
Issue 1: Ohio's Bipartisan Redistricting Commission Amendment

The facts

Redistricting happens when the state changes the boundary lines of voting districts. Shifting district lines changes who gets to vote for which representatives in both the State and Federal government. Until recently, Ohio redistricting decisions were generally made by the political party in control of the state legislature. However, in October 2015, Ohio voters passed Issue 1, amending the state constitution to create a redistricting commission with at least two members from the political party not in control of the state legislature. Issue 1 aims to prevent redistricting decisions that only help the political party in control and often harm the minority party.

This bipartisan ballot measure will improve the redrawing of legislative districts, in turn promoting fair elections and representation:

- ★ Issue 1 will create a redistricting commission comprised of seven state officials and legislative appointees, and requires that two members of the commission be from the minority party.
- ★ Redistricting plans stay in effect for a long time. Under Issue 1, to pass a ten year redistricting plan, the commission will have to secure two votes from minority commission members. If it cannot do so, the plan will only last four years.
- ★ Issue 1 will expressly prohibit drawing district lines for political gain.
- ★ All districts that will be redrawn must be "contiguous" and "compact", meaning no manipulating district lines for personal gain or, in other words, no gerrymandering.

Why it matters

Redistricting becomes problematic if it is done to intentionally benefit one political party and to create a voting demographic that does not actually represent the people in that community. Called gerrymandering, this tactic undermines the value of minority party votes. By creating a bipartisan redistricting commission, Issue 1 can help ensure that district lines are drawn more fairly.



URGE is a national nonprofit organization that mobilizes the diverse, upcoming generation of leaders to promote and protect reproductive rights, sexual health & gender justice. Visit us at: www.URGE.org

The connection between gerrymandering and reproductive justice may not be immediately clear, but it does exist. For example, Ohioans support the right to an abortion, but because of the redistricting that happened after the 2010 election, the state legislature is overwhelmingly anti-choice. The results of gerrymandering in Ohio have been catastrophic for abortion rights and access in the state. Since 2011, Ohio has passed 16 anti-choice laws, including banning abortion after 20 weeks of pregnancy and stripping Planned Parenthood of funding. During the same time period, the number of abortion providers in the state has dropped by half. Issue 1 will improve the redrawing of legislative districts and promote fair elections and representation, in turn facilitating the introduction of more pro-choice laws.

What you can do

Issue 1 can have a real impact on the future outcome of Ohio elections, but only if you get out there and vote in them!

- ★ Make sure you and your friends are registered to vote. Go [here](#) for more info on how to register.
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Resources

Voting is power. Find out more about how to register to vote and get involved in civic engagement with Rock the Vote: <http://www.rockthevote.com/>

To learn more about how voting rights are intertwined with reproductive justice issues, read our "[3 Reasons Why Voting Rights Are A Reproductive Justice Issue](#)"



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