



Share this toolkit: bit.ly/Tips4Testimony

Get ready to testify about Congressional Redistricting!

Updated October 16, 2025 at 8:30am

Background

The [congressional map created in 2022](#) was only approved by Republican members of the Ohio Redistricting Commission. Without bipartisan support, these voting districts were only valid for the 2022 and 2024 elections.

During October, the [Ohio Redistricting Commission](#) is required to work on building bipartisan support for new congressional districts. The Commission includes Gov. Mike DeWine, Secretary Frank LaRose, Auditor Keith Faber. Senator Jane Timken and Rep. Brian Stewart are the Republican legislative appointees; Senate Minority Leader Nicki Antonio and House Minority Leader Dani Isaacsohn are the Democrats.

The Ohio Redistricting Commission has not begun their work. Governor DeWine is convening the Commission for the first time on [Tuesday, October 21 at 9:00am](#) in the Senate Finance Hearing Room in the Senate Building of the Ohio Statehouse, 1 Capitol Square Columbus, OH 43215.

If the map fails to draw the support of two Democrats and two Republicans on the Commission by **October 31**, the mapmaking authority will be given to the Ohio General Assembly. With a deadline of **November 30**, the state legislature will have a month to work on new congressional districts.

Public hearings including public deliberation are required by the Ohio Constitution and Ohio's Open Meetings Law.

On September 9, Democratic legislators introduced a congressional map for public consideration ([Senate Bill 259](#) and [House Bill 442](#)). [Check out this map](#) on Dave's Redistricting App. Nearly 100 congressional maps were [submitted by the public](#) to the state legislature. On October 1, Speaker of the Ohio House Speaker Matt Huffman said, "[I don't think introducing a](#)

[map accomplishes something.](#)” On October 15, Governor DeWine announced the first hearing.

Of course, it’s hard to get ready, when those in power haven’t released a map for the public to weigh in on. Consider testifying about the lack of transparency in the mapmaking process or how the current congressional map violates fairness. [Check out the current congressional map](#) on Dave’s Redistricting App.

Two of the maps submitted already are representationally fair (the [Democrats’ map](#) and the map created by the Citizens Redistricting Commission in 2021. These maps reflect the preferences of Ohio voters. Eight of the districts favor Republicans; seven favor Democrats. There are also competitive seats. [Click here](#) to read about the map created by the Citizens Redistricting Commission.

The first hearing has been announced. Once they announce that they are accepting public testimony at the hearing, it’s time to let the Ohio Redistricting Commission know that you want to testify.

HOW TO SUBMIT TESTIMONY (in-person OR written-only):

- 1.) **Decide whether you want to testify** as a **PROPONENT** (supporter) of one of proposed maps or an **INTERESTED PARTY** (this allows you to comment on the bills without taking a stance)
- 2.) **Write your testimony**
 - See [testimony templates below](#).
- 3.) **Save your testimony as a pdf file**
- 4.) **Upload your testimony to the Ohio Redistricting Commission’s website:**
 - <https://www.redistricting.ohio.gov/meetings>
 - Make sure you also complete the “Submit Testimony” information listed on the website
 - **NOTE:** You must upload your testimony! It doesn’t matter if you’re testifying in-person or written-only

(If you’re submitting written-only testimony, that’s it! You’re done! You officially testified. If you’re testifying in-person, see below.)

TESTIFYING

Arrive at the Statehouse before the Ohio Redistricting Commission is scheduled to begin.

- Park either in the garage underneath the Statehouse, the Columbus Commons Parking Garage, or on the street ([ParkMobile Columbus](#)).
- Note: you’ll need to go through a metal detector when you arrive.
- You can ask the security guards to direct you to the room where your hearing is being held. If you have difficulty finding the room, feel free to ask others.

- You are allowed to have signs/banners in the Statehouse, but you cannot bring them into the hearing room with you.

Overview of the process:

- Commission hearings are televised live and recorded for later viewing on [The Ohio Channel](#).
- The Commission may only provide five minutes for testifying. Don't be surprised if there is a clock on the podium. The Chair may encourage you to wrap up if you go over the time they have allotted.
- **Bring a printed copy of your testimony with you** to read but you do not need to read everything.
- Bring a couple additional copies of your testimony for reporters.
- Speak directly to the Commission, and, if possible, make eye contact rather than read your testimony verbatim.
- Be prepared to answer questions. Commission members are allowed to question witnesses after their statements. This is an opportunity to provide greater detail. If you cannot answer a question, it is **OK** to answer "I do not have that answer" and/or "I am happy to send you that information after the hearing."
- There are rules based on Robert's Rules of Order. Commissioners will ask questions through the chair. Do your best to address the chair first and then answer another member's question
 - For example, when answering a Commission's question, you'd say "Through the chair to the Representative/Senator/Auditor or other statewide elected officials" before giving the rest of your response.
- It is OK if you forget to address the chair! It feels unnatural and it's more important to focus on answering the questions you receive.

AFTER THE HEARING:

After the hearing is over, we also recommend taking some additional steps to increase the impact of your testimony:

- **Contact the Commission members:** Remind them about your testimony, and offer to meet/speak with them to discuss the issue further.
- **Find your testimony on the [Ohio Redistricting Commission website](#)**, and share it on social media!
 - Urge others to contact the committee too
 - All written and in-person testimonies are posted online and shareable
- **Create a video clip** of yourself testifying, and share it on social media!
 - Urge others to contact the committee too
 - [How to pull video clips from OhioChannel.org](#)

TESTIMONY TEMPLATE — PROPONENT:

Members of the Ohio Redistricting Commission:

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is _____. I am *[basic bio about who you are]*. I am here as a *[strong/ardent/passionate/firm/etc.]* supporter of the proposed congressional district maps laid out in SB 259 and HB 442 (or other map you like).

[Then tell them why! Make it short and sweet - a few paragraphs is perfect. Tell a personal story. Or explain why your job experience gives you this perspective on the bill. Maybe cite some statistics or case studies to back up your claims]

[You are also welcome to offer general suggestions! Do you have a list of must-haves for any congressional map they select? Are there certain things they should take into consideration during the map drawing process? etc.]

I ask you to consider my testimony and *[use SB 259 and HB 442 (or other map you like) for Ohio's congressional maps / draw constitutional maps / something else you want them to do]* Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

[If you are testifying in-person] I will now take any questions you may have.

TESTIMONY TEMPLATE — INTERESTED PARTY:

Members of the Ohio Redistricting Commission:

Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is _____. I am *[basic bio about who you are]*. I am testifying today as an interested party.

[Then provide your insights on any proposed maps! Make it short and sweet - a few paragraphs is perfect. Tell a personal story. Or explain why your job experience gives you this perspective on the bill. Maybe cite some statistics or case studies to back up your claims]

[You are also welcome to offer general suggestions! Do you have a list of must-haves for any congressional map they select? Are there certain things they should take into consideration during the map drawing process? etc.]

I ask you to consider my testimony and *[take these recommendations to heart / draw constitutional maps / something else you want them to do]* Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

[If you are testifying in-person] I will now take any questions you may have.