

Cindy Kirk, Allegheny County Councilwoman's Testimony  
for the Southwest Hearing on Legislative Redistricting

I am here today to testify on behalf of the residents of Allegheny County and specifically those who I represent in Allegheny County Council District 2. The growing areas of this region currently served by Republican representation in the House, are being disenfranchised by this gerrymandered map. Decades of legislative relationships will be unnecessarily severed under this plan.

To be clear, the purposeful legislative division of common interest urban areas to combine with disparate suburban area interests for political advantage, at the expense one over the other is clearly gerrymandering. As a practical matter, this map will result in the election of a number of representatives, largely on the support and strength of the urban core voters and their interests in the City of Pittsburgh. This effectively disenfranchises their suburban constituents of representation; voters who already voted with their feet, moving to these high-growth areas served for decades by Republican leadership.

Redrawing lines to combine shrinking areas with growing areas is necessary to rebalance represented areas every ten years, but the spoke and hub district approach approved on this map, goes against the very intent of fair districts. This spoke and hub approach will corrupt this region's state representation. The average person finds it absurd that municipalities are divided and surely would frown upon splitting of school districts. This map violates the basic principles of fair map making with this excessive fragmentation of municipalities and school districts.

This map effectively does an end-run, a plan B if you will, toward metropolitanism in our region by creating a map guaranteed to elect a City of Pittsburgh centric group of legislators with much broader influence than the City of Pittsburgh's shrinking population warrants.

Our voters have repeatedly pushed back against the elitists and academics of this region who envision a singular all-powerful centralized Allegheny County government, sweeping aside the importance of local issues, in favor of sole support for the elite interests of the urban core.

In Allegheny County District 2, splitting the common interests of the Quaker Valley School District, the Pine Richland School District, the North Allegheny School District and the Town of McCandless in pursuit of this gerrymandering spoke and hub approach is unfair to all, and I strongly urge the LRC to reconsider this map.