

HB 52 – relative congressional district maps
Presentation to the Senate Election Law and Municipal Affairs Committee
Monday, 1.31.22

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee,

I write in opposition to HB 52.

A side-by-side comparison of the congressional maps drawn over the past 140 years, compared with the Pinocchio map drawn by the house committee provides clear and convincing evidence of the will to gerrymander sufficiently to deliver a specific result; that CD-2 will produce an election victory for a Democrat; that CD-1 will produce an election victory for a Republican. This is not how representation in a Democracy works. In a Democracy, the will of the people decides who is elected, whether through fair, competitive maps Democrats win, Republicans win, or the result is split – that's up to the voters, not partisan legislators. The practical result of HB 52's gerrymandering is that, in too many instances, the votes cast by representatives on bills in the U.S. House of Representatives will cancel each other by design.

A better map has been drawn, a map that is fair and competitive, and available for your consideration, complete with map analysis. Its drafters considered criteria that did not include partisanship or incumbent protection; instead, considered voters, communities of interest, and the respect for precedent.

By comparison, the fair, competitive map retains 9 out of 10 county boundaries, while the Pinocchio map breaks up 6 out of 10; the fair, competitive map only violates 5 SAU boundaries, while the Pinocchio map doubles the number; the fair, competitive map moves only 12 towns or wards, while the Pinocchio map moves 75 towns or wards, shifting 365,703 people to a new district; the fair, competitive map is also superior in areas of public health, regional planning, and population retained from prior districts, all of this while achieving a population deviation of 0.01%.

I like Pinocchio, now that he's a better person. But we can't forget he went astray, as has our Democracy, and his extended nose gave him away. I much prefer the outcome of the legislative process in this and all areas parallel the recovery of Pinocchio, rather than the fate of Humpty Dumpty.

ITL on HB 52

Bob Perry
Strafford

