



Thank you, Mr/Ms Chairman,

I'm tired. We are all tired. We are tired of the political shenanigans that go into gerrymandered districts with non-Euclidean geometric shapes that span time and space. It's been formulaic at this point for the past two decades. First, partisans create maps that effectively disenfranchise voters. Then other groups correctly sue and take the legislature to the courts. The courts look at the maps and rule that they are unconstitutional, which took 8 years the last time. The districts get redrawn to be fair for a couple years, and then we start all over again. Meanwhile, Americans get disenfranchised, politicians see no consequences for their actions, and we all end up worse off for it.

Can we skip it this time? Seriously. We, the voting public, are tired of these elementary schoolyard games. We ask only that you serve in our legislature with a sense of integrity, honor, and duty to your constituents. Let's stop wasting time and money on these battles where every Pennsylvanian ends up on the losing end.

This is your warning. History shows that if you make democracy more difficult, you'll make governing impossible. I don't want that. I want to see us as a unified people. So Democrats and Republicans need to work together in Harrisburg and be reasonable with the new maps.

As we move forward as a country, there needs to be a reckoning about who we are as a people. Are we fair, equitable, impartial, and cohesive? Or will historians call our society unjust, nakedly biased, and selfish? I think we can be better. Instead of setting up fights that can be avoided, we can make our district lines reasonable from the beginning. The alternative leads us down a dark road -- but one that we can evade with relative ease. All you have to do is be honest with the districting, honest with the Pennsylvanian public, and honest with yourselves.

Thank you for your time.

## **Southeast Regional Hearing**

### **Written testimony (as of 10/13/21) submitted by:**

- 1. Tobin W.,**  
Douglassville, PA

Politically, Montgomery County is the same as Philadelphia. I am a Berks Republican living at the very Southeastern edge of Berks (Douglassville) and historically was in a red district. This is a conservative area. We were redistricted to suburban Montgomery County area and now our votes do not count for federal elections. We are Berks and have to vote with Montgomery County, although Douglass Township has a lot of farms and agricultural businesses.

- 2. Allan P.,**  
West Chester, PA

Democracy requires that House districts be reasonably contiguous and representative of the area's population. Drawing district boundaries that are clearly designed to coral the majority of the voters registered to the majority party into a minority of districts is gerrymandering and is a form of Apartheid.

- 3. Lisa C.,**  
Bryn Athyn, PA

I live in the tiny borough of Bryn Athyn, which is sandwiched between the two "Morelands," Upper Moreland and Lower Moreland, in Montgomery County. I've lived and voted in or near Bryn Athyn since the late 70s, although I've had ties to the town my whole life, as my relatives have lived here going back three generations.

Bryn Athyn is a tiny borough and benefits greatly from a relationship with Lower Moreland that enables it to piggyback onto LM contracts for trash hauling, waste disposal, and road paving. BA works closely with LM Public Works on snowplowing, and benefits from use of its Public Works storage facility. LM in its turn relies on BA for ambulance service to its residents and businesses. Both fire companies are suffering from a lack of volunteers and are discussing closer cooperation as one solution. BA and LM are in almost daily contact regarding a variety of issues.

BA cooperates with Upper Moreland as well, on the maintenance and snowplowing of Masons Mill Road along the border between the two municipalities. BA's one large commercial property, the Masons Mill Business Park, is serviced by the Upper Moreland/Hatboro Joint Sewer Authority.

What I would ask is that Bryn Athyn be mapped into the same congressional district as Lower Moreland. Inclusion with Upper Moreland as well would be a benefit, though a less important one.

Thank you.

**4. James V.,**  
Easton, PA

Gerrymandering needs to stop! Counties and college campuses should not be split into different voting districts. One party doing everything possible to secure as many seats as it can by packing and cracking districts is criminal and those who attempt this should be booted out of office. Also, please stop wasting taxpayer money on silly voter fraud investigations and spend your time passing legislation that improves healthcare, infrastructure and education. Charter schools are a scam, FYI.

**5. Adam B.,**  
Lincoln University, PA

It is imperative that the PA Senate and General Assembly collaborate in non-partisan manner to establish districts for the general assembly, state senate, and US Congress. The redistricting plan shall not, when considered on a statewide basis, unduly favor or disfavor any political party. Use the following criteria as set forth in the following order of priority:

1. Districts shall be geographically contiguous.
2. Districts shall provide minority groups with an equal opportunity to participate in the political process and shall not dilute or diminish their ability to elect candidates of choice.
3. Districts shall minimize the division of communities of interest to the extent practicable. A community of interest is defined as an area with recognized similarities of interests, including but not limited to economic, social, cultural, geographic, or historic identities. Communities of interest shall not include common relationships with political parties, officeholders, or political candidates.
4. Districts shall respect the geographic integrity of political subdivision boundaries to the extent that preceding criteria have been satisfied.

In the absence of codified rules, the criteria listed above are essential to deter partisan gerrymandering. Doing so will enable constructive public hearings to explain how and why the districts were drawn. This is the most equitable and efficient way to establish the new districts. Entering into a partisan fight between the legislature and the PA governor's office perhaps culminating in a case before PA Supreme court is an easily avoidable embarrassment if these criteria are leveraged.

**6. Ruth Y.,**  
Schwenksville, PA

Testimony for House State Government Committee: Congressional Maps 2021

I live in Lower Frederick Township—Montgomery County. Before the maps were redrawn in 2018, I was in the 8th Congressional District. After the maps were redrawn, I landed in the 4th Congressional District.

I am confused as to why my testimony on redistricting is being collected and curated by a partisan caucus website... For the purposes of election integrity, this information and the curation of redistricting testimony should be handled in a non-partisan manner on the General Assembly website.

After the 2011 redistricting, Montgomery County (my county) was the poster child for gerrymandered congressional districts. The county was carved up into 5 congressional districts and not one

congressional representative lived in Montgomery County. All of these congressional reps could have had the best intentions in the world, but because their districts sprawled across multiple densely populated counties, no rep could focus their attention solely on the needs of Montgomery County. Instead of ensuring good representation, the districts had all been surgically drawn to ensure the outcome. Partisan data was used to determine an index value for each precinct. A positive index value indicated that the precinct leaned red while a negative index value indicated that the precinct leaned blue. The index values of all the precincts in the district were added up and if the result was positive, the district leaned red. If the result was negative, the district leaned blue. If the mapmakers (or the majority party leadership) didn't like the result, the mapmakers moved the lines. We sometimes hear our reps defending gerrymandered maps by noting that the "voter has the last word." But it's really hard to vote the bums out when they are gerrymandered in. This gerrymandering for partisan and incumbent advantage was cheating and it has led to extremism on both sides, refusal to compromise and general dysfunction in Washington.

A good fair map would reflect that there are areas in Pennsylvania that will always elect a Republican while other areas in Pennsylvania will always elect a Democrat. A good fair map will also reflect the purple areas. Purple areas should be drawn so that so that the outcome of the election will swing with the allegiances of the purple voters. These purple areas would allow Pennsylvania's congressional delegation to be responsive to the shifts in priorities of Pennsylvania voters. Genuinely purple districts would force candidates of all parties to appeal to the voters in the middle. Because representatives from purple areas would have to answer to their "purple" voters, these representatives would have to be purple in Washington...Such reps would force compromise, moderation, and they would counter the dysfunction that we have unfortunately come to expect.

My township is the epitome of purple. We are just on the bubble of development...go east and the land is "suburban sprawl". Go west and the land is still rural. We have voted for Barack Obama, Mitt Romney, Donald Trump, and Joe Biden. We have voted for Madeleine Dean and Kathy Barnette. Our supervisors are a mix of R and D as are our township volunteers. In 2011, Lower Frederick was assigned to a pre-baked red district. In 2018, Lower Frederick was assigned to a pre-baked blue district. Lower Frederick would be a good fit for a very purple district.

In the upcoming weeks, you'll have a bunch of maps to review. There will be a bunch of maps that fit the criteria of a "good" map in terms of county splits, majority minority districts, compactness, contiguity. From the "good" maps, choose the map with the least partisan bias that also allows purple areas elect purple reps. With any luck, those districts will be "duking" it out for the voter in the middle and we'll send some moderates to Washington as a result. And with any real luck, my township will end up in one of those purple districts.

Here is a link to a map that puts my township in a purple district.

<https://davesredistricting.org/join/c5f82e2d-81bc-4ece-a00a-979f94d55bc0>

**7. Kim K.,**  
Oxford, PA

I am a resident of Chester County and live in the 13th legislative district. I want to thank State Representative John Lawrence for recalling my interest in the dangers of gerrymandering and sending me information on this hearing.

I am not an expert in any way on this subject but want you to know that PA voters are watching.

Please be careful to draw districts that adopt LACRA mapping guardrails.

Focus on maintaining the voting power of similarly minded community members by being careful not to split its members among several districts and by doing so limit their relevancy.

It's simple. Draw fair districts. Meaning that in the end, every individual voter's vote counts.

Thank you.

**8. Gillian S., President, League of Women Voters of Radnor Twp.**  
Villanova, PA

To: The Honorable Seth Grove, Chairman, Pennsylvania House State Government Committee

From: The League of Women Voters (LWV) of Radnor Township, Delaware County, Pennsylvania

Date: October 5, 2021

On behalf of the League of Women Voters of Radnor Township, a member of the League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania, I respectfully submit the following testimony to the Pennsylvania House State Government Committee.

The League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania is committed to securing fair electoral districts for all Pennsylvanians.

The context for this testimony is described in a June 5, 2021 Letter to the Editor from the Delaware County League of Women Voters— Inter League Organization, as follows:

“This year, as in 2011, Pennsylvania will once again lose a congressional district due to loss of population. When that happened a decade ago, the Republican-controlled Legislature merged two districts held by Democrats. As a result, two incumbent Democrats were forced to run against one another, while the Republicans maintained their pre-existing seats. Statewide gerrymandering resulted in a 13-5 Republican advantage in Pennsylvania’s congressional delegation from 2012 to 2018.”

The League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania and its partners challenged the state legislature in court on the grounds that the 2011 congressional maps were the result of a biased redistricting process. When the new congressional maps were drawn in 2018, the Letter to the Editor continues, “.... Delaware

County (was) once again its own congressional district, with contiguous slivers of Philadelphia and Montgomery counties.”

To avoid any possibility of new, lengthy and costly litigation, the League of Women Voters of Radnor Township urges the Pennsylvania House State Government Committee to draw maps which are fairly representative of the citizens who live in each district. The means to accomplish this lie in greater transparency and more public engagement in the process.

We advocate and support:

- A user-friendly website for free public access to data, maps and all redistricting information
- Multiple statewide public hearings before and after redistricting plans are drafted to ensure that the Committee is responsive to the public
- Meetings that are all subject to the Open Meetings Law, and hearings that must
- Be live-streamed and set up to allow distance testimony via Zoom or another platform
- Be held at convenient times for the public and in physical locations which are accessible to mass transit so that all those who wish to testify will be able to do so
- The ability to submit a redistricting plan or part of a plan which the Committee must review (this applies to every Pennsylvanian)
- A written report of decisions, rationale, and process

The League of Women Voters of Radnor Township supports the values of The Legislative and Congressional Redistricting Act (LACRA).

We call for clear and measurable redistricting criteria that will:

- Mandate compact and contiguous federal and state districts, with minimal splitting of municipal and county lines between districts
- Add enforceable limits on splitting counties beyond what is required by the even distribution of population, and ban dividing voting precincts
- Protect racial and language minorities against discrimination in the mapping process
- Outlaw district plans designed to protect incumbents or discriminate against a specific political party
- Promote keeping communities of interest intact
- Respond to voter preferences as measured by widely accepted tests
- Conform districts to natural boundaries such as mountains and rivers

Conclusion:

A redistricting process reflecting the principles above is essential for the future economic, environmental and social well-being of Pennsylvania. In 2019, adults 19 – 25 years of age made up 7.9% of the state’s population, below the national average of 8.7%.\* Keeping educated young citizens in the Commonwealth depends on many factors, chief among them the confidence that government at all levels truly represents them, and that the representatives they elect will be responsive, responsible and accountable.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony.

**9. Anne M., President, League of Women Voters of Central Delaware County**  
Glen Mills, PA

To: The Honorable Seth Grove, chairman, Pa. House State Government Committee and fellow committee members,

I am the president of the League of Women Voters of Central Delaware County and together with the Radnor League of Women Voters, we comprise the LWVs in the entire county of Delaware.

We are especially eager to testify before this committee as you get down to the business of reapportioning the congressional districts in yet another decade in which we will lose a congressional district statewide.

The most important thing we want to say to you is: Please maintain Delaware County as a whole in whatever congressional district you devise for the next 10 years. The voters of Delaware County were victims of the 2011 reapportionment in which the largest part of our county was part of Congressional District 7 – a district so gerrymandered to preserve Republican dominance that it took on a shape dubbed Donald kicking Goofy, spread over disjointed dollops of five counties – for the purpose of preserving a Republican majority in that one district. CD 7 became a national laughingstock and was a catalyst in the Pennsylvania Supreme Court’s decision in 2018 to redistrict the congressional districts itself. The voters in the bits and pieces of the other four counties that made up District 7 were also victimized by being completely detached from their own communities of interest, again for the sole purpose of attaching Republican votes to CD 7 without regard for their problems, issues or geographical distance from the other parts of the district.

The 2018 reapportionment carried out by the Court restored Delaware County to one congressional district – CD 5 – as it had been historically and that realignment did much to restore the voters’ confidence in their elected officials. Indeed, the old CD 7 went without a congressional representative for nine months due to the resignation of Congressman Patrick Meehan over a personal matter. That left the voters with no one to contact about legislative matters such as potential repeal of the Affordable Care Act and other momentous and small legislative matters during those months. Both the gerrymandering and the resignation were traumatic for voters of all stripes within the district.

The current District 5 (all of Delaware County, Southwest Philadelphia and a portion of Bryn Mawr in Montgomery County) is now a district that comports with the requirements the State Supreme Court laid out in its landmark decision, League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania v. Pennsylvania – Pa. Sup. Ct. 2018 – It is compact, contiguous, divides relatively few political entities geographically and, for the most part, represents common communities of interest while still meeting the necessary population (670,000)



to protect the principle of one person one vote. Delaware County's population grew to 575,000 in the 2020 census.

Here is what the Supreme Court said in the congressional reapportionment case:

An essential part of such an inquiry is an examination of whether the congressional districts created under a redistricting plan are: composed of compact and contiguous territory; as nearly equal in population as practicable; and which do not divide any county, city, incorporated town, borough, township, or ward, except where necessary to ensure equality of population. Order. We recognize that other factors have historically played a role in the drawing of legislative districts, such as the preservation of prior district lines, protection of incumbents, or the maintenance of the political balance which existed after the prior reapportionment. See, e.g., Holt I, 38 A.3d at 1235. However, we view these factors to be wholly subordinate to the neutral criteria of compactness, contiguity, minimization of the division of political subdivisions, and maintenance of population equality among congressional districts.

(4) Districts shall respect communities of interest, neighborhoods, and political subdivisions to the extent practicable and after compliance with the requirements of paragraphs (1) through (3). A community of interest is defined as an area with recognized similarities of interests, including but not limited to ethnic, racial, economic, tribal, social, cultural, geographic or historic identities. The term communities of interest may, in certain circumstances, include political subdivisions such as counties, municipalities, tribal lands and reservations, or school districts, but shall not include common relationships with political parties or political candidates.

The court pointedly disallowed the subordination of these neutral principles to political expediency: When, however, it is demonstrated that, in the creation of congressional districts, these neutral criteria have been subordinated, in whole or in part, to extraneous considerations such as gerrymandering for unfair partisan political advantage, a congressional redistricting plan violates Article I, Section 5 of the Pennsylvania Constitution.

#### Delaware County

Delaware County is one of the oldest counties in Pennsylvania, having been laid out (as the eastern part of Chester County) by William Penn and separated into its own county in 1789. It is one of the smallest in land area but is, at the same time, one of the most densely populated of Pennsylvania counties. As Quaker farmers tamed the land and the county grew and developed along with the railroads and roadways that cut through it and the mills that sprouted along its creek banks throughout the 19th century, Delaware County established a strong history as a unified community of interests.

Much of its 575,000 population is condensed along its eastern lip adjacent to Philadelphia with a great many immigrants added to its lively mix. Our communities vary widely, from the well-to-do Mainline communities of Radnor and Bryn Mawr to our only Class 1 city, the impoverished city of Chester, with a population of about 31,000 on the Delaware River waterfront, to beautiful old suburbs such as Springfield and Swarthmore, to the many small working class towns – Yeadon, Darby, Folcroft, Colwyn, Eddystone – up along the river and next to Philadelphia that we call our “river wards.” The formerly largely rural western part of the county has also grown steadily into sprawling shopping sectors and large senior citizens housing, such as Maris Grove.

We do feel that the county as a whole forms a commonality of mutual interests: Five of our public-school districts were recently recognized as among the top 50 in the state. We have 15 colleges and universities within our borders. Philadelphia International Airport is almost completely within our

borders. We have many medical, pharmaceuticals and technology companies on one side of the county and several riverfront industries along the other, including Covanta, the country's largest trash to steam plant, the Boeing Helicopter plant and the burgeoning gas storage and shipping facilities at Marcus Hook. We are about to get our first countywide public health department, a vastly improved 911 call center and other countywide improvements. We also vastly upgraded our election department last year to handle the overwhelming influx of mail-in ballots. Our Delco district attorney has implemented a youth at risk program in Chester that has greatly reduced gun violence even as it spirals out of control in Philadelphia.

We also have countywide problems and issues – our jail is going private to public, the county's juvenile detention center was recently shut down, as was the highly regarded Glen Mills School. Trash disposal, sewer and water issues are all coming to a head – all of which requires urgently someone that Delaware Countians have its representative fighting for us in Washington.

Voters in Congressional District 5 feel a great deal more enfranchised than we ever did in the Donald Kicking Goofy era when we never even saw our congressman. We see our congresswoman now. She is out at events all weekend, every weekend. We can talk to her, even if we didn't vote for her. This is community. This is what happens when a voting district is made competitive and gives its voters a chance to pick their representative, not the other way round.

The Supreme Court again:

When an individual is grouped with other members of his or her community in a congressional district for purposes of voting, the commonality of the interests shared with the other voters in the community increases the ability of the individual to elect a congressional representative for the district who reflects his or her personal preferences. This approach ensures no political party's benefit or detriment. It simply achieves the constitutional goal of fair and equal elections for all of our Commonwealth's voters. Finally, these standards also comport with the minimum requirements for congressional districts guaranteed by the United States Constitution.

There will be tons of maps, suggestions and demands to reapportion the congressional districts this way or that. We hope and believe that our little corner of the state will be one of your easiest decisions and that you will decide to include our county as a whole in any new congressional district.

What the League of Women Voters insists on (indeed won its redistricting case on) is that the process be fair and open, with ample opportunities for public input, free access to the data you are using and a written final report detailing the process and rationale for your decisions.

**10. Ginny K.,**  
Newtown Square, PA

Having been a registered – and active – voter since the 70s, I have a deep-seated wish to believe that we do have a government of, for, and by the people. That voting matters. That our politicians are not actively seeking to disenfranchise some of us, but only to fairly accommodate change in our population when they draw up electoral districts. Unfortunately, the last redistricting of Pennsylvania made a mockery of that cherished belief. The gerrymandering was so very blatant, and so extreme, that it was demoralizing to witness and to be subjugated to. Our reapportionment leaders betrayed the electorate, the offices they occupied, and the founding principles of our nation. And they didn't even try a little bit

to hide what they were doing. The extraordinary disregard for free and fair elections was shocking. It was a sorry sight, and one that I hope you will not now repeat.

As required under Pennsylvania statute, the districts you draw up must be both compact and contiguous, not merely contiguous like the malign Goofy-kicking-Donald district in which I found myself nearly ten years ago. I am proud of the League of Women Voters for bringing suit to challenge that woeful result. I wish I might be able to be proud of the redistricting results this time, without the need for litigation and a court action to deliver just voting districts for the people of Pennsylvania. Will you prove yourselves fair stewards of the responsibility you have been given? Are you so cynical and self-serving to find that idea laughable? Will you dismiss it as you go forward? If so, I will pray for the courts to erase any biased plans you may put forward, and that the voters will rise up and throw you to the curb. Don't disgrace us like the last committee did. Don't knowingly and deliberately betray the people of the Commonwealth.

I do hope that is not too much to ask.

**11. Olivia N.,**  
Hatboro, PA

I am a resident of Upper Moreland and junior student at Ursinus College. I have lived and learned in Montgomery County my entire life, and I love this area. I believe that it would be best to preserve the integrity of southeastern PA Congressional districts by not dividing up Montgomery County and Bucks County into several different and strangely shaped districts as they were after the 2010 census. In September at Ursinus College, students from all over the state and beyond came together at an event called Redrawing Democracy to learn about the importance of making sure our redistricting process is as fair and transparent as possible this time around. Students learned that the maps drawn after the 2010 census were used nationwide as prime examples of gerrymandering. It felt embarrassing and frustrating to know that where I live was unfairly redistricted. At Redrawing Democracy, we talked about the infamous 2011 7th Congressional District, which had been dubbed "Goofy Kicking Donald Duck" for its strange shape. Anyone can take a look at that district and recognize that there is something wrong with the redistricting process. This year, I hope that Pennsylvania will not have districts as oddly drawn for the sake of PA's future and my own and a resident and voting citizen of PA. In democracies, the voters choose representatives, not the other way around. Please work to preserve the integrity of our democracy and draw the maps with fairness, community, and competitiveness in mind. The young people of the state are counting on you to do so.

**12. Sandra K.,**  
Pipersville, PA

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on the congressional redistricting of Southeastern Pennsylvania.

I have lived in Pennsylvania for 32 years and have been a voter in Bucks County for 26 years. I spent my entire working career (30+ years) in the pharmaceutical industry. Much of that time was in a regulatory and compliance role ensuring adherence to the letter and spirit of federal laws and regulations. I am submitting testimony today asking that the Pennsylvania House State Government Committee adheres to and complies with the letter and spirit of the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution and the Voting Rights Act (VRA) when drawing congressional district maps.

Specifically, as you consider the congressional redistricting of the Southeast region of Pennsylvania which includes the counties of Berks, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Lehigh, Montgomery and Northampton, I ask that you:

1. Keep Bucks County in a single congressional district

Bucks County has been in a single congressional district for over 170 years. A single district is optimal for engagement and interactions between county officials and the Congressional representative. Dividing Bucks County into 2 districts would add administrative complexities and double the work of the County Commissioners and the Congressional representatives: County Commissioners would be required to meet with 2 Congressional representatives and the Congressional representative would be required to meet with commissioners in 2 counties. Retaining Bucks County in a single congressional district is also the subject of a Resolution, recently passed by County Commissioners of Bucks (1 Republican and 2 Democrats).

2. Draw at least 1 congressional district to ensure effective representation of the population of Hispanics or Latinos

Though many parts of Pennsylvania lost residents since 2010, the population of the 7 counties of the Southeast region grew by 189,032 people over the last decade, with those identifying as Hispanic or Latino accounting for nearly 70% of that growth. A total of 405,724 people identify as Hispanics or Latinos in the Southeast region which accounts for 40% of the total population of Hispanics or Latinos in the Commonwealth. A large percentage of the Hispanic or Latino population in the Southeast region resides in the cities and municipalities of the greater Lehigh Valley region, in Berks (22.5%), Northampton (14.2%) and Lehigh (26.2%) counties. Hispanics or Latinos represent 69% of Reading, 54% of Allentown, 29% of Bethlehem and 22.6% of Easton. Those cities are located within a 52-mile radius of each other making it possible to draw a district that includes a substantial population of Hispanic or Latino people that is geographically compact and contiguous.

I ask that you draw a congressional district in the Southeast region that adheres to the federal requirements of 1. being as equal as “practicable” in population, and 2. Not diluting the power of minority groups, in this case, people who identify as Hispanic or Latino. Hispanics and Latinos are a important driver of growth in the Southeast Region, and they should be given the opportunity to see someone they vote for get elected.

3. Hold regional hearings like today’s to allow public input on and reaction to proposed congressional district maps

Residents of the 7 counties of the Southeast Region deserve an opportunity to review and provide feedback on a congressional district map that will impact their election choices for the next decade. The map should be made public at least 30 days prior to any scheduled vote. Availability of the map and the process for providing comments should be easily accessible by the general public on a user-friendly website. The preliminary map should show the proposed district lines as an overlay on a composite, illustrated, Pennsylvania county map with appropriate detail so the public can easily determine where they live and the impact of the proposed district boundaries. The hearings must be live streamed, held at convenient times for the public, and accommodate for multiple languages and those that are hearing or visually impaired.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

**13. John S.,**  
Brookhaven, PA

Please allow me the opportunity to comment on the redistricting currently before the Legislature. Delaware County is where Pennsylvania was founded by William Penn in 1682. We are 5th most populated County, but the 3rd smallest by area. Our traditions, culture, and social fabric require that Delaware County be kept whole regarding redistricting.

While we interact with all our neighboring counties, we have particular associations with Chester County, from which our county was carved in 1789. Both our Senatorial Districts extend into Chester County. One of our House Districts extends as far as Kennett Square in Chester County. One of our municipalities sends its students to Chester County schools. Most recently, Delaware County Council contracted with the Chester County Health Department during the pandemic. When the boundaries of the 5th Congressional District are adjusted, it is logical that they should shift in the same direction as the current state legislative boundaries and in line with historic precedent. This would provide clear federal and state overlaps that would allow elected officials to coordinate their efforts in a seamless manner.

Thank you for this opportunity to express my views on this important topic to the citizens of Delaware County, the birthplace of Pennsylvania.

**14. Jeanne O'H.,**  
Doylestown, PA

I think redistricting of Congressional districts needs virtually no people's input! ONLY the numbers of people within a reasonable distance (20 minutes) of polling places is fair to all. NO ONE should ever wait in an hour-long line or longer!!!!!!!!!! to vote!!! A computer can easily do the calculations. NO POLITICAL PARTY should use any other method!!! To do redistricting any other way is WRONG!!!!!!!!!!!!!! AND UNFAIR to everyone.

**15. Ruth S.,**  
Brookhaven, PA

It was my understanding that we already have an independent commission which is supposed to be drawing district lines both for state and Federal offices. I honestly don't understand why we are having these little gatherings when we have a commission already set up for this purpose. Is this more GOP lying and cheating going on? They claim all kinds of fraud when the only fraudsters found are Republicans. Let the independent redistricting commission do its work then let a bipartisan committee look at it to be sure both State and Federal lines have been drawn fairly. Our State Supreme Court can be the final arbiters if Republicans throw a tantrum. We know what Republicans do when they have charge of redistricting. We already did that and decided we didn't like it. We still don't

## **16. Nevaya W., Campus Vote Project**

Lititz, PA

I am a first-year student at Penn State University Main Campus. I am also participating in a college student Redistricting Fellowship with Campus Vote Project, an organization that is empowering college students to have a voice in their state's redistricting process. I am fairly new to this amazingly welcoming community, but I have visited enough times to know that it needs to be brought and kept together as a Community of Interest as part of our state's redistricting process.

Penn State and the State College community, including the surrounding townships, are full of energy and pride. One thing you will notice when visiting State College is the amount of people who live in the area and who wear clothing that represents the community. Penn State is known for its exciting events such as football games, THON, and many other events that locals always show out to and show their appreciation for the community through. When talking about the community, members may say things like, "There is no better feeling than being at Penn State or in State College." This is what I was told by alumni when I was deciding which college to attend, and it is something that has stuck with me ever since. It is a spot-on description of the feeling I get when being here. I would describe the campus and town as alive, energetic, and connected. Everyone here is happy to be here, hence the common name associated with State College, "Happy Valley."

State College is heavily populated with students, considering there are over 43,000 students who attend Penn State Main Campus. The main kinds of jobs people have within the community range from part-time jobs in restaurants, buildings on campus, and downtown local businesses to full-time jobs such as hundreds of faculty who teach at the university. Additionally, there are a number of people who participate in paid internships or federal work study jobs. Furthermore, our students live both on campus and in the surrounding communities. Over time, students build strong relationships with their peers and find homes in the community to live together. Moreover, there are many historical landmarks around State College such as the Lion Shrine and Old Main. The lion shrine is the statue of the universities' mascot and Old Main is the original building of the university.

The current Congressional and State Senate boundary lines do an okay job of keeping at least the physical campus together but is currently split between State House Districts 77 and 171. Also, parts of our surrounding community, where a large percentage of our community members live, should be included within our Congressional and State boundary lines. The boundaries of Penn State University should range from the southern end on W. College Ave. on route 26 all the way up to Loop Rd. The eastern side of campus should reach Shingleton Rd., while the west side should reach Big Hollow Rd. My community is different from other college communities because of the size of the school and the population. The community is bigger than how it is being portrayed through the current boundary lines.

What makes Penn State, my community, so special is that it is home to people from all around the world and attracts thousands of visitors on a regular basis. Thank you for listening, I hope my testimony will give you some insight into just how special my community is and how important it is to bring and keep it together.

## **17. Michael G., Campus Vote Project**

University Park, PA

I have lived in the State College community of Pennsylvania for four months. I am also participating in a college student Redistricting Fellowship with Campus Vote Project, an organization that is empowering college students to have a voice in their state's redistricting process. I would like you to keep my community, Penn State, together. This community is composed of undergraduate students, graduate students, and many of these constituents come from across the nation, including from throughout our home state. One thing this community has in common is the love and passion for Penn State. These constituents vary in ages from 18 years old to late twenties or early thirties (for graduate students). The housing that many of these students live in are residential halls, fraternity or sorority houses, and apartments. These different kinds of homes are a representation of how diverse our community is. Many places surrounding the Penn State University Park campus are locations for students and faculty to meet up and either do work, homework or catch up and grab a bite. Many students utilize the eateries and cafes to plan social events, meetings, and connect with other students. Many of these students take on part-time jobs to help afford the costs of living in this area. These small local businesses and eateries are what make the State College area so unique. Our area is filled with working college students, serving other Penn State students and other members of our community. The State College area has morphed into a small town that is full of life. The boundaries of this area are Toftrees, Park Forest Village, and Briarly. Toftrees boundaries extend to Cricklewood Dr. and Fox Hill Rd. and Hwy 99. Park Forest Village's boundaries are Valley Vista Dr. and extends to the intersection of Old Gatesburg Rd and N Science Park Rd. Lastly, Briarly's boundaries are located on Hwy 26 and W Whitehall Rd. and stretches to Hwy 322 or Atherton St. These small neighborhoods are located in the outskirts of State College. Many of these spots include apartment complexes that offer its residents many amenities. Currently, our campus community is split between multiple Congressional and State House districts. Specifically, at the Congressional level, the residential neighborhood between N Atherton St., W Clearview Ave., and Vairo Blvd. can be found in Congressional District 15, whereas the rest of the Penn State community is in Congressional District 12. And, at the State House level, our community is split in half between State House Districts 77 and 171. By dividing the State College community, our Congressional and State leaders have placed barriers on our voices, and this is an issue that many of my fellow Penn State students are unaware of. This reality puts Penn State students at a disadvantage and keeps them from having a powerful voice in our democracy.

In conclusion, it is important to have adequate representation for Penn State students. If we are able to properly represent the State College community, then every students' voice can be heard and we can be represented by those who are able to understand and advocate for our unique needs. I also want to highlight the importance of keeping all colleges and universities together as Communities of Interest throughout our state's redistricting process. Penn State's concerns are similar to our sibling institutions and, as such, should be considered accordingly. Thank you to those who have read this and I hope I have enlightened you a little bit more on the Penn State and State College community.

**18. Christopher R.,  
Shillington, PA**

Written Testimony for Committee – October 19, 2021 To Committee Members INTRODUCTION My name is C.R. born in the Reading Hospital just prior to Apollo 8 and happy to share my thoughts with you over the challenging and fundamental task you have before you to continue the work of our Founders from 1776 and 1787 on this fortress of American ideals with oceans on either side and sky above. What makes us an American, choosing to live in Pennsylvania?

For something as fundamental to our fragile democracy, we walk in the shoes of the founders of both the commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and founders who met in Philadelphia in 1776 later in 1787 to establish a self-government that maintains a liberal democracy with market based capitalism in a world at odds with this concept. Today, we violate Jefferson's ideal of generational constitutions leaving much to the dead hand to guide our system. Nevertheless, the Founders gave us the basic tools to keep this liberal democracy coupled with market-based capitalism to improve the human condition. But if we do not use the tools properly, as Franklin put it, we may lose this system.

Every ten years, or half a generation, the Framers of the Federal Constitution, required a census to be conducted. This massive, big data collection is key to understanding the Framers understanding and support of an ongoing process to keep change in our political system. They knew from Roman Empire and British Empire, the cost of stagnation. They wanted a government that responded to its citizens as a whole, every changing, not a system where elite aristocracy could rule forever. The Framers recognized every ten years it was time to redraw political maps in order to reflect changes that were inevitable, which was one of their stunning ideas.

The Framers were clear that political change must happen, otherwise leaving us with stagnation which would led to a government that no longer reflected the hopes and ideals of the citizens it no longer served. This type of government would become immoral in that it no longer operated with the best intentions of its representatives. In political terms, without the support of the citizens, the government would cease to operate in a moral sphere and slowly collapse.

Unfortunately, in the recent past, the Pennsylvania legislature has, due to pressure from outside Pennsylvania, chosen to embrace the immoral political weapon of gerrymandering. From courts to media, from business to citizens, the wide spread acknowledgement that Pennsylvania has become the most gerrymandered state has made international news and points to a process of parties picking the voters that best supports candidates it picks has upended American values as enshrined in the Pennsylvania Constitution and Federal Constitution. Gerrymandering in Pennsylvania has placed party goals and undemocratically elected partisan leaders choosing maps from partisan specialists who are morally bereft of belief in liberal democracies. There is a question to what end such gerrymandering is, what is the ultimate goal? The world already has large population under rule of unelected leaders using powerful technologies the Framers could only imagine in the halls of infernos.

Gerrymandering fights politics true goal of finding solutions for as many people as possible to improve the human condition and provide a path of opportunity for all to achieve their best in life.

Gerrymandering instead rewards the worst political behavior of intense tribalism and seeks to degrade the human condition with an end point of hopelessness or working towards the worst that politics can



bring. For those who think this is untrue, today, post COVID-19, one can merely look to the images of Afghanistan, the edge of civilization what would lie ahead should gerrymandering continue.

I want to turn your attention to what the Framers true genius was – we can always change a bad course and correct a past wrong.

I want to repeat that: the Framers true genius was and still is today – we can always change a bad course and correct a past wrong for a better future.

The Framers were not gods but men who had a deep belief that the human condition could be always improved and that future generations would not be tied to a past wrong or past history.

I would remind members to re-read the last few lines of the Declaration of Independence, where those that help forged a new nation in 1776: "...with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor." Today, you need not make that pledge but merely put aside partisan pulls and threats from those who sit far away from Berks County and the struggles average Berks countians have.

My testimony today is not about correcting past wrongs but considering the future of the year 2141. Today, I want the committee and entire legislature to consider not redistricting from your partisan political viewpoint, but from someone born in 2020, during the COVID19 pandemic. I want the committee to consider how political maps are drawn to provide citizens with the opportunity to find representatives that both share their hopes and dreams but can guide them to a better future. I want the committee to be fully aware that the world today, a mere 52 years post Apollo 11 with Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin walking on the Moon that July in 1969, is a different world with different opportunities and different threats that requires this committee members to know that the world in 2030 and 2141 will be so different than today 2021. I want committee members to know, those changes require you to understand that finding political solutions cannot be mired in the past or Pennsylvania will become the next Afghanistan in short order.

As a citizen born, raised and educated in Berks, yet experienced in the wider world thru education, work, and travel, I want you to know that it is frame of mind that holds back many in thinking about the future. Some are so mired in the past, thinking that wishing past nostalgia will return. Yet it will not.

#### ECONOMICS OF REDISTRICTING

Let us start with economics. Many still think that nine out of ten farm the land, as pre 1930's and pre-industrial age. Too many politicians think that framers are not using satellite global positioning systems to run tractors and competing against precision farming in New Zealand or export farm credits from the Bank of China. Too many politicians think that farming itself is the only industry to aspire too. Today, farming is important, but an example of how technology has radically changed a basic human endeavor. Farmers today are decision makers and brawn has no relevance. Farmers compete globally and in the markets of China, Japan, Germany, Brazil, and Africa. Farmers are not what everyone aspires to, and Jefferson's ideal of the gentleman farmer is exchanged for a CEO making complex decisions. This means politicians need to not tailor everyone solution to just one profession; but think broadly about all the stakeholders from those below the insanely low poverty level needing food to survive to the even the wealthy who do still need food but enjoy world class dinning, just delivered to their home. This means that districts should include some farming but not all nor ignore all. The idea that Philadelphia and Pittsburgh residents could not care about food or lifestyle of healthy eating is on its

face absurd as anyone who has walk thru the cities with huge variety of cuisine. But to make a better balance, it makes sense to add some farm or today mini farm areas to each district.

That means looking at a map of Pennsylvania thru eyes of framers and other stakeholders. Taking a map and understanding where farms and agriculturally productive land would fit better in the political representation.

Looking a land map of Berks County (Pennsylvania Historic Agricultural History Project) ([www.phmc.state.pa.us/portal/communities/agriculture/history.index.html](http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/portal/communities/agriculture/history.index.html)) everyone can get a sense of Pennsylvania farm land formed by natural geography. Berks has a large farm corridor in terms of land, corridor running from Northampton thru Lehigh (Allentown region is like a hole full of potatoes), thru Berks, all of Lebanon, half of Dauphin, thru Cumberland and Franklin. This means these farmers would share many of the same concerns for their land and future production. Currently, it makes no sense for farmers in Berks to be part of four different Congressional districts, and Pennsylvania State house and Senate districts.

Northern Berks farms would share more with Lebanon County than Schuylkill County. Southern Western Berks farms would share more with Lancaster County while North Eastern would share more with Leigh County farmers.

After considering farmers, what about the other residents of Berks County?

Prior to COVID-19, Berks had become a commuter community. From the 1970s until now, Berks lost manufacturing jobs due to both globalization, shipping jobs to lower and lower price employment from Mexico to China to anyplace where someone would do the lower quality work for less, and increasing automation. I want to be clear. Automation is a form of technology but not the only form. Under the old model of market based capitalism, environment costs were shifted to future generations or someone else (trashing being sent to China instead of the trash capital of Pennsylvania – Berks County home to most number of landfills) and only shareholder capital was rewarded. Hence the decline in the need for education claimed by many returning to the farmer as ideal occupation as fewer than one in ten work in the farm industry as an occupation. Actually, farmers are fewer than one in ten Americans by occupation and with more technology will need more education and most likely fewer will be actually farmers in the future.

However, much of those trends have ended. Environmental costs are so high and the future generations are no longer willing to accept prior generations cost shift as recent storms in Berks, also effecting farmers, has shown.

While education in the past was always viewed as a cost, since human capital was never on the company balance sheet, until now, the legislature in 2030 and 2141 will have to face the fundamental question now, after decades of cutting education, how to deal with a aged population unable to work and a huge economic gap thru exporting Pennsylvania's number one export – young educated people willing to learn.

What makes America unique was its Founders belief in economic power thru human capital. The Founders were learned men and valued education as investment, like working the land to build a strong foundation for future planting. Pennsylvanians shared investment views across state lines from New England to the Deep South. Investing in a better future was a common bond across all ideologues for the Founders.

In the Pennsylvania Constitution, "The General Assembly shall provide for the maintenance and support of a thorough and efficient system of public education to serve the needs of the Commonwealth." It does not say "we should through some money into education everyone once in a while". Previously the language (1776 Constitution) was "A school or schools shall be established in each county by the legislature, for the convenient instruction of youth, with such salaries to the masters paid by the public, as may enable them to instruct youth at low prices: And all useful learning shall be duly encouraged and promoted in one or more universities."

What has the legislature of 2021 lost in the intent of the Founders of Pennsylvania to today?

Clearly, by having the public pay for salaries of teachers to instruct future generations at "low prices" the Founders were clear: the obligation of current generations to pay for future generations was in everyone's best interest long term. Past few decades, the legislature has rejected the principle, one excuse is in a declining economy, no one can pay for the future.

Again, gerrymandering means that districts are mapped out to find those that agree with a binary party view.

Instead, this committee should consider the revenue base in mapping out districts. A mixed economy would be fair as it evens out the inequities for school funding. While the residents of Wyomissing might complain about being lumped in with those of less economic means, it is still far cheaper to educate the next generation than house them in jails after juvenile detention and gig jobs paying well below poverty wages. The cost to import perceived cheaper help to do the jobs that some wish not to do, is still higher in the long term than paying for "useful learning".

I want to point out to this committee the original term of "useful learning" as opposed to the current language in the Pennsylvania Constitution; "public education".

Are these terms the same?

Many seem to argue that education consists of "useful learning" and therefore in binary terms, a set of learning that is not useful. This implies that someone somewhere is making a judgment call with limited resources to instruct in non-useful information.

To those of you on the committee who have not taken astrodynamics, I want to explain that the farmer in Berks and everywhere else that relies on GPS to run her tractor, is relying on some level to 1772 author Joseph-Louis Lagrange. I would challenge members of this committee to explain Lagrange's "non useful" insights to each other and why farmers in Berks should throw away their GPS units and compete against Chinese farmers with nothing but "their gut feelings".

To be clear, I challenge the legislature to rely on solely their legal training to decide what is "non useful" and "useful" knowledge and let those with expertise in knowledge fields to decide. Your duty is to consider the larger economic situation, what resources you can best allocate and prioritize, and let the experts in education (by degrees, and experience) work with those resources. Given the global competition for human capital, it is very unlikely that educators will find time to teach "non useful information". Again, we cannot predict the future, but we can use reasonable means to prepare for it.

This all means that this committee, should look at the outcomes in education we want in 2030 and 2141 then compare to the best ways to fund a public education system that is fairer for as many Pennsylvanians' as possible. Looking at Berks County school districts, and charter schools, what is the best way to allocate funds? This is where the committee has to work extra hard – defining a broadly based revenue base to fund education at the county level and higher education level.

I want to digress a moment, as someone who has gone thru, public primary education in Berks County – Oley Valley, to public university, Pennsylvania State University, to various work training to career training, to private law school – Widener University Law School – Wilmington DE to private business school, MBA from Widener University , Chester PA to developing, Continuing legal education to lawyers across the country.

We as a civilization know very little about what is learning and how people learn. Probably the last educational development of note was the humble textbook. The internet has taught everyone thru remote learning, how much there is to teaching and standardized testing alone is not educating but monitoring. At a Federal Reserve economic development conference one person opined we could use a DARPA approach to discovering more about learning and teaching. Only recently, past few years, as medical science had the technological tools to look inside the brain as it works and surprisingly, our brains don't work like computers developed for profit.

I want to stress that there is no stable future of work, and anyone who thinks it's 1952 should not be in public office today. The career ladder is not only dead, it was buried several decades ago. Instead, in spite of some in this legislature denying it is not 1952, the outside world of work is accelerating.

As a former central banker noted, today post COVID19 we face a labor force where one third have to work in person – from picking up trash to providing medical services to paving roads, one third can work remotely – from online teaching to legal advice to customer support – and we have no idea what to do with the other one third yet in either neither or combined category. Yet, everyone admits that having only two thirds or some 60% of labor participation is not sustainable nor morally just for everyone.

Which all means that this committee must carefully consider not today's economy but 2030 thru 2141 economy.

What public educational opportunities should be open to all Pennsylvanians?

Should all doctors and vets be able to get all the education they want?

Should anyone who chooses to learn how to service robots or develop language skills for a global customer base be able to educate themselves both in person or online at any school in Pennsylvania or out of Pennsylvania have to worry how to pay for this training, degree or certificate?

#### REVENUE REDISTRICTING

Where will revenue come from to pay for the society needs that the private market will not pay for?

One method for this committee is to simply ask Pennsylvania Department of Revenue to map out where the money comes from by zip code, by grouping businesses and citizens separately. With this basic data, again its 2021 and no one has this data it is not because the technology does not exist to do this – it's because someone does not want the citizens to know facts.

Which leads me to one particular point of economic development as a technologist and business expert I want to make clear – Silicon Valley is not a particular successful model of economic development. Anyone can pour billions into a specific industry for national defense and set up an entire new ecosystem, then privatized the investments made by millions of taxpayers and taxes paid by thousands of business's calling them profits for a handful of companies that were given monopolies.

This is not capitalism, nor is it how a liberal democracy operates. Even if those handful of monopolies are allowed the privilege to raise capital on Wall Street, when one share equals ten votes, it is still not how Adam Smith defined capitalism. (<https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/09/1099972>). This model is a failure. It does not push human progress forward: but backward. My generation was promised and shown Stanley Kubrick's "2001: A Space Odyssey" but instead by 2021 got Franklin J Schaffner's "Planet of the Apes".

Recently, a global agreement of a corporate minimum tax has been reached, OECD, which will lay the groundwork for everyone paying their fair share unlike today's voluntary tax payments seen by large multinational companies. This will finally level the marketplace field. Pennsylvania needs to think about fair taxing needing to support civilization.

Economic develop should be based on broader principles and broader views. One narrow area's advanced cannot supersede other areas of human knowledge to allow ignorance to grow and thrive. The legislature should be careful when favoring one area over another and handing out no liability to everyone does not "starve the government" but merely creates winners and losers in a rigged economic game – not a fair market place competition.

Government exist to balance out marketplace failures. I would ask the committee to look to Jamie Dimon's Annual Shareholder Letter for 2020 published March 27, 2021 (VI Public Policy). He clearly is not a flaming communist or socialist. He notes a list of American problems to be solved including fair taxes to fund society needs. He points to saying all issues are binary as one example of how those in government can cause more problems and not solve current ones. There are fair criticisms he has about government in general, but he notes we need some industrial policies.

This committee should carefully consider how to represent a broader constituency for where people want to go; not where they are now or where their ancestors were. That is what the Founders were, looking into the future not the past nor the present.

This can be done by considering economics and occupations. Good paying jobs for as many as possible that are sustainable which includes economic safety nets that are coupled with education to help everyone move thru a changing technology world. Tax revenue needs to be a part of the redistricting plan.

#### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REDISTRICTING

Where are Berks residents' concerns besides food, land, education, and occupation?

Berks county should not be the next Silicon Valley or the next Ruhr Germany or the next Shenyang, China. It can't be. Pennsylvania leaders should in 2021 as a minimal make a promise or pact with voters to stop promising Shangri-La.

We are not stupid outside of the Capital, Harrisburg.

We have seen it all.

Instead, redistricting should be a thoughtful exercise in educating this committee and entire legislature, what change has occurred not just last ten years but from 1970, 1950, 1930, 1900, and prior. What costs have gone up, but new technology makes vacant office spaces that sit for 20 years-time to be repurposed from empty to farmland or something else more productive than vacant. What are the empty spaces? What office blocks are being built for no reason?

These broader economic considerations can only come from representatives who have broader economic districts – not lobbying groups. Economics react to non-economic events. Consider the massive societal changes Pennsylvania, United States, and the entire globe is going thru post COVID19 failures. There are already winners and losers changing societies and cultures.

Which leads me to cities like Reading, in Berks County known globally as a poor and forgotten city.

The legislature in the past has used these cities as punching bags for everything and anything, rather than trying to invest and fix problems. Smart cities term gets thrown around which to me translates as political leaders saying: “let someone else pay for generating profit by privatizing and getting another monopoly going.” Instead, of these cities being chips on a political bargaining board, why not start connecting them to the rest of the state and broader constituencies?

One way to consider is linking these cities with surrounding or even neighboring areas.

One possibility could be Reading can be connected as a satellite city to Philadelphia as on stretch option or sharing more with Lancaster City in a corridor as an option. Turning the state into parallelograms rather than traditional squares. Of course, someone will always have to be at the edges and that may be harsh, but at least give people a clearer delineation.

What do constituencies want?

Do they want to live in moated cities as in the past?

Our French friend noted that American township was based on the idea that communal freedom comes from the communal living. He pointed out that local government engaged at the local level was democracy up close to citizens of the township. This is why the Founders in Pennsylvania wanted to have boundaries respected.

This committee as an aside, should note that Tocqueville, had his own criticism of China, as being too equal and that “Lofty ambition can hardly breathe in such an atmosphere.” Take note of the phrase.

Americans should have lofty ambitions for a better redistricting effort today than the past.

Socially, Berks county is now diverse in terms of mixture of occupations and social status. Their district should reflect more diversity, not less and not determined by political consultants who live in Washington DC Congressional politics.

Instead, this committee should rely more on testimony from thoughtful residents, their own judgments, and listening to colleagues. Which brings to me to my final point about my legislature.

#### WHAT ARE THE POLITICAL GOALS OF REDISTRICTING

I have watched my legislature from a far in many ways, often having to dig deep for what it is up to. Late nite votes and complex linguistics in draft legislation strongly means to me there is something to hide from citizens. In a time in human history where technology has given this body the most tools every to engage the public and citizens, seems the most the legislature is either silent or working against our interests.

Some argue democracy encourages only the worst to run. Others argue that legislature itself follow the rule that one bad apple spoils the lot.

Often to me it seems legislators are subject to those working to play the system with massive distrust in legislators' abilities.

I would remind this committee that your protection is the reasonable voter – not the partisan looking thru a narrow lens of one issue and refuses to consider other possibilities. The reasonable voter may not be on your mind when the phone rings with a DC number, but they every day get up and try to make sure their children have an opportunity better than they had. The grandparent will be reasonable once you explain that every dollar cannot go to them but some has to go to their grandkids to cover basic education. The reasonable business-person knows that roads cost money and as long as they are getting a fair price for a good job they have no problem for paying those taxes. It is immoral for revenue to be taking in one areas to shift costs to those who can least afford or more often least benefit. The farmer in Berks should not have to subsidize the public benefits to a huge wealthy family that runs a business that refuses to pay fair wages for the fair work that people are doing.

This committee has clearly made the first step in making these hearings open to everyone with comments.

I applaud the first step and the next is carefully considering redistricting then explaining to us the residents with political power why you grouped us together. Anyone today can even buy a simple satellite image and map districts. We have a right to know what political calculations and date you used, unlike past secret decision making.

If you can pick a reasonable district, you have no fear of explaining openly.

If you gerrymander, then as I earlier stated, and remind you, you have done an injustice to yourself by rejecting democracy and the Founders vision. There are always consequences whether people simply leave the Commonwealth or quietly withdrawn their support to a government that no longer represents their interest. Afghanistan should give you pause as I say if it can happen over there, chaos followed by war, famine, and death, all of society breakdowns will come sooner than you think – technology can always undo faster than society can build. This is why the Founders were clear – governments are instituted to secure rights which we already have. By allowing government to fail you are encouraging those who want to take those rights away. Again, look around the globe and see how technology can be very effective out of Silicon Valley to ensure authoritarianisms cemented for generations to come.

Developing reasonable districts, regardless of partisan outcomes, prevents the unreasonable candidate the candidate that needs only a fringe group to elect and control. Broader communities and engaged voters will protect the reasonable legislator. America's Founders built a system for consensus to emerge, we are not a Parliamentary system swinging from one side to another.

Given a more open process than the past, already the outcome means voters can see what's happening. That is a good thing.

I want this committee to read and spend some time thinking about what the community of interest means and how we reach aspiring to something better.

Remember, the Founders did not set everything in stone. They gave you plenty of room to correct past mistakes and change course. They gave you the tools to move forward with others, even those you may dislike, but they assumed you all wanted to move forward. That is your challenge with voters behind.

So take that first step into another world, redistrict not based on the past or fringe political partisan advice, but on what you want future generations to thank you for drawing representative maps that reflect aspirations in 2030 to 2141.

#### CONCLUDING REMARKS

What makes us America is a set of rules and customs developed since 1776 when a group of men decided to forge a new nation, not out of war, but a realization that American's were different than British subjects living under King George IV with some rules pasted by a Parliament with members often chosen not elected.

Today, we elect but defter politicians have rigged the binary choices and limit voters' options.

This cannot stand.

Facing all the problems we have we need a new generation of leaders willing to craft solutions for 2141. We need leaders who can think into the future. We need leaders who can win fairly and garner support for their solutions. We need an American fairer system to elect leaders and Pennsylvanians deserve a redistricting plan that reflects "compact and contiguous," as those living in Pennsylvania still agree to the rules as set forth in the Pennsylvania Constitution.

If elected officials want to rewrite the Constitution and ask voters to approve their new rules, I welcome that choice. But if there is a redistricting plan that again violates the Pennsylvania and Federal Constitution, the plan by definitions becomes immoral and no Pennsylvanian must abide by the outcome. This is not a result the legislature, governor, and people of Pennsylvania want. Consider carefully past mistakes and move forward with a redistricting plan that honors those who live and will live in Pennsylvania today and 2141.

Thank you for the opportunity to add my voice and thoughts that others have made. I wish you all success in crafting a fair redistricting plan for the future.



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### **19. Eric T., Media, PA**

Testimony to PA House State Government Committee on Congressional Redistricting Submitted October 13, 2021

I am a 24-year resident of Delaware County and have lived in Pennsylvania all my life. I write to request that this decennial redistricting ensures that Delaware County remains wholly within one congressional district, as it is now. There are several reasons for my request.

Delaware is one of Philadelphia's four "collar counties," but shouldn't be thought of as sharing the advantages and characteristics of the posher Chester, Montgomery, or Bucks counties. Delco is Pennsylvania's third smallest county geographically, but it's packed with 49 municipalities. It's the state's second most densely populated county, and in fact is twice as dense as Montgomery County and five times denser than Chester County. It has higher rates of poverty, a higher percentage of minority residents, and a higher proportion of immigrants than the other collar counties. The new census shows that Delco didn't enjoy the robust growth of the other counties; it grew at less than half their rate.

The county has physical issues. A good proportion of the other collar counties is rural, but Delco has no remaining functional agricultural areas. It was industrialized early and now suffers the long-term deleterious effects of poor environmental practices, especially air and water pollution. Much of the county's infrastructure was built at the turn of the last century and is still in place, but well beyond its life expectancy. The road system is extensive and needs much more attention than there is funding available. Many residents depend on public transit to get to work, school, and shopping, but transit is under-funded. And more recently, the county's very dense development and extensive impervious surface has made communities especially vulnerable to destructive flooding from the more frequent, larger storms that are the new norm.

There are many more measures that apply, but it's clear that the county, although we are a scrappy place, has struggles. All these issues require the FOCUSED attention and access to federal resources that a single congressional representative can provide.

We've seen how bad representation can get when it's splintered. Gerrymandering for partisan advantage is practiced by both sides, but it reached a troubling level in Pennsylvania beginning in 2001 and worsened in 2011 in a map that was so egregious that it was overturned by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court. The Delaware County congressional districts were among the most tortured. In the 2011 map, the worm-like 1st district bored into the center of Delaware County and then slithered along the county border, chaining that handful of reliably Democratic towns with the city of Philadelphia in a sweetheart gerrymander to protect an incumbent Philly career politician. The rest of the county, which at the time was believed to be more reliably Republican, was included in the infamous "Goofy Kicking Donald" 7th district, which shamelessly snaked through parts of five counties to protect a Republican

incumbent who might not have been able to retain his seat otherwise. The congressman from the 1st district didn't have to pay any attention to his Delco constituents. The congressman from the 7th district never did figure out which parts of which towns were in or out of his territory in any of the five counties. Both congressmen did an indifferent job, at best, in serving Delco constituents. And the inexplicable splits meant that many Delaware Countians couldn't say who their congressman was.

Since 2018 however, the county has been wholly included in the new 5th district and has been well served through focused attention from a single representative.

Keeping Delaware County within a single congressional district also complies with the state Supreme Court 2018 guidance that required that districts be compact and contiguous, and that districts don't divide any county except where necessary to ensure equality of population. Delaware County's 2020 population of 576,830 is well within the limits of a congressional district, and there is no need or rationale for dividing the county. Please keep Delaware County whole.

Finally, I have a request regarding your process. Please provide your draft congressional map very quickly after the conclusion of your regional hearings. Providing several alternative maps for comparison would be even better. Include a report on your thinking and choices about how districts were drawn. Most important: provide plenty of time for the public to review and comment on the maps. Then make the changes that the public requests.

Thank you for your attention.

**20. Rachel G.,**  
Elkins Park, PA

To the House State Government Committee.

Chairman Grove, Chairman Conklin and committee members

I appreciate the opportunity to submit formal testimony to the committee on congressional redistricting. I have concerns about the process and the actual maps.

Process:

I applaud the public hearings that the committee has been collecting. I also applaud Chairman Grove's comments on the need for transparency and accountability. Those were sorely lacking in the 2011 redistricting, conducted by the House and Senate state government committees. In 2011, the Senate SGC presented a "shell" bill (SB 1249) for both first and second consideration on the Senate floor. The actual text of the bill, with the district descriptions, was released 14 hours before the final senate vote. The House voted this bill through the committee and all 3 considerations in less than 5 business days, just prior to the Christmas holiday. There was no effort to solicit input from the citizens of PA and no visual maps were available to anyone.

In 2021, I expect that the House SGC will transparently share the bill and associated map of the 17 districts with the public and give time (a week minimum) for comment and review prior to committee considerations and a floor vote. I expect the committee will also transparency share who drew the

maps and what data was considered as well as the reasoning behind any county, city, and municipality divisions.

#### Mapping comments: Montgomery County

I am a retired physician living Elkins Park, in Montgomery County. Montgomery County was severely gerrymandered in the 2011 congressional redistricting process. We were divided into 5 congressional districts, though we had enough population to have our own congressional representative. None of the 5 representatives lived in our county. Our commissioners had to deal with 5 not too interested representatives when our county experienced issues related to the federal government. These representatives had no accountability to our county or its citizens. This is not the way our government is supposed to work. Please do not repeat this.

The 2011 congressional gerrymandering created a series of "safe" districts, drawn to be safe for the party. This included the many districts in my county. These safe districts create a deep partisan divide, where only the primary counts. This paralyzes problem solving. As a PA citizen, I do not want my state to participate in such gerrymandering. We are a moderate nation governed by extremists from both parties, thanks to gerrymandering.

My part of the state, southeast PA, has grown in population and thus we should not lose representation: areas of the state that have lost population should lose a district. I request you align prisoner counting with the LRC. It is fair to count prisoners where they last resided as that is how PA defines their residence. This deeply effects my region, as the current counting disproportionately reduces Philadelphia's voting power. Strong cultural, economic and social interactions connect Montgomery and Philadelphia counties. We function as the southeast region, and the title for this hearing acknowledges.

In 2011, PA voters were handed "Goofy Kicking Donald" and other bizarre district lines, many of which ran through Montgomery County. Montgomery County needs to remain whole in accordance with the state constitutional requirements to not divide counties. I also request that you avoid splitting precincts and school districts which function as communities of interest. I wish the legislature has chosen to codify these criteria into law for congressional redistricting. I believe they are important. Representative Wendi Thomas introduced HB22 many months ago and it has not been acted on. Perhaps that can yet occur.

Finally, I request you start with blank maps so district lines are not drawn for any incumbent's protection or retribution.

I, like most PA citizens, want congressional districts that are fair, that do not favor a political party and that support competitive elections. Right now, 37% of all PA elections lack an opposition candidate. PA can do better and fairer congressional districts will stimulate more election competition.

Thank you for your work.

21. Norman J.,  
Norristown, PA

## ***LUKE 11:37-46 The Message Translation of The BIBLE***

Frauds!

**37-41** When he finished that talk, a Pharisee asked him to dinner. He entered his house and sat right down at the table. The Pharisee was shocked and somewhat offended when he saw that Jesus didn't wash up before the meal. But the Master said to him, "I know you Pharisees buff the surface of your cups and plates so they sparkle in the sun, but I also know your insides are maggoty with greed and secret evil. Stupid Pharisees! Didn't the One who made the outside also make the inside? Turn both your pockets and your hearts inside out and give generously to the poor; then your *lives* will be clean, not just your dishes and your hands.

**42** "I've had it with you! You're hopeless, you Pharisees! Frauds! You keep meticulous account books, tithing on every nickel and dime you get, but manage to find loopholes for getting around basic matters of justice and God's love. Careful bookkeeping is commendable, but the basics are required.

**43-44** "You're hopeless, you Pharisees! Frauds! You love sitting at the head table at church dinners, love preening yourselves in the radiance of public flattery. Frauds! You're just like unmarked graves: People walk over that nice, grassy surface, never suspecting the rot and corruption that is six feet under."

**45** One of the religion scholars spoke up: "Teacher, do you realize that in saying these things you're insulting us?"

**46** He said, "Yes, and I can be even more explicit. You're hopeless, you religious scholars! You load people down with rules and regulations, nearly breaking their backs, but never lift even a finger to help.

Now in this passage of scripture Jesus rebukes the religious leaders of His day for their mistreatment of the people. They were writing and passing laws that only benefited them. I share the same sentiment as He.

Politicians are supposed to be TRUSTED SERVANTS of their own community! They were ***elected*** by the voters because the voters believed that they would be cared for by the elected politician. Sadly what politics has done is allowed itself to be infiltrated and held hostage by selfish activities of a few who by appearance are only interested in power and selfish gain. This can't be the impression that is put into the public square and then ask the same people to vote for the system. Gerrymandering is the epitome of power-mongering. No state should be cut in a way that it can even be recognized. Each state has been separated by counties, which seems to be fair and adequate. But to cut up a county to hinder the voting rights of people is criminal. The effort that you are putting into gerrymandering would be far better spent on town halls, and purposeful think tanks to create new ideas that would benefit your constituents so you would naturally increase the voter turnout.

This bi-partisan foolishness is crippling our society, and doing nothing to help move our United States progressively. FINALLY. What is sad and depressing is our country looks down on others countries and calls them 3rd world nations while we are here purposefully creating an oligarchy. And let's be clear when you open the door with this action can you be sure who you are really letting in? This hearing is taking place so we can appeal to the servant inside of all of you, please remember the life we live leaves the legacy we create.

**22. Kathy B.**

Warrington, PA

In a democracy, it's important that elected officials represent their constituents. In so much of Pennsylvania that is not the case and it has resulted in gridlock. I do advocacy work for the Bucks County Women's Advocacy Coalition on behalf of 49 nonprofits. Our bills go nowhere in Harrisburg.

We need to have district boundaries that are drawn around communities. My own Congressional District is the First Congressional District in Pa. I believe ours is one of the most fair since it encompasses the entire county and a little bit of Montgomery County. Please make other districts fair as well so we can have a government that works.