

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you. My name is Pamela Mascio. I live in Aurora and I am in the 76th State House District represented by Diane Grendell and the 18th Senate District represented by Jerry Cirino. I am speaking here today to tell you why I believe it is critical to our democracy to restore representational government by drawing fair maps for the next 10 years.

I have previously been involved in state level issues. I was the president of the Northeast Ohio Affiliate of Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation from 2001 until 2007. During that time, I initiated a bill in partnership with Senator Kirk Shuring to provide additional state funding for the Breast and Cervical Cancer Program. After 2 years of work, the bill passed with bi-partisan support and was signed into law by Governor Kasich. I was honored to attend the signing ceremony with both Democratic and Republican representatives. I am not sure I could accomplish the same today. Our legislature has grown more deeply divided and seems to be concentrated on fringe cultural issues that only a minority of Ohioans would think important. I believe we have arrived at this point almost entirely because of partisan gerrymandering, which continues to become more and more sophisticated as technology advances.

The voters no longer have a voice. I have called Representative Grendell's office over 40 times in the past 18 months. I keep track of the calls I make. I have never ever reached her, or an aide. I only get a VM. I leave my message and when appropriate ask for a call back. I have never received one. In all the inquiries I have made, I have only once received a form letter back, which did not in any way address the questions I raised. I know Representative Grendell does not have to answer my calls or respond to me because she will be undoubtedly reelected. I ask you, should I continue to call and try to interact with her? I believe I am wasting my time and frankly, beginning to feel foolish. I am personally experiencing the disenfranchisement caused by gerrymandering in our state.

I am a speaker for Fair Districts and over the past six months I have spoken to all kinds of groups on redistricting. Just last week I spoke to the Rotary in Aurora – a largely republican group. In every talk I've given, someone inevitably asks, is gerrymandering legal? How can this be? To our collective detriment, it is.

But, please do not ignore the powerful and unprecedented vote by Ohioans in 2015 and 2018 demanding fair maps – not skewed to one party or another...just fair. We want 10 year maps, not 4 year maps, but 10 year maps passed with bipartisan support. Please do this work in accordance, and most importantly, in the true spirit of the reforms that Ohioans overwhelmingly passed. Thank you for listening to me today.

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