

**Michelle Nestor, Assistant Board Secretary
Cumberland Valley School District
Hampden Township
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Mr. Chairman, members of the House Majority Policy Committee, ladies, and gentlemen:

I want to thank you for the opportunity to be here today and to discuss the Legislative Redistricting and specifically the proposed House map as it relates to Cumberland County and my community.

My name is Michelle Nestor, and I am a School Board Director of the Cumberland Valley School District and I serve Hampden Township as well as Board Assistant Secretary. I serve as Facilities Chair and sit on the Curriculum and Education and Athletic committees as well as the advisory chair for both the PTO and Inclusion Advisory Groups. My cohorts Mr. Bud Shaffner and Mr. Mike Gossert, as well, represent the largest township in Cumberland County, with just shy of 33,000 constituents. The three of us have been serving our community and school district with a combined service of over 42 years. So, I am speaking on behalf of Hampden Township, and although our board has not taken a formal position on the proposed maps, there are several other school directors who share our concern about the adverse effects on Cumberland County and these proposed redistricting maps.

There are almost 260,000 residents in Cumberland County, and we are the fastest growing county in the state. Cumberland Valley school district likewise is the fastest growing school and contains 4 municipalities with over 67,000 residents as of 2020. What is disturbing is that a continuously growing county and school does not GAIN a seat, but lose a seat?

Furthermore, maps should be drawn to reflect communities of interest-- such as school district boundaries or municipalities. I for one feel that it is important to stay within those boundaries. For example, I shop at my local stores, I worship in my neighboring church, and I support the commerce that directly affects my school district and where my family lives.

The current map plan, for example, splits us from our neighbors with whom we have a long-defined relationship. Those who reside in both Hampden and Silver Spring townships have established life-long neighboring communities. We share major roadways and parks which encompass our recreational use of the Conodoguinet Creek and surrounding State Game Lands. We shop together and we dine in the same restaurants, as well as worship in the same churches. I would not travel across the river for many of those activities unless it was not here in my backyard. I expect those who represent myself, my family, my neighbors, and my school-based community, to also be living within those boundaries.

What has defined us, could now be a way of dividing us and not representing our true needs. Both of our townships have common issues that need to be addressed and having a single State Representative would not only be helpful but a productive line of communication. For example, having that communication and assistance to build 2 new school buildings that houses over 2000 students, and remodeling a 9th grade academy in the last 3 years has been crucial in working with governmental entities. It is also important to note that Hampden Township has major intergovernmental agreements with our neighbors as well as mutual aid agreements for services, such as fire.

The Legislative Reapportionment Commission would split Cumberland Valley School District, for example, among three House districts with persons who may not directly reside in any of the places I just spoke about. It also splits other neighboring schools as well, such as Big Spring School District, Carlisle Area School District, Mechanicsburg Area School District, South Middleton School District, and the West Shore School District.

It is concerning that the proposed map would combine municipalities from across the Susquehanna River that would only serve to keep these communities physically divided.

The proposed map falls short in many ways but most importantly, it does not serve the needs of our citizens and our county as a whole. Division is not the way to create community. We should not be dividing our townships and school districts, but rather creating representation based on our counties, townships, boroughs, and schools. Both the Senate and the House should adhere to these simple guidelines already established by our State maps and the Pennsylvania Constitution.

I implore you to take another look at these maps and keep Hampden Township as a whole entity represented by one State Representative as well as our neighboring townships in Cumberland County. It not only makes sense, but it continues to allow the growth of our communities to thrive which is why we have growth and a true desire to live here.

Thank you for your time and attention.

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