

Proponent Testimony of
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In support of Ohio Congressional Redistricting for FAIR maps

November 10, 2021

To the Chair, Co-Chair and members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to present this testimony in support of FAIR maps and the redistricting of my gerrymandered community in Dublin, OH 4.

I am a concerned Ohioan, mother and community volunteer who drove nearly 90 minutes to testify in Zanesville in August because the Ohio Redistricting Commission decided not to allow testimony in Columbus, the state capital and largest gerrymandered city in the state. Now, I'm writing testimony for a hearing that was just announced with little notice after the republican-led legislature defied 2 constitutional deadlines for drawing & approving congressional maps and holding hearings. This is not what democracy looks like.

We've lived in Dublin, a Columbus suburb since 1993. We chose to raise our family in Dublin and our kids attended K-12 and graduated from Dublin City Schools. I just served as a volunteer field organizer with other members of my community in all 3 counties to elect Dublin School Board members who support public education, inclusion and representation. I've volunteered in the Dublin community & Dublin City Schools for 28 years. We remain in Dublin today because we are part of this community, but one thing has us considering other options: we're stuck in a district with horrendous partisan gerrymandering because we live on the Union County line. That leaves us unrepresented in the 4th district, focused instead on 14 counties of small towns and rural communities hand-picked for our congressman. I am testifying because we need a fair map for Dublin that gives us a pathway to actual representation as one community instead of 2 separate districts. This intentionally undermines our political power guaranteed by the Constitution.

Living in OH4 is exhausting. This district was drawn in the bunker in 2010 to ensure Jim Jordan and republicans would remain in power for the foreseeable future. "The Duck" also contains part of a Cleveland suburb and one of the state's largest prisons (which had one of the single largest Covid national outbreaks in 2020). Jim Jordan told the media he is not here to write bills and he hasn't. He's proudly opposed everything from Farm Aid to equal pay for women, VAWA, and infrastructure which are widely supported by the majority of Ohioans. Under his rule, our district has languished without reliable internet in many areas! Gerrymandering has given us an anti-government actor who likes to shout on TV but leaves us without resources and support for our community. Gerrymandering leads to representatives who are

unaccountable and only focused on pleasing their primary voters & donors because their district is in the bag for them.

OH4 is currently 65%R-35%D but Dublin is not. Dublin is one community. It is the 16th largest city in the state and the 2nd largest city situated in 3 counties. Our school district is the 10th largest district in the state (>15K students) where neighborhoods span 3 counties united by common interests, goals and activities. Forty percent of families in Dublin schools live outside the city limits in neighborhoods that border county lines. 6000 Dublin City Schools voters are split into District 4 in Union County. There are 2 elementary schools, a middle school & a high school in Union County. Approximately 25% of Dublin students reside in Union County and OH4 where our voices are lost in a sea of rural voters. We essentially have taxation without representation because Union Co. is not unified with the rest of Dublin in Congress. Delaware and Union County are the fastest growing counties in Ohio thanks to thriving Dublin neighborhoods, yet you insist on dividing us in Congress. Dublin is a suburb of Columbus. While splitting by county lines is not prohibited, it harms constituents here. Our voices are intentionally diluted.

Dublin is home to a large immigrant community (25% of our total) which is also split by gerrymandering. We have a diverse community with a large Asian population. Their voices are not accurately represented in white, rural OH4. Current maps split our neighborhoods by house and street. We're the 2nd house on our street at the Delaware - Union County line. We're in District 4, yet 2 houses away is in District 12 and it's like this in neighborhoods throughout our community. Dublin neighbors are confused about who their representative is due to these cracked districts. In fact, Franklin County Dublin residents are unaware that so many of us are in another county and another district because Dublin is Dublin to us. Dublin neighbors split into District 4 have the same priorities as our Dublin neighbors in District 12. In our daily lives we don't divide by county, our representation shouldn't either. It's unreasonable for a suburb of 50K to be cracked into 2-3 districts!

The Ohio Citizens Redistricting Map has all of the Dublin community together in one district. It's a YES! The House Dem map dropped over the weekend could be revised to add the Union County portion instead of splitting Wyandot Co. In the Senate Republican map, Dublin should be together instead of cracking Clintonville with 2/3 of Dublin. As they stand now, our voices in Dublin have been intentionally silenced in all 4 legislative maps by throwing us in with rural counties using geography, instead of community. You have refused to follow the constitutional amendments we approved at every step. This is not what the fair maps voters demanded look like. We ask you to put our Dublin community together in one Congressional district.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.