

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
LEGISLATIVE REAPPORTIONMENT COMMISSION

In re: Public Meeting of the Legislative
Reapportionment Commission

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Stenographic report of hearing held
in Hearing Room No. 1, North Office
Building, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

Thursday
January 6, 2022
6:00 p.m.

MEMBERS OF LEGISLATIVE REAPPORTIONMENT COMMISSION

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| Sen. Kim Ward | Rep. Kerry Benninghoff |
| Sen. Jay Costa | Rep. Matthew Bradford, (Deputy Commissioner for Rep. Joanna McClinton) |

Also Present:

Robert L. Byer, Esq., Chief Counsel
G. Reynolds Clark, Executive Director
Dr. Jonathan Cervas, Redistricting Consultant
Leah Mintz, Assistant Counsel
G. Carlton Logue, Esq. Deputy Counsel, Senate Majority Leader
Chad Davis, Research Analyst, Senate Republican Policy Office
C.J. Hafner, Esq., Chief Counsel, Senate Democratic Leader
Ronald N. Jumper, Esq. Deputy Chief Counsel, Senate Democratic
Leader
Lora S. Schoenberg, Director, Senate Democratic Legislative
Services
Rod Corey, Esq., Chief Counsel, House Republican Caucus
James Mann, Esq., Senior Deputy Chief Counsel, House
Republican Caucus
Katherine Testa, Esq., Senior Legal Counsel, House
Republican Caucus
William R. Schaller, Director, House Republican District
Operations
Michael Schwoyer, Esq., Special Counsel, Deputy Chief of
Staff for Legislation and Policy, House Democratic Caucus

Reported by:
Ann-Marie P. Sweeney
Official Reporter

1 Also Present:

2 Justin Klos, Director, House Democratic Office of
3 Demographic Analysis

4 David Brogan, Esq., Director, House Democratic Legislation
5 and Policy

6 Andrew McGinley, Esq., General Counsel, House Democratic
7 Government Oversight Committee

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1 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Okay, the entire delegation is
2 back, and the technical people are in their positions. I
3 think we're ready to begin with our second hearing of the day,
4 and we're very fortunate that our first witness is going to be
5 Representative DeLissio from Philadelphia.

6 Welcome, very much.

7 REPRESENTATIVE DeLISSIO: Thank you, Chairman
8 Nordenberg.

9 CHAIR NORDENBERG: And the floor is yours.

10 REPRESENTATIVE DeLISSIO: Thank you, sir.

11 Good evening, Commissioners. Thank you for this
12 opportunity to testify. My name is Pamela DeLissio, and I
13 represent the 194th Legislative District. Having been first
14 elected in 2010, I am a veteran of the redistricting process.
15 In 2011, the process was concerningly political and basically
16 without any meaningful citizen input. Thank you to this
17 Commission for the recognition that citizen input is critical,
18 and I believe should take priority over political or party
19 input.

20 On January 4, I held a special town hall to inform
21 my constituents about the preliminary map for the 194th, and
22 how to comment and/or testify, and the importance of same.
23 Due to the horrific practice of gerrymandering over many
24 decades, some constituents found it hard to believe that their
25 comments and their input would be seriously considered. I

1 assured them that this Commission would consider their
2 comments with appropriate seriousness, as the citizens know
3 best how they function and live in their respective
4 communities and what their communities need to function and
5 thrive. Many of my constituents are familiar with the topic
6 of redistricting reform, as I have covered this topic in 51 of
7 my 112 town halls over the past 11 years, a dozen of those
8 town halls focused exclusively on this topic.

9 Regarding the preliminary map for the 194th, the
10 Philadelphia Planning Commission, in its document titled
11 *Philadelphia 2035: The Vision for Philadelphia's Growth and*
12 *Development*, the Planning Commission identifies two distinct
13 areas for the northwest part of the city - the upper northwest
14 and the lower northwest. The Planning Commission conducted a
15 comprehensive planning process to produce this report with
16 heavy local citizen involvement. I participated in most of
17 those gatherings for the lower northwest. However, instead of
18 following the established approach for this part of the city
19 of Philadelphia, the preliminary map voted by the LRC on
20 December 16 reflects a combination of the lower and upper
21 northwest.

22 I believe that this preliminary map actually does
23 a disservice to the northwest overall by drawing the district
24 boundaries in this manner, and I can give you a very concrete
25 example. For the last three or four years, the lower

1 northwest community has been meeting and discussing the
2 expansion of the Wissahickon Transfer Center, which is a bus
3 transfer center, and we have been meeting with SEPTA. The
4 civics and the neighborhoods involved in those discussions
5 have been exclusively from the lower northwest, and not one
6 discussion has involved neighborhoods of the upper northwest.
7 Citizens, including myself, run errands, use parks, support
8 businesses regularly and for the most part, but not
9 exclusively, along the boundaries created by the Wissahickon
10 Valley Park and the Wissahickon Creek. The preliminary map
11 includes the park and creek in the preliminary 194th, and the
12 park and creek actually function as a divider for these
13 communities, the upper northwest and the lower northwest.

14 When I first took office, the upper part of
15 Roxborough was appended to the 200th Legislative District,
16 which included Chestnut Hill. Many constituents often came to
17 my office, constituents of the 200th often came to my office
18 for service and did not understand why their Representative
19 was on the other side of the park and creek. The folks who
20 came to my office lived in Upper Roxborough and the Andorra
21 section. This preliminary map will do that in reverse.
22 Currently, the 194th includes parts of East Falls, and the
23 desire I have heard repeatedly over the last handful of years
24 is for the balance of East Falls to be included in the 194th.
25 The preliminary map has appended East Falls with a district

1 located in west Philadelphia.

2 I urge the Commission to look closely at the Fair
3 Districts PA Citizen Map that was submitted. That map follows
4 closely the wishes of the citizens of the lower northwest.

5 Thank you for your time this evening.

6 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you very much.

7 Are there questions or comments?

8 Can I ask you, Representative, I should know the
9 answer to this question, did you submit anything in writing?

10 REPRESENTATIVE DeLISSIO: I will be, Chair
11 Nordenberg.

12 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Okay.

13 REPRESENTATIVE DeLISSIO: I will be doing that
14 before the January 18 deadline.

15 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you very much. That
16 would be very helpful.

17 REPRESENTATIVE DeLISSIO: Thank you.

18 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thanks again.

19 REPRESENTATIVE DeLISSIO: Take care.

20 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Our second speaker this evening
21 is here in person. He is Matthew Albrecht from Wyoming, and
22 he's here to talk about Luzerne County.

23 Welcome, sir.

24 MR. ALBRECHT: Good evening, everyone. My name is
25 Matthew Albrecht, and I'm a college student in Dallas,

1 Pennsylvania, at Misericordia University. I'm a pre-med
2 student with a double major in biology, and then government
3 law and national security, which brings me here today to speak
4 about Luzerne County, where I've grown up and now I'm in
5 college.

6 So I would first like to start at your proposed
7 map that you have put forward of the entirety of the
8 northeastern section of the State. And it's been really easy
9 -- not easy, let me rephrase. It has been really effective in
10 the way that you've drawn yours with all of the borders of the
11 counties being able to be redrawn without changing all of the
12 population regarding all of the people of the State. I would
13 just like to focus on Luzerne County and establish that in
14 this map and most maps, some parts are just used to fill
15 population. And in this map, Luzerne County is cut up into
16 four and is completely -- it's cut up and lost. The
17 representation is just completely all over the place. Parts
18 of it are just thrown in with Scranton, and other parts are
19 put so the Representatives won't ever have to be in that
20 district or win those areas to even have to be close to
21 winning their districts.

22 And the next slide just closes in, and I would
23 just like to describe the area that I'm going to be speaking
24 about, which is the Wyoming Valley. In that area, within
25 Luzerne County, a valley runs right through the center, right

1 along the Susquehanna River, and the area that I'm going to be
2 speaking about specifically is between the mountains, in the
3 valley. This valley in your map is cut up horribly in all
4 regards. It's cut into four. On each of your maps in front
5 of you, I have just very briefly shaded in where the mountains
6 are, just for reference, just so you could see that even
7 individual parts of the valley are cut up.

8 And that brings me to my proposal of the
9 northeast. In this district, the first district in this map
10 is Wyoming Valley, and it goes down into Hazleton. District 2
11 is very similar to your map. District 3 is Scranton and
12 following the Interstate out to the border, and then Districts
13 4, 5, and 6 are more rural going along the Susquehanna River
14 on the bottom.

15 On the next page, on page 4, I would just like to
16 zoom in on Luzerne County and show just how it would follow
17 along right along where I have described that the mountains
18 are in there and showing how the river goes right along
19 through. One of the earlier speakers talked about how county
20 lines aren't necessarily the best way to represent communities
21 of interest. And I think in this instance, it is extremely
22 important to demonstrate how this area is one of those areas.
23 The county border does not demonstrate how it actually is
24 represented in the people of the area. Having grown up there
25 my entire life and now I'm slightly outside the valley, it's

1 easier to see how different the groups of people are when
2 you're actually there and living with them and working with
3 them.

4 While this process has been very inclusive of the
5 PA Constitution, and while competitiveness and partisan lean
6 is not found within that document at all, I would like to just
7 show this map just for reference. This would be the partisan
8 lean according to Dave's Redistricting, which I'm assuming all
9 of you are very comfortable with at this point. District 1
10 would be a very moderate district. And while I do not see the
11 reason for creating competitive districts according to the
12 Pennsylvania Constitution, when areas are competitive, it is
13 better for them, for that, like, competitive nature to be
14 fostered. It shouldn't be split up into four different
15 districts. That competitive nature should be put together.
16 And you can see this in this map, which is strictly what the
17 new district would look like in its moderation. There's one
18 slightly Democratic stronghold in Wilkes-Barre, and then the
19 more rural areas are on its way down to Hazleton, but
20 throughout the whole valley, the whole valley is very, very
21 moderate. So I think that in that moderate sense, that
22 moderation should be put together and allow for that moderate
23 nature to be accounted for.

24 I don't see a clock. I just don't know how far --
25 okay, how much time I have.

1 On this page, just the geological borders that
2 were used rather than just strictly county lines, because if
3 you look at that whole map as a whole, I do cross slightly
4 more county borders, but it's just for actual geological
5 matters, because especially in this are -- these county lines
6 are very all over the place, so it's hard to follow them. And
7 this is the Susquehanna River. That would just follow the
8 entire northern border of District 6 and the bottom of most of
9 the districts. And then on page 1, you can see the whole map
10 as a whole in relation to this section.

11 And then one last geological aspect, or
12 geological, as I like to call it, the roads that were used for
13 people within the district to be able to reach the offices
14 whenever they're necessary, such as the last speaker spoke
15 about, how relation to the actual office is sometimes
16 confusing. So on your map, I have illustrated the main roads
17 that would be taken, and just the easier routes that would be
18 taken and the nature for the people to actually reach their
19 county offices. District 2, the only reason that I went into
20 Luzerne County rather than finishing out Carbon County below
21 that would just be, if you just look at the roads where the
22 actual people are, it's easier to reach them. It's easier to
23 reach the people there rather than to continue down into
24 Carbon County.

25 And then on your last page, I have not included it

1 in here, is just the population distribution. Districts 5 and
2 6 are the only ones that have population distributions that
3 would be slightly skewed. But that would be easy enough to
4 fix by just going over the Susquehanna River that I've
5 established and picking up that change in population. But I
6 chose not to do that and leave the river alone.

7 And that is all I have to say. Thank you.

8 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you very much.

9 Yes, he did say he was a student.

10 MR. ALBRECHT: Yes.

11 SENATOR K. WARD: Where are you a student?

12 MR. ALBRECHT: Misericordia University in Dallas,
13 Pennsylvania.

14 SENATOR COSTA: And a med student, at that.

15 MR. ALBRECHT: Yes. A med student, at that. Yes.

16 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Well, he had about three or
17 four majors, as I recall, Jay. Let's give him full credit.

18 Well, I want to thank you, because I think a lot
19 of us have know we wanted to go back and take a look at this
20 area of the map, and what you've done is going to be very
21 helpful.

22 MR. ALBRECHT: Yes. Can I say one more thing,
23 last thing?

24 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Yes.

25 MR. ALBRECHT: It's about the incumbency question

1 that I'm sure you've all wrestled with before. In that area
2 is the only Independent Senator from the entire State, and not
3 that looks or that you have to care about public opinion or
4 anything like that, but writing out the only Independent
5 Senator I don't think is the greatest use of redistricting is
6 to put him in a district with another Republican Senator that
7 all of her constituents have known her forever. So more or
8 less writing him out of a district is not the best thing to do
9 with redistricting, and I will leave my comments at that.

10 Thank you.

11 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you for that comment,
12 too.

13 Any other questions?

14 (There was no response.)

15 CHAIR NORDENBERG: If not, again, we are grateful
16 to you.

17 MR. ALBRECHT: Thank you very much.

18 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Our third speaker, our second
19 Zoom speaker, is Nathan Rybner from Lancaster. He was to be
20 here in person, but there he is up on the screen.

21 Welcome.

22 MR. RYBNER: Oh, thank you. Hi there.

23 First, I would like to thank the Commission on
24 Legislative Reapportionment for allowing me to speak remotely
25 in my home county of Lancaster County. We are expecting snow

1 this evening, so this is a wonderful accommodation. I would
2 also like to thank every Member of this Commission for the
3 hard work you have all put into this process, regardless about
4 my feelings over the work done thus far. Thank you, Chairman
5 Mark Nordenberg, Republicans Kim Ward and Kerry Benninghoff,
6 Democrats Jay Costa and Joanna McClinton, I think represented
7 here by Matthew Bradford tonight. I'm here to testify about
8 my feelings and the feelings I've gathered from other
9 Lancaster County residents about the maps that have been put
10 forward thus far.

11 My name is Nathan Rybner. I'm a 20-year-old from
12 Manheim Township in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. I'm a
13 resident of the 97th House District and the 13th Senate
14 District. In the new maps, you put me in the 96th District
15 for the State House and the 36th Senate district.

16 I'm going to begin with my testimony with the
17 Senate district. I can live with the Senate map. I believe
18 it to be a fair compromise map for the population increases in
19 Lancaster County. Lancaster County is currently split, as we
20 know, between two State Senate seats, the 13th and the 36th,
21 that contain no territory outside of Lancaster County. The
22 13th covers southern Lancaster County, and the 36th covers the
23 north. Manheim Township has a sister community in Lititz that
24 votes extremely similar to Manheim Township in elections, has
25 an extremely similar culture, and has very similar property

1 values, more comparable than any other municipality in the
2 rest of the county. That's why our State House seat since the
3 '60s has been comprised of Manheim Township and Lititz.
4 Keeping these sister communities together in the State Senate
5 is an excellent choice. I must commend you for it.
6 Considering there is no member of the Commission from
7 Lancaster County, you did do a good job.

8 I'm afraid I do not have the same feelings for the
9 State House maps. If necessary, I urge you to extend the
10 deadline, if needed, because this is a serious process that
11 truly requires it to be done right. I believe that's been
12 mentioned already tonight. This happens once every 10 years,
13 and we need to make sure communities are represented
14 correctly. If people don't have proper representation at the
15 local level, then we don't have a democratic system for them
16 to adhere to at a positive note. At a local level, people
17 want to be represented by like-minded communities.

18 I will get started. For starters, you split
19 Lancaster city. Lancaster city has never been split in the
20 history of State House districts. The public reason it was
21 allegedly split was to give Hispanics and other
22 underrepresented groups more representation in Lancaster
23 County without them having to face a 32-year incumbent, which
24 is, without a doubt, a positive goal in mind. However, it
25 does not amplify the Hispanic representation as much as it

1 could be. It creates a new district that is the 50th
2 District, 43-percent white and 37-percent Hispanic. Hardly
3 different than the current 96th District that represents all
4 of Lancaster city. I submitted several maps that were
5 variations of Lancaster County. They were minor variations of
6 the preliminary map. One of my maps makes the 50th District a
7 40-percent Hispanic district and 39-percent white, but, of
8 course, you would still split Lancaster city, something that
9 would cause great controversy, but it would accomplish that
10 goal in mind without splitting Lancaster Township, which has
11 been split four ways over the last 10 years.

12 If you're trying to create more Hispanic
13 representation, you don't put them in a district with
14 Millersville, a borough that is 78-percent white, and an 87-
15 percent white precinct of West Lampeter Township, or an 83-
16 percent half of a precinct of Manheim Township. It simply
17 doesn't make any sense to me. If you are interested in
18 looking at that map, I have submitted it as Plan B
19 Modification for Lancaster County. If you are interested in
20 drawing a district map that is for keeping municipalities
21 together, I would suggest the last map I submitted. I kept
22 incumbents in districts that I believe they would still be
23 satisfied with.

24 One of the problems I see with the current
25 preliminary map is that, on occasion in the past, it's one

1 thing to have a few blocks that are outside the district. You
2 know, a few people living outside the district, that's
3 something we have become accustomed to. You can't draw a
4 perfect map, but the current map has 300 people of the 41st
5 District not contiguous with the rest of their district. This
6 is why Manheim Township in the past has always been paired
7 with Lititz and not East Petersburg.

8 In Map D that I submitted, I try my best to avoid
9 school district and township splits, when avoidable. I can
10 say I recommend any of the four latter maps that I submitted
11 after the preliminary maps came out. The current maps have
12 been criticized heavily in my county. My county is an
13 ancestral Republican county, and a lot of people seem to
14 believe that the splitting of Lancaster city was purely done
15 as a sync of Democratic votes. Those that live in Lancaster
16 city have very little in common with the suburbs to the north.

17 My personal opinion, and those who I have spoken
18 to also in my county, urge you highly to modify these current
19 preliminary maps. We wish to have communities that have
20 like-minded representation.

21 And thank you for your time.

22 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you for sharing your
23 thoughts.

24 Are there any questions or comments?

25 (There was no response.)

1 CHAIR NORDENBERG: It sounds as if you have
2 persuaded everyone. So thank you, again, for joining us.

3 MR. RYBNER: All right. Thank you.

4 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Our next witness will be
5 Stephanie Grimes from Oakmont.

6 Welcome.

7 MS. GRIMES: Hi. Thank you.

8 My name is Stephanie Grimes. I am 37 years old.
9 I live in Oakmont, Pennsylvania, which is currently the 33rd
10 District, House of Representatives, and has been proposed to
11 be changed into the 32nd District. And so I am actually
12 testifying today to support that. I was very pleasantly --
13 when I saw the new proposed maps, I was very happy to see that
14 Oakmont was going to be, hopefully, to be redistricted to the
15 32nd. And this is for a number of reasons, but the biggest
16 one, we moved to Oakmont 9 years ago. We were not from the
17 area. My husband was active duty Army and we relocated to the
18 Pittsburgh area for a job opportunity.

19 This community has been lovely to us and our
20 family in this major transition in our lives. Our son started
21 kindergarten at the Riverview School District, which is the
22 public school district that children in Oakmont are districted
23 to, and he is now in the eighth grade. So he started in
24 kindergarten and he's in eighth grade, and we have been with
25 the Riverview School District that entire time. It is a very

1 small district. There's approximately 1,000 kids that are
2 served in the district in a 1.5-square-mile area that
3 encompasses all of Oakmont and part of Verona. And this new
4 district, of putting us in the 32nd would put us with Verona,
5 which is, to me, very important. This is a community that we
6 share a culture, we share borders, and we share a school
7 district with.

8 As you all know, the State votes -- proposes
9 legislation on things that very directly affect public
10 education. And for our small district, the community, to be
11 able to have a succinct voice at the House of Representatives
12 is something that was very exciting for me to see and
13 something that is a long time coming. In addition to the
14 school district, I think it's also important to say that being
15 districted in with the community of Verona just makes sense.
16 Our community grocery store sits in Verona, and all the time I
17 go to the grocery store. And many of the kids -- most of the
18 kids in Oakmont that play soccer, it's the Twin Borough
19 League. We played in Verona with kids and youth from Verona.
20 They nickname our boroughs the Twin Boroughs, and so for us to
21 be districted together, along with Penn Hills and Plum, which
22 are also our neighbors, really was a delight for me to see
23 that and to be able to work with the community that I identify
24 with. For instance, I volunteer at the community garden.
25 That's in Verona. I live in Oakmont, but our community garden

1 is Verona.

2 So really, my point is that I was happy to see the
3 proposed changes, and I hope that they'll stick, because it
4 was really some exciting stuff for me to see and some of our
5 neighbors to be able to say, hey, we can mobilize together now
6 and our kids have one voice at the State. My son comes home
7 all the time wanting to talk about legislation to get more
8 recess and things like that, and frustrated when he gets into
9 his classroom and they have different State Reps that they
10 would be having to reach out to should they want to advocate
11 in that way. So not only was I happy, so was my kiddo. So I
12 want to thank you all for that.

13 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you very much. We're
14 glad for your testimony, and some of us are very glad that
15 your move to the Pittsburgh region has been a good one.

16 MS. GRIMES: Well, thank you. It's been good to
17 us, so.

18 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Any comments or questions?
19 Senator Costa.

20 SENATOR COSTA: Just very briefly.

21 Thank you for your testimony, and I think, having
22 represented Oakmont for a number of years now, the way you
23 described it in terms of the relationship with Verona and just
24 the community of interests that are there. It's a wonderful
25 small community, and as I mentioned to Representative

1 Bradford, has the best bakery in Pennsylvania. But,
2 nevertheless, I think at the end of the day, your testimony
3 helped illustrate how important it is that these communities
4 connect to one another, and in this particular case, Oakmont,
5 and as opposed to other parts of the district in the 33rd, I
6 guess, they're different, in many respects, and I think it's
7 good to hear that type of testimony. So thank you. It's
8 helpful.

9 MS. GRIMES: Well, thank you. I appreciated you
10 listening.

11 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you, again.

12 Our next speaker, we're staying out west, is Jill
13 Cooper from Murrysville.

14 I can see you on the small screen. I'm waiting
15 for you to get up on the big screen.

16 MS. COOPER: Hello.

17 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Oh, here we go. Welcome.

18 MS. COOPER: Thank you. Hi.

19 Mr. Chairman, Majority and Minority Leaders, I
20 want to thank you for this opportunity to speak with you
21 today. My name is Jill Cooper, and I live in Murrysville, a
22 community about 30 miles east of Pittsburgh. I'm an engaged
23 volunteer in my community, having served on my county
24 workforce investment board, chamber, adult school, economic
25 and community development board, and I'm an activist for

1 smaller, smarter government.

2 Today, I am addressing you as a volunteer who
3 cares deeply about my community and State. My message is very
4 simple: Unite Murrysville. The preliminary map splits the
5 municipality of Murrysville between two State legislators.
6 I'm not just here to complain to you without a solution.
7 There is a very easy fix to unite Murrysville. The
8 Murrysville municipality split can be eliminated with no other
9 map changes and without causing any other harm. If the
10 Commission would move Salem Township to the 56th and then
11 return all of Murrysville and Export in the 55th, it would
12 solve this unnecessary municipal split and any population
13 requirement.

14 Population is nearly identical under the
15 preliminary map and with what I am suggesting. Under the
16 preliminary map, the 55th has 1,311 over standard, 65,464.
17 Under the preliminary map, the 56th has 372 over standard,
18 64,242. Under the Unite Murrysville map, the 55th has 1,345
19 people over standard, 65,398; and the 56th has 338 people over
20 standard, 64,391. Effectively, this net change between the
21 maps would be zero. This is not impacting Salem's
22 representation, as Salem is currently in neither the 55th or
23 56th, but in the 57th.

24 In terms of compactness, the Unite Murrysville map
25 is also a more sensible option versus splitting Murrysville.

1 Our town had to live with being split for a decade, and we
2 were fortunate enough and grateful to have it rectified in the
3 2011 map. It is confusing for citizens to know which
4 Representative to seek help from based on where they live.
5 One neighbor uses one Representative, and the next neighbor
6 another. It's chaos. Plus, our school district
7 representation would be split as well.

8 With my remaining time, I would just like to spend
9 a few minutes talking about fairness. The word "fair" is a
10 tricky word. We use it with our children. We teach it to
11 them at a young age, and we were taught to be fair when we
12 were children. We do this so that we raise our children to
13 treat people the way we would want to be treated. It is a
14 word that has meaning. Believe me, it elicits strong emotion
15 because it taps into our childhood. We are taught at a young
16 age to feel guilt if we are unfair. Because of this, my life
17 experience tells me the word "fair" is often a tool used to
18 manipulate. People use it to get what they want while making
19 the person giving it feel guilt if they do not agree. I spent
20 many years negotiating contracts, and the moment someone used
21 the word "fair," it was a red flag because it nearly always
22 meant they were trying to coerce me into agreeing to something
23 that I should not.

24 Mr. Chairman, you are a good man, smart, well
25 spoken, and I believe have the best interest of all in mind.

1 I have no doubt about that. Ask yourself if the people who
2 actually drew this map township by township, city by city,
3 street by street, have the same level of integrity as you do.
4 Because when this process is over, when the maps are
5 finalized, no matter what they look like, there will be
6 battles in our court, in our media, and in political campaigns
7 for years to come. The people who drew these maps will not be
8 on the front page. Their names will be forgotten. Mr.
9 Chairman, fair or not, the legacy of these maps will be yours.
10 The Members of this Commission are only doing their job to
11 protect their respective Caucuses. The people of this State
12 are counting on you, sir, to rise above the fray of
13 derisiveness that pervades our communities, schools, and
14 dinner tables.

15 I already hear people saying the word
16 "gerrymandering" will now be replaced with "Nordenbergering."
17 I cringe when I hear that, but these people feel that is the
18 only way to push back when they see this as a very one-sided
19 process rigged against them. These maps will be your legacy
20 alone, Chancellor. Do you want Pennsylvania to be
21 Nordenbergering districts? We can do better. You can do
22 better. Demand better.

23 Mr. Chairman, Majority and Minority Leaders,
24 please unite Murrysville, and please do better and demand
25 better for these maps in our State.

1 Thank you.

2 CHAIR NORDENBERG: And thank you, I think.

3 (Laughter.)

4 MS. COOPER: Good luck.

5 CHAIR NORDENBERG: I kind of wish we could have
6 stopped your comments at a particular point.

7 MS. COOPER: I'm sure.

8 CHAIR NORDENBERG: And maybe I'll be talking to
9 the stenographer about that.

10 (Laughter.)

11 CHAIR NORDENBERG: This was very, very helpful.

12 MS. COOPER: Sure.

13 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Are there any questions or
14 comments?

15 Majority Leader Ward.

16 SENATOR K. WARD: Hi, Jill.

17 MS. COOPER: Hi, my new Senator-to-be.

18 SENATOR K. WARD: Well, it's not final yet, but.

19 CHAIR NORDENBERG: That is the shortest comment
20 that Majority Leader Ward has made.

21 (Laughter.)

22 REPRESENTATIVE BENNINGHOFF: All year.

23 SENATOR K. WARD: Wait, who said that?

24 REPRESENTATIVE BENNINGHOFF: Me.

25 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you very, very much for

1 your interest--

2 MS. COOPER: You're welcome.

3 CHAIR NORDENBERG: --and for your help.

4 MS. COOPER: Yes. Thank you.

5 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Our next speaker is going to
6 take us back to Allentown. It is just Justan Fields.

7 (There was no response.)

8 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Okay, we're moving then to
9 Jessica Faust, back in the west in Zelienople.

10 MS. FAUST: Hello. Is there a camera? Oh here, I
11 see. I'm sorry. I'm unfamiliar with Zoom. I apologize.

12 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Well, we can see you now.
13 You're doing very well.

14 MS. FAUST: Great. Thanks.

15 Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak
16 today. I'm actually really excited to be able to do something
17 like this. I live in Zelienople, which is part of Butler
18 County, and I subscribe to my Senator, Elder Vogel's
19 newsletter, which is how I found out about all of this, and I
20 find it very interesting. So I'm a wife, a mom, I work as a
21 data analyst, and as soon as I started looking up all the
22 information like the DistrictBuilder maps, I found that to be
23 very interesting, and so I played around with some of that.
24 One of the maps that I found actually matches very well with
25 exactly what I was going to suggest, which is a 2021

1 preliminary House by Daniel McGlone, which is available
2 through the DistrictBuilder website.

3 So I moved six years ago to Butler County from
4 Allegheny County. I've seen on the list of speakers that
5 there's a person from Plum. That's the district that I came
6 from, and I moved to Cranberry Township. I lived there for
7 four years before I purchased a home in Zelienople. So I'm
8 very familiar with the Cranberry Township area. Cranberry
9 Township currently is voting in House District 12, I believe,
10 and that is grouped in with Beaver County and Allegheny
11 County. One of the reasons that I want to advocate for the
12 map, it's showing that Cranberry Township is going to be
13 grouped in along with Seven Fields and Mars and Valencia and
14 Middlesex Township, and I believe there's one additional
15 township in there as well. And I believe that that better
16 represents the citizens of Cranberry Township because
17 Cranberry Township and all of the communities through there
18 are along a major business hub of Route 228. So there's a lot
19 of businesses there, there is residential homes and things
20 there, but that's not one of the main things that happens.
21 That's about businesses and what types of businesses and
22 infrastructure would be going through that area.

23 Cranberry Township, specifically, has received a
24 lot of influx in the last several years as far as population
25 growth. But they're not growing that much anymore, whereas

1 Jackson Township in Butler County has had the largest increase
2 in population growth, probably will continue to grow through
3 the years, along with Harmony, even Zelienople, with many
4 proposed residential housing plans that are proposed for the
5 area. So I would personally expect Butler County to grow
6 increasingly.

7 I do feel that the map of the preliminary House by
8 Daniel McGlone represents my specific area of Zelienople along
9 with other communities that would have similar interests as
10 far as interests of Butler County citizens. Butler County
11 tourism, Butler county events, and Butler County small
12 businesses, things like that, the Butler County tourism and
13 the Butler County Commissioners do much effort to promote.
14 One thing that the citizens of Butler County seem to be very
15 concerned with is small businesses, small business growth. So
16 I think that keeping these districts together is the best
17 representation of Butler County.

18 One thing, too, is that the proposed District 8 in
19 this map also lumps the majority of the municipalities that
20 are in the Seneca Valley School District, with one exception
21 being Cranberry Township and Seven Fields, which are part of
22 the Seneca Valley District. However, I do think that the
23 citizens would be better represented in this District 12 with
24 that business hub on Route 228. And that's all.

25 Thank you.

1 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you very much for that
2 insightful testimony.

3 Are there any comments or questions?

4 (There was no response.)

5 MS. FAUST: Thank you.

6 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you very much, again.

7 MS. FAUST: You're welcome.

8 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Our next speaker is Terry
9 Hoffman from Eagleville, who is going to talk about the Senate
10 map, and more particularly Montgomery County.

11 MS. HOFFMAN: Hi. My name is Terry Hoffman, and
12 thank you for allowing me to speak.

13 I am retired from full time being a medical
14 information scientist, former product development chemist, and
15 former high school science teacher, and currently a very
16 proactive volunteer. I live in Lower Providence Township,
17 Montgomery County, currently in Pennsylvania State Senate 44.
18 I find it very disturbing that three adjacent townships where
19 I live, with Worcester Township being on one side of Lower
20 Providence, and Upper Providence Township being on the other
21 side of Lower Providence, in which each of these townships
22 have been purposely carved out to be reapportioned into three
23 separate Pennsylvania State Senate districts. To add insult
24 to injury, Worcester Township and Lower Providence Township
25 comprise of one single school district, Methacton. And due to

1 this gerrymandering, our school district has been ripped apart
2 into two separate Pennsylvania State districts.

3 Now, I only looked at my little area of
4 Pennsylvania in Montgomery County, but I represent a lot of
5 Montgomery County residents who, like me, have been negatively
6 impacted by this unfair redistricting, and they should be
7 entitled to have our votes equally counted as everyone else.
8 So this type of reapportionment truly is unacceptable, and we
9 need the Pennsylvania Reapportionment Committee to correct
10 this disservice, particularly to our school. And as Jill
11 Cooper, who I just met online, just said, being fair is of the
12 utmost importance, and fair voting is really -- we should all
13 have that.

14 So thank you so much for listening.

15 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you very much for being
16 with us and sharing those thoughts.

17 Are there any questions or comments?

18 (There was no response.)

19 CHAIR NORDENBERG: If not, thanks again, and Happy
20 New Year.

21 MS. HOFFMAN: Thank you.

22 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Our next witness is Steve
23 Schlauch from Plum, who is going to talk about Plum Borough.

24 MR. SCHLAUCH: My name is Steve Schlauch. Thank
25 you, Members of the Commission, for allowing me to speak in

1 front of you today. I appreciate it.

2 I'm speaking as far as our area, in particular,
3 House District 25. My topic of interest is keeping Plum
4 Borough together and putting people before politics. I am a
5 concerned citizen and taxpayer of Plum Borough in the eastern
6 suburbs of Allegheny County. I wanted to offer my perspective
7 on what the new proposed redistricting maps would do to our
8 neighborhood and community. For decades, Plum has been
9 gerrymandered between PA State House Districts 25 and 32,
10 resulting in municipality and school district splits. As a
11 result, our community doesn't get full representation, nor
12 have its values of interest considered.

13 In short, our new House District 25 doesn't put
14 people before politics like it should, but rather the other
15 way around. So I want to offer up a revised proposed map that
16 will be more contiguous, compact, offers more equal
17 representation, and keeps municipalities and school districts
18 together. These are all key points of the Constitution that
19 should be followed when redistricting. The total population
20 of the proposed district I have is 68,192, which would be
21 approximately the same population of the current proposed
22 district map passed by a majority on the Commission. It would
23 also keep Verona and Oakmont on the same side of the river as
24 Plum Borough. And Plum and Monroeville are very similar
25 suburban neighborhoods in terms of population and size.

1 Therefore, keeping these whole municipalities together is
2 important also.

3 Also, this proposed new map would be very
4 competitive in terms of voter registration numbers, making it
5 a fair district to anyone, which I'm going to get into soon.
6 So the new proposed House district, you'd have Oakmont and
7 Verona all going to Riverview School District, then you'd, of
8 course, have all of Plum for the Plum School District, and then
9 you'd have all of Monroeville and all of Pitcairn, which both
10 go to the Gateway School District. So you'd have, obviously,
11 no splits whatsoever. And the total population, of course,
12 68,192, is based on the 2020 Census data.

13 And as far as the voter registration numbers of
14 the district I want to propose: Republican, 35.4 percent;
15 Democrat, 50.9 percent; and Independent or other, 13.7
16 percent. So as you can see, it's very competitive, number
17 wise, and there's no splits.

18 In conclusion, this new proposed map puts the
19 people first and foremost before politics for any politician
20 in Harrisburg.

21 Thank you for your time and consideration.

22 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you very much.

23 Leader Benninghoff has a comment or question.

24 REPRESENTATIVE BENNINGHOFF: Thank you, Mr.

25 Chairman.

1 Steve, if I may. I don't know if you've been on
2 this for very long, but there wasn't too many people before
3 you that actually spoke, and one was suggesting taking Oakmont
4 out. I did not recall what they said about the splits, but
5 you're advocating keeping Oakmont and Verona together? I
6 think they may have said that, but I think you want to be more
7 inclusive into the Plum Borough area.

8 MR. SCHLAUCH: Yeah, keeping Verona and Oakmont on
9 the same side of the river as Plum, because basically, you
10 know, you've got Oakmont Country Club and Plum basically
11 connected right there at Oakmont. So why not? You know, you
12 have similar communities and similar values of interest, so
13 why not just keep it together, because, you know, I know the
14 area out here, so, you know, they share similar values of
15 interest, plus the fact there's no reason. You want to keep
16 the school districts together and keep the communities,
17 municipalities together, so why not? I mean, and then plus
18 you'd have, as far as the registration numbers, it's more
19 Democrat, but, you know, the voters vote either way. I know
20 the area pretty well out here and the voters basically vote
21 for the -- you know, they can vote Republican or Democrat,
22 depending on the message and the candidate. You know, so my
23 opinion keeping Monroeville and Plum, you know, they're both
24 similar population and size, so I figured keeping all the
25 school districts together. I mean, it's compact, contiguous,

1 there's no splitting of Plum halfway down the middle, because
2 for decades we've had absolutely no representation out here
3 because you split Plum between 32 and 25. So, that's why I
4 think keep Oakmont and Plum together.

5 REPRESENTATIVE BENNINGHOFF: You see that as an
6 improvement over the present situation?

7 MR. SCHLAUCH: Oh, absolutely. The current House
8 District 25 is not representative of the people. It splits
9 municipalities, splits school districts, it puts other
10 communities of a different school district with like, say,
11 Plum, who don't represent the same values. So in my opinion,
12 keeping Monroeville and Pittcairn, which are all part of
13 Gateway, with Plum, pretty much the same size, because
14 Oakmont's basically Plum. It's right there, right connected
15 to Plum. Keep Oakmont and Verona with Plum and keep that as
16 25, and that would be the perfect district.

17 The current House District 25 is absolutely not
18 representative of the people, and, once again, Plum is getting
19 the short end of the stick because we're always split, you
20 know, for political gerrymandering reasons, whatever you want
21 to call it. In my opinion, the current proposed House
22 District 25 passed by the Commission is not representative of
23 the people at all, and I'm very disappointed. And I know a
24 lot of citizens around here are disappointed, and I think we
25 could do a lot better. The proposed district -- I sent you

1 guys a map with my proposed District 25, plus the testimony,
2 and it's got the numbers and everything. If you need me to
3 send it to you again, I'll gladly send it to you, but this is
4 a perfect -- not perfect, but it's got no splits and it's much
5 more representative of the people, and I think you'd have a
6 lot less complaints than the current one now. The current
7 House District 25 is more of a partisan gerrymandered district
8 that clearly favors the one side and Plum is getting the short
9 end of the stick by far, and I don't see how this is a fair
10 district at all.

11 REPRESENTATIVE BENNINGHOFF: All right. Thank
12 you. We appreciate you forwarding that information.

13 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

14 MR. SCHLAUCH: Thank you.

15 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you very much. We do
16 have your map and it's indexed, so we should be able to get to
17 it easily.

18 Thank you, again.

19 MR. SCHLAUCH: Thank you very much.

20 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Our next speaker is Mark Steir
21 from Harrisburg. Welcome. It's nice to have a break from the
22 Zoom calls and to have somebody here in person.

23 MR. STEIR: Considering I've been on Zoom all day,
24 it's nice for me, too.

25 My name is Mark Steir. Thank you, Chair

1 Nordenberg and Members of the Commission, for taking my
2 testimony. I speak today both as Director of the Pennsylvania
3 Budget and Policy Center, and as a professional political
4 scientist who has written and taught about the intersection of
5 philosophical and practical issues in American politics for 25
6 years. This is, obviously, one issue that is at that
7 intersection. And I have to say, I'm so impressed by the
8 local knowledge people are demonstrating in this process.
9 It's really quite amazing, but I'm going to speak more
10 generally about some broader issues today.

11 In January, I wrote a paper for PBPC facetiously
12 entitled, *What to Expect When You're Expecting New Districts*.
13 That paper projected that you would ultimately give birth to
14 maps that Pennsylvanians would embrace. Thanks to the
15 two-step process embedded in our Constitution, in drawing
16 these maps, we can look at the maps you are developing in
17 vitro, as it were, and they largely, but not entirely, meet
18 our expectations, as I will explain when talking first about
19 the House map and then the Senate map.

20 The new House district lines are an enormous
21 improvement over those currently in place because they do two
22 things we predicted you would do. First, they take into
23 account the changing demographics of the State; and second,
24 they unwind two decades of extreme partisan gerrymandering.
25 In accomplishing those tasks, the House map rightfully reduces

1 the enormous partisan advantage Republicans have enjoyed for
2 those two decades.

3 Now, Republicans have made two substantive
4 arguments in defense of that advantage. First, they say that
5 statewide partisan fairness is not one of the standards for
6 redistricting explicitly mentioned in the Pennsylvania
7 Constitution. However, I want to respond by saying our
8 Constitution explicitly says in Section 2 of Article I that
9 "All power is inherent in the people..." and in Section 5 of
10 Article I that "Elections shall be free and equal; and no
11 power...shall...prevent the free exercise of the right of
12 suffrage." The Pennsylvania Supreme Court has rightly held
13 that a legislative district map that provides a permanent and
14 substantial advantage to one party or another fundamentally
15 violates those principles and basically violates the whole
16 idea of representative democracy. Creating districts to
17 insure that shifts in public opinion are registered in the
18 composition of the General Assembly is one of the necessities
19 that allows for some departure from the explicit redistricting
20 standards mentioned in Article II, Section 16.

21 The second complaint about the House district map
22 is that it overrides what is said to be a natural Republican
23 political advantage arising from the tendency of Democrats to
24 live clustered together in urban areas. In response, I would
25 dispute the notion that the Republican political advantage,

1 which is true in some respects, is at all natural. That
2 Democrats live together in urban areas is not mainly a product
3 of individual choice but rather of a long history of public
4 policy that has encouraged the flight of disproportionately
5 white middle class people from our cities to the suburbs, and
6 thus the concentration of disproportionately Black, poor, and
7 working class people in large and small cities. Those
8 policies include a transportation infrastructure that
9 encouraged white flight in the '50s and '60s, redlining that
10 undermined the ability of Black people to accumulate wealth
11 that might have allowed them to move to the suburbs, racist
12 deed covenants that for decades made it impossible for Black
13 people to move to the suburbs, and zoning laws that make it
14 difficult to build low- and moderate-income housing in the
15 suburbs.

16 Given this history, not only the Pennsylvania
17 Constitution, but the 14th Amendment to the United States
18 Constitution and the Federal Voting Rights Act could be
19 understood to require that the LRC draw lines that minimizes,
20 rather than recognizes, any so-called natural Republican
21 political advantage.

22 Now, when it comes to the Senate, there's no
23 question the new lines are preferable to the old ones, but
24 while the overall partisan bias in a Republican direction is
25 reduced in the proposed lines, it is, unfortunately, greater

1 than what's found in the House map, and I urge you to try to
2 correct that. Even more concerning is that the Senate map
3 does less well than the House map in avoiding splits in
4 communities of interest and municipalities. Others who know
5 these regions better, who have that local knowledge I
6 mentioned before, have testified about that with regard to the
7 city of Allentown and the Lancaster metropolitan area being
8 unnecessarily divided into multiple Senate districts, and I
9 encourage you to pay attention to what they've said. I think,
10 in particular, it would be ideal to create a district in the
11 Lancaster area that could grow into a Latino opportunity
12 district over the next decade. On the other side of the
13 State, we're moving Mount Lebanon from the 37th Senatorial
14 District and it unnecessarily divides communities that have a
15 shared concern, I believe.

16 To conclude on a note that perhaps echoes my
17 strained metaphor, which I chose in part because I recognize
18 the difficult -- the labor you were doing in producing this
19 work, my examination of your maps in vitro suggests they will
20 ultimately give birth to healthy districts. Thanks to the
21 benefit of modern technology, however, it's possible not just
22 to gerrymander districts but to fix some problems before
23 delivery, especially in the Senate map. If you do that, most
24 Pennsylvanians will be handing out cigars, or the politically
25 correct version of cigars, when your maps ultimately leave the

1 womb.

2 Thank you very much.

3 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Questions or comments?

4 SENATOR COSTA: Thank you.

5 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Yeah, thank you very much.

6 And have you submitted written testimony?

7 MR. STEIR: I have not yet, but I will do so.

8 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Okay. Thank you.

9 Our next speaker is Elizabeth Gallo. She is here
10 from Dillsburg and is going to speak about Cumberland County.
11 Welcome.

12 MS. GALLO: Thank you.

13 CHAIR NORDENBERG: It's great to have you.

14 MS. GALLO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Members of
15 the Commission, for the opportunity to speak this evening and
16 for allowing our voices to be heard. My name is Elizabeth
17 Gallo, and I'm currently a resident of northern York County.
18 I was born and raised in New Jersey and chose to attend
19 Messiah College, now University, within Cumberland County. I
20 traded not having to pump my own gas, being a 40-minute train
21 ride from New York City, and real pizza and bagels for a part
22 of the country that is more my pace and where I found people
23 to be more caring and intentional. After graduation, I
24 elected to remain in central PA. I had a very positive
25 experience at Messiah, and over four years was able to build a

1 network of people whom are still great mentors, colleagues,
2 and friends. I bought a house in the summer of 2017 and have
3 lived here ever since.

4 With that being said, I would like to speak
5 briefly this evening about how these preliminary maps will
6 affect Cumberland County in particular, a place I now call
7 home. The recent map that was drawn, which was supposedly
8 done based upon population growth, I feel slighted Cumberland
9 County, the number one growing county within the Keystone
10 State. I currently work for a private railroad contracting
11 business based out of Boiling Springs within Cumberland
12 County, and some of the customers we serve on a monthly basis
13 are housed in Cumberland County as well: Ames True Temper,
14 ADM Milling, Cargill, and Allen Distribution, to name a few.
15 These companies are constantly building and maintaining their
16 tracks as they experience an increase in car volume due to an
17 increase in product demand. With an increase in car volume
18 comes opportunity to employ more people. Additionally, the
19 Amazon warehouse in South Middleton Township within Cumberland
20 County is a facility which houses over 600 employees alone.
21 Women make up just under 43 percent of the facility's
22 frontline workers, and just under 34 percent are African
23 American, Latino, Native American, and Asian. To me, this
24 employer alone exemplifies the growth of Cumberland County,
25 which has grown by 10 percent over the last 10 years.

1 I recently served as the campaign manager for the
2 reelection of the mayor of New Cumberland, within Cumberland
3 County. And back in August, realtor.com released its annual
4 hottest ZIP Codes in America, and the borough of New
5 Cumberland came in at number 41 nationwide, one of two places
6 in PA--the other was Bethlehem--to make the list's top 50.
7 According to realtor.com's Chief Economist, Daniel Hale, by
8 definition, the ZIPs that make their annual hottest report are
9 very competitive. But in 2021, they were white hot. Homes in
10 2021's ZIPs were under contract in less than a week, which is
11 three times faster than the contract times for 2020's hottest
12 markets.

13 With this new proposed map, Cumberland County
14 loses a House seat in representation, not to mention
15 Mechanicsburg Borough will be unnecessarily split in half,
16 partially in the 87th District and partially in 88th District.
17 As a result, Mechanicsburg School District splits, the newly
18 created borough fire company splits, and the Simpson Library
19 base splits. In Upper Allen, the whole township moves to the
20 87th District for the first time. Lemoyne and Wormleysburg
21 move to the 103rd District, which encompasses Camp Hill
22 Borough, East Pennsboro Township, the borough of Lemoyne, the
23 borough of Wormleysburg, and parts of Harrisburg city. As a
24 result of the 103rd District would be three new school
25 districts: Camp Hill, East Penn, and West Shore School

1 Districts, not to mention in the Senate, an entirely new
2 district has been created within Cumberland County.

3 When I examine this, many questions come to mind.
4 Where would one's district office be, on the East Shore or the
5 West Shore? Would a satellite office be needed on one side of
6 the river? What is the cost of having two offices? What
7 services are shared on each side of the river, such as EMS and
8 police? Why is the district crossing the river if not
9 completely necessary? While there are many more questions
10 that come to mind, the one that stands out in front of all the
11 others for me is why Cumberland County is losing a seat of
12 representation, and, furthermore, cohesive school districts,
13 libraries, fire companies, et cetera, would be split up
14 unnecessarily.

15 Thank you for your time and your consideration.

16 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you very much.

17 MS. GALLO: Yep.

18 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Questions or comments?

19 Leader Benninghoff.

20 REPRESENTATIVE BENNINGHOFF: Should there be a
21 change in another district put in that area, I can probably
22 think of somebody that might be a good candidate. You're very
23 bright, and I appreciate your well-researched information
24 there, and we will take all that into consideration.

25 MS. GALLO: Thank you.

1 REPRESENTATIVE BENNINGHOFF: It's very helpful.
2 For someone who hasn't lived there that long, you seem to be
3 very engaged and knowledgeable in your community, and it
4 shows.

5 MS. GALLO: Thank you.

6 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you very much.

7 Our next speaker is Nate Silcox from
8 Mechanicsburg, who also is here in person. Welcome.

9 MR. SILCOX: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Leaders.
10 I greatly appreciate this opportunity to provide a statement
11 on the proposed House maps as it relates to Cumberland County.
12 I'm going to repeat a little bit of what my good friend
13 Elizabeth Gallo said, but please bear with me.

14 By way of background, I serve as the President of
15 the Board of Commissioners of Hampden Township, which, at
16 almost 33,000 population, is the largest municipality in
17 Cumberland County. Politically, I serve as the Deputy Vice
18 Chair of the Cumberland County Republican Committee. While
19 neither the Hampden Township Board of Commissioners or the
20 Cumberland County Republican Committee have taken any formal
21 position on the proposed maps, I'm personally very concerned
22 about their adverse effect on Cumberland County, as well as
23 Hampden Township.

24 First, it is confounding that the Commonwealth's
25 fastest growing county is not only not gaining a House

1 district, it is, in fact, losing a district. Furthermore, at
2 a time when maps could be drawn to reflect communities of
3 interest, such as school district boundaries, the Legislative
4 Reapportionment Commission would split Cumberland Valley
5 School District, the largest school district in Cumberland
6 County, amongst three House districts. It would also split
7 Big Springs School District, Carlisle Area, Mechanicsburg
8 Area, South Middleton, and West Shore School District.

9 It is also concerning that the proposed map would
10 combine municipalities from across the Susquehanna River at a
11 time when the Wolf administration is proposing a bridge
12 tolling plan that would, regrettably, only serve to keep these
13 communities physically divided. It's a shame that it also
14 divides Hampden Township from its neighbors which we have
15 close relationships with. Silver Spring Township and Hampden
16 have a particularly close relationship. We share several
17 major highways, the Wertzville Road, the Carlisle Pike,
18 Interstate 81. And we are part of the same school district,
19 and our schools educate each other's children. We share
20 wonderful natural resources such as the Conodoguinet Creek, as
21 well as State game land along the mountain. We eat, shop,
22 worship, and recreate together in each other's townships.
23 Both of our townships have common interests that need to be
24 addressed, and having a single State Representative is
25 helpful, particularly as it related to recently when our

1 Representative got funding from PennDOT for a safety study of
2 Wertzville Road that I just mentioned.

3 It is also important to note that Hampden Township
4 has a major intergovernmental agreement with our neighbors
5 like Camp Hill, as we handle their sewer. We also have mutual
6 aid agreements with our fire with each of our neighbors.

7 Dividing Hampden Township from our current configuration and
8 rearranging the chairs for the sake of rearranging chairs is a
9 disservice to each of these communities.

10 Throughout the process, many espoused principles
11 like preventing gerrymandering, making districts fair, and
12 keeping municipalities intact. Unfortunately, the proposed
13 map falls short for the citizens of Cumberland County. Along
14 with this, the Pennsylvania Constitution says, "Unless
15 absolutely necessary no county, city, incorporated town,
16 borough, township or ward shall be divided in forming either a
17 senatorial or representative district." Despite this,
18 Mechanicsburg and South Middleton Township are carved up
19 between House Districts.

20 It's my hope that the Legislative Reapportionment
21 Commission will take another look at Cumberland County and
22 address those glaring issues. Mr. Chairman, I heard that you
23 made some positive statements about Cumberland County possibly
24 getting changed, and I would certainly appreciate that. And
25 to Senator Costa, the Pennsylvania Bakery in Camp Hill is also

1 a pretty fine one as well. So, put that on the record.

2 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

3 SENATOR COSTA: Thanks, Nate.

4 CHAIR NORDENBERG: It sounds as if there is a
5 competition brewing here.

6 Thank you very much.

7 We are taking this period of time seriously, the
8 comments that all of the witnesses have made seriously, and
9 we're grateful to you.

10 Are there any questions?

11 (There was no response.)

12 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you very much.

13 SENATOR COSTA: I'm going to take you to the
14 Oakmont Bakery the next time you're in Pittsburgh.

15 MR. SILCOX: I've been there, and you know that.
16 It's excellent too. Thank you.

17 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Our next witness is Jeff Haste,
18 who is in Harrisburg but will be appearing via Zoom.

19 I'm getting the thumbs up. Okay, here you come, I
20 hope, up on the big screen. Can you hear us?

21 Are you muted?

22 Oh, here we go. This looks better. Now we can't
23 hear you. Can you hear me?

24 Maybe we should try again in a couple of minutes,
25 because we've got you on the big screen now, but we can't hear

1 anything.

2 Why don't we go to the next witness and then try
3 to get him back. We have one more witness. We're going to go
4 to that person and then try coming back to you. Okay? Maybe
5 you should log out and log back in.

6 Our next witness is Joshua Siegel, who is from
7 Allentown.

8 Mr. Siegel, welcome.

9 I was off this time. Now, can you hear me?

10 MR. SIEGEL: I can hear you, yes.

11 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Okay, great. We're glad to
12 have you here. Thanks for taking the time.

13 MR. SIEGEL: Thank you, and please excuse my
14 exercise equipment in the background, so.

15 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Well, you look like you're very
16 fit, so you probably don't get very far from it.

17 MR. SIEGEL: Much appreciated. I'll begin now.

18 Good afternoon, and thank you to the Members of
19 this esteemed Commission for giving me the opportunity to
20 testify tonight. While I have submitted some initial public
21 comments online, I do hope today will represent sort of the
22 totality of my opinion on Pennsylvania's proposed Senate map.
23 My name is Joshua Siegel, and I'm testifying tonight both as a
24 resident of Allentown, more importantly, an Allentown city
25 councilman, speaking on behalf of the 125,000 residents and

1 constituents whom I've been elected to serve.

2 I do want to briefly talk about the Pennsylvania
3 House map, which I think, as Carol Kuniholm indicated earlier
4 today from Fair Districts, does a great job in making the
5 seats in Pennsylvania much fairer and much more aligned with
6 the partisan outcomes here in Pennsylvania. I think here in
7 Allentown a slight tweaking would be helpful. In particular,
8 the 134th District, which encompasses parts of center city on
9 the south side and the newly created 22nd District, which is
10 parts of center city on the east side, I do think it would
11 probably be more appropriate in Allentown to have a center
12 city district being entirely represented by one State
13 legislator, and then an east side seat and other portions of
14 surrounding municipalities.

15 With that being said, I do support and I'm greatly
16 pleased by the actions of this board in creating a third State
17 legislative seat in the city of Allentown. I think that would
18 go a long way to making sure that the third largest city in
19 the State and one that's growing extraordinarily fast receives
20 the clout and representation in Harrisburg that it deserves,
21 and I think that will afford us the capacity to compete for
22 additional resources, whether it be education or economic
23 development.

24 I want to move, more importantly, to the State
25 Senate map that's been proposed and how that specifically

1 affects Allentown and Lehigh County. I think the first and
2 most glaring aspect of the State Senate proposal is, of
3 course, the fact that Allentown is split. For one, 14
4 precincts in Allentown are currently split off from what would
5 be part of the 14th District and put into the 16th. I think
6 it's quite obvious that this is a brazen and glaring attempt
7 to gerrymander in defense of Senator Pat Browne, who narrowly
8 won reelection in 2018. Quite obviously sensing that the
9 Lehigh Valley is trending perhaps more blue, a more favorable
10 district was created in the 16th.

11 In particular, I also want to comment on the
12 dichotomous nature of claims of creating a 14th Senate
13 District which is Hispanic and minority-influence, but when
14 you look at the 14 precincts that are being taken off of
15 Allentown and put into the 16th, those are, in fact,
16 extraordinarily diverse precincts, home to large populations
17 of African American and Hispanic residents. In fact, 45
18 percent of those 14 precincts, of the 26,000 people that
19 reside within them, are non-white, many of them Hispanic and
20 African American. I think this speaks to the fact that, while
21 we can claim that the 14th Senate District was created to be a
22 minority-influence district, which is obviously an admirable
23 goal and I certainly support the opportunity to elect the
24 first Latino State Senator, it makes no sense, and it's simply
25 not defensible, to take one of the most diverse parts of

1 Allentown and draw it in into the 16th Senate District, which
2 is, by the way, 85-percent white, which I think would only
3 serve to dilute those communities of color.

4 More specifically, if we look at the fact that
5 west Bethlehem was drawn into the 14th Senate District, this
6 also makes no sense. And as someone who resides in the Lehigh
7 Valley, I can say west Bethlehem belongs with the rest of
8 Bethlehem in a Northampton County Senate Seat, which would be
9 the 18th Senate District. West Bethlehem in particular votes
10 for Bethlehem mayor and Bethlehem city council and, therefore,
11 shares a common fate with the city of Bethlehem, which is
12 primarily in Northampton County and represented by a
13 Northampton Senator. That district, by the way, those
14 precincts from west Bethlehem, are 70-percent white and
15 30-percent non-white. So, adding it into the 14th District,
16 once again, I think contradicts the notion that creating the
17 14th Senate District was exclusively about minority
18 representation. I think there's a little bit of smokescreen
19 there in an effort to sort of divert the conversation away
20 from what, in my opinion, is the cracking of the third largest
21 city in the State.

22 Beyond that, I also want to point out the fact
23 that Lehigh County is a 374,000-person county. It's the 10th
24 largest county in the State. And that being said, there are
25 more efficient ways to split Lehigh County in a way that

1 respects the margins of the county and uses it as a building
2 block, instead of breaking that block. The 14th Senate
3 District, as it stands now, stretches from the borders of
4 Salisbury and Emmaus and all the way into Lehigh and Moore
5 Townships. And I'd point out that Lehigh and Moore Townships
6 are extraordinarily white and extremely rural, not necessarily
7 a community of common interest when you look at urban
8 Allentown and then the largely urbanized suburbs that surround
9 them.

10 Very briefly, I realize I'm running out of time,
11 but if I could share my screen. I just wanted to highlight
12 three State Senate maps that the LRC's website has uploaded,
13 and I want to commend this board for making it extraordinarily
14 simple and easy for members of the public to comment.

15 Can you see my PowerPoint?

16 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Yes, we can.

17 MR. SIEGEL: Excellent. So if I can just briefly
18 comment, being cognizant of my time here, these are three
19 proposed districts not drawn by myself but by other members of
20 the public throughout Pennsylvania, and these represent, I
21 think, more efficient ways to apportion Lehigh County.

22 So I'll draw your attention to this district right
23 here. This is Senate Map A, submitted by Jesse Stowell,
24 that's how they've identified themselves on the website. This
25 L-shaped map more, I think, properly reflects Lehigh County by

1 absorbing Allentown and the surrounding municipalities and
2 suburbs that are clearly communities of common interest and
3 share a common fate. As you, Mr. Nordenberg, have indicated,
4 you also care much about creating a minority-influence
5 district, which again, is a great goal, and a good thing about
6 this district is that it is 28-percent Hispanic, 10-percent
7 African American, 3-percent Asian. So, it would still be a
8 large minority-influence seat, and those proportions are well
9 in line with what the current 14th District is, but we do it
10 without splitting Allentown.

11 Moving on to this next map that was submitted by
12 an individual who only identified themselves by their initials
13 SRF, but they did indicate that they were the 2018 winner of
14 Draw the Lines PA congressional mapping contest, which I think
15 also indicates the validity of this proposal. You'll notice
16 that it essentially divides Lehigh County in half, with one
17 district being exclusively within Lehigh County, that being
18 the 16th. As a resident, I can tell you that that's Lower
19 Saucon, stretching all the way up to Slatington in the north.
20 Again, the great thing about Lehigh County having 374,000
21 residents is that you can very efficiently draw at least one
22 Senate District concentrated primarily, or not exclusively,
23 within Lehigh County, which is a better representation and a
24 better way to empower not only minority communities but, more
25 importantly, residents of Lehigh County without cracking them

1 and splitting amongst too many municipalities. And if you
2 look, of course, to the left, the rest is Lehigh County is
3 drawn into neighboring Berks. Those municipalities, of
4 course, are more rural, and therefore would share much more of
5 a common fate with the more rural Berks County.

6 And then the final map is sort of a backwards C,
7 it was interesting, was submitted by another individual who
8 only identified themselves as MG. This district, again,
9 maintains Allentown as well as its surrounding municipalities
10 and has similar minority representation. In fact, all three
11 of these districts exceed the LRC's proposed 14th minority
12 threshold by about 1.5 to 2 percentage points. So not a
13 significant increase, but I can tell you, obviously as an
14 elected official, that in close elections, those margins
15 matter, and it might be the difference between a candidate of
16 color getting elected or not.

17 So it is my hope that this board will utilize
18 these maps as examples of how Lehigh County, but Allentown
19 more in particular, can be effectively represented and
20 effectively redistricted. A number of members of the
21 community, myself included, have submitted a fourth map which,
22 I think, is more and more out of cynicism and pragmatist which
23 continues to keep Allentown split, but mitigates and minimizes
24 it to the lowest possible level, because, unfortunately, I
25 recognize that sometimes incumbency seems to be playing a

1 factor, and the best we can do in those situations is adjust.
2 It is my hope that this board will prove me and many people
3 wrong in taking the right steps and utilizing the previous
4 three maps as the proper and fair way to split Lehigh County
5 and properly represent Allentown.

6 And I might close by adding, I know earlier today
7 during Carol Kuniholm's testimony there was a suggestion that
8 Allentown and Bethlehem might be combined into one single
9 State Senate seat, and I think myself, and just about every
10 resident of the Lehigh Valley, would protest that to the
11 highest possible degree. There is no justification for
12 putting Allentown and Bethlehem in a single State Senate seat.
13 That would be akin to packing, in my opinion. It would create
14 an extraordinarily lopsided Democratic seat, but it would also
15 dilute voices throughout the Lehigh Valley by essentially
16 guaranteeing that the rest would be uncompetitive. Allentown
17 is a distinctly different city with its own set of unique
18 challenges and opportunities, and as such needs its own State
19 Senator, and Bethlehem as well. That is how they're currently
20 divided, and that should stay as such.

21 I hope, as I said before, that this body will act
22 accordingly, restore Allentown to one State Senate district,
23 do not split the city, and insure that Lehigh County gets the
24 voice and representation it deserves as the 10th largest
25 county in the State and one of the fastest growing

1 metropolitan regions in the State as well.

2 I thank you for the opportunity to testify. I
3 apologize for going over on my time a little bit. I welcome
4 any questions, and I do, once again, thank this board for the
5 transparency and the opportunity for so many residents to
6 submit their comments and testify. That has certainly been a
7 refreshing process and I think a testament to at least the
8 change in the redistricting processing, and your commitment,
9 Mr. Nordenberg, to making sure that this process is played out
10 and as many voices are heard as possible. So, thank you.

11 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you very much.

12 Are there questions or comments?

13 Majority Leader Benninghoff.

14 REPRESENTATIVE BENNINGHOFF: Thank you, Mr.
15 Siegel, for your in-depth comments on that proposal. It
16 seemed like you focused predominantly on the Senate map, which
17 is fine. I just want to make sure I heard things right. You
18 were very focused on the minority districts and things within
19 the Senate and gave us a lot to think about. I thought I
20 heard you say earlier on in your overall assessment that you
21 were content with the House maps, or you liked the House maps,
22 and yet you had some problems with the minority district in
23 the Senate. I was just curious if you were listening to any
24 of the prior speakers tonight? If you look at the current
25 proposed maps'--preliminary map, I guess we'd call it--

1 majority-minority districts actually reduces the Hispanic
2 population I think in three out of four of them. And if you
3 look at the overall Hispanic voting age being 40 percent or
4 less, you know, those numbers seem to be counterproductive to
5 what you were saying was what you liked otherwise.

6 MR. SIEGEL: Well, I mean, I would add the 22nd
7 District as it's created in Allentown is certainly well over
8 the 40-percent threshold, but I might add, I think there's a
9 difference between packing just a few districts and having
10 perhaps a 70- or 60-percent sort of, you know, Hispanic
11 population. You know, the goal of a minority-influence
12 district is not necessarily to be the majority but insure that
13 there's at least enough of a certain demographic group within
14 a House or Senate seat that they simply cannot be ignored,
15 that they can, at the very least, affect the outcome of the
16 election and represent a key constituency.

17 My only point of contention with the House map in
18 Allentown is not the way Allentown is apportioned, but merely
19 that I think some slight tweaking might necessarily improve,
20 again, keeping certain communities together. If you look at
21 the way center city is currently apportioned, it's sort of
22 halfway split between the 134th and the 22nd. I merely
23 suggested that those two districts might be adjusted so that
24 perhaps all of Center City reside in one House district as
25 opposed to sort of being divided amongst the two.

1 But as far as your comments go, I don't
2 necessarily think that every minority district needs to have a
3 majority, you know, Latino presence. It's simply that there
4 needs to be a significant enough presence that they do have a
5 consequential and substantiative impact on election outcomes.
6 And I think that their 40 percent of the district, or 33 or 35
7 percent, you cannot ignore that constituency, nor should you.
8 So that would be my only comment. But I certainly understand
9 what you're saying, sir.

10 REPRESENTATIVE BENNINGHOFF: Actually, the
11 percentage of Hispanic population was reduced in three out of
12 those four, so it actually reduces the amount of ability for
13 somebody to get, or statistically the ability for a minority
14 to get elected, specifically.

15 MR. SIEGEL: Well, if I may, I don't necessarily
16 know if I agree with the contention that a district has to be
17 overwhelming minority. I think the whole point of democracy
18 is coalition building. I would point to State Representative
19 Austin Davis, who is elected in the Mon Valley. He's an
20 African American Representative, but his district is majority
21 white but has a large African American constituency. But it's
22 not, by any chance or stretch of the imagination, a
23 majority-minority district. I think that the value in the
24 House map is that it creates a number of districts with a
25 sizable portion of minority representation, and that allows

1 Representatives to run and build a coalition, which ultimately
2 the mission of any elected representative is to stitch
3 together different constituencies rather than one simple
4 voting bloc.

5 REPRESENTATIVE BENNINGHOFF: Thank you.

6 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Any other questions?

7 Senator Costa.

8 SENATOR COSTA: Not necessarily a question, Mr.
9 Chairman, just I want to thank Mr. Siegel for his testimony,
10 and more importantly, as Leader Benninghoff indicated, your
11 knowledge of the area, both whether it be Lehigh or
12 Northampton and the interrelationship with those
13 municipalities and those communities of interest and the like.
14 And one of the things we've heard from a number of other folks
15 today related to school districts, and I don't know whether
16 you mentioned anything about your school districts in your
17 commentary. What are your thoughts in terms of how that plays
18 out throughout, whether it be the House Districts or the
19 Senate Districts, in terms of as it relates to what you
20 believe the impact of the school districts are? I know that
21 you're on council, but you also certainly know, as goes the
22 school district goes the municipalities, oftentimes. So can
23 you comment on that very briefly?

24 MR. SIEGEL: Yes, Senator Costa. Well, obviously,
25 looking at the 14th Senate District, the decision to split

1 Allentown I think will have a disproportionate impact. For
2 example, William Allen, which is the second high school in the
3 city of Allentown, would reside in the 16th Senate District,
4 whereas Dieruff, the other high school in Allentown, would be
5 in the 14th. I don't think it's advantageous to split our
6 only two high schools between two State Senators. Allentown,
7 as I'm sure you're aware, is a deeply impoverished school
8 district. We're underfunded by roughly \$100 million. I don't
9 think having two Senators actually does us any good. It
10 divides the time and energy we have towards negotiating or
11 working. I'd rather have one State Senator that I can sit
12 down with and talk with and be our voice in Harrisburg. And I
13 would add that, you know, the 16th Senate District that takes
14 the 14 precincts from Allentown, that Senator is now going to
15 represent a plethora of other school districts, and their
16 primary concern is likely not going to be the 26,000 residents
17 of a very small sliver of Allentown that they're forced to
18 represent. It's going to be the rest of the district, which
19 is roughly, you know, 260,000 people. So that sliver of the
20 city will be a very small factor. And as you know, Berks is a
21 much more rural county. Those school districts face a series
22 of different issues than an urban school district like
23 Allentown, or even a suburban school district in Lehigh
24 County. So I think, in particular, obviously just speaking as
25 an Allentown councilman, that's an unacceptable outcome that's

1 going to hurt a majority-minority school district where it's
2 100 percent, you know, free school lunch. It's not going to
3 be anything near a win for my constituents.

4 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you, again, very much.

5 MR. SIEGEL: Thank you.

6 CHAIR NORDENBERG: And now we're going to try to
7 go back and reconnect with Mr. Haste, who has been waiting
8 patiently. Let's see if we can hear you this time.

9 No, we can't hear you.

10 REPRESENTATIVE BENNINGHOFF: Mr. Chairman.

11 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Yes.

12 REPRESENTATIVE BENNINGHOFF: Have him call our
13 phone.

14 CHAIR NORDENBERG: The suggestion has been that
15 you call one of our phones, and we'll put you on speaker.

16 SENATOR K. WARD: It's fine. I have a full
17 battery.

18 REPRESENTATIVE BENNINGHOFF: If you want to, I
19 will give you my number.

20 SENATOR K. WARD: Oh, I don't care.

21 CHAIR NORDENBERG: You apparently have email
22 instructions about how to call into the phone system. You can
23 tell we want to hear you.

24 Have you been able to find the email?

25 Since you're in Harrisburg, if this doesn't work,

1 we may just come out to your house.

2 Brent, you've got my cell phone number, why don't
3 you email that to him.

4 You're about to get an email with my cell phone
5 number in it. Did you get my cell phone number?

6 MR. HASTE: Can you hear me?

7 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Yes.

8 MR. HASTE: All right. It echoes on my side. Let
9 me try to turn off the speaker. Is that better?

10 CHAIR NORDENBERG: That's great.

11 MR. HASTE: Okay. Well, again, thank you for your
12 persistence.

13 CHAIR NORDENBERG: The suspense is killing us.

14 MR. HASTE: And I want to commend you for taking
15 the time that you have to put these maps together and to work
16 on this process on behalf of all the citizens of Pennsylvania.

17 My name is Jeff Haste. I recently retired as
18 county commissioner, where I had served as chairman of the
19 board for the last just under 19 years. I have a total of 28
20 years of service representing Dauphin County in various
21 capacities.

22 And I wanted to just talk a little bit tonight
23 about the House map. Historically, we have tried to keep four
24 communities as the hubs of our districts. We have northern
25 Dauphin County, which is predominantly agricultural and rural.

1 We have Derry Township, which you would know as Hershey. We
2 have the city of Harrisburg, and we've had Lower Paxton.
3 Lower Paxton is our largest municipality, Harrisburg is our
4 second largest municipality in the county. We, for the most
5 part, have kept northern Dauphin together as one community,
6 and Derry Township, or Hershey, has been kept as together as
7 one community. The problem with the House maps is the rest of
8 the county has been divided not among communities or not among
9 corridors at all.

10 We now have, in your map, the 125th comes down
11 into Lower Dauphin County, the central part of the county, by
12 way of crossing over a mountain. In the past, northern
13 Dauphin had to come down to get some numbers out of the
14 southern part of the county, and you did so by going down
15 Route 322, and that made sense, there was a natural corridor
16 there, and those were river communities that connect. By
17 coming into Lower Paxton, there is no major route that comes
18 into that part of the district, and that part of the district
19 really has nothing in common with the northern part of the
20 125th.

21 And then in the city of Harrisburg, and I
22 understand the rationale with trying to do it, but the city of
23 Harrisburg now is split in half. And in both of the proposed
24 House Districts, the city of Harrisburg could be represented
25 by two different House members, and a very good possibility

1 that neither one would live in the city of Harrisburg. And,
2 again, that doesn't seem to make sense.

3 And then in the new 104th, which I actually
4 represented back in the mid-90s, has moved east in our county,
5 and in the 104th, it starts in the city and it goes the whole
6 way out to encompasses the borough of Hummelstown. The
7 borough of Hummelstown is really a suburb of Hershey. It's
8 right beside Derry Township. It's right beside Hershey.
9 Businesses transact between the two. Communities back and
10 forth between the two, and now Hummelstown is removed from
11 that familiar community and put in with the city of Harrisburg
12 on the other side of the county, and there's really little
13 connection between the two.

14 I would just really ask that the committee take
15 the time, go back and start to look at communities, keeping
16 those four hubs as the hubs of the districts that you develop
17 within Dauphin County. Again, that would be northern Dauphin;
18 our largest municipality, Lower Paxton; the second largest,
19 the city of Harrisburg; and then the Derry Township area. And
20 I think if you do that, I think you come up with districts
21 that will be more conducive to our communities, to our school
22 district. Everybody's made that point. Instead of splitting
23 school districts, we would keep them somewhat together, and
24 would keep general local economies of commerce working
25 together as opposed to putting one here and one over here.

1 And with that, I'd be happy to answer any
2 questions.

3 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you very much, and we're
4 glad we waited.

5 MR. HASTE: Thank you.

6 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Are there any questions or
7 comments?

8 (There was no response.)

9 CHAIR NORDENBERG: I guess you've answered all our
10 questions for the moment, but we may be following up. It was
11 important testimony.

12 MR. HASTE: Thank you.

13 CHAIR NORDENBERG: Thank you very much.

14 MR. HASTE: Thank you.

15 CHAIR NORDENBERG: And that concludes our second
16 hearing of the day. We'll be together again tomorrow morning,
17 and I'll look forward to seeing people again then. Thank you
18 very much.

19 (Whereupon, the proceedings were concluded at 7:40
20 p.m.)

21

22

23

24

25

1
2 I hereby certify that the proceedings and evidence
3 are contained fully and accurately in the notes taken by me
4 during the hearing of the within cause, and that this is a
5 true and correct transcript of the same.
6
7
8
9

10 

11 ANN-MARIE P. SWEENEY
12 Official Reporter
13 Legislative Reapportionment
14 Commission
15

16 THE FOREGOING CERTIFICATION DOES NOT APPLY TO ANY
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21 ANN-MARIE P. SWEENEY
22 Official Reporter
23 Legislative Reapportionment Commission
24 P.O. Box 203079
25 Harrisburg, PA 17120

EXHIBITS

Agenda

Hearing #11

Pennsylvania Legislative Reapportionment Commission

January 6, 2022

6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

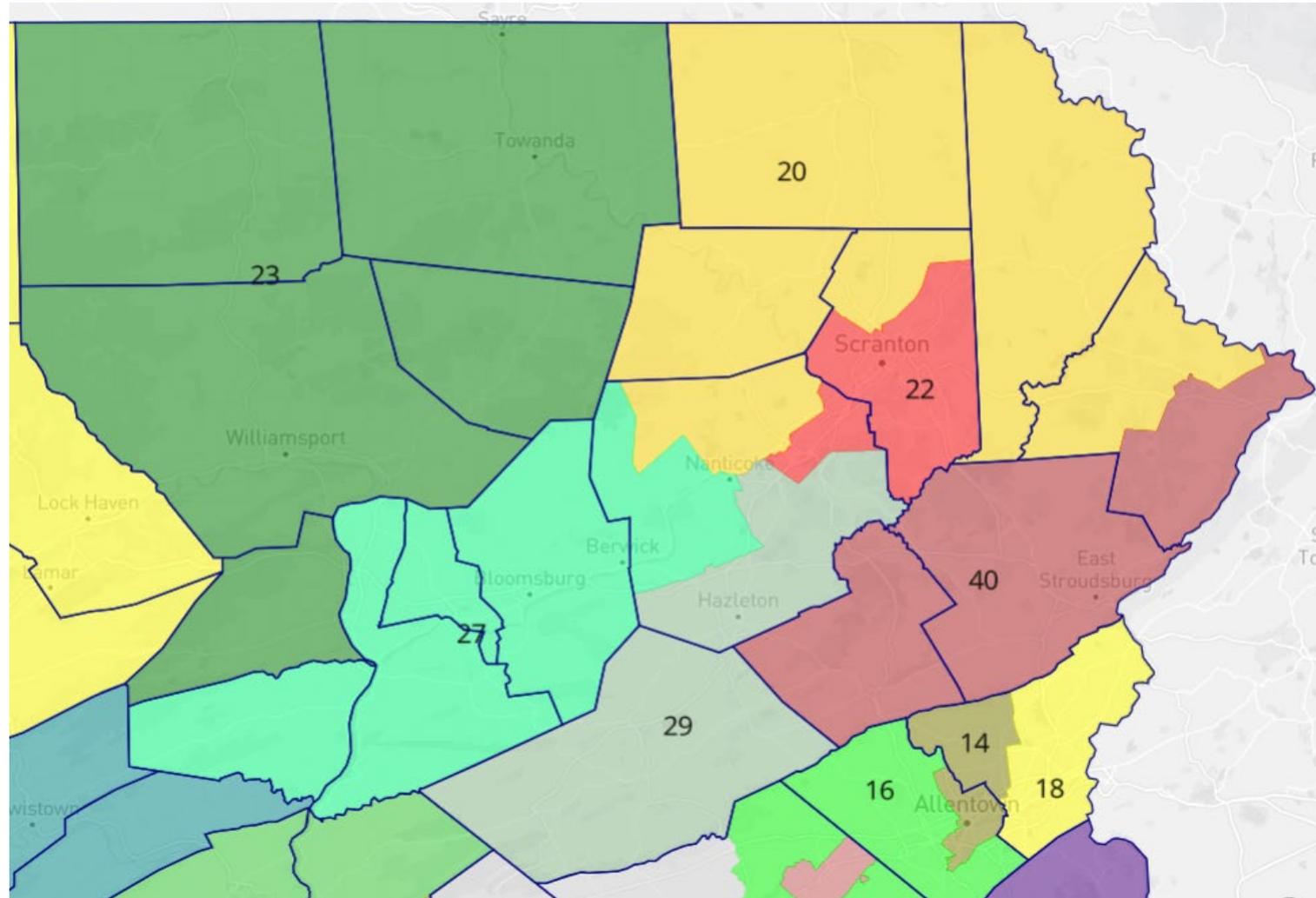
North Office Building, Hearing Room 1

Comments on Preliminary Plan

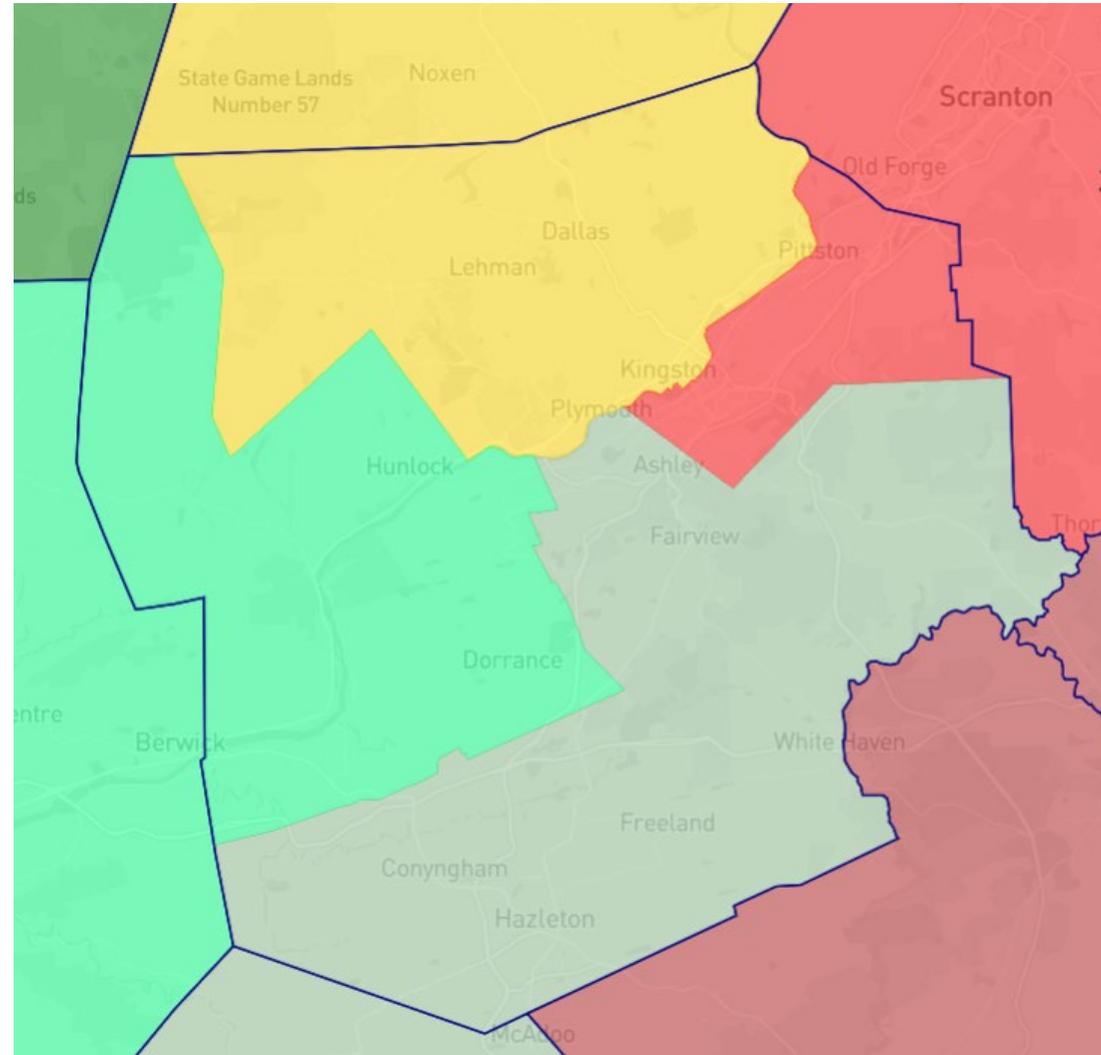
1. Call to Order and Opening Remarks
2. Comments from Interested Citizens
3. Closing Remarks and Adjournment



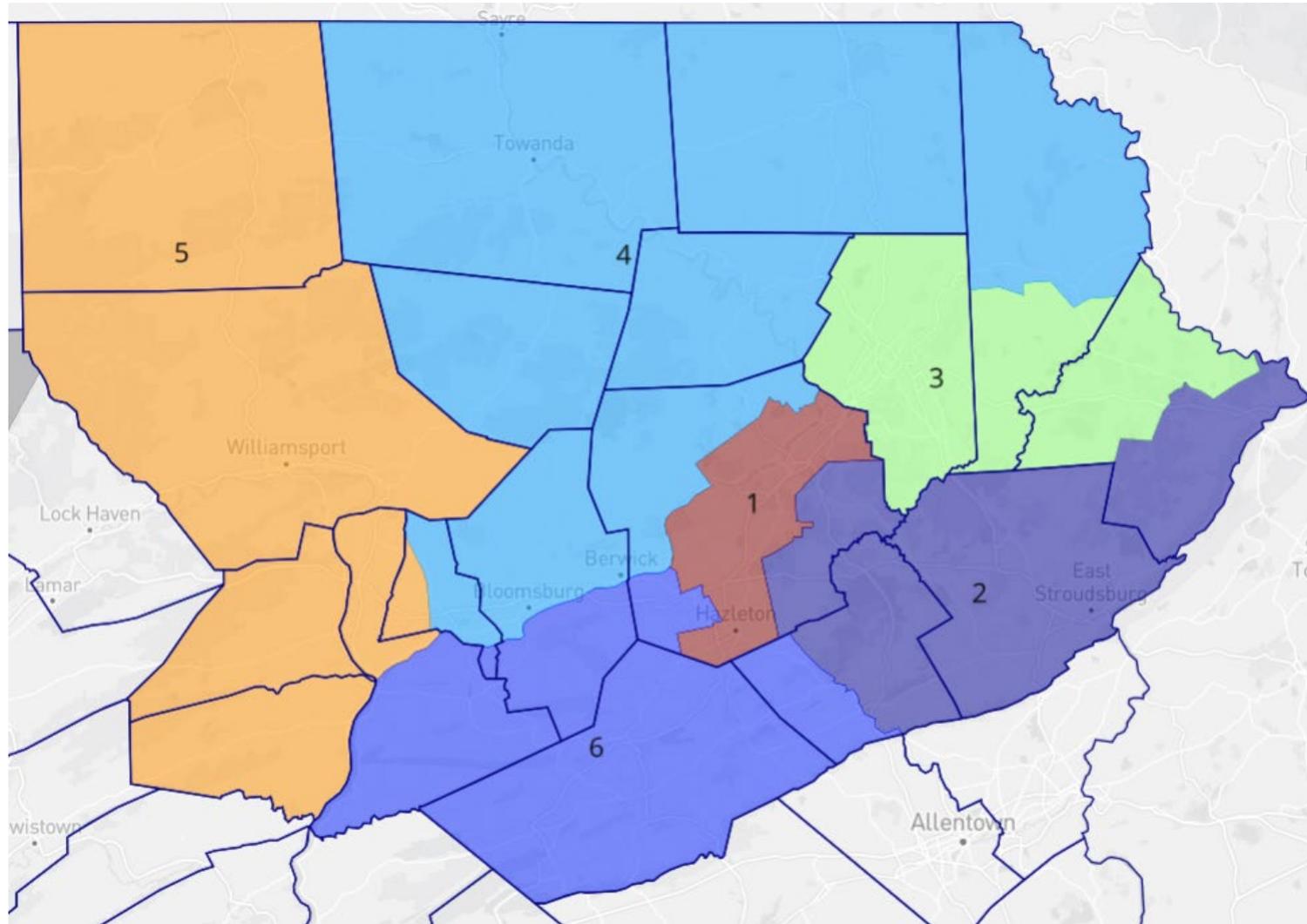
LRC Proposed Map



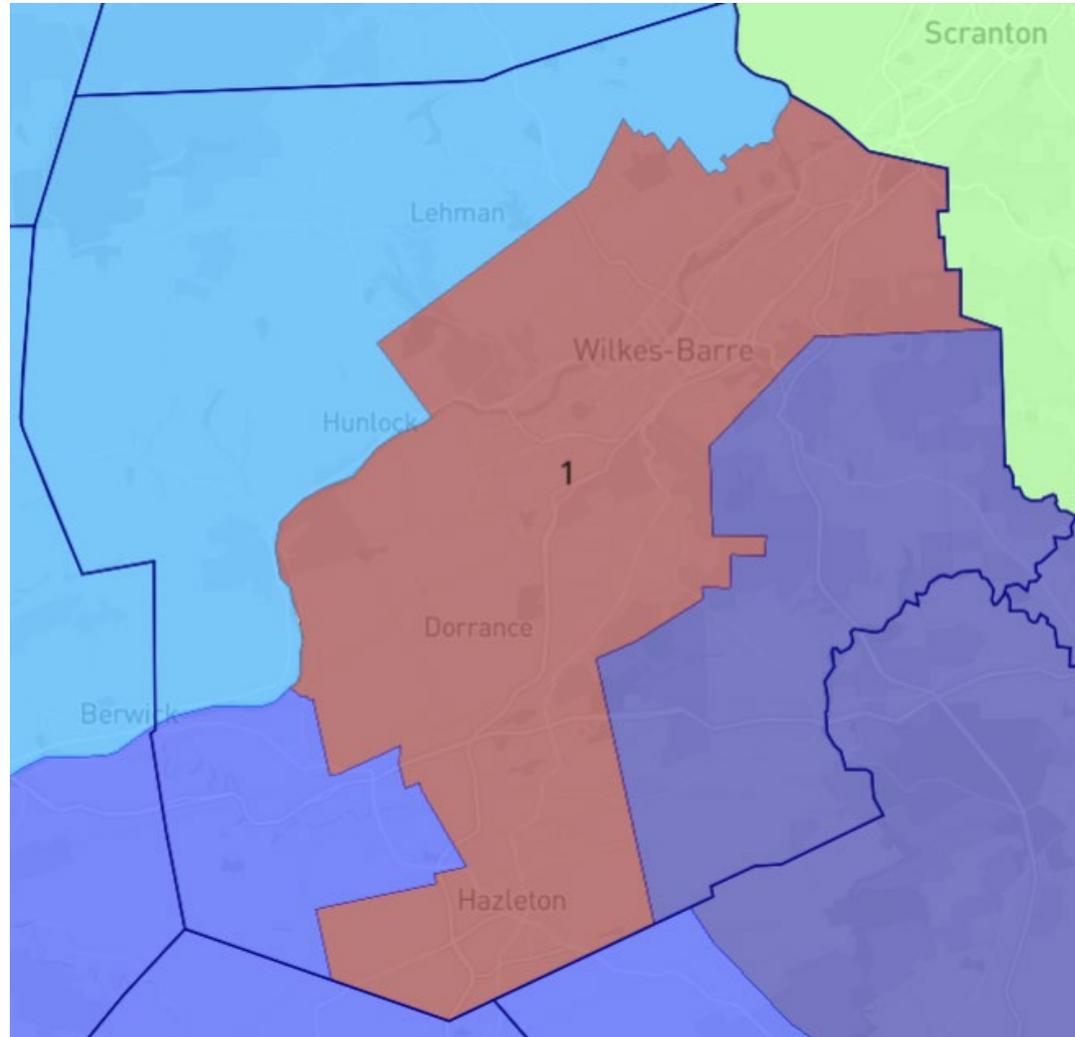
LRC Proposed Map - Luzerne County



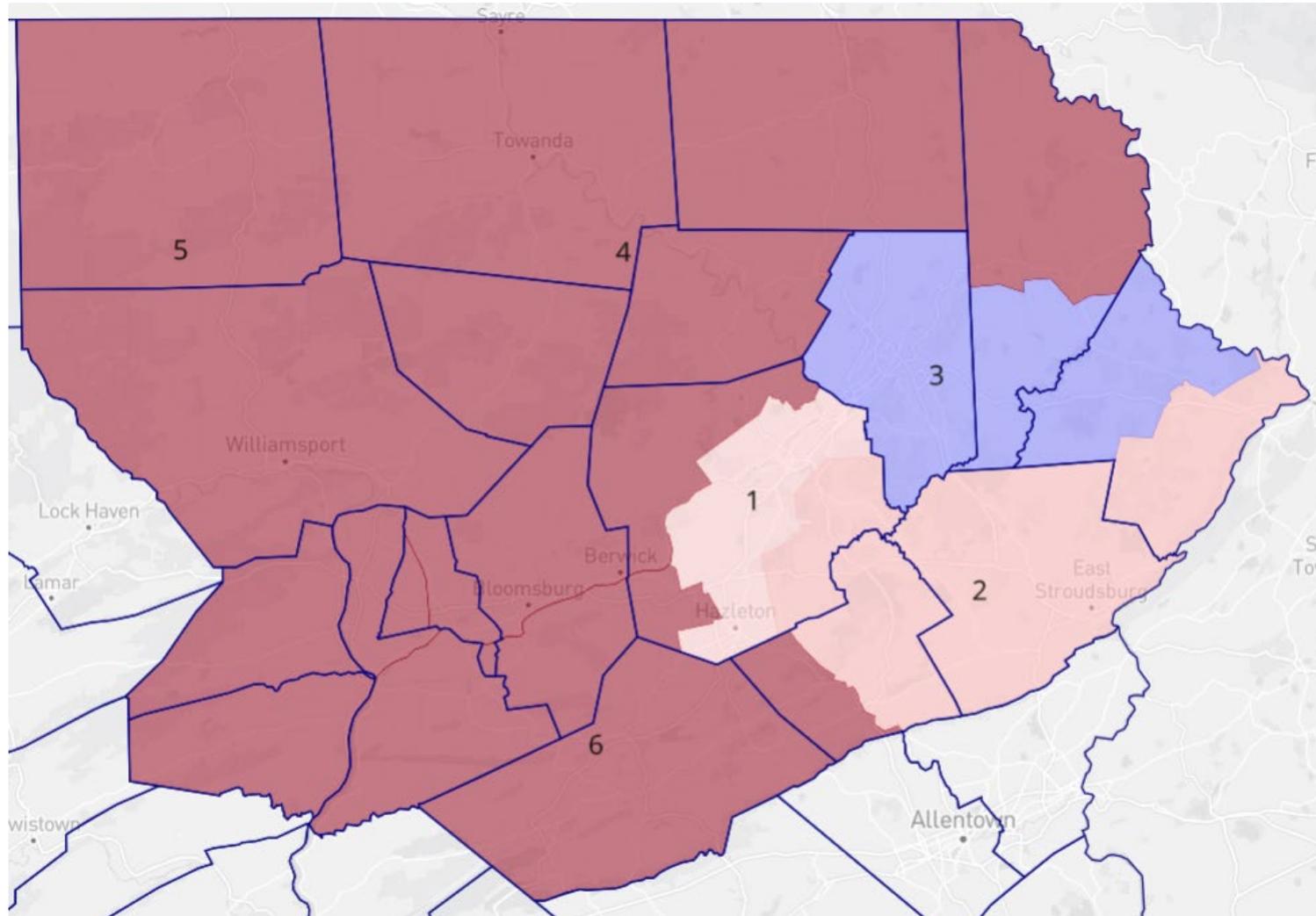
Proposed Map



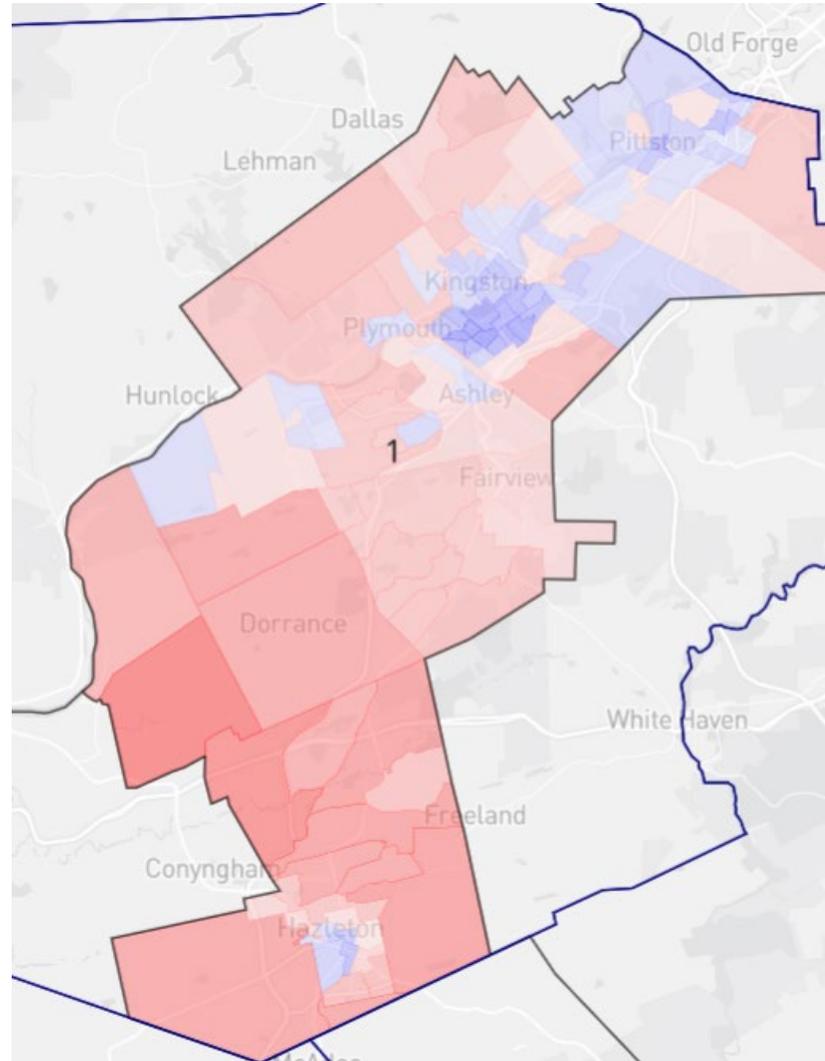
Proposed Map - Luzerne County



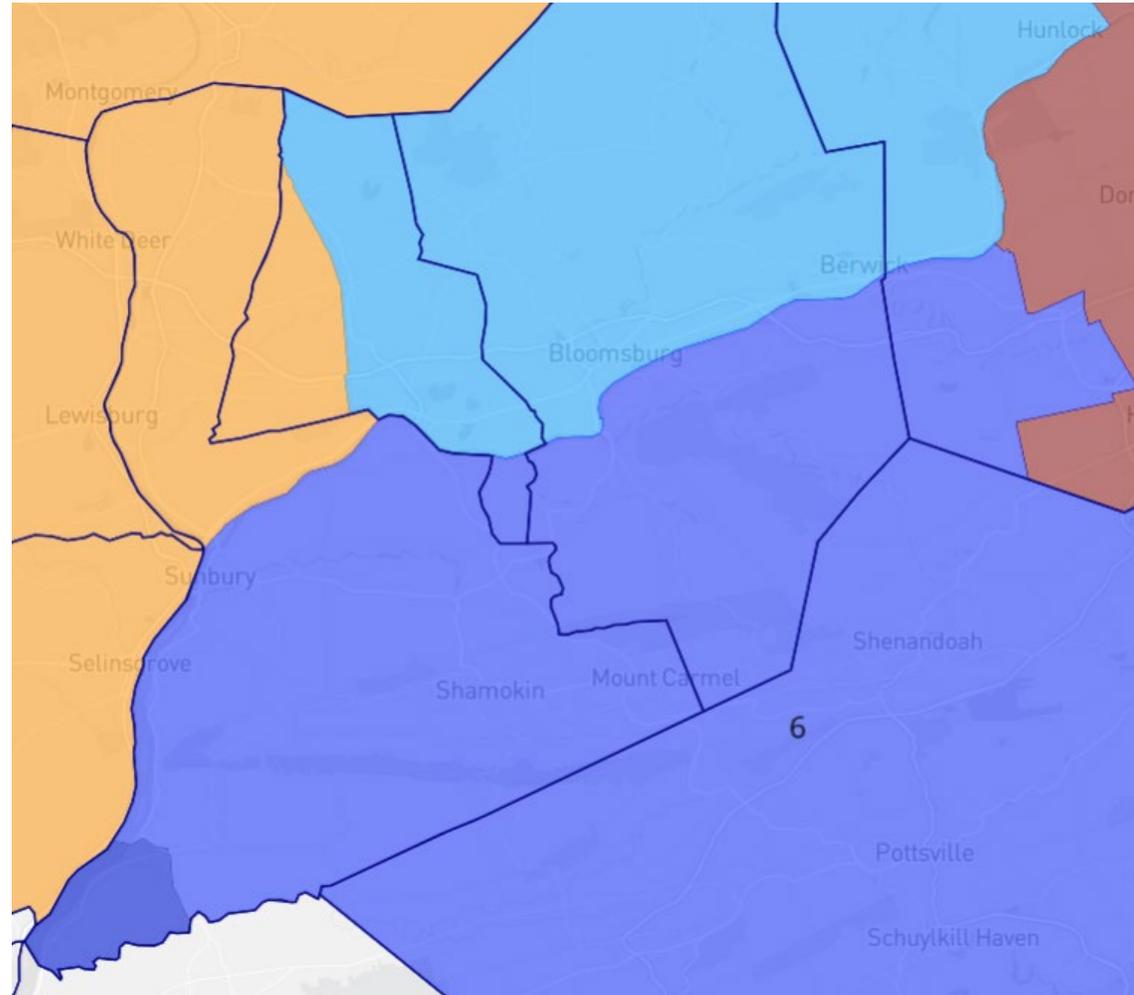
Proposed Map - Partisan Lean



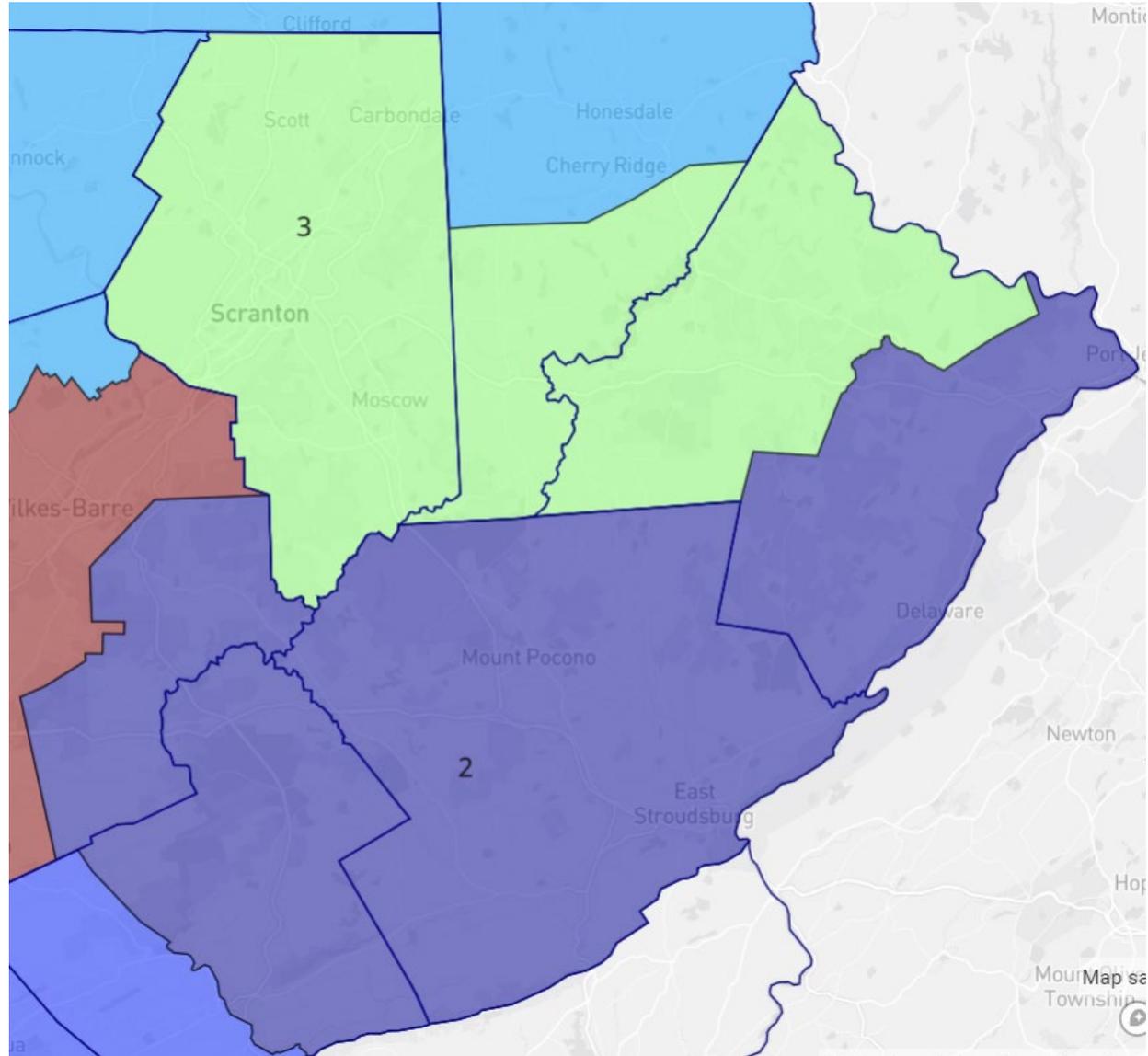
Luzerne County - Political Moderation



Geological Border



Geological Aspects Used





I submitted a map that goes along with my testimony. Thank you!

I have lived in Lancaster County for almost my entire life. I posted both of the commission's preliminary maps on social media to get viewpoints on the maps. The phrase that has been used to describe the state senate map is "I can live with it." We can live with the state senate map. That means that both sides view it as a compromise that we can live with. We are a competitive state with diverse geography and population. We can not, however, live with the state house map. Most importantly for me, this map is a non-negotiable map for Lancaster County. I am a lifelong resident of my county, and I have shown people of all professions, backgrounds, and people who come from varying municipalities, the preliminary map that has been posted for the public to see. This map was not drawn in good faith, nor could an honest nonpartisan support it. This current map is not a starter with the majority of our county residents. In local elections in 2020 and 2021, local republicans won a majority of the vote in every municipality, except Lancaster Township and Lancaster City. The combined population of these municipalities is less than 80,000 people. It would be one thing, to not split Lancaster Township, you gave several Lancaster City precincts to a suburban district to make it a competitive district. This map does not do that. It intentionally adds Millersville to a Southern Lancaster City district to gerrymander an extra democratic district to the North.

A majority of Lancaster County residents from all over the county are EXTREMELY upset at this democratic gerrymander of our county. There is NO reason to split Lancaster City, and this map does that to sink suburban, and Republican Manheim Township into a safe Democratic district. You put Millersville, a small college town located across the street from Penn Manor High School, a school that services a largely rural school district, into a district with Lancaster City. I am CONDEMNING this democratic gerrymander of a map on all counts. You place my home in Manheim Township in the new 96th district, a district that will be a majority suburban, instead of a previously urban district, but will act as a democratic sinkhole. Why did you tear apart the previous 97th district? The previous 97th district for decades, as a premise, contained most of Manheim Township, the entire Borough of Lititz, and the entirety of Warwick Township. With this map, you are putting a township with farms into an urban-dominated district. We were paired with Lititz for years because culturally, we vote very similarly to how Lititz votes and property values are similar. In this new district you drew for a majority of Manheim Township, you drew us into the dissimilar Lancaster City. Once again, I completely condemn this blatant democratic gerrymander of my county. The districts in Lancaster County aren't even contiguous. The 41st has part of its district surrounded by the 96th, making the district non-contiguous. There are multiple interloping districts alongside the 41st are that are not contiguous. This makes this map unconstitutional. So what did I do? I followed the history of our districts.

East Petersburg and East Hempfield was moved back into the 37, and Manheim Township was paired with its historic district partners of Lititz and Warwick Township, although not all of the latter will be in the 96th district. The benefit of my map is that for the first time in history, Manheim Township democrats will have a voice. The current preliminary map will allow Lancaster City democrats to swamp Manheim Township democrats in a primary election for the state house. Lancaster City democrats will already have control of the newly drawn 50th. This map will give suburban democrats in my county an actual chance of electing one of their own in this decade. But likewise, it will create a truly competitive district. Manheim Township has been the center of close elections as of late. In 2020 Joe Biden won my home township by 6 points. My Republican state representative won it by 7. My Republican state Senator and congressman both won it by 5. Republicans won 9/10 local elections in 2021, only losing one school board seat. The average margin of these races was two and a half percent. So why should we not have a competitive state house seat?

I have spoken to upset citizens across the commonwealth, and they don't believe the preliminary maps will stick, because they still have faith in this commission to change the map to something fair. Erie County, a County that votes 50-50 in local and state elections, has 4 state house districts located entirely within the county. I made a slight modification to the county house seats. I made it so there is 1 safe Republican, 1 safe Democrat, and 2 competitive seats. I also made the house seats in Centre County more compact. There is no serious or respectable reason to split the borough of State College. This new map only makes minor changes to the current preliminary one, but these are necessary changes.

I rearranged Lancaster County slightly for a new map, but even with this one, I don't know if Republicans would accept it, because it still splits Lancaster City. If you even want the current map of having a chance of being accepted by the state of Pennsylvania, you need to cut Millersville out of the 50th and give it to the 97th. The current preliminary map, if implemented, will result in protests taking place outside of the homes and offices of the members of this commission. To prevent that, we need to make sure a bipartisan agreement takes place. The current preliminary map has 8 non-contiguous districts. The one I am proposing has 0, which will help it stand up in court should a lawsuit occur.

This process is important, and its important both sides are able to walk away with a compromise they can live with.

I am willing to testify before this commission if necessary to provide further proof on why my map should be chosen.

Thank you, and god bless you all.



Mr. Chairman, Majority and Minority Leaders, I want to thank you for this opportunity to speak with you today. My name is Jill Cooper and I live in Murrysville a community of about 30 miles east of Pittsburgh. I am an engaged volunteer in my community having served on my county workforce investment board, chamber, adult school board, economic and community development board and I am an activist for smaller smarter government.

Today, I am addressing you as a volunteer who cares deeply about my community and state.

My message is simple – UNITE MURRYSVILLE!

The Preliminary map splits the Municipality of Murrysville between 2 state legislators.

I am not just here to complain to you without a solution.

There is an easy fix to UNITE MURRYSVILLE. The Murrysville municipal split can be eliminated with no other map changes and without causing any other harm.

If the commission would move Salem Township to the 56th and then return all of Murrysville and Export in the 55th it would solve this unnecessary municipal split AND any population requirement.

Population is nearly identical under the preliminary map and with what I am suggesting.

Under the preliminary map the 55th has 1311 over standard, 65,464

Under the preliminary map the 56th has 372 over standards, 64,424

Under the UNITE MURRYSVILLE MAP the 55th has 1345 people over standard, 65,398

AND the 56TH has 338 people over standard, 64,391.

Effectively, this net change between the maps would be zero.

This is not impacting Salem's representation, as Salem is currently in neither the 55th or the 56, but is instead in the 57th. In terms of compactness, the UNITE MURRYSVILLE MAP is also a more sensible option versus splitting Murrysville.

Our town had to live with being split for a decade and we were fortunate enough and grateful to have it rectified in the 2011 map. It is confusing for the citizens to know which representative to seek help from based on where they live. One neighbor uses one representative and the next neighbor another. It is chaos.

I would like to spend the next few minutes talking about "fairness". The word FAIR is a tricky word. We use it with our children, we teach it to them at a young age, and we were

taught to be fair when we were children. We do this so that we raise our children to treat people the way that they would want to be treated. It's a word that has meaning, believe me, it elicits strong emotion because it taps into our childhood. We are taught at a young age to feel guilt if we are unfair.

Because of this, my life experience tells me that the word FAIR is often a tool used to manipulate. People use it to get what they want while making the person giving it feel guilt if they do not agree. I spent many years negotiating contracts and the moment someone used the word FAIR, it was a red flag because it nearly always meant that they were trying to coerce me into agreeing to something that I should not!

Mr. Chairman, you are a good man. Smart, well-spoken, and I believe have the best interests of all in mind. I have no doubt about that. Ask yourself if the people who actually drew this map township by township, city by city, street by street have the same level of integrity as you. Because when this process is over and the maps are finalized, no matter what they look like there will be battles in our courts, in our media, and in political campaigns for years to come.

The people who drew these maps will not be on the front page, their names will be forgotten. Mr. Chairman, fair or not, the legacy of these maps will be yours. The other members of this commission are only doing their job to protect their respective caucuses. The people of this state are counting on you, Sir, to rise above the fray of the divisiveness that pervades our communities, schools, and dinner tables.

I already hear people saying that the word gerrymandering will now be replaced with Nordenbergering. I cringe when I hear that but those people likely feel that its only way to push back when they see this as a very one sided process, rigged against them. These maps will be your legacy alone Chancellor Nordenberg ---- Do you want PA to be Nordenbergering? We can do better. Demand better.

Mr. Chairman, Majority and Minority Leaders please Unite Murrysville and please do better and demand better for all of Pennsylvania

Thank you.



Nathan Silcox
Hampden Township Commissioner (Cumberland County)
January 6, 2022

Mr. Chairman and members of the Commission:

Thank you for the opportunity to make a statement in regard to the proposed House map as it relates to Cumberland County.

By way of background, I serve as the President of the Board of Commissioners in Hampden Township, which at almost 33,000 residents, is the largest municipality in Cumberland County.

Politically, I serve as the Deputy Vice Chair of the Cumberland County Republican Committee.

While neither the Hampden Township Board of Commissioners or the Cumberland County Republican Committee have taken a formal position on the proposed maps, I am personally very concerned about their adverse effect on Cumberland County.

First, it is confounding that the Commonwealth's fastest growing county is not only NOT gaining a new House seat, but in fact would lose a district.

Furthermore, at a time, when maps could be drawn to reflect communities of interest – such as school district boundaries – the Legislative Reapportionment Commission would split Cumberland Valley School District, our largest district, amongst three House districts, as well as splitting Big Spring School District, Carlisle Area School District, Mechanicsburg Area School District, South Middleton School District, and the West Shore School District.

It is also concerning that the proposed map would combine municipalities from across the Susquehanna River at a time when the Wolf Administration is proposing a bridge-tolling scheme that would regrettably only serve to keep these communities physically divided.

This map is particularly egregious in that it divides Hampden Township from its neighbors with which we have close relationships. Silver Spring Township and Hampden Township have a particularly close relationship. We share several major roadways - the Carlisle Pike, Wertzville Road and Interstate 81. We are part of the same school district, and schools in our municipalities educate each other's children. We share wonderful natural resources such as the Conodoguinet Creek and State Game Lands #170 on Blue Mountain. We eat, shop, worship and recreate in each other's townships. Both of our townships have common issues that need to be addressed and having a single State Representative would be helpful, as our current Representative was of assistance in getting PENNDOT to assist with a safety study of the Wertzville Road corridor;

It is also important to note that Hampden Township has major intergovernmental agreements with our other neighbors, like Camp Hill, as we handle their sewer. We also have mutual aid agreements for fire service with each of our neighbors. Dividing Hampden Township from our current configuration – and re-arranging the chairs for the sake of re-arranging chairs --does a disservice to these communities of interest.

Throughout the process, many have espoused principles like 'preventing gerrymandering'; 'making districts fairer'; and 'keeping municipalities intact.' Unfortunately, the proposed House map falls short for the citizens of Cumberland County.

I'll end with this. The Pennsylvania Constitution says, "Unless absolutely necessary no county, city, incorporated town, borough, township or ward shall be divided in forming either a senatorial or representative district." Despite this, Mechanicsburg and South Middleton Township are carved up between House seats.

It's my hope that the Legislative Reapportionment Commission will take another look at Cumberland County and address these glaring issues.

Thank you



Good Morning,

My name is Joshua Siegel, I'm both a resident of Lehigh County and an Allentown City Councilman. I feel compelled to articulate my disgust with the current division of the Lehigh Valley, specifically Allentown and Bethlehem and the dilution of Lehigh County voters. The map must be altered in a way that achieves optimal outcomes for representation while acknowledging that incumbency will inevitably play a factor in the creation of some seats. First, the present division of Allentown is illogical and unacceptable. In order to provide Senator Browne an outlet to a more favorable district, it's clear that the West of Allentown was divided off in order to ensure that Senator Browne could be drawn into the 18th Senate District. However, this means that Allentown will have 14 of its precincts split off. This will result in nearly 25% of Allentown's population being part of the 16th Senate District and the remaining 75% will be in the 14th. This is simply unfair to the residents of my city and a pathway for ineffectual representation. Those 25% of Allentown stand little chance of having their voice heard, amongst a much larger district that stretches all the way to Berks County. I begrudgingly recognize that incumbency is a tough motivator to overcome, but there are more optimal ways to split Allentown that would significantly reduce Allentown precincts being split into the 16th and put more into the 14th. If the LRC were to start with Pat's precinct and draw south, it could much easier reach the rest of the proposed 18th and do so without significantly undermining representation. I urge the LRC to utilize this approach first and restore most of Allentown to the 14th Senate District. This would also have the added benefit of improving the total number of minority voters in the district and create more opportunity for diverse representation.

Second, I urge the LRC to give West Bethlehem back to the 18th Senate District. West Bethlehem has far more in common with the whole of Bethlehem as its truly part of the whole city than it does the rest of Allentown. Bethlehem does not need to be divided at all as a city.

Third, the LRC needs to make the 14th Senate District more Lehigh County-centric. Lehigh County is the 10th largest county in the state of Pennsylvania. As such it's easier to draw a Senate seat that is more geographically and municipally concentrated in Lehigh County. At present, Lehigh County appears to be an after thought for the 14th, and most of Lehigh County will have their voice overshadowed by Berks County which has much less in common with it. Lehigh County is a far more suburban and urban county than Berks County. I would like to see South Whitehall, North Whitehall Township and possibly Washington Township and Slatington added. There is no excuse for the district to extend out to Moore Township which shares far less in common with the rest of the district.

The current map doesn't even achieve the highest possible level of minority representation and seriously undermines Lehigh County. I recognize no map is perfect and nothing will ever satisfy everyone, but this map doesn't even come close to what a potential compromise could look like. We can do much better and still achieve an outcome that all parties can live with. Senator Costa and Senator Ward, I'm calling you to create a more representative seat for Lehigh County that preserves most of Allentown in 14th Senate District. I understand that Senator Browne's position in the Republican Party inclines the redistricting process to consider that when drawing. I accept that as political reality and I say let's just find a way to work around it than pretend that the outcome is likely to change that much. Fair Districts has even said that incumbency must be understood and acknowledged. Drawing through the South of Allentown will result in fewer Allentown precincts being lost, but would also ensure Senator Browne gets his district. We can also achieve Mr. Nordenberg's goal of more minority influence seats by adding more of Allentown to the 14th. This board needs to take public comment and make changes based on it. The public needs to see that their voices are heard and that concessions can be made on all side towards a more perfect map. While we may never achieve it exactly, we should strive to come as close as possible.