

## **Southwest Regional Hearing - Submit Written Testimony Web Submission – Redistricting-Received after 8/23/21**

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I live in West Newton, a small town south of Pittsburgh. I reside in Congressional District 14, Pa House District 58 and Pa Senate District 39. I am a lifelong resident of this area and have witnessed many legislative changes.

I became aware of the redistricting process in 2018 when the PA Supreme Court declared that the 2011 US Congressional districting map violated the Pennsylvania Constitution. I learned that partisan gerrymandering had let the legislators select their voters instead of the voters selecting their legislators. This was done in secret, behind closed doors, with no public or voter input into the process. I don't want this to happen again for either the Congressional districts or the state legislative districts.

Government is to represent the will of the voters and redistricting that is not transparent and partisan goes against this. Partisan gerrymandering leads to one party deciding the boundary lines to benefit them and creates safe seats that allows bad government to fester. If your seat is safe from any election challenge, there is no need to listen to your constituents, only the views of the party that will keep you in office. There is no reason to work on legislation on a bipartisan basis and this creates a system that only represents the party in control. It is all about power, not the voters. This is why our government is so dysfunctional.

I would like this redistricting process do the following:

- Be transparent by providing current data, maps and redistricting information via a user-friendly website that is free to the public
- Identify and post clear and measurable map-drawing standards that create compact and contiguous federal and state districts, bans dividing voting districts, protects communities of interest, respects natural boundaries like mountains and rivers, prohibits plans that protect incumbents and political parties from election challenges
- Encourage and review public input from a variety of sources: in person, virtual, submitted written comments and maps, question and answer formats
- Allow submitted redistricting plans to be reviewed and commented on by the committees
- Provide a written report of decisions, rationale and process in a timely fashion, allowing enough time for public review and comment.

Thank you for allowing me to comment on this important process.