

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF OHIO

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF OHIO, ET
AL.,

MERYL NEIMAN, ET AL.,

v.

SECRETARY OF STATE FRANK LAROSE, ET
AL.

Case No. 2022-0303

Case No. 2022-0298

Consolidated

Original Action Filed Pursuant to
Ohio Constitution, Article XIX, Section
3(A)

AFFIDAVIT OF FREDA J. LEVENSON
PETITIONERS' EVIDENCE – MEDIA MATERIALS

Freda J. Levenson (0045916)
Counsel of Record
ACLU OF OHIO FOUNDATION, INC.
4506 Chester Avenue
Cleveland, OH 44103
(614) 586-1972 x125
flevenson@acluohio.org

David J. Carey (0088787)
ACLU OF OHIO FOUNDATION, INC.
1108 City Park Avenue, Suite 203
Columbus, OH 43206
(614) 586-1972 x2004
dcarey@acluohio.org

Alora Thomas (PHV 22010-2022)
Julie A. Ebenstein (PHV 25423-2022)
AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION
FOUNDATION
125 Broad Street
New York, NY 10004
(212) 519-7866
athomas@aclu.org

Dave Yost
OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL
Julie M. Pfeiffer (0069762)
Jonathan D. Blanton (0070035)
Michael A. Walton (0092201)
Allison D. Daniel (0096186)
Constitutional Offices Section
30 E. Broad Street, 16th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215
(614) 466-2872
Julie.Pfeiffer@OhioAGO.gov

*Counsel for Respondent Ohio Secretary of
State Frank LaRose*

Phillip J. Strach (PHV 25444-2022)
Thomas A. Farr (PHV 25461-2022)
John E. Branch, III (PHV 25460-2022)
Alyssa M. Riggins (PHV 25441-2022)
NELSON MULLINS RILEY & SCARBOROUGH
LLP
4140 Parklake Avenue, Suite 200
Raleigh, NC 27612
(919) 329-3800
phillip.strach@nelsonmullins.com

Robert D. Fram (PHV 25414-2022)
Donald Brown (PHV 25480-2022)
David Denuyl (PHV 25452-2022)
Janelle Lamb (PHV 25909-2022)*
COVINGTON & BURLING LLP
415 Mission Street, Suite 5400
San Francisco, CA 94105-2533
(415) 591-6000
rfram@cov.com

James Smith (PHV 25421-2022)
Sarah Suwanda (PHV 25602-2022)
Alex Thomson (PHV 25462-2022)
Kimberly Plumer (PHV 25888-2022)*
COVINGTON & BURLING LLP
One CityCenter
850 Tenth Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001-4956
(202) 662-6000
jmsmith@cov.com

Anupam Sharma (PHV 25418-2022)
Yale Fu (PHV 25419-2022)
COVINGTON & BURLING LLP
3000 El Camino Real
5 Palo Alto Square, 10th Floor
Palo Alto, CA 94306-2112
(650) 632-4700
asharma@cov.com

*Counsel for League of Women Voters
Petitioners*

**Pro Hac Vice motions forthcoming*

W. Stuart Dornette (0002955)
Beth A. Bryan (0082076)
Philip D. Williamson (0097174)
TAFT STETTINUS & HOLLISTER LLP
425 Walnut Street, Suite 1800
Cincinnati, OH 45202-3957
(513) 381-2838
dornette@taftlaw.com

*Counsel for Respondents House Speaker
Robert Cupp and Senate President Matt
Huffman*

Erik J. Clark (0078732)
Ashley T. Merino (0096853)
ORGAN LAW LLP
1330 Dublin Road
Columbus, OH 43215
(614) 481-0900
ejclark@organlegal.com

*Counsel for Respondent Ohio Redistricting
Commission*

Abha Khanna (PHV 2189-2022)
Ben Stafford (PHV 25433-2022)
ELIAS LAW GROUP, LLP
1700 Seventh Avenue, Suite 2100
Seattle, WA 98101
(206) 656-0176
akhanna@elias.law

Jyoti Jasrasaria (PHV 25401-2022)
Spencer W. Klein (PHV 25432-2022)
Harleen K. Gambhir (PHV 25587-2022)
Raisa Cramer (PHV 25880-2022)
ELIAS LAW GROUP, LLP
10 G St. NE, Suite 600
Washington, DC 20002
(202) 968-4490
jjasrasaria@elias.law

Donald J. McTigue (0022849)
Derek S. Clinger (0092075)
MCTIGUE COLOMBO & CLINGER, LLC
545 East Town Street
Columbus, OH 43215
(614) 263-7000
dmctigue@electionlawgroup.com

Counsel for Neiman Petitioners



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flevenson@acluohio.org (Principal) (Personally Known)

E-Signature Notary: Theresa M Sabo (TMS)

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tess.sabo@gmail.com
I, Theresa M Sabo, did witness the participants named above electronically sign this document.



Affidavit of Freda J. Levenson

I, Freda J. Levenson, having been duly sworn and cautioned according to law, hereby state that I am over the age of eighteen years and am competent to testify as to the facts set forth below based on my personal knowledge and having personally examined all records referenced in this affidavit, and further state as follows:

1. The Ohio Supreme Court entered an order in the above-captioned consolidated cases, *League of Women Voters of Ohio, et al. v. Secretary of State Frank LaRose, et al.*, No. 2022-0303, and *Meryl Neiman, et al., v. Secretary of State Frank LaRose, et al.*, No. 2022-0298, providing that the parties shall file any evidence they intend to present no later than Monday, April 25, 2022.
2. I am one of the counsel for Petitioners in the above-captioned case, No. 2022-0303.
3. Alongside this affidavit, Petitioners submit an Appendix of Exhibits. The Index included below provides a description of each document and states where it appears in the Appendix.
4. **The Exhibits Appendix** includes a true and correct copy of the article “Ohio lawmakers miss deadline for new congressional district map” by J.D. Davidson, as published on February 14, 2022. The original article can be found at bit.ly/3v4zcV0.
5. **The Exhibits Appendix** includes a true and correct copy of the article “Ohio Votes to Reform Congressional Redistricting; Issue 1 Could End Gerrymandering” by Rich Exner, as published on May 9, 2018. The original article can be found at <http://bitly.ws/jM5Q>.
6. **The Exhibits Appendix** includes a true and correct copy of the article “Ohio Lawmakers Miss Deadline to Draw New Congressional Districts. What’s Next?” by Jim Gaines, as published on October 1, 2021. The original article can be found at <https://bit.ly/3liLofB>.

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7. **The Exhibits Appendix** includes a true and correct copy of the article “Ohio Lawmakers to Take Up Congressional Map After Redistricting Commission Fails to Act” by Andrew Tobias, as published on October 28, 2021. The original article can be found at <https://bit.ly/3D0jTxi>.
8. **The Exhibits Appendix** includes a true and correct copy of “Ohio Environmental Council, Trio of Good Government Groups File Congressional Redistricting Proposal: Congressional Reform Mirrors State Reform Measure Approved by 71% of Ohio Voters in 2015” by Aryeh Alex, as published on April 24, 2017. The original article can be found at <http://bitly.ws/jLZ2>.
9. **The Exhibits Appendix** includes a true and correct copy of “Ohio Voters May See Two Anti-Gerrymandering Issues on Their Ballots Next Year” by Karen Kasler, as published on December 21, 2017. The original article can be found at <http://bitly.ws/jLZI>.
10. **The Exhibits Appendix** includes a true and correct copy of “An End to Gerrymandering in Ohio?” by Vann R. Newkirk II, as published on February 6, 2018. The original article can be found at <http://bitly.ws/jM4x>.
11. **The Exhibits Appendix** includes a true and correct copy of “Movement on New Ohio Congressional District Map Not Expected for Another Week” by Andy Chow, as published on January 27, 2022. The original article can be found at <https://bit.ly/3MIS2O1>.
12. **The Exhibits Appendix** includes a true and correct copy of “New U.S. House Map Stumbles Again in Wake of Latest Supreme Court Ruling” by Jim Gaines, as published on February 8, 2022. The original article can be found at <https://bit.ly/3KhisYJ>.



13. **The Exhibits Appendix** includes a true and correct copy of a tweet from Josh Rultenberg (@JoshRultNews), as tweeted on February 8, 2022 at 9:18 AM. The original tweet can be found at <https://bit.ly/3CfjWGL>.
14. **The Exhibits Appendix** includes a true and correct copy of a tweet from Josh Rultenberg (@JoshRultNews), as tweeted on February 8, 2022 at 11:20 AM. The original tweet can be found at <https://bit.ly/34jhSBi>.
15. **The Exhibits Appendix** includes a true and correct copy of "Congressional Redistricting Headed for Ohio Redistricting Commission" by Josh Rultenberg, as published on February 8, 2022. The original article can be found at <https://bit.ly/3hEZJ3L>.

Freda Levenson


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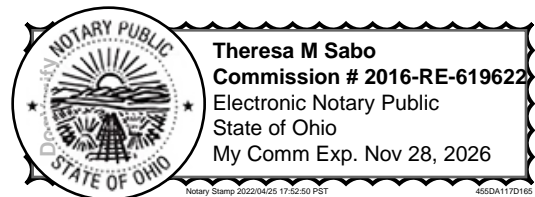
Freda Levenson

Signed at Columbus, Franklin, Ohio

04/25/2022

Sworn to and subscribed be for me this ___ day of April, 2022


Signed on 2022/04/25 17:52:50 -8:00



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EXHIBITS APPENDIX - MEDIA SOURCES
Volume 1 of 1

Index of Documents

| ITEM | DESCRIPTION | BATES RANGE |
|-------------|---|--------------------|
| 1 | “Ohio lawmakers miss deadline for new congressional district map” by J.D. Davidson, published on February 14, 2022 | MEDIA_001-004 |
| 2 | “Ohio Votes to Reform Congressional Redistricting; Issue 1 Could End Gerrymandering” by Rich Exner, published on May 9, 2018 | MEDIA_005-008 |
| 3 | “Ohio Lawmakers Miss Deadline to Draw New Congressional Districts. What’s Next?” by Jim Gaines, published on October 1, 2021 | MEDIA_009-010 |
| 4 | “Ohio Lawmakers to Take Up Congressional Map After Redistricting Commission Fails to Act” by Andrew Tobias, published on October 28, 2021 | MEDIA_011-014 |
| 5 | “Ohio Environmental Council, Trio of Good Government Groups File Congressional Redistricting Proposal: Congressional Reform Mirrors State Reform Measure Approved by 71% of Ohio Voters in 2015” by Aryeh Alex, published on April 24, 2017 | MEDIA_015-016 |
| 6 | “Ohio Voters May See Two Anti-Gerrymandering Issues on Their Ballots Next Year” by Karen Kasler, published on December 21, 2017 | MEDIA_017-026 |
| 7 | “An End to Gerrymandering in Ohio?” by Vann R. Newkirk II, published on February 6, 2018 | MEDIA_027-30 |
| 8 | “Movement on New Ohio Congressional District Map Not Expected for Another Week” by Andy Chow, published on January 27, 2022 | MEDIA_031-035 |
| 9 | “New U.S. House Map Stumbles Again in Wake of Latest Supreme Court Ruling” by Jim Gaines, published on February 8, 2022 | MEDIA_036-038 |
| 10 | Tweet from Josh Rultenberg (@JoshRultNews), tweeted on February 8, 2022 at 9:18 AM | MEDIA_039-040 |

| | | |
|----|--|---------------|
| 11 | Tweet from Josh Rultenberg (@JoshRultNews), tweeted on February 8, 2022 at 11:20 AM | MEDIA_041-043 |
| 12 | “Congressional Redistricting Headed for Ohio Redistricting Commission” by Josh Rultenberg, published on February 8, 2022 | MEDIA_044-049 |

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Ohio lawmakers miss deadline to draw new congressional districts. What's next?



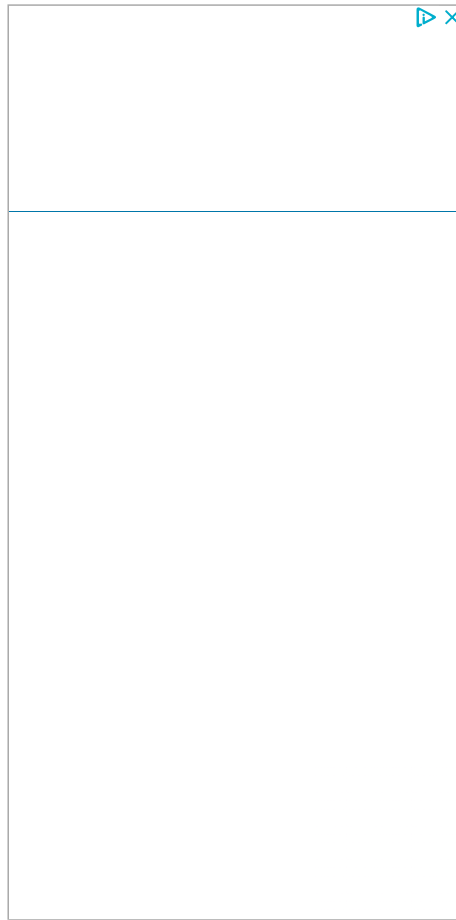
OHIO NEWS

By [Jim Gaines](#)

Updated Oct 1, 2021

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State lawmakers missed the first deadline to redraw Ohio’s congressional district maps on Thursday, having held no hearings on any proposals.



Republicans haven't released any redistricting proposals.

Democrats and two independent but frequently allied groups have made their map proposals public. All three would create seven districts that lean Democratic and eight that lean Republican, which aligns fairly closely with the state's overall partisan split. Ohioans voted 53% Republican and 45% Democratic in the 2020 presidential election.

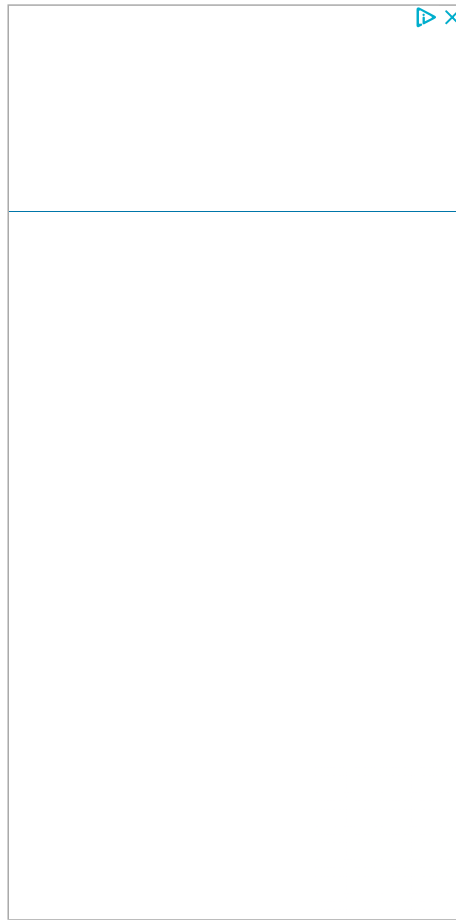
Explore See how your Statehouse districts will change

Ohio's current [U.S. House delegation contains three Democrats and 11 Republicans](#), with two vacant seats to be decided in the general election Nov. 2. The 11th District was previously held by a Democrat and the 15th District by a Republican.

The General Assembly faced a Sept. 30 deadline to draw new maps, reducing Ohio's U.S. House of Representatives districts from 16 to 15, as required by 2020 census results. Each of the new districts will contain about 780,000 people.

The new process for drawing those districts, established in 2018 via state constitutional amendment, says legislators must hold at least two public hearings before approving a map.

They have held no hearings so far. House Speaker Bob Cupp, R-Lima, said Wednesday that he knew of no meetings scheduled for drawing congressional district maps.



Now the job goes back to the Ohio Redistricting Commission, which on Sept. 15 approved new maps for state House and Senate districts. Those maps were approved at midnight on the last possible day, and passed the commission by a 5-2 vote without any Democratic support, meaning they will only be in effect for four years.

Explore What Ohio lawmakers will likely focus on this fall

Three lawsuits have been filed against the state legislative maps, denouncing them as gerrymandered to preserve a Republican supermajority in both houses.

Cupp co-chairs the redistricting commission with state Sen. Vernon Sykes, D-Akron. Aaron Mulvey, spokesperson for Cupp and Republicans on the redistricting commission, didn't specifically answer questions but provided a one-line statement Thursday.

"The speaker anticipates the work of the Redistricting Commission to be underway soon for the congressional maps," Mulvey said.

"We do not know yet when the redistricting commission will convene again," said Giulia Cambieri, Ohio Senate Democratic Caucus communications director and spokesperson for Democrats on the redistricting commission. "Sen. Sykes will reach out to his co-chair, Speaker Cupp, shortly to discuss that and set a schedule for the next meetings."

Democrats look forward to reviewing a Republican proposal when one emerges, she said.

"We do not know when that may be," Cambieri said.

The Ohio Redistricting Commission includes Gov. Mike DeWine, Secretary of State Frank LaRose, Auditor Keith Faber, Cupp, Vernon Sykes, Senate President Matt Huffman, R-Lima, and House Minority Leader Emilia Sykes, D-Akron. That gives Republicans a 5-2 edge.

The 2018 constitutional amendment says the redistricting commission must hold at least two public hearings and allow the public to submit map proposals. If commissioners cannot approve a bipartisan map by Oct. 31, the job goes to the General Assembly once again, which must act by Nov. 30.

If lawmakers at that point can approve a map by a 3/5 majority vote, including at least a third of Democrats — three in the Senate and 12 in the House — then the map will last for a decade.

Failing that, the General Assembly can pass a map by a simple majority vote, but like the recently approved state legislative map it would only be in force for four years.

Ohio Senate [Democrats released their map proposal as Senate Bill 237](#), with Sens. Sykes and Kenny Yuko, D-Richmond Heights, as primary sponsors.

Fair Districts Ohio and the [Ohio Citizens Redistricting Commission](#) also released maps. Both organizations are supported by voting rights groups, various progressive groups and minority advocates.

Fair Districts Ohio sponsored a public map-drawing contest which received nearly 40 entries since Aug. 27. The [first-place winner was John Hagner of Yellow Springs](#).

“Redistricting is all about trade-offs, but what this map shows is that it’s possible to balance minority representation, representative fairness, and competitive districts with boundaries that make sense and reflect Ohio communities,” Hagner said in the Fair Districts Ohio news release. “Tortured lines, and split communities, and districts that sprawl across the state are deliberate choices to make elections less competitive, and we can demand better.”

In Other News

- 1 Once again, redistricting is a waiting game
- 2 VOTER GUIDE: Montgomery County Common Pleas Court Judge Republican...
- 3 VOTER GUIDE: Champaign County Commission Republican candidates
- 4 VOTER GUIDE: Montgomery County Common Pleas Court Judge Democratic...
- 5 VOTER GUIDE: Ohio Governor Republican candidates

About the Author

Jim Gaines

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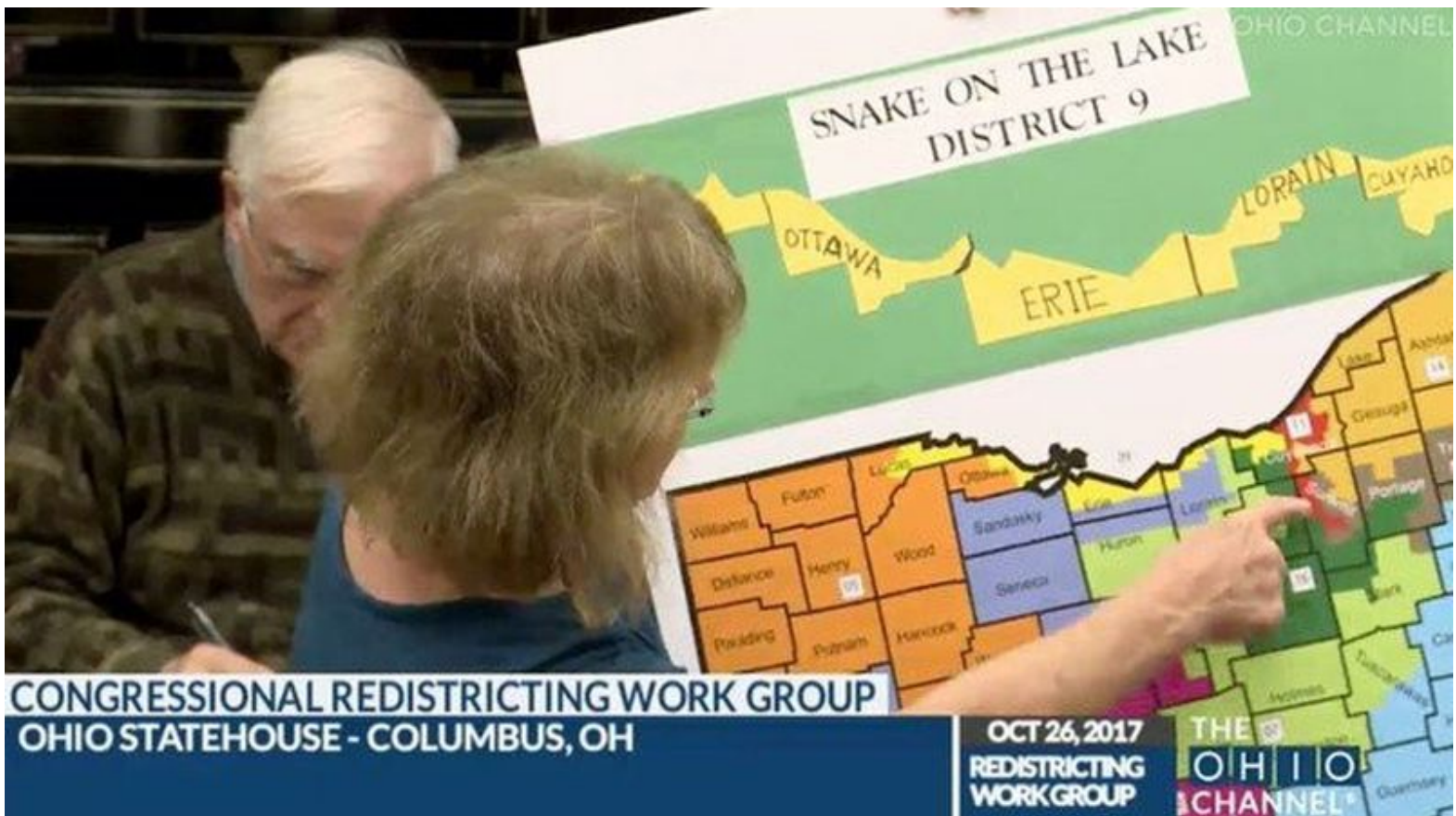


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Ohio Politics

Ohio votes to reform congressional redistricting; Issue 1 could end gerrymandering

Updated: Mar. 18, 2019, 8:46 a.m. | Published: May. 09, 2018, 3:54 a.m.



Kathleen Atwater of Vermilion, displaying the map she created to show the far-reaching 9th congressional district, testifies last fall before an Ohio House/Senate working group on redistricting reform.(Ohio Channel)

By **Rich Exner, cleveland.com**

CLEVELAND, Ohio - While gerrymandering disputes from other states have landed in the U.S. Supreme Court, Ohio voters took the historic step Tuesday of passing a bipartisan proposal aimed at creating fairer and more logical congressional districts.

Issue 1 amends the Ohio Constitution by putting rules in place, where none exist now, aimed at creating districts that make geographic sense - rather than districts designed solely with political gain in mind.

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How often - and to what extent - counties can be split will be severely limited. And a new 10-year map cannot be enacted without significant buy-in from both major political parties.

The unofficial vote tally showed Issue 1 with a 75 percent to 25 percent lead -- 1,165,409 votes for to 391,527 against. The official vote will be known within a few weeks.

The first map drawn under the new rules will be created after the 2020 census. This will mark the first time that the party in power will not have almost total control over the process.

"It should be a ray of hope for people in Ohio concerned with both political parties working together to get something done," said Rep. Kirk Schuring, a Canton Republican who worked on the proposal as part of a special bipartisan committee in the Ohio Legislature.

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"I think we will have fairer districts. I think we will have more competitive districts. If they are more competitive, people in Washington will have to be more conciliatory, not so partisan."

Under Ohio's current map, drawn under Republican control in 2011, there are almost no competitive races, counties such as Cuyahoga and Summit are split four ways each, and some districts meander for more than 100 miles across the state.

Results have turned out as planned, with 12 solid Republican districts and four solid Democratic districts - none changing party hands during any election. The closest race in 2016 was decided by more than 18 percentage points, leaving voters little opportunity to hold their elected representatives accountable.

There were failed attempts at reform before, including:

- In 1981,
- In 2012,
- Finally,

However, the 2015 issue did not address congressional redistricting.

The legislature promised to revisit the issue, but didn't do so until pressure mounted last year from a petition drive and increased media scrutiny. Redistricting reform was the focus of a months-long cleveland.com series - [Out of Line: Impact 2017 and Beyond](#).

In the meantime, multiple cases from elsewhere landed in the Supreme Court. Among those, complaints from Wisconsin Democrats and Maryland Republicans upset with maps in those states are awaiting decisions.

But in Ohio three months ago, a compromise was reached among Democrats and Republicans, plus the groups responsible for the petition drive. Then the proposal was placed on the ballot after bipartisan votes, [31-0 in the Ohio Senate](#) and [83-10 in the Ohio House](#).

As Election Day approached, backers of the separate petition drive, including Common Cause Ohio and the Ohio League of Women Voters, kept their petitions active - holding the threat to take their own proposal to the ballot in November if Issue 1 failed.

[Rep. Jack Cera](#), a Democrat from Bellaire who was part the working group with Schuring, said both the petition drive and the public's education on the ills of the current map led to reform apparently really happening this time.

"The majority party down here realized they were going to have to deal with it (the petitions) at the ballot box," Cera said. "They didn't want that. The other thing is that this map was so blatantly gerrymandered. ... The terribly gerrymandered map was driving people to finally understand it and how that connected to the inability of Congress to do anything."

Republicans in the General Assembly had the votes to put their own proposal on the ballot, but [Sen. Matt Huffman](#), a Republican from Lima, insisted on bipartisan support before going to the ballot. Otherwise, he said it wouldn't win.

How it will work

Under Issue 1, the legislature will still hold control over approval of the next map in following the 2020 census. But the new rules for congressional maps require 50 percent support from members of each of the two major political parties.

If that fails, the work will be turned over to a separate, seven-member commission of statewide elected officials and representatives from the legislature. But the commission cannot approve a new map without at least two votes from each party.

If that fails, the legislature eventually could approve a new map without any minority support, but that new map would be good for only four years - instead of 10 - and added requirements would be imposed in an attempt to protect local communities and the party in the minority.

Other provisions are aimed at ending the practice of designing districts without regard to local communities.

Issue 1 also requires compact districts and limits county splits. No more than five counties could be split three ways. No more than 18 counties could be split two ways. At least 65 counties would be kept whole.

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Ohio lawmakers miss deadline for new congressional district map

thecentersquare.com/ohio/ohio-lawmakers-miss-deadline-for-new-congressional-district-map/article_0c49dfc6-8dc4-11ec-8a10-bb89fd04a0fe.html

J.D. Davidson

February 14, 2022



(The Center Square) – Another court ordered redistricting deadline came and went for Ohio, leaving congressional and state legislative maps in limbo as the state’s May 3 primary gets closer.

The General Assembly missed a Sunday deadline to redraw and submit new congressional maps to the Ohio Supreme Court, putting the congressional map in the hands of the Ohio Redistricting Commission for another 30 days.

The commission also has a Thursday deadline to submit its third attempt at state legislative district maps after the first two were declared unconstitutional.

“It is disappointing but not surprising that the legislature missed the Congressional map deadline, given that Republicans never showed Democrats their proposed congressional map and the majority party has purposefully delayed work on these maps throughout this entire process,” House Minority Leader Allison Russo, R-Upper Arlington, said. “As we enter the Redistricting Commission stage, I hope Republican Commissioners are ready to work together to produce the fair, constitutional maps Ohioans deserve.”

No meetings are scheduled on the commission’s website.

A spokesperson for Secretary of State Frank LaRose, who is a member of the commission, said the potential risk for the primaries grows each day maps are not settled.

Candidates have qualified for the May 3 primary, and the General Assembly has given LaRose the ability to make adjustments to deadlines and rules.

“You can’t just flip a switch and have an election. A lot of work goes into certifying candidates, preparing and printing ballots, accommodating overseas military voters, programming and testing machines, and more. If you compare that process with the Court’s timeline for resolving the redistricting litigation, it becomes less likely with each passing day that Ohioans will have the high-quality election they deserve,” said Rob Nichols, LaRose’s spokesperson.

The commission had asked the Supreme Court to stay its decision regarding the state legislative maps until after the November general election, allowing both primaries and the general election to take place under the recently passed maps and deciding their constitutionality after the election.

The court denied that request, saying the General Assembly could fix any issues.

“We have a duty to tell the General Assembly that there’s risk in running an election on an expedited timeframe, and that’s what we’re doing,” Nichols said. “We have the best election officials in the nation, and we have absolute confidence in their ability to manage these unprecedented circumstances. But this is somewhat like trying to fly and land planes in a storm. We’re not saying it can’t be done, just that there’s a higher degree of risk.”



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Ohio Politics

Ohio lawmakers to take up congressional map drawing after redistricting commission fails to act

Updated: Oct. 29, 2021, 3:56 a.m. | Published: Oct. 28, 2021, 4:39 p.m.



Members of the Ohio Redistricting Commission. They are (from top to bottom and left to right): Secretary of State Frank LaRose, Gov. Mike DeWine, State Auditor Keith Faber, Sen. Vernon Sykes, Senate President Matt Huffman, House Minority Leader Emilia Sykes and House Speaker Bob Cupp. (State of Ohio photos) State of Ohio

By **Andrew J. Tobias, cleveland.com**

COLUMBUS, Ohio – The Ohio Redistricting Commission held its first and only congressional redistricting meeting at the Ohio Statehouse on Thursday. And as expected, the commission didn't approve, much less consider, an official map proposal.

Instead, commissioners, including two who won't be involved with the process anymore, heard from members of the public who touted their unofficial plans during the two-hour hearing. With Thursday's uneventful meeting out of the way, the map-making authority now will head to the state legislature, which as of Monday, will be on the clock to approve new congressional districts by the end of November.



After Thursday's meeting, Secretary of State Frank LaRose, a Republican who, along with state Auditor Keith Faber is getting booted from the redistricting process, called the outcome a "supreme disappointment."

"Redistricting reform has been a passion of mine for a long time," said LaRose, who unsuccessfully pushed for the redistricting commission to meet three weeks ago. "I haven't slept well for the last couple of weeks."

LaRose also suggested changes may be needed to the redistricting process, which like the 2018 reform that voters approved setting up the current system, would require a constitutional amendment.

"That's a conversation for another day," he said.

The redistricting commission could have approved new congressional maps at any time during October after state lawmakers missed an initial Sept. 30 deadline to approve new districts. The commission, created under a 2018 anti-gerrymandering reform approved by voters, is a seven-member panel composed of five Republicans -- Gov. Mike DeWine, LaRose, Faber, House Speaker Bob Cupp, Senate President Matt Huffman and two Democrats -- House Minority Leader Emilia Sykes and her father, Sen. Vernon Sykes. A new map plan would require four "yes" votes to be approved.

But the commission didn't even hold a meeting until Thursday when Cupp agreed for it to happen. And commission Republicans never introduced a map.

Among those who presented map proposals to the commission on Thursday was Fair Districts Ohio, a redistricting advocacy coalition that presented winning maps from its redistricting contest, Paul Miller, a man in an American Flag tie who presented on behalf of a group called Ohioans Defending Freedom and Geoff Wise, a Cincinnati man who described himself as the president of the Frank LaRose Fan Club and used pieces of candy corn and other Halloween candy as visual aids in his presentation.

Wise encouraged LaRose, DeWine and Faber to break ranks with Republican legislative leaders and work with Democratic commissioners to pass a map on Thursday.

That didn't happen.

Vernon Sykes said afterward he felt the meeting was worthwhile.

"I think we have an understanding of what the public is interested in," he said. "That's one of the basic purposes of these hearings, to use that information, and with those suggestions, I think we'll be better equipped to draw some conclusions about these issues."

Meanwhile, activists with Fair Districts Ohio held a rally outside the Statehouse following the hearing calling on lawmakers to act.

Huffman told reporters earlier this week he plans to introduce a Senate Republican congressional map proposal next week, likely Wednesday.

Ohio Senate Republicans have introduced a bill, Senate Bill 258, which will serve as a vehicle for an eventual congressional map plan.

Huffman said the Senate Elections Committee will hold hearings on SB258, which for now is just a blank placeholder bill, and Senate Bill 237, Senate Democrats' proposal that would draw eight Republican districts, six Democratic districts and a toss-up district in Northeast Ohio. The proposal is likely a non-starter since it would cause Republicans to lose four seats compared to the current maps.

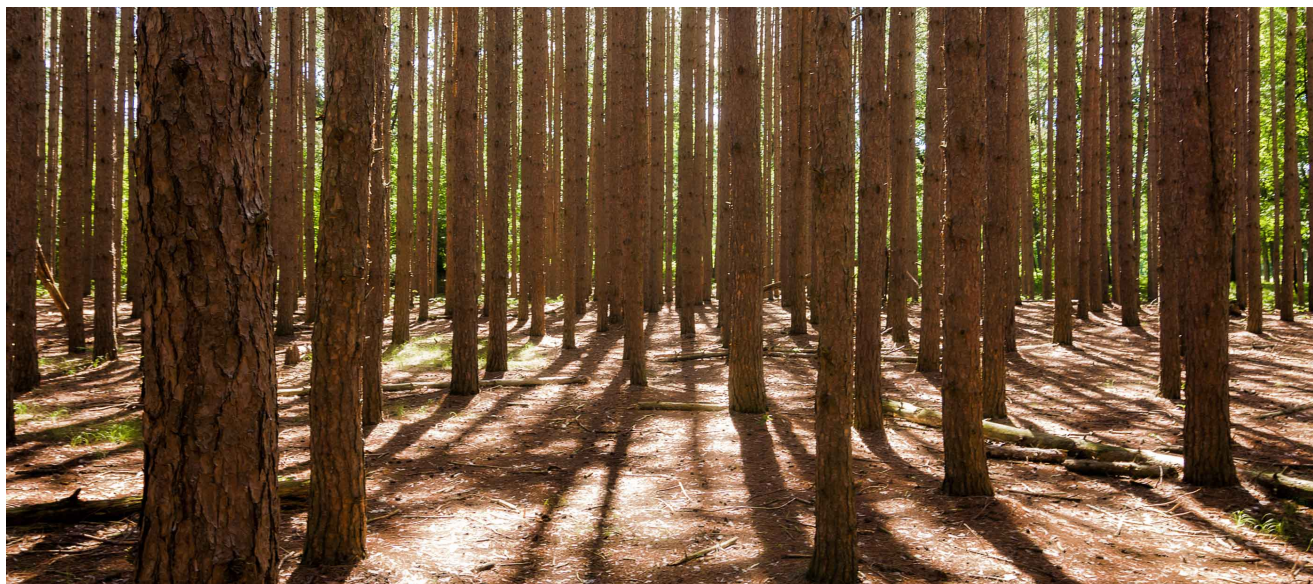
Huffman has told reporters the Senate GOP map plan is "not very far" along in its development.

Republicans must get at least one-third of the Democrats in the House and Senate to vote for a map for it to remain in place for the typical 10 years. Otherwise, they can pass a map on their own, but it would expire after four years. A four-year map also would have to meet a loose political criteria under the state constitution, forbidding it from "unduly" favoring or disfavoring a political party or its incumbents.

Trio of Good Government Groups File Congressional Redistricting Proposal: Congressional Reform Mirrors State Reform Measure Approved by 71% of Ohio Voters in 2015

theoec.org/press-releases/trio-of-good-government-groups-file-congressional-redistricting-proposal-congressional-reform-mirrors-state-reform-measure-approved-by-71-of-ohio-voters-in-2015/

July 28, 2017



Press Release

Aryeh Alex, April 24, 2017

In partnership with the League of Women Voters of Ohio and Common Cause Ohio, the Ohio Environmental Council announced today an initial collection of over 1,000 signatures in support of the Fair Congressional Districts for Ohio ballot proposal, which mirrors the legislative redistricting reform plan that Ohio voters endorsed by a vote of 71-29 percent in 2015.

“From congressional districts straddling Lake Erie, to those along the Ohio River and those nestled in the farmlands of western Ohio, we all deserve federal representatives who will fight in support of issues facing our communities, not on behalf of their political parties,” said Heather Taylor-Miesle, Executive Director for the Ohio Environmental Council.

Carrie Davis, Executive Director of the League of Women Voters of Ohio said, “this is a critical effort to ensure fair districts and fair elections for every congressional seat in Ohio. When members of Congress have safe seats drawn to guarantee which party wins, the real

losers are the voters. With our initial collection of over 1,000 signatures from across the Buckeye State, the League of Women Voters of Ohio firmly believes this effort will ensure all Ohioans are represented in our nation's capital."

"In 2015, Ohioans overwhelmingly supported state legislative redistricting reform. Issue 1 of 2015 won by more than 71% of the vote and won in all 88 counties. We are building on that momentum," said Catherine Turcer, Policy Analyst for Common Cause Ohio. "What's good for the Statehouse is good for Congress. We're excited to work toward fixing the congressional mapmaking."

The text of the proposal was available for public comment for five months.

Summary of the Proposed Constitutional Amendment

- No congressional district map shall be drawn to favor or disfavor a political party or candidates.
- Each district will be nearly equal in population (one person, one vote) with the splitting of communities (counties, cities and townships) kept to a minimum.
- Districts shall be geographically compact.
- The Voting Rights Act and other state and federal laws that protect minority representation shall be respected.
- Representational fairness is required. This means that the congressional map should reflect the will of Ohio voters. This reinforces the prohibition on gerrymandering or drawing a map to favor one political party over another. The proposal requires that partisan makeup reflects statewide elections over the previous ten years.
- The bipartisan Ohio Redistricting Commission (established by Issue 1 in 2015) will draw state legislative, as well as congressional district maps.
- The Ohio Redistricting Commission includes the Governor, the Auditor, the Secretary of State and appointees of the Speaker of the Ohio House, House Minority Leader, the Ohio Senate President and the Senate Minority Leader.
- To pass a new congressional map requires a majority of the Ohio Redistricting Commission approve the map with a minimum of two votes from the minor political party.

You might also like

Ohio Voters May See Two Anti-Gerrymandering Issues on Their Ballots Next year

wksu.org/government-politics/2017-12-21/ohio-voters-may-see-two-anti-gerrymandering-issues-on-their-ballots-next-year

December 21, 2017

Gerrymandering: Shading the Lines

If the U.S. is supposed to be a representative democracy, when did this country go from voters picking their representatives to politicians picking their voters? WKSU takes a look at the evolution of Ohio's congressional district, how they've gone from making geographic sense to the twisted, contorted shapes they are today.





KAREN KASLER

/

OHIO PUBLIC RADIO

Ohio voters may see not one, but two, issues next year overhauling the way congressional districts are drawn. In the words of one advocate: “I care about slaying the gerrymander because I’m an American.”

Here is the fourth installment of our series, “Gerrymandering: Shading the Lines.”

On election night two years ago, Catherine Turcer of Common Cause Ohio couldn’t have been more thrilled.

“It’s like Christmas. I got the best present, and the thing that’s exciting is that this is for all of us,” she said.

“This” was an Ohio constitutional amendment to create a seven-member bipartisan redistricting commission. Previous citizen-backed ballot issues on redistricting had been rejected by voters. But this one passed with more than 70 percent of the vote – likely because both Democratic and Republican lawmakers also supported it.



Credit STATEHOUSE NEWS BUREAU

/

STATEHOUSE NEWS BUREAU

Catherine Turcer's Common Cause Ohio was among the groups pushing a change in how state Legislative districts are drawn. Voters passed it in 2015 by 70 percent. But the issue did not mention Congressional districts.

No mention of Congress, yet

But it applied only to state House and state Senate districts. Advocates said Congressional redistricting was next, because the current Ohio map has been called one of the most gerrymandered in the country. It was drawn up six years ago, with the process and the product kept hidden in a downtown Columbus hotel room called “the bunker.”

State-paid Republican consultants worked under the heavy influence of U.S. House Speaker John Boehner – even though technically, it’s state lawmakers, not Congress, that builds Ohio’s congressional map.

Ohio Redistricting Transparency Report

The Elephant in the Room



How power was used in the political backrooms to manipulate districts to benefit the political insiders.

But the overwhelmingly Republican Legislature approved the map, over objections from Democratic lawmakers including then-party Chair Chris Redfern.

“I think that this Speaker and his staff are far more interested in politics than they are in drafting a bill that could get wide bipartisan support,” he said.

Democrats tried to take the issue to the ballot, which would have meant two different primaries in 2012 for Ohio’s 16 Congressional districts. Republicans tweaked the map slightly and Democrats signed off.

To read the report, [click here](#).

But frustrated citizen activists – led by [the League of Women Voters](#) -- started working on their redistricting plan, which would take the Congressional map-drawing power away from lawmakers and put it with the bipartisan commission set up to create Statehouse districts. They got a sudden and surprising boost in late 2015 – from the man who signed the law that created the current Congressional map, Gov. John Kasich.

Good for Ohio and the country

“I think we need to eliminate gerrymandering, we gotta figure out a way to do it, we gotta be aggressive on it and we gotta have more competitive districts. That to me is what’s good for the state of Ohio and what’s good for the country.”

This April, activists began collecting signatures to put their [Fair Congressional Districts for Ohio](#) amendment before voters next fall. But a few months ago, four state lawmakers were appointed to craft a plan to beat the clock and go to the voters this coming May.

“We must have a transparent, bipartisan approach to redistricting.” “The General Assembly has the opportunity to restore fairness in our elections.” “Gerrymandering is really bullying.”

That’s Carole Lunney, Camille Winbush, and Kathy Deitsch, three of the dozens of people who testified at two hearings this fall held by the working group. No one defended the current Congressional map drawing process.



Credit The Ohio Channel

/

The Ohio Channel

At the first meeting of the working group, Sens. Vernon Sykes (left) and Matt Huffman debated what most determines who will win an election.

Do maps really win elections?

But one member of the group -- Republican Sen. Matt Huffman of Lima, who jointly sponsored the Statehouse redistricting reform plan – countered the claim that map-making increasingly dictates election results.

“The current system that we have, as imperfect as it is, allows the appropriate candidates, appropriately funded, with party support, and if the issues are the way they are, folks can win,” he said.

Democratic panel member Sen. Vernon Sykes of Akron – who was also a sponsor of the Statehouse redistricting reform - shot back.

“As a political science professor, I would state that it’s found that the most significant variable is who draws the lines,” he said.

Since the hearings, lawmakers have been in private talks. If they want to get their version on the May primary ballot, they have it ready by Feb. 7.

In contrast, because it's a citizens' effort, the Fair Congressional Districts plan can only go on the fall ballot. But activists aren't deterred. They're halfway to the more than 300,000 signatures they need. And those working on the issue say things are different than they were even two years ago. Maryann Barnes chairs the Cleveland Heights-University Heights chapter of the League of Women Voters – she recently circulated petitions at a Cleveland Heights bar.



Credit M.L. SCHULTZE / WKSU public radio

/

WKSU public radio

Advocates collecting signatures to get a proposed constitutional amendment on the November ballot say the current map is their best weapons

"Now, you know, we have our little sign that says, 'Please stop gerrymandering', and people come to us to sign the petition. They do know now what gerrymandering is, and a lot of people are very angry about it."

There's also a third plan in the Legislature – it says if lawmakers can't agree to a Congressional map, the bipartisan Statehouse district map-drawing commission takes over. But that bill has yet to have a hearing.

The working group of state lawmakers considering a redistricting plan are:

- **Ohio Rep. Kirk Schuring (R)**
- **Ohio Rep. Jack Cera (D)**
- **Ohio Sen. Vernon Sykes (D)**
- **Ohio Sen. Matt Huffman (R)**

Schuring has said some lawmakers have a concern that the Legislature not cede responsibility for the map entirely, but the group is looking for broad support from the public. Schuring was the only GOP member of the Ohio House who voted against Congressional map in 2011, saying his was concerned that dividing his native Stark County into three Congressional districts would dilute its strength.

The group has not announced a plan publicly. The Legislature faces a Feb. 7 deadline to get an issue on the May ballot.

Fair Districts Ohio's proposal

The group of citizen's groups, including the League of Women Voters, has collected more than 175, 000 signatures to get its voter initiative on the November ballot. (By law, voter-initiated issues can only be on General election ballots.

Here's the outline of their plan:

- It would amend Article XI of the Ohio Constitution to transfer responsibility for redrawing Congressional district lines from the state Legislature (with the governor's signature) to the bipartisan Ohio Redistricting Commission.
- The Ohio Redistricting Commission consists of Ohio's governor, secretary of state, auditor and one person each appointed by the Ohio House and Senate majority and minority leaders.
- Voters established the commission in 2015 by 71.5 % of the vote to establish district Lines for the Ohio House and Ohio Senate. Congressional districts were unaffected.
- A plan must be supported by a majority of the commission, including at least two members of the minority party, to be adopted.
- Any citizen of Ohio may propose a plan for the Commission's consideration.
- The amendment would go into effect following the 2020 census, and the new congressional district boundaries would take effect in 2022.
- Here are the criteria the amendment would set for Congressional districts:
- No congressional district map shall be drawn to favor or disfavor a political party or candidates.
- Each district will be nearly equal in population (one person, one vote).

- The plan shall minimize the splitting of counties, municipalities and townships, and no county shall be split more than once.
- Districts shall be geographically contiguous and compact.
- The Voting Rights Act and other state and federal laws that protect minority representation shall be respected.
- Representational fairness is required. The statewide percentage of districts leaning towards each of the two major parties shall closely correspond to the partisan preferences of Ohio voters as measured by votes in state and federal partisan general elections over the previous 10 years.

WKSU'S series, "Gerrymandering: Shading the Lines"

- Summit County: Four congressional districts and no member of Congress to call its own
- Snakes, ducks and toilet bowls: How's Ohio shape its congressional districts?
- How'd Ohio's most liberal town end up represented by one of the nation's most conservative congressmen?
- Ohio voters may see two anti-gerrymandering Issues on Next Year's ballots
- The nation watches Ohio and Ohio could find models in other states

Editor's note: The name of Carole Lunney was originally misspelled and has been corrected.

POLITICS

An End to Gerrymandering in Ohio?

A bipartisan compromise that just passed the state Senate would require minority-party support for political maps, and would limit the number of communities that could be splintered.

By Vann R. Newkirk II



Fair Districts members Sam Gresham and Ann Henkener at a press conference in Columbus, Ohio, in January (Julie Carr Smyth / AP)

FEBRUARY 6, 2018

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On Monday night, the Ohio state Senate did something truly unprecedented: With near-unanimous support from both Republicans and Democrats, the chamber approved Senate Resolution 5, a measure that would for the first time require bipartisan input and approval for federal congressional maps. The measure is expected to pass the state House today, and it will appear on the ballot in the May primary elections to get final approval from voters.

As it stands, there are few state guidelines on federal redistricting in Ohio. As in most states, the power to create maps rests with the state legislature, which usually means that the party in power—right now, it's the GOP—ends up calling the shots. There are also few requirements for community disclosure or involvement. The only real constraints that exist are those under federal court rulings and the Voting Rights Act, which prohibit racial gerrymandering and ensure districts have roughly the same populations. So far, the result of those limited rules has been a congressional map that, according to the Brennan Center for Justice, has consistently led to Republican partisan bias.

Senate Resolution 5 would change all that. The proposal would require three-fifths support of the entire legislature to pass a map for use over a 10-year period. The three-fifths must include 50 percent of all members of the minority party. The resolution also sets forth a maximum number of counties that can be split by congressional districts, a provision that should affect district compactness.

If the legislature cannot create maps that follow these rules and secure the requisite support, the task would fall to a seven-member bipartisan commission. Their maps would have to win support from at least two of the minority members of the commission for the adoption process to continue. If the commission fails, the resolution creates two more contingencies: Either the legislature can have another go at creating a 10-year map—this time, only having to secure a third of the minority party’s votes—or it could create a map that only lasts for four years and has much stricter compactness requirements. That four-year map would require a simple majority.

According to the Fair Districts Coalition, a collection of Ohio-based groups pushing for bipartisan redistricting reform, this amendment “creates a bipartisan process that strongly encourages both major parties to cooperate and agree on a congressional map that better represents the views of Ohioans.”

Redistricting reform has been a major issue in Ohio, with strong grassroots support for finding a way to break the partisan monopoly on mapmaking in the state. In 2015, the coalition achieved its first major victory when it ushered through a ballot initiative that reforms the way state General Assembly maps are drawn. The resulting constitutional amendment created a seven-member Ohio Redistricting Commission, whose members must include the governor, state auditor, secretary of state, two more political appointees, and at least two members of the minority party. The amendment also implemented strict limits on the number of counties that could be split by General Assembly districts.

The Fair Districts Coalition favored a federal mapmaking plan that used the same commission, thus ensuring the participation of the governor and minority-party representatives. The Senate resolution that passed Monday, however, doesn’t quite meet those demands. The resolution allows the legislature first pass at mapmaking, without the governor’s veto or input; only if that effort fails does the commission come into play. The resolution could also take away key leverage from citizens to vote down political maps.

Still, after months of negotiating—and with Republicans accepting more input than they’d originally planned from the minority party—coalition members seemed content with the outcome. “We wanted bipartisan compromise, which is what this is,” the League of Women Voters of Ohio wrote in a Facebook post Monday evening.

If approved by the people of Ohio in May, the resolution would almost certainly increase the degree of minority-party participation, civic

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participation, and transparency in political mapmaking. For the time being, Democrats will at least be part of the drawing process. And while the public hearings and input the resolution requires won't necessarily impact the shapes of districts, they will give people more insight into the process and the political dealings at work.

Still, there are no guarantees in the game of gerrymandering—no way to ensure the maps won't have flaws. For one, as *FiveThirtyEight* notes, compactness doesn't mean fairness, and the resolution doesn't mandate compactness to begin with. While it would require that 65 of the state's 88 counties remain undivided, it would allow 18 to be divided once, and another five to be divided as many as three times. With 40 percent of Ohio's population clustered into its most populous five counties, there are plenty of ways to get politically creative with maps there, even as other counties like Cuyahoga and Summit are divided into fewer districts.

Over time, these new requirements may decrease the runaway partisan advantage Republicans currently enjoy. But as opponents of the resolution's development plan noted, that advantage makes it easy for Republicans to continue dominating the process in the short term. Of the 132 total seats across both chambers of the General Assembly, Republicans currently hold 90, meaning they already meet the three-fifths-majority clause. Assuming those numbers are roughly similar in 2020 when the next maps are drawn, even if 21 of the 42 Democratic lawmakers hold out on approving a partisan gerrymander—and even if the two Democratic members of the special commission stonewall in the next round—a Republican plan could still win out: Round three would only require approval from 14 Democratic lawmakers to move a map forward.

The resolution still preserves what many believe is the central conflict of interest in American political redistricting: that politicians pick their voters. While ensuring participation from Democratic state lawmakers in the process might mitigate Republican advantage in the future, so-called “bipartisan gerrymanders” still occur in some states where a single party doesn't hold total dominance over the redistricting process. These gerrymanders don't necessarily provide fairer, more representative maps. But what they do tend to do is preserve the incumbency of those already in office, thus perpetuating the existing balance—or imbalance—of partisan bias.

Ohio's new plan could incentivize bipartisan gerrymandering. The minority party under this resolution can really only play the role of spoiler, while the majority faces little penalty for pressing for more advantage. The natural outcome of this impasse is the preservation of the status quo, map-wise. In Ohio, incumbency preservation would likely mean more years of lopsided congressional representation; currently, 11 members of the state's House delegation are Republicans and four are Democrats. The incumbency incentive is one aspect of gerrymandering that seems likely to continue under any fixes that maintain state legislatures' redistricting power (as opposed to the ostensibly politically independent commissions created in places like California, where House incumbency cratered in the 2012 elections).

Still, Ohio's new plan is an important addition to the national redistricting landscape, where many state legislatures and millions of people are

reconsidering exactly how political maps are drawn. The next domino to fall could be Ohio's neighbor Michigan, where activists are submitting petitions to add an initiative to November's ballot that would create an independent redistricting commission. As the country hurtles toward the 2020 Census, Ohio might be one sign of where states are heading.

Movement on new Ohio Congressional district map not expected for another week

The Statehouse News Bureau | By [Andy Chow](#)

Published January 27, 2022 at 11:56 AM EST



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WKSU

Weekend All Things Consid...

MEDIA_031

Senate President Matt Huffman (R-Lima) says the legislature will potentially start taking action on a new Congressional

The Ohio House and Ohio Senate must redraw the state's 15 congressional districts after the supreme court ruled the previous map unconstitutionally gerrymandered in favor of Republicans just under two weeks ago.

While the legislature has first crack at approving a new plan, they have a new hurdle to deal with.

Huffman says this time around the legislature will have to pass a new Congressional map with two-thirds of the vote in order for it to go into effect before the primary, which means getting Democratic support.

"Hopefully that we can we can get a resolution where, you know, again, the issue is largely in the house where they could get a two-thirds vote on emergency clause with that bill," says Huffman.

If not, the process goes back to the Ohio Redistricting Commission where Republicans can pass a four-year map without Democratic approval.

Republicans will also be at a fundraiser in Florida next week but Huffman doesn't think that'll conflict with redrawing the maps, and says he will cancel the trip if he needs to.

The Senate created a placeholder bill, [SB286](#), to begin working on the new map.

The previous map created 12 out of 15 districts that heavily favor or lean in favor of Republicans in a state that has voted about 54% Republican and 46% Democratic, according to an average of statewide race results over the last 10 years.

Tags

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Andy Chow

Contact Andy at achow@statehousenews.org.

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Government/Politics

Ohio lawmakers adjust candidate filing requirements with district maps in limbo

Andy Chow, January 26, 2022

The House and Senate approved a bill that gives potential candidates more flexibility while the Ohio Supreme Court deliberates on the newly redrawn maps.

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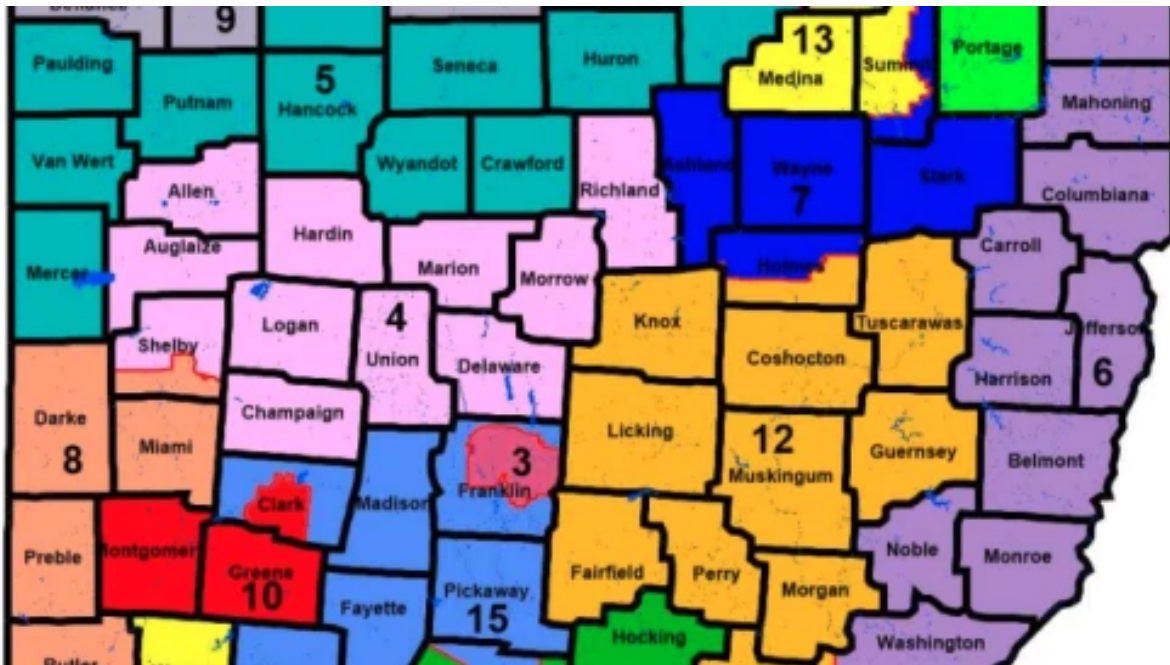
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Ohio Supreme Court rules proposed Congressional redistricting map invalid

Jo Ingles, January 14, 2022

And the court is telling lawmakers how to fix it.



Constitutionality of Ohio's Congressional map now in the hands of the state's Supreme Court justices

Karen Kasler, December 28, 2021

The four Republican and three Democratic justices are expected to deliver a decision soon on whether the new 15-district map, which gives an advantage to Republicans, is constitutional.

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New U.S. House map stumbles again in wake of latest Supreme Court ruling



LOCAL NEWS
By Jim Gaines
Feb 8, 2022

Advertisement

The Ohio Supreme Court's ruling Monday to strike down maps of Ohio's state House and Senate U.S. House districts seems to have sown confusion among state legislators still trying to assemble an acceptable map of new congressional districts — and thrown both processes back on the Ohio Redistricting Commission.

What's happened: Every 10 years, the state must draw new legislative district based on new census data. The Ohio Redistricting Commission approved Ohio House and Senate maps in September, and the General Assembly approved a congressional map in November. But both were Republican proposals that garnered only Republican support and would only be in effect for four years, due to new map-drawing processes Ohio voters approved.

Progressive and voting-rights groups sued over both, alleging the maps were gerrymandered to unfairly favor Republicans, who already held strong majorities in the legislature and on the redistricting commission.

In a succession of three 4-3 rulings, the Supreme Court agreed: rejecting the state legislative maps Jan. 12, overturning the congressional map two days later, and now invalidating revised state House and Senate maps for the same reasons.

What's going on now: Legislators were slated Tuesday to consider two bills on new congressional districts — a House committee was to hear House Bill 479 in the morning, while an afternoon Senate committee was to hear Senate Bill 286. A Republican map proposal was expected to be unveiled at those hearings, with the intent of pushing it through both House and Senate by the end of the week.

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But both those meetings were cancelled. A hearing on SB 286 is scheduled for Wednesday morning, but that doesn't leave time to get a map through both houses in regular session before the court-imposed deadline of Feb. 13.

If that happens the job of map-drawing — including reducing Ohio's U.S. House districts from 16 to 15 — will revert to the Ohio Redistricting Commission. That would give state officials another 30 days to produce an acceptable map.

House Speaker Bob Cupp, R-Lima, said he would be unable to get the two-thirds House majority needed to declare a new congressional map as an emergency measure. Declaring an emergency would let the map go into effect immediately, instead of waiting 90 days after the governor's signature; without an emergency declaration, the map wouldn't be in place before the May 3 primary for U.S. House seats.

A map approved by the redistricting commission, however, could go into effect immediately.

Anticipating a return to the redistricting commission, Ohio Senate Democrats posted a revised congressional map proposal of their own on the commission's website Tuesday.

But as of Monday, before the commission takes up the congressional map, it faces a Feb. 17 deadline to adopt new Ohio House and Senate maps as well. Following that, parties would have three business days to file any further objections.

Explore Election 2022: Who's seeking Ohio's highest offices?

What did the latest court ruling say: The court's latest opinion affirmed Democratic objections that many "Democratic-leaning" districts were so by less than 2%, while no Republican-leaning districts were that close. That could easily produce a more Republican-dominated legislature than the map they overturned, the majority opinion said.

Explore Redistricting commission adopts Republican plan

Justices also faulted Republicans for simply making minor adjustments to maps the court had already thrown out.

"We clearly invalidated the entire original plan in League of Women Voters of Ohio," the opinion says, citing the case's lead plaintiff. "The commission's choice to nevertheless start with that plan and change it as little as possible is tantamount to an intent to preserve as much partisan favoritism as could be salvaged from the invalidated plan."

Reaction to the latest news: State Sen. Vernon Sykes, D-Akron, co-chair of the redistricting commission, echoed the court's sentiment in a statement Tuesday.

"Before we start drawing maps, it is important that every member of the Redistricting Commission publicly states that they intend to follow the Court order and draw fair maps that closely match statewide voter preferences and comply with the Ohio Constitution," he said.

Jen Miller, executive director of the League of Women Voters of Ohio — lead plaintiff in the case — said her group is ready to work with the redistricting commission on creating maps that adhere to the state constitution and uphold voting rights.

"Once again, we commend the Ohio Supreme Court for standing with voters and rejecting partisan gerrymandering," she said in a news release. "For our representative democracy to work, Ohioans need districts that are fair and responsive to voters, rather than rigged for political interests."

How will this affect the upcoming election: The filing deadline for congressional seats has been extended to March 4. The filing deadline for state House and Senate seats was Feb. 2 — even though those district boundaries are again uncertain.

"Ohio's voters, candidates and election system now face a constitutional crisis and election system chaos," said John Fortney, director of communications for the Ohio Senate Majority Caucus. "Candidates have no specific direction regarding the districts for their campaigns and voters face the uncertainty of additional court-ordered gerrymandering."

The Ohio Secretary of State's office, which oversees elections, is reviewing the court's ruling but has no immediate announcements to make on its impact, according to Rob Nichols, press secretary for Secretary of State Frank LaRose.

In their majority opinion, justices noted that the General Assembly could move the May 3 state House and Senate primary election date if needed.

Giulia Cambieri, communications director for Ohio Senate Democrats, said their caucus has not heard any rumblings from the Republican majority about moving the primary date.

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JUST IN: Both congressional map hearings have been canceled today. @SpectrumNews1OH

9:18 AM · Feb 8, 2022 · Twitter Web App

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5 Quote Tweets

71 Likes

Josh Rultenberg

@JoshRultNews · Feb 8

Replying to @JoshRultNews

I just spoke with @bobpetersonfarm who chairs the Ohio Senate General Thread Budget Committee. He says because there are not 66 votes in the Ohio House, there is not a map that can be put forward at this time. @SpectrumNews1OH

4

17

25

Josh Rultenberg

@JoshRultNews · Feb 8

I asked @bobpetersonfarm if tomorrow's hearing was still going to happen. He was noncommittal but said they are working towards getting 66 votes in the House (which means Democratic support). @SpectrumNews1OH

7

6

13

Kevin O'Neil

@Kevin_C_ONeil · Feb 8

Replying to @JoshRultNews and @SpectrumNews1OH

Cancelled yesterday after OHSupCt ruled RC map invalid. GA has wasted the time they were given to redraw their map (likely planned on pulling the same #BS as the RC). Now they are desperate; they don't have a valid map and they know it. This map will end up with the RC too.

1

12

Natalie Hastings she/her #SOSNicaragua

@nataliehastings · Feb 8

Replying to @JoshRultNews and @SpectrumNews1OH

When does the Ohio Supreme Court get to make it themselves?

Faye Fellows

@cottage_orchard · Feb 8

Replying to @JoshRultNews and @SpectrumNews1OH

But I thought yesterday they said we were ima constitutional crisis, they're running out the lock thinking it'll get too close to a election so they're rigged Maia will be used ..., again.

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Josh Rultenberg  @JoshRultNews · Feb 8

JUST IN: Ohio House and Senate Democrats soon releasing their own congressional map proposal. [@SpectrumNews1OH](#)

 5

 80

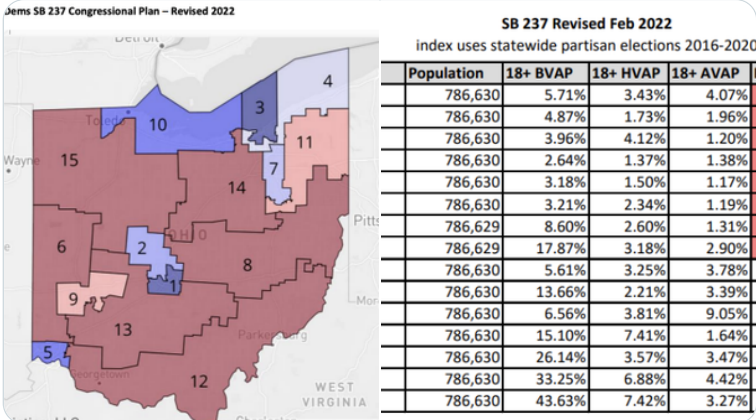
 359





Josh Rultenberg  @JoshRultNews

Here is the map. [@OHHouseDems](#) [@OhioSenateDems](#) [@SpectrumNews1OH](#)



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Josh Rultenberg  @JoshRultNews · Feb 8

Replying to [@JoshRultNews](#)

I just showed [@SpeakerCupp](#) the Dem proposal. He said “interesting.” [@SpectrumNews1OH](#)

 3

 5

 23





Lou @mainepotato82 · Feb 8

Replying to [@JoshRultNews](#) [@OHHouseDems](#) and 2 others


Well, at least mine doesn’t look like a duck anymore.





 1







David Helmick @ThaDavidHelmick · Feb 8


Replying to [@JoshRultNews](#) [@OHHouseDems](#) and 2 others


[@MVRedPodcast](#)


Democrats seriously want to put Columbiana and rural Mahoning county into a district that stretches into Delaware county.




 1

 1


 2








Rebeeber, Esq. @BeekerLooHoo · Feb 8

does that really make less sense to you than cincinnati’s urban core being broken up into three districts?

 1



 1



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one district instead of 3, keeps most communities together, maintains the right ratio without overly favoring one party.

1

Michael Connor @hippiechicken12 · Feb 8

Replying to @JoshRultNews @OHHouseDems and 2 others

Am I reading this wrong? It looks like Lake County is in both 3 and 4?

1

End of Empire Observer @SirhcRetnevac · Feb 8

nah, Lake appears exclusively in 4.

4 runs to the western lake county boarder, but then south to like, mayfield/beechwood/orange etc and back around the southern portion of cuyahoga.

source: live Eastlake, work Euclid

1

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AnnieGirl822 @AnnieGirl822 · Feb 8

Replying to @JoshRultNews @OHHouseDems and 2 others

Wow. Warren County is not an extension of Hamilton County. Interesting. Get Chabot outta there!!

End of Empire Observer @SirhcRetnevac · Feb 8

Replying to @JoshRultNews @OHHouseDems and 2 others

Thread

This map likely results in a 9-6 split by 2024/26.

District 4 (as drawn) is trending R every cycle since 2008 - including the outer belt southern CLE suburbs and Lake County.

Still, a FAIRER map.

DoltBrownies! @DoltBrownies · Feb 8

Replying to @JoshRultNews @Richland_Dems and 3 others

Goodbye Gym Jordan!

1

Geoff Wise @GeoffWise3 · Feb 8

Replying to @JoshRultNews @OHHouseDems and 2 others

Personally, I don't see this as a good starting point. Too many long east-west cuts across communities of interest, esp District12. And the R/D splits of the middle seats look a little too Dem-favored.

1

Ohio PoliticsGuru @OPoliticsguru · Feb 8

I generally agree with you, but it is pretty obvious to me that this map was drawn not to double or triple bunk incumbents, which is something the GOP stressed way too much the first time around, suggesting they won't (for better or worse) vote for a map without considering it.

Jaladah Aslam @JaladahA · Feb 9

Replying to @JoshRultNews @OHHouseDems and 2 others

These actually aren't that bad...

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3/3

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POLITICS

Congressional redistricting headed for Ohio Redistricting Commission

BY JOSH RULTENBERG | COLUMBUS
PUBLISHED 6:28 PM ET FEB. 08, 2022

COLUMBUS, Ohio — The fate of Ohio's legislative and congressional district maps are still up in the air less than three months from the May 3 primary. Despite that, lawmakers on both sides of the aisle are hesitant to move the primary back.

What You Need To Know

- Ohio lawmakers were set to consider new boundaries for Ohio's U.S. House seats on Tuesday
- Lawmakers ended up canceling hearings after districts for the state's House and Senate districts were again rejected by the Ohio Supreme Court
- Timing is of important as primaries for the Ohio House and Senate and the U.S. House will all be held May 3
- While filing deadlines already passed for Ohio House and Senate candidates, U.S. House candidates have until next month to file petitions

What was supposed to be a busy day at the Statehouse Tuesday quickly went quiet. Committees in the Ohio House and Senate canceled hearings where Republicans were expected to unveil their latest congressional map proposals.

“Given that we have not seen any maps from the Republican Senate caucus or the House caucus, and I think given that there was some question whether or not we could actually get enough votes needed for an emergency clause moving straight from the legislative process to the redistricting commission, it’s not entirely surprising, which is what I suspect will happen,” said Ohio House Minority Leader Allison Russo, D-Upper Arlington.

And so the process remains in limbo, just over three weeks from the congressional filing deadline. By early next week, it could be back in the hands of the Ohio Redistricting Commission, which would then have until mid-March before it needs to submit an approved map to the Ohio Supreme Court.

Ohio voters approved changes to how the state draws its boundaries for Ohio House and Senate districts and the state’s U.S. House districts.

“It’s interesting to see how the court is really holding the line on their interpretation of the amendments that were passed to the Constitution to institute this measure of map drawing that it hew closely to the 54-46 percent split of voter turnout Republican and Democrat over the last several years,” said Thomas Sutton, Ph.D., political science professor at Baldwin Wallace University.

As the clock ticks, we inch closer to the May 3 primary. It is a date neither party wants to change, but at some point they might not have a choice.

“Just from a functional standpoint that has to do with boardroom elections that are printing ballots. They need a certain timeline to be able to print those ballots and have them ready for early voting. So under current rules, early voting starts approximately a month before the primary that backs you up to April 2nd roughly. And so (if) we don’t have a resolution as to where these districts are and therefore who can be candidates in those districts because we have a residency requirement for those state legislative candidates, then they’re going to have to move the primary,” said Sutton.

The uncertainty leaves congressional and legislative candidates without answers as the commission tries for a third time to redraw the legislative maps a week after their filing deadline passed.

“For seats with incumbents, they’re going to have a natural advantage if in fact the incumbent is in an area that more or less is where they were before. If not, then it’s going to be like an open seat race. And in that case, it’s kind of a probably more of a voting party-line vote than anything else. I think that’s what you’re going to see voters rely on,” Sutton said.

“This is a lot more complicated than getting your Etch A Sketch out and drawing squares or blocks in the state of Ohio,” said Cupp.

It is unclear at this point what the schedule for hearings is for either process or when other maps could be released to the public.

While Republicans did not unveil their congressional proposal today, the Democrats did. They say their map would give the GOP an 8-7 advantage, which is in line with 54 percent of the vote that Republicans have received in recent elections.

- [Ohio Supreme Court again scraps GOP-drawn Statehouse maps](#)

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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I, Freda J. Levenson, hereby certify that on this 25th day of April 2022, I caused a true and correct copy of the foregoing to be served by email upon the counsel below:

Julie M. Pfeiffer, Julie.Pfeiffer@OhioAGO.gov
Bridget C. Coontz, bridget.coontz@ohioago.gov
Jonathan Blanton, jonathan.blanton@ohioago.gov
Michael Walton, michael.walton@ohioago.gov
Allison Daniel, allison.daniel@ohioago.gov

Counsel for Respondent Secretary of State Frank LaRose

Phillip J. Strach, phil.strach@nelsonmullins.com
Thomas A. Farr, tom.farr@nelsonmullins.com
John E. Branch, III, john.branch@nelsonmullins.com
Alyssa M. Riggins, alyssa.riggins@nelsonmullins.com

W. Stuart Dornette, dornette@taftlaw.com
Beth A. Bryan, bryan@taftlaw.com
Philip D. Williamson, pwilliamson@taftlaw.com

*Counsel for Respondents House Speaker Robert R. Cupp and Senate President
Matt Huffman*

Erik J. Clark, ejclark@organlegal.com

Counsel for Respondent Ohio Redistricting Commission

/s/ Freda J. Levenson
Freda J. Levenson (0045916)

*Counsel for League of Women Voters
Petitioners*