

**Testimony of Peter Rockwell Petto**  
**Senate Committee on Local Government and Elections**  
**November 9, 2021**

My name is Peter Rockwell Petto, from Bay Village. I vote in House district 16, Senate district 24, and Congressional district 9. I am a retired high-school statistics and mathematics teacher. I have helped *many* students explore topics such as voting power, fair division, and apportionment — things you are wrestling with today. I recently helped the League of Women Voters construct a districting map that was submitted to the Cuyahoga County Redistricting Commission; and several chapters of the League with community maps that were submitted to Fair Districts Gallery and to the Ohio Citizen's Redistricting Commission.

Recent redistricting reform in Ohio was focused on ensuring that voters receive proportional representation in the legislatures when district lines are drawn. Ohio voters should no longer be disenfranchised by jerrymandered districts, as has been the case over the past ten years. In statewide and national elections in Ohio, the split between Republican and Democratic voters has been approximately 55 to 45 percent. In the Republican map before you it is approximately 87 to 13 percent, which has the effect of shutting the Democrats out of the legislative process. In the Democratic map before you it is approximately 53 to 47 percent which encourages dialog and consensus as laws are constructed — which is desirable, Constitutional, and the will of the electorate when they reformed this process.

In particular, when you look at the maps you see the fracturing of urban areas: Columbus, Greater Cleveland, and Greater Cincinnati, in particular. This disenfranchises those voters, especially suburban ones where cities must be kept intact. I live in Bay Village, about 17 miles west of downtown Cleveland. It would make sense for me to be in a district of suburbs that ring the city. This is my community-of-interest with shared values, that center on the city. My neighbors in Bay work in the city or in this ring. I have worked in Cleveland, Avon Lake, and Lakewood. My neighbors work in Berea, Lorain, Cleveland, North Royalton, Beachwood, Mayfield Heights. All these communities are in my district in the Democratic Map. My district, in the Republican map, instead of hugging the city shoots south into very rural communities, quite unlike all the ones I've just mentioned; to include Wellington, Pennfield Township, Guilford Township, Chatham Township, Spencer Township, a long list of unfamiliar places I'd need a map to find. Everything I said about employment also applies to recreation, entertainment, culture, health care — all the things that are the shared value of a community.

I don't believe that the redistricting reforms were intended to result in maps constructed in private only by the two parties, and then negotiated (or negotiated to impasse) behind closed doors.

I urge this committee to take its responsibilities seriously. I don't believe you are able to hire mapmakers, as the Cuyahoga County Redistricting Commission did, and supervise their construction of maps in an open and transparent fashion. What you can do is solicit maps from parties other than the Republicans and Democrats. You could then score those maps for representation, compactness, cracking, packing, compliance with the Voting Rights Act, and so on. And then you could select the best one. Doing this would demonstrate that you tried, that you attempted to construct a fair map. I believe that if you did this, you would succeed in constructing a fair map.

Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

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References:

Democratic Map – <https://davesredistricting.org/maps#viewmap::a5d710a6-f571-4b1d-ada7-7baecf63fc0e>

Republican Map – <https://davesredistricting.org/maps#viewmap::582be6e2-1183-4a40-ab50-8a72be16492b>