 14. Or maybe even go for 10 or 12? We're #6 in the country in "brain drain." Perhaps you want to try for the top 3.

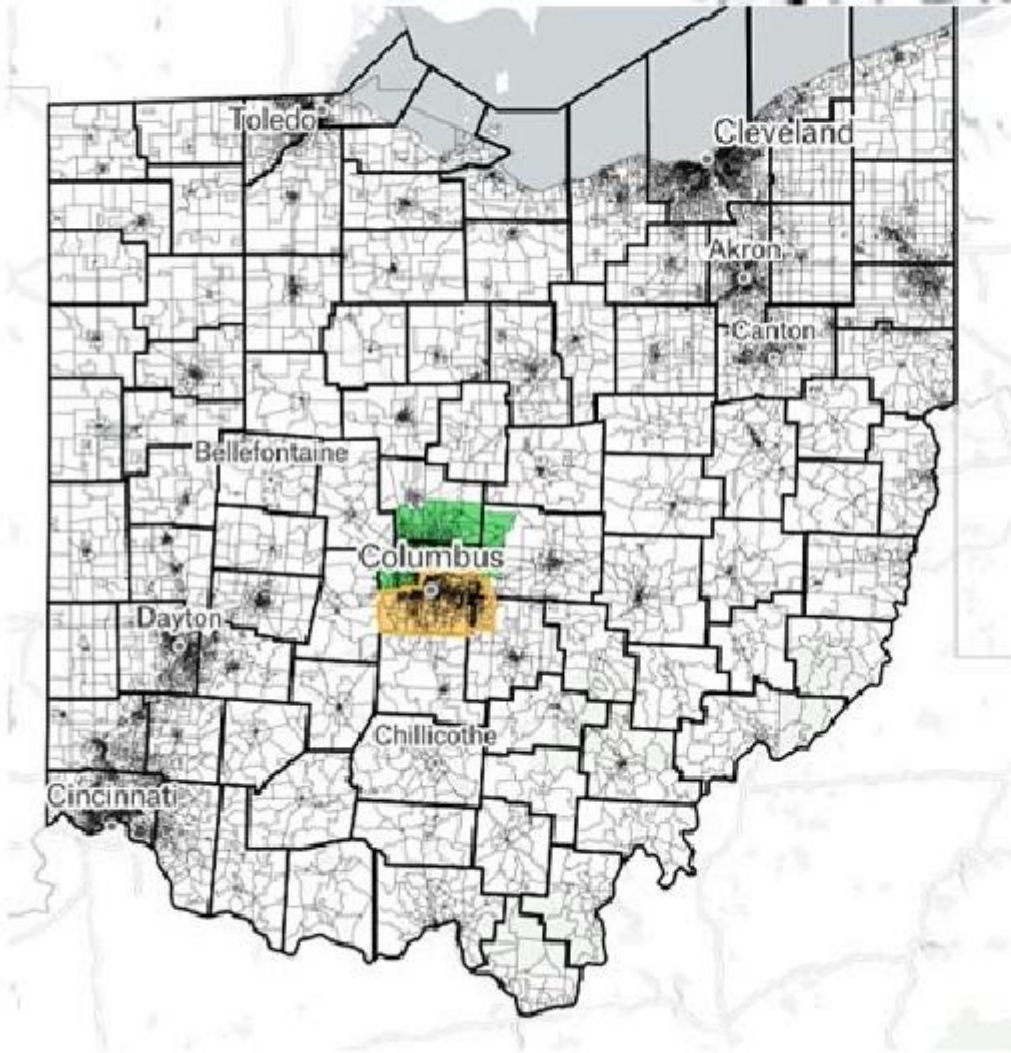
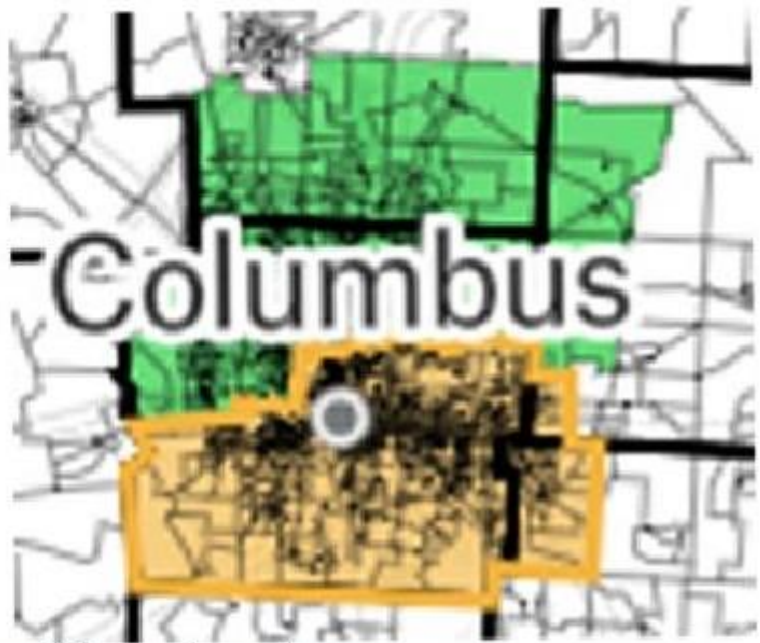
But if you really care about Ohio and Ohioans, you'll start working across the aisle to create a fair map for all. I really hope you will.

Susan A. Cavanaugh

Addendum 1: Current Congressional Districts that include Franklin County



**Addendum 2:
Possible compact districts
including Franklin County and
adjacent urban areas**



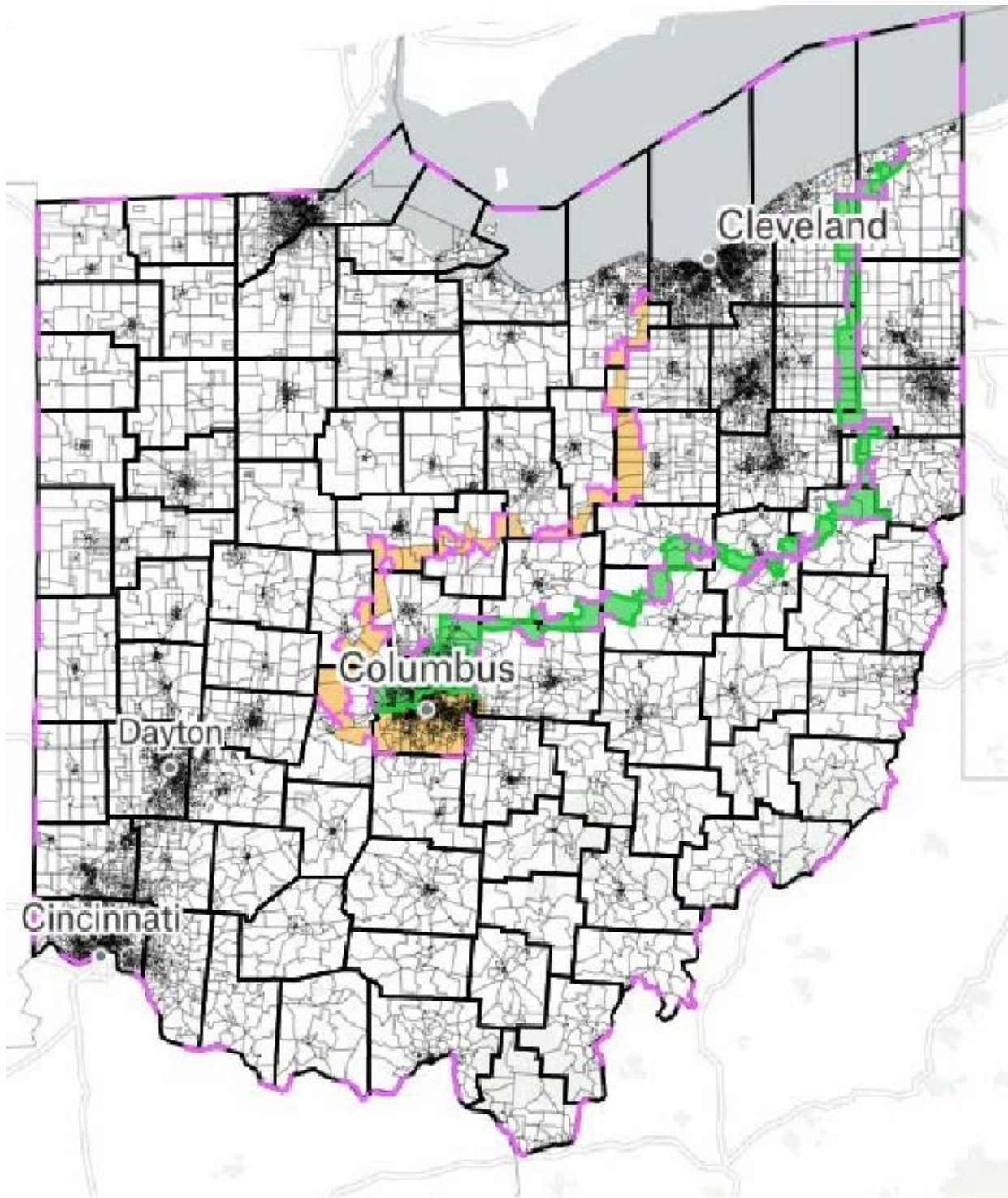
Addendum 3:

Franklin County as divided by S.B. 258



Addendum 4: Districts that contain all or part of Franklin County in S.B. 258





**Addendum 5: Parts of Ashtabula, North Ridgeville and Kirtland gerrymandered into Franklin County.
I wouldn't do this to you, please don't do this to me.**