

## **Matthew Krug written testimony for the 10 Nov 2021 hearing of the Ohio House Government Oversight Committee**

As a League of Women Voters community mapmaking volunteer, our group's map-making activity was limited to communities within Montgomery County. Regarding the specific issue of leaving Montgomery County in-tact so that Dayton's outlying communities \*within Montgomery County\* are not severed from Dayton which is their urban center of gravity: neither map is especially objectionable. That is, most of the Montgomery county Dayton-centric urban communities are in the same district, and therefore could in theory jointly appeal to a representative for advocacy on issues common to regional urban centers. However, this analysis leaves out something critically important. In both the House and the Senate maps, Dayton is in district 10, and in both cases district 10 was clearly designed to assure that rural voters will outnumber urban ones by a large enough margin that Dayton-area urban communities will be denied any chance of electing a representative from the Democratic party. This is despite Dayton being the 4th-largest metropolitan center in the state, and despite the clear voting preferences of Dayton and its surrounding urban centers for Democratic party representatives. In the Senate's proposed map, Warren County is included in district 10, but the north-east corner of Montgomery County, and the four closely-associated urban centers east of Dayton (Xenia, Fairborn, Yellow Springs, Springfield, all in neighboring Greene County) are all excluded. This choice was clearly made with the purpose of cracking these communities apart to assure Republican party success in two districts instead of the more natural choice of allowing these communities to jointly have a political voice in their state in the same district as Dayton. The House's proposed map is even more blatant: District 10 includes all of Montgomery, Greene and Clinton Counties, but only includes a portion of Clark County, excising Springfield with surgical precision. This was clearly not a random choice, but again a calculated maneuver to assure two Republican-controlled districts rather than allowing the Dayton area to elect a Democratic-party representative as would be their strong preference.

A personal comment: when my family moved here several years ago from out of state, we felt reassured that Ohio was a politically-moderate state with nearly-split electorate that I assumed would produce balanced policy preferences. Since that time, I've been alarmed at the extreme nature of some of the positions taken by our state representatives - positions taken despite the fairly narrow partisan margin in the state electorate, and directly enabled by our gerrymandered districts. I was hopeful when I learned about the promise of a constitutional fix to our gerrymandering problem, and expected that the dubious politics and policies being generated in Columbus would be short-lived and that sanity and a pivot toward a voter-first ethic would be on the way. Seeing now how the Commission has disregarded the clear will of the voters for a bipartisan and fundamentally fair redistricting process, how the commission has chosen obfuscation and self-interest over transparency and institutional health, how the commission has chosen party over state and country - I am running out of optimism for Ohio and seriously questioning the wisdom of moving my family here.

I thank you for your time and attention,

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