

- Hello – I am Sean Meloy, the Vice President of Political Programs at LGBTQ Victory Fund, the only non-partisan group dedicated to elected LGBTQ people at all levels of government. I also serve on Governor Wolf’s LGBTQ Affairs Commission.
- A project I’ve developed as Vice President of Political Programs at LGBTQ Victory Fund “We Belong Together” which embarks on a first-of-its-kind NATIONAL effort for the LGBTQ community, with four primary objectives:
 - Educate allied organizations, elected officials and redistricting authorities (like this) on why LGBTQ people are a legitimate “community of interest”;
 - Provide resources and information to advocates and organizations ready to engage redistricting authorities;
 - Partner with local and state-based organizations on testimony to redistricting authorities; and
 - Gather and provide the LGBTQ population data necessary to assist mapmakers.
- Historically, LGBTQ people are largely absent from discussions on redistricting – among redistricting entities and elected officials, in media stories and importantly, within the LGBTQ movement itself.
- Yet we know how consequential redistricting is for LGBTQ representation. A line drawn in the middle of a neighborhood with a large LGBTQ population – or even a line drawn to cut off a corner of that neighborhood – can be the difference between electing an LGBTQ person, an ally, or antito office
- However there was no entity singularly focused on ensuring the LGBTQ community was considered a “community of interest” and there still lacks the LGBTQ population data necessary to be as considered as other COI, although that has been improved since LGBTQ gained marriage equality in the last decade and same sex marriage information is available from the ACS of 2018.
- However, over the last two years a record amount of anti-LGBTQ legislation has been proposed, including here in Pennsylvania, where we can still be fired from our jobs, kicked out of our homes, and denied other opportunities just because of who we are and who we love.
- LGBTQ people are underrepresented in Congress and the PA Legislature; PA has never elected an out LGBTQ person to congress or statewide office
- LGBTQ communities are heavily concentrated in many cities and dividing up those communities could be part of an effort to limit LGBTQ voices
- This redistricting entity must ensure LGBTQ people are considered a “community of interest” so we can ensure we have lines that are not drawn to purposely divide LGBTQ neighborhoods (or any other COI) and keep those communities together.
- Right now, we have just 986 LGBTQ elected officials in the entire U.S. – just 0.19% of elected positions despite being 5.6% of the US population. We need to elect 28,116 more for equitable representation.
- Young people moving into lots of places like Pittsburgh – they are identifying as 16%+ LGBTQ.
 - LGBTQ people are severely underrepresented and it comes with enormous consequences – as we can see with the anti-trans bills in state legislatures and lack of protections for LGBTQ people in places, just like here in PA, which stands at odds with all of our fellow NE/Mid Atlantic states.
 - This redistricting effort should tread new ground and ensure LGBTQ people are considered a community of interest and analyze and aggregate data to that end.

- California's Redistricting Authority did this in 2011 and it has led to them being a leader on LGBTQ representation, including several congressional, state legislative, and municipal districts that have a propensity to elect out LGBTQ people and/or Allies
- We would welcome support of this commission to help ensure LGBTQ people are represented all around PA.