

**PROPONENT TESTIMONY OF:**

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**IN SUPPORT OF:**

HB 55

*Allow House committees/sessions be conducted virtually*  
House Government Oversight Committee

Hi.

Our democracy works best when all of us are involved and we have equitable access to it. With an ongoing public health crisis, participating in legislative proceedings in person at the Ohio Statehouse is not a safe or accessible option for most Ohioans. Providing virtual testimony for all legislative hearings in the General Assembly would ensure that all Ohioans, no matter where they're located, would have more accessibility to contribute.

This year, our legislature will take up the process of redistricting. Virtual hearings will be of the utmost importance during this debate. Ohio has some of the most gerrymandered districts in the country, which effectively shut out voters from the democratic process.

It's imperative for legislative leadership to keep democracy open. Rep. Brigid Kelly's House Bill 55 that would allow for virtual testimony is a crucial first step to ensuring that all Ohioans can participate in the legislative process.