

## **Testimony of Rosemary Prostko (Allegheny Regional Hearing)**

Good morning Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am not here to point fingers or call names. As a common Citizen I want to share my alarm with you. I listen to and read the news and hear distressing out cries. I talk to people who are also alarmed. Many in our country have lost their faith in our elected government.

It is becoming evident that the words spoken by Abraham Lincoln are no longer true. Our government does not appear to be "of" the people. It seems people who are elected today have their own money to run campaigns or know people who can give large amounts of money. As a result, fewer and fewer people can run for public office.

When a person is elected, they automatically "owe" something to their donors for helping them. Please don't try to tell me large donors have no standing with those who win office. That makes no sense. Why do they give if they expect nothing in return? Therefore, I and others must believe politicians are guided not "by" me but "by" those they know and listen to. If they have no influence in decision making why can't I see their names?

Which brings us to the subject of the day-Fair Voting Districts. It has been said over and over but I must say it again. The districts must be drawn "for" the good of the people in the district and not "for" the good of the politicians and their donors.

Many people do not vote every year because they say their vote doesn't count. They feel they have no impact on who is elected or what laws are passed. WHY VOTE? If we have fairly drawn districts it will help all voters, regardless of their party.

The majority Republican Legislators have an incentive to draw fair maps. This year and perhaps in the future a Democratic Governor can veto the maps if he/she thinks them unfair. The PA Supreme Court has the same Chief Justice who ruled in 2019 that the Republican maps were extremely partisan and violated the Pennsylvania Constitution. State law makers cannot appeal to the Supreme Court of the United States because the Court has declared they cannot intervene in State elections.

After all the money is spent and time wasted to appeal unfair maps when will they be ready? Will we miss the Primary?

The majority of United States citizens see themselves as fair. All but the most partisan on both sides want every vote to count. Gerrymandered districts are not fair, everyone's vote does not count. The Legislature has a chance to restore some faith in our electoral system.