

Good morning. My name is Wendy Dyer. I live at 3813 Callaway Court, Bellbrook, Ohio.

When I decided to come testify, I fully intended to discuss the details of the map proposed in SB258. Unfortunately, when I examined the map in detail, I realized the proposed map is not a conversation starter, it is a conversation ender.

What's wrong with the map? Let's start with the fact that eight of the ten largest counties are obviously split for partisan reasons, not to meet the requirements of fair apportionment. Further, some of these counties appear to be split with the intention to crack and pack communities of color. I remind this committee that racial gerrymandering is illegal.

The reality is the map itself and the questions Chairperson Gavarone asked Katherine Turcer yesterday, made it that clear the majority party proposed this map to follow the letter of the law, not the spirit of the law.

Last week when the bill was introduced, I thought the Republicans started with an extreme position, so they had room to

move to the middle. However, as today is the fourth public hearing and there have been no changes to the map, I can only assume that these hearings are yet another example of the majority party trying to follow the letter, not the spirit of the law.

If this committee was serious about having a transparent process, it would have a hearing, make amendments to address the issues citizens and their colleagues have identified, then hold follow-up hearings so the public can address the changes. It would also have hearings at times and locations that more people could attend.

Further, SB 258 combined with this committee's failure to do anything in September to fulfill its constitution directive, signals that the majority party's plan is to wait out the clock and design a four-year map. There has been some discussion about whether the requirement, that a map must not favor one party or incumbent over another applies only applies to a four-year map. On this issue I must agree with the point Ms. Yagoda's made yesterday, the minority party has no incentive to negotiate if the map they are going to get is worse than the one they would get if they just wait out the clock.

Commented [MD1]:

Thus, by introducing a map that does not at least meet all the requirements of a four-year map, the majority party made it clear that it is not interested in collaborating with its colleagues across the aisle.

I want this committee to know that I am one of thousands of volunteers who worked to end gerrymandering in Ohio. In 2017 and 18, we got over 200,000 signatures to get redistricting reform on the ballot. This was not easy. Most signature campaigns deal with issues that voters are motivated to sign with a simple sentence., such as, “sign this petition to end animal cruelty.” This campaign required us to have serious conversations with voters. Usually, we needed to educate them about the redistricting process itself, gerrymandering and the problems it causes. We also had to explain our proposal and how it would provide fair representation. All in about 3 minutes.

In addition to collecting signatures, I attended trainings to learn about the ways gerrymandering is hurting our communities, our state, and our nation. I traveled to this statehouse in 2018 for a hearing like this. I met with my state representative, Rick Perales, to discuss the differences between the constitutional amendment Fair

Districts was proposing and the original legislation the Republicans had proposed.

Maybe I was naïve, but when I learned in early February of 2018 that the Senate had come to a bipartisan agreement with the help of the Fair Districts Coalition, and that it had unanimously passed a resolution to put a compromise on the ballot, I thought Ohio had accomplished something.

Now I just feel stupid that I honestly believed my government would do the right thing.