

Legislative Redistricting Committee, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to speak at today's public meeting. My name is Richard Miller, Jr. I am the former Student Trustee of West Chester University, current Graduate Assistant in Residence Life and Housing services and Treasurer of the Graduate Association, and am in the process of obtaining my Master's in Business Administration. While the proposed redistricting violates the constitutional rights of the citizen of the West Chester Borough as outlined in the previous remarks, as an Alumnus and current graduate student I am here today to provide a student prospective for my beloved University.

I came to West Chester University to obtain a degree in Music Education. While I continued to enrich my life in the music world, I was drawn into the world of politics through my active involvement on campus. From there, I could not have imagined how many individuals and relationships I would form. I quickly became an active member in the student senate and eventually found myself appointed the Student Trustee of the University. From there, I learned how closely connected the Borough of West Chester and the University truly were not only geographically but economically, socially, and politically.

Geographically, the University itself is located in West Chester Borough, West Goshen Township, and East Bradford Township which creates a compact, adjacent, and intertwined region. The North campus residence halls are within the West Chester Borough area. The South Campus Apartments and Village lie in the East Bradford Township area. And the academic buildings of East Campus and West Chester Commons are in West Goshen Township.

Economically, West Chester University and the Borough have created a unique partnership that has allowed are communities to grow in tandem. As many of you can probably remember, moving in your first apartment is a "big deal." Typically, students at West Chester University will move off campus during their sophomore or junior year and into the neighboring communities. While most take on this new adventure for a variety of reasons, students do not realize how much they would invest into their surrounding community as they becoming active contributors to their neighborhood. Students typically find jobs in the town of West Chester to help support their academic and daily living expenses. West Chester businesses are substantially dependent on the University population.

Socially, students spend a variety of time in their community as we find ourselves holding community service events throughout the town as well as participating in numerous festivals and activities throughout the year such as the Restaurant festival and Hanging of the Greens. These activities directly link us to the West Chester community. To split the representation of the student body from the Borough would be an engross injustice to our community as a whole.

Politically, there is an ongoing conversation between the Borough and the University regarding student governance. As a Graduate Assistant in Residence Life and Housing Services, I have many roles. One role is that of University Judicial Hearing Officer which requires me to meet with students who have received judicial violations and discuss the findings of the officer or university official who documented the case. The help of West Chester Borough Police is instrumental in our efforts to maintain a safe and respectful environment conducive to learning. I know in extreme judicial cases such as drugs and

underage drinking cases, I can rely on the report of the West Chester Borough Officers to find the most appropriate sanction.

The strong bond between our communities allow for an active Student Government to exist. The relationship between the borough and students runs deep. Committee meetings, town gown events, and overall positive relationship have forever changed my involvement as well as numerous other students who get involved with the political scene. Knowing we have the support of Borough allows us to progress forward as a community. Knowing that the Borough and the University can present a united voice to one representative is conducive to maintaining the strong relationship and efficient governance which we currently have.

Students want to know to whom they can turn for support to understand the matters that directly affect Higher Education and their lives. Two-thirds of students live in the surrounding communities. By having their legislative representation so close to their location, they feel a sense of security and relief knowing their representatives lives so close and can identify with their needs and wants. It does not make sense to rip the ties that have been produced. It also poses problems for students for voting as they may not understand exactly who and where they should be voting. It also can lead candidates to have to campaign to different sections of the University, further creating more confusion amongst the student body as they attempt to understand which candidate to vote for depending on their geographical location.

I never thought I would be anywhere near the political scene. I was never one to stand up for what I believe in because I thought I was only one voice. However, because of the close relationship that has formed with the University and the borough, I have been forever changed into an informed and active member in both my community and political scene. By splitting the student voice, it will ultimately affect future student's engagement in their community, town, and university.