

Jason Singer

Member of Council, Town of McCandless Ward 4

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#### Southwest PA Policy Hearing on State Legislative Redistricting

I am speaking on my concerns about the redistricting of the statewide legislative districts. As a local elected official, I will explain how this redistricting will affect my local municipality and my constituents. I live in The Town of McCandless, for the previous 10 years my township in whole has been represented by the same legislative districts. In the proposed changes, my ward and another from my township has now been carved away from the other five wards. We are now to be divided between two state house districts. As I look at the proposed changes, this will do a disservice to my community. The township itself must go through a redistricting of its own local wards. This will add to the confusion to residents and stakeholders as lines continue to change in the future. No township should be split unless necessary. The ability to work on local projects that span over different state house districts now becomes more problematic. Where walking trails between two wards was a simple idea before, it now requires degrees of communications and state funding support over multiple districts to achieve the same. The ability for state level representation to look at a local community will be fractured. No longer can we say that something will benefit McCandless as a whole, but we will now say that it benefits this part or that part. Dividing a township breaks its sense of community. When my Ward seeks statewide support for an initiative in the township but is a minor stake holder in a larger state district, the residents lose. It allows focus to be taken on individual parts and not on the whole of the community. State representatives have a respect to stay out of other state representative's districts, and with this creates a problem as the minority stake holder in a split township will get less representation than the majority stake holder. The ability to work within my own local government now can have friction because of the differing support at a state level. When a township is split, especially not equally in size, part of the township will feel underrepresented. I speak to the redistricting plan on a community level and how it will impact my ability to carry out my duty as a local elected official. The splitting of townships in ways to achieve lines on maps and numbers on a spreadsheet do a disservice to the people who live in these communities.

Sincerely,

Jason Singer