

Good Evening,

I would like to thank the committee for the opportunity to speak on behalf of Westmoreland County. My name is Sean Kertes and I am the Chairman of the Westmoreland County Commissioners. As a County Commissioner, the residents of Westmoreland County expect me to govern responsibly, listen to their concerns, and be a voice when I see an injustice. That is why I am here this evening.

Westmoreland County has a population of 348,000 residents, which is the second largest population behind Allegheny County in Western Pennsylvania. As a Pennsylvania resident, I'm equally concerned for the rest of the Commonwealth. I feel that the current maps presented do not equitably represent Westmoreland County, demonstrating a blatant gerrymandering of the commonwealth that negatively affects the citizens that we all serve. The unconstitutional dividing of districts such as Murrysville and North Huntingdon, the loss of not one not one but two voices from my county in Harrisburg due to the shifting and elimination of seats, as well as a broader overall attempt to change districts for what clearly looks to be partisan reasons must be addressed.

Dealing with state and local governments day in and day out, I understand the importance of continuity between each level. Splits such as these make everything from funding to repair pot holes, community development projects, to getting answers to questions more difficult. Officials at each level often work for years to get funding for much needed projects. Many of these projects I can only assume will now be delayed further, funding fought for once again, and citizens further frustrated. Before the maps were redrawn, the majority of municipalities in Westmoreland County were represented by a single State House Member. Since the redrawing, several municipalities are

now represented by more than one State House Member, thus creating more red tape and confusion when municipalities look to state funding. These splits in communities also are confusing for residents when they vote and when they need the state to intervene on their behalf. I know that the people of my county have been generally happy with their representation. They are aware of who represents them and know who to call when they have a problem. As we are ALL elected by the residents in counties we live in, election integrity has become a major topic in Pennsylvania, and I fear that the splitting up of districts will cause confusion on Election Day in May and in November. Residents could not be aware of the map change, been away seeing family, and now may go and vote in a Primary and General election and not see the state official who has represented them for years.

In conclusion, the maps presented (both the house and senate) appear to be drawn not only to favor a particular party, but look like change for the sake of change. There is no good reason in my mind that roughly four and half million Pennsylvanians should have new representation. The electorate, many of whom I have no doubt do not know this process is taking place, will be equally displeased if this is to occur. I respectfully ask that you take my concerns into consideration and think long and hard before approving the changes presented in the preliminary maps.