

**Testimony of Timothy P. O’Hanlon**

**House Bill 479**

**Subject: Congressional Redistricting**

**Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee**

Good morning.

My name is Tim O’Hanlon. We live in the sliver of Columbus that was “cracked” into the meandering and very gerrymandered 15<sup>th</sup> Congressional District, a district that meanders over 12 counties. Thanks to extreme gerrymandering, we have been disenfranchised for a decade. And now, as a further insult to representative democracy, our congressman for the next year, will be a Murray Energy Coal lobbyist who was at the table when the notorious House Bill 6 was taking shape.

The only transparency in the redistricting process thus far has been the blatant defiance of Constitutional mandates voted by over 70% of Ohio voters in 2015 and 2018. The Congressional Map that magically appeared on November 3 offers a new variety of disenfranchisement by gerrymandering. This time, we would be packed into the overwhelmingly Democratic District 3, in exchange for the reducing Ohio’s Democratic Congressional Delegation from 4 to 2.

A fair and proportional Congressional map would reflect percentage of Republican and Democratic votes in statewide elections over the past ten years. A

proportional Ohio Congressional map, at minimum, would produce eight Republican leaning districts and at least six districts that lean Democratic. The remaining district might be a highly contested one with a slight Democratic tilt, but clearly winnable by the most effective candidate from either party.

Despite the parade of disingenuous public statements, the leaders of the majority party in the Ohio Senate and House are well aware that political scientists employ the percentage of Republican and Democratic votes in analyzing the degree of proportional representation in state legislative and congressional district maps. But, as with the Ohio Senate and House maps, the majority leadership is either advancing a bizarre definition of proportionality that no one else recognizes as valid, or simply abandoning any pretense of democratic representation.

Like the Ohio Senate and House maps, this newly hatched Congressional map represents nothing less than an attempt by Republican leadership to draw their way to a Congressional majority, where issues that matter to the majority of Ohioans can be safely ignored.