

Hello, my name is Cindi Ward and I've been a Cumberland County resident for 26 years and an East Pennsboro resident for almost 24 years. I've been a waitress, bartender, preschool teacher, school bus driver and now I am a Realtor and a School Board Director in the East Pennsboro Area School District. I have grown within this community BECAUSE of this community. My husband and I had lived in Mechanicsburg when we first moved here because it was close to his job but we wanted to get to know the area before purchasing a home. I traveled locally for my job and learned the area on both sides of the river. But we loved this county and this community and decided this is where we wanted to raise our son. Unfortunately, I am now worried for our community. Our community is what it is because of the people and our representatives. Our representatives live here too and value our community as much as we do. You can drive anywhere in Cumberland County and you can feel the same community pride and values Why would splitting up our county, townships, and school districts make any sense to anyone? What exactly is the benefit of this? Splits should not be for political gain but I see no other logical explanation.

I fully understand that each and every district in our state needs to be as equal in population as possible to have fairness in representation. According to the census, Cumberland County has 257,848 people. Divide that by 4 and you get 64,462. The average house district is approximately 64,000. You can fit 4 house districts within the borders of Cumberland County. Article II, Section 16 of the Pennsylvania Constitution clearly states "unless absolutely necessary, no county, municipality, or ward be divided in the forming of districts" yet that is exactly what they are proposing to do and there is no logical reason or explanation for it.

Also, according to the census data, Cumberland County is the fastest growing county in the STATE of PA, growing by more than 10%. The proposed redistricting map will drop the number of house members from 6 to 5....and only 3 will actually be residents of Cumberland County. Shouldn't we gain, rather than lose, representation?

As a school board director, I represent the families, teachers, and residents in EPASD. I can NOT represent residents of other school districts because I do not reside there. If this planned map goes into effect, our new representative will be unable to represent us from Dauphin County . She does not know our community. The community of East Pennsboro has very different needs, values, and industry than the City of Harrisburg, how will either community get fair representation? And the needs of the Harrisburg school district will far outshadow the needs of our students in East Pennsboro and our students deserve better than that. I did not want my testimony to be about politics but our students are being pulled into a politically driven split within our county and community. Our school district, like all the others, are struggling and pushing so hard to get our students back to learning and to catch up from the past 2 years.