

Opponent Testimony on State House Bill 479

Government Oversight Committee

November 10, 2021

Submitted by:

Ann Shroyer

Chair Wilkins, Vice Chair White, Ranking Member Brown, and members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to present this testimony in opposition to House Bill 479.

My name is Ann Shroyer and I am a resident of Delaware County and current resident of the 12th Congressional District – a gerrymandered marvel that stretches like an ‘L’ from Mansfield to Zanesville with a tail made of Clintonville.

I oppose the current maps because it is ridiculous that my city of Westerville – on the north east side of Columbus be included in a district that stretches to include my home town of Wapakoneta on the West side of the state, down to Champaign county, all with the benefit of continuing to elect Jim Jordan to Congress. Where gerrymandering has allowed him to be re-elected repeatedly while actually producing nothing for constituents other than repeated yelling soundbites. He held up the Farm Bill for his own grandstanding – the farm bill – in a district I drove through last night and watched combines in fields in the dark taking off the remaining soy beans and corn from fields dried from a fortunate week of no rain. He does not even serve his current district adequately, and now my community will be lumped into in his incompetence.

Gerrymandering has very real effects on the lives of Ohioans – as I witnessed in House committees in the past few weeks, where even though Ohio is above average in the nation in gun violence deaths, our Ohio State Legislature is focused on training teachers to shoot and kill our school children. Gun violence is not addressed at the state or national level because of this continued gerrymandering so that our Representatives are only beholden to their financial benefactors, not their voters.

I moved here back to Ohio nearly 2 years ago fall from Central Pennsylvania – where my Representative there did not listen to voters and frequently did fundraisers OUT OF STATE with Rep Jordan because being responsive to big

donors was more important than doing the work of holding town halls within the district. The one town hall he did do, I had the opportunity to call him out for his poor voting record to protect victims of domestic violence – important to me for many reasons, but partially because that summer a nearby neighbor – who I did not know but had seen gardening the day before – was shot and killed in her driveway by her husband – on a road I took everyday from my home, on a road named for the Country Club – the golf course of which that was steps away. This former congressman of mine continued to argue with me that most domestic violence deaths were not perpetrated with a gun (false in PA, as statistics for 10 years showed the majority were by gun). Despite me telling him I knew the woman who tried to save the shooting victim, by attempting to hold the victim's wounds together long enough for emergency personnel to arrive. This congressman – beholden to gun lobbying group money – continued to argue against me and another neighbor piped up in the Town Hall to say he lived next door to this shooting and saw this husband and murderer then go into his backyard and shoot himself. And yet my Congressman was not moved, because we were just voters - we did not have thousands in independent expenditure money to give to him, so our voice was not important.

And so it will be for me here in Ohio – in this new district that I will be drawn that is unrepresented by a Congressman that does not even currently provide most services for its mostly rural residents and now my suburban city on the other side of Columbus from most of the district will be included into his vehicle for fundraising.

I would ask you to vote no on these proposed districts as mine is just one small example of taking the voice from voters and dividing communities to continue to allow lobbyists and corporate money to be the true constituents of our elected officials. Vote no for gun violence victims alone – who have not been heard by my representatives, nor the Governor – partially because he fell asleep the last time I testified in a hearing about redistricting. Please stay alert and attentive to the VOTERS and vote no on these gerrymandered maps.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Shroyer