

Testimony of Michael Korn, Murrysville

My name is Michael Korn, and I am a resident of the Municipality of Murrysville in Westmoreland County Pennsylvania. My town, as well as multiple other municipalities in Westmoreland County, has been split under the proposed Pennsylvania House redistricting map. I believe that maintaining whole municipalities is vital, not only in order to stay consistent with the principles of redistricting as required under the US Constitution, but also to allow better constituent service and representation for our communities.

I recognize that the Commission had a difficult job, and that some municipal splits are unavoidable when dividing a Commonwealth of 12 million people into 203 districts. However, I believe the municipal splits in Westmoreland are avoidable, and I urge the Commission to look at doing whatever possible to avoid these splits before enshrining them into law for the next ten years.

The attached map eliminates municipal splits not only in Murrysville, but also in North Huntingdon, Lower Burrell, and Trafford. It does require a single precinct in Hempfield Township, (New Stanton Precinct, Hempfield Township), to move, as Hunker Borough and New Stanton Borough are separated by approximately 800 feet. This split impacts about 800 residents of Hempfield Township, a municipality of over 41 thousand residents. In addition, one precinct in Plum Borough was moved from the 25th to the 32nd districts to maintain population balance. Plum is currently split between those two districts under the proposed map, so there is no major change.

The 55th district does now include some of Armstrong County, but no Armstrong municipalities are split. and only the 60th district, which already includes part of Westmoreland County under the proposed map, is impacted.

I did not try to address municipal splits in other Counties, as I do not know the areas well enough to do so in an intelligent manner. However, as this map makes only the two minor changes noted above outside of Westmoreland, hopefully it will be compatible with other proposed maps for other areas.

<https://davesredistricting.org/join/d0a923c0-879a-4c42-89aa-22af2e1e5e77>

Just a final note. The above is a great improvement. I did want to mention however, there is an option to largely eliminate even the Hempfield split. The 800 feet between Hunker and New Stanton Borough is largely commercial strip malls, and appears to have little to no residential occupation. Youngwood Borough abuts New Stanton and could be moved into the 58th, while Madison would move into the 58th to rebalance population. While slightly more complicated, this option would mean that there are no split municipalities impacting voters in Westmoreland County. The public software does not allow for splitting precincts in the way I just described, but the Commission has the legal authority to do so, and could do so in this case to maintain the integrity.