

Testimony of PA State Rep. Doyle Heffley (R-Carbon)  
Northeast Regional Congressional Redistricting Hearing  
Kingston, PA, Oct. 18, 2021

Good afternoon, Chairman Grove, Minority Chair Conklin, and members of the House State Government Committee. As a state representative, I represent the residents of the 122<sup>nd</sup> Legislative District in Carbon County. Thank you for this opportunity to appear before you today to discuss the upcoming congressional redistricting plan for Pennsylvania.

I commend the chairman and this committee for holding these hearings and providing for a transparent process that includes public input.

My testimony will focus on ensuring we have a redistricting process that adheres to our Constitution and allows for meaningful public participation – a process that is not influenced by members of partisan special interests, unelected bureaucrats, or activist judges. This authority was given to the Commonwealth's elected state representatives, senators, and governor, who have the responsibility to enact legislation that will redraw the boundaries of our state's congressional districts.

Every resident of this Commonwealth has a stake in this process. No voices should be denied, nor should any be elevated. I have spoken to residents throughout the 122<sup>nd</sup> District – many of whom work full time and are unable to attend these hearings. I am testifying on behalf of them today.

Our guidance is one person, one vote. My focus is to keep Carbon County whole, in one congressional district, so that my constituents will have a voice in selecting who represents them in Congress. Historical ties and voter turnout in recent elections has confirmed that residents in the 122<sup>nd</sup> Legislative District support our current representation in the 9<sup>th</sup> Congressional District. It is my hope that we will continue to reside in a district that reflects our communities and our values. Smaller counties like ours should not be carved up further, reducing our influence in national matters.

I have a serious concern that progressive, special interest groups will have more of an influence in the process than the voters of Pennsylvania in how the boundaries will be redrawn. With that in mind, I believe it would be short-sighted for anyone to think that prison inmates should not be counted in the districts where they are incarcerated. After all, they use the local infrastructure for water, sewer, broadband, and more. Rural communities often rely on congressional support for funding of infrastructure projects and could be left out if they are underrepresented. The committee needs to address this blatant partisan attempt at gerrymandering because it will result in differing populations in Pennsylvania's legislative and congressional districts, which conflicts with the uniformity clause in the state Constitution.

We need an open and transparent bipartisan redistricting process, which I hope will result in legislation that the General Assembly can support and enact in a timely manner so we can attract worthy candidates to run for office. At the end of the day, our responsibility is to listen to the voters who elected us, and not to the special interest groups.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.