

My name is Suzanne Broughton. This is the testimony I presented 1-7-22 to which I have added data backing up my remarks.

In September, I presented testimony in which I described the splits in Butler County and in the Fox Chapel School District in the 2011 redistricting. Today, I will speak on the proposed map of the House districts only. I have one specific comment and two more general comments.

First, specifically, the Town of McCandless, where I live, has been split by moving wards 1, 2, 5, 6 and 7 to District 30 while leaving wards 3 and 4 in District 28 also splitting the North Allegheny School District. The 2011 split in the Pine-Richland school district remains. Several municipalities have been added to District 28 splitting both the Avonworth and Quaker Valley school districts. Provision of services through cooperation of several municipalities along the Rt. 8 corridor are also disrupted as Leader Benninghoff heard Tuesday in McCandless. The commission should take another look at the north hills area to determine whether the split of McCandless is “absolutely necessary” and whether splits in that many school districts and disruption of cooperative municipal arrangements are needed.

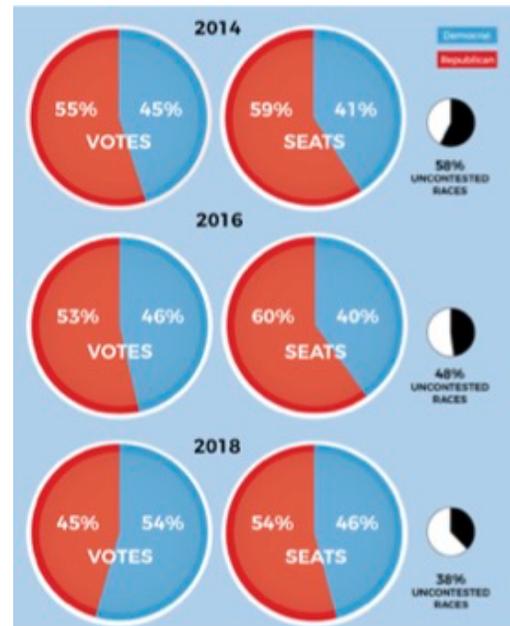
Second, I watched the meeting in which the maps were adopted and would like to respond to Leader Benninghoff’s comments there. That some incumbents must run against each other can be attributed to two factors. One is that population shifts in the decade since 2011 have been away from rural districts. For example, population in one region in northwest PA was 816,792, represented by 16 Republican legislators. The 2020 census data shows that the region’s population is now 765,040 – down 51,752. The target population for one of the House districts is about 64,000, so that region will likely lose at least one House seat to a more populous area. These primaries are the result of simple math due to population shift.

County	2010	Population St. Reprs	2020
Armstrong	68,941	Silvis, Major, Oberlander 3 R	63501
Cameron	5,085	Causer 1 R	4,339
Clarion	39,988	Oberlander 1 R	37,970
Crawford	88,765	Rapp, Wentling, Roae 3 R	83667
Elk	31,946	Armanini 1 R	29,510
Erie	280,566	Wentling, Sonney, Roae, Bizzaro, Harkins, Merski 6 R	266,096
Forest	7,716	Rapp, Oberlander 2 R	7,173
Indiana	88,880	Struzi, Smith, Major 3 R	83337
Jefferson	45,189	Smith 1 R	43,047
McKean	43,450	Causer 1 R	39,975
Potter	17,457	Causer, Owlett 2 R	16,332
Venango	54,984	James 1 R	49602
Warren	41,815	Rapp 1 R	38,471
	816,792		765040
		Loss	51,752

2020 PA County Census Data <https://worldpopulationreview.com/us-counties/states/pa>
 2010 PA County Census Data <https://www.indexmundi.com/facts/united-states/quick-facts/pennsylvania/population-2010#table>

Unique Representatives: 16 R
 Silvis, Major, Oberlander, Causer, Rapp, Wentling, Roae, Armanini, Sonney, Bizzaro, Harkins, Merski, Struzi, Smith, Owlett, James

The other factor is the Gerrymandering done by the 2011 LRC that mangled district borders to produce an overabundance of safe Republican seats. That gerrymandering has been effective. In each election since 2012, the percentage of Republican seats in the PA House has exceeded the percentage of Republican votes. In 2018, that discrepancy became particularly egregious. Republicans won only 45% of the vote but retained 54% of the seats. The proposed map undoes some of those gerrymanders. The partisan actions of the 2011 LRC have been visited upon the legislators who took those seats, in primary contests 10 years later.



Third and finally, I want to mention the allegations of bias that I have seen directed at Commission Chair Nordenberg. I have lived in the Pittsburgh area for 57 of my adult years and know it well. To my knowledge, University of Pittsburgh Chancellor Emeritus Nordenberg's reputation for thoughtfulness and fairness is indisputable. I understand that this criticism is not coming directly from any member of this commission, but I know of no effort on the commissioners' part to quiet or refute it.

Thank you for your attention.