

Hello, my name is Jacob Benner, and I am currently a college student at the University of Toledo. I would like to testify today on behalf of fairly drawn district maps and the newly proposed H.B. 479.

It is clear after reviewing the newly proposed district map, that this was drawn in a partisan fashion, and does not represent the constituents in Ohio whatsoever. Take for example the newly proposed 9<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> districts. It is clear that the city of Toledo is being cut in half to weaken the democratic vote because the city is a democratic stronghold. The same can be said about the Canton/Akron area. This trend continues in multiple parts of the map so the Democratic vote in large cities is split and absorbed into large Republican districts, so that the Democratic vote is wiped out. Entire cities should be kept in the same district, so this problem does not occur.

This newly drawn map is problematic because there would only be 2 democratic law makers in the House of Representatives representing Ohio. According to Pew Research Center, Ohio consists of approximately 40% Democratic voters and 42% Republican voters (<https://www.pewforum.org/religious-landscape-study/state/ohio/party-affiliation/>) . This being said, if this new map is imposed Republicans would be overrepresented by roughly 44%.

There needs to be a map that both parties can agree on and that doesn't over represent one particular party. If this bill gets passed, the only areas that will have Democratic representative seats are the Columbus and Cleveland areas. In those cases the district will only cover the city and none of the suburbs. In the cases of Toledo and the Akron/Canton area, the cities are all either cut in half or three parts, which will result in different representatives for different parts of the city. I believe that it should go without saying why this is a problem.

Instead of getting behind one representative, the cities will have to advocate their issues to two people instead of one. Additionally, by merging urban districts into rural ones there will be a conflict of interest in the district, and a great deal of people will not be represented correctly on a federal level. I believe that the map that is proposed is a Republican power grab instead of a map that reflects its constituents.