

My name is Karen Calhoun, and I am the local coordinator of the Somerset-Westmoreland County group of Fair Districts PA. I am a constituent of a member of the Senate State Government Committee, Senator Pat Stefano. I have a strong commitment to a redistricting process that will *re-establish an accountable, representative government* that better serves the people of Pennsylvania.

As Senator Stefano can attest, I have been speaking up for fair district voting maps, both congressional and legislative, over the past year. One example is my written testimony on congressional maps, submitted to the August 26 hearing of the House State Government Committee. In that testimony, I suggested a redistricting process centered on *citizens' common interests and needs*, using the example of sorely-needed workforce and economic development in my part of PA, the rural southwest. *

In brief, what I am looking for as a voter and citizen is a well-functioning government and legislators who are capable of *bipartisan* action and *results* that help PA citizens, rather than the endless bickering and partisan dysfunction that characterize the General Assembly and US Congress now. Still another statewide congressional redistricting plan that purposely favors the party in power will produce neither a more functional government nor legislators who are capable of compromise and collaborative problem-solving. Our broken government will remain broken.

This year's congressional redistricting process is much more likely to be successful if it is based on criteria that are clear, documented, and known to the public in advance. In his invited testimony at the May 26 hearing of the Senate State Government Committee, Patrick Beaty, Legislative Director of Fair Districts PA, suggested an approach to redistricting that starts with well-accepted neutral criteria (population equality, compactness, contiguity, minimizing splits), but that also protects individuals from the dilution of their votes through partisan gerrymandering, in violation of the PA Constitution's Free and Equal Elections clause.

I have the following requests for Senate State Government Committee members:

1. In the committee's public hearing of August 4, Senator Argall mentioned the possibility for citizens to submit maps for viewing by committee members and the public. I urge the committee to follow through and open up a public portal for the submission and viewing of congressional maps.
2. Revisit Patrick Beaty's testimony and suggestions, which he presented on May 26 following the remarks of David Thornburgh and prior to those of Amanda Holt, or invite him to reprise his testimony at the November 10 hearing.
3. Prior to the committee's drawing and presenting its congressional plan and map, *either* adopt the criteria and values in the Legislative and Congressional Redistricting Act (LACRA) *or* agree on and publish the criteria and values that the committee will use to evaluate maps.

Respectfully,
Karen Calhoun
Boswell, PA

*K. Calhoun Testimony, August 26, HSGC:
https://www.legis.state.pa.us/WU01/LI/TR/Transcripts/2021_0131_0006_TSTMNY.pdf

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