

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF OHIO

League of Women Voters of Ohio, et al., :
 : **Case No. 2021-1193**
Petitioners, :
 : **Original Action Filed Pursuant to**
v. : **Ohio Constitution, Article XI, Section 9(A)**
 :
Ohio Redistricting Commission, et al., : **[Apportionment Case Pursuant to S. Ct.**
 : **Prac. R. 14.03]**
Respondents. :

**RESPONSE OF RESPONDENTS SENATOR VERNON SYKES
AND HOUSE MINORITY LEADER C. ALLISON RUSSO
TO PETITIONERS' MOTION FOR ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE**

C. BENJAMIN COOPER (0093103)
Counsel of Record
CHARLES H. COOPER, JR. (0037295)
CHELSEA C. WEAVER (0096850)
Cooper & Elliott, LLC
305 West Nationwide Boulevard
Columbus, Ohio 43215
(614) 481-6000
(614) 481-6001 (fax)
benc@cooperelliott.com
chipc@cooperelliott.com
chelseaw@cooperelliott.com

**Special Counsel for Respondents
Senator Vernon Sykes and
House Minority Leader C. Allison Russo**

FREDA J. LEVENSON (0045916)
ACLU of Ohio Foundation, Inc.
4506 Chester Avenue
Cleveland, OH 44103
Tel: (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
Tel: (614) 586-1972 x2004
dcarey@acluohio.org

ALORA THOMAS (PHV 22010)
JULIE A. EBENSTEIN (PHV 25423)
American Civil Liberties Union
125 Broad Street
New York, NY 10004
Tel: (212) 519-7866
athomas@aclu.org
jebenstein@aclu.org

ROBERT D. FRAM (PHV 25414)
DONALD BROWN (PHV 25480)
JOSHUA GONZÁLEZ (PHV 25424)
DAVID DENUYL (PHV 25452)
JULIANA GOLDROSEN (PHV 25193)
Covington & Burling LLP
Salesforce Tower
415 Mission Street, Suite 5400
San Francisco, CA 94105
Tel: (415) 591-6000
rfram@cov.com

ALEXANDER THOMAS (PHV 25462)
Covington & Burling LLP
850 W. Tenth Street, NW
Washington DC 20001
Tel: (202) 662-5968
athomson@cov.com

ANUPAM SHARMA (PHV 25418)
YALE FU (PHV 25419)
Covington & Burling LLP
3000 El Camino Real
5 Palo Alto Square, 10th Floor
Palo Alto, CA 94306
Tel: (650) 632-4716
asharma@cov.com
yfu@cov.com

Counsel for Petitioners
League of Women Voters of Ohio, *et al.*

JOHN W. ZEIGER (0010707)
MARION H. LITTLE, JR. (0042679)
CHRISTOPHER J. HOGAN (0079829)
Zeiger, Tigges & Little LLP
3500 Huntington Center
41 South High Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215
Tel: (614) 365-9900
zeiger@lito.com
little@lito.com
hogan@lito.com

**Counsel for Respondent
Governor Mike DeWine**

JONATHAN D. BLANTON (0070035)
JULIE M. PFEIFFER (0069762)
MICHAEL A. WALTON (0092201)
Ohio Attorney General
30 E. Broad Street, 16th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215
Tel: (614) 466-2872
jonathan.blanton@ohio.gov
julie.pfeiffer@ohio.gov
michael.walton@ohio.gov

**Counsel for Respondents
Secretary of State Frank LaRose and
Auditor Keith Faber**

ERIK J. CLARK (0078732)
ASHLEY MERINO (0096853)
Organ Law LLP
1330 Dublin Road
Columbus, OH 43215
Tel: (614) 481-0900
ejclark@organlegal.com
amerino@organlegal.com

**Counsel for Respondent
Ohio Redistricting Commission**

W. STUART DORNETTE (0002955)
BETH A. BRYAN (0082076)
PHILIP D. WILLIAMSON (0097174)
Taft Stettinius & Hollister LLP
425 Walnut St., Suite 1800
Cincinnati, OH 45202
Tel: (513) 381-2838
dornette@taftlaw.com
bryan@taftlaw.com
pwilliamson@taftlaw.com

PHILLIP J. STRACH (PHV 25444)
THOMAS A. FARR (PHV 25461)
JOHN E. BRANCH, III (PHV 25460)
ALYSSA M. RIGGINS (PHV 25441)
GREG MCGUIRE (PHV 25483)
Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough LLP
4140 Parklake Avenue, Suite 200
Raleigh, NC 27612
Tel: (919) 329-3812
phil.strach@nelsonmullins.com
tom.farr@nelsonmullins.com
john.branch@nelsonmullins.com
alyssa.riggins@nelsonmullins.com
greg.mcguire@nelsonmullins.com

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

**RESPONSE OF RESPONDENTS SENATOR VERNON SYKES
AND HOUSE MINORITY LEADER C. ALLISON RUSSO
TO PETITIONERS' MOTION FOR ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE**

On April 25, 2022, Petitioners in this matter (the “LWV Petitioners”) filed a motion asking the Court to order members of the Ohio Redistricting Commission to show cause why they should not be held in contempt for failing to comply with the Court’s April 14, 2022 decision in *League of Women Voters of Ohio v. Ohio Redistricting Comm.*, ___ Ohio St.3d ___, 2022-Ohio-1235, ___ N.E.3d ___ (“*League IV*”). Specifically, the LWV Petitioners asked that, unless good cause is shown, the Court direct the Commissioners to meet and begin their work by April 29, a date that has passed. Because that date has passed, and the Commissioners have now had an initial meeting, Democratic Commissioners Senator Vernon Sykes and House Minority Leader Allison Russo respectfully submit that the LWV Petitioners’ requested relief can no longer be granted and their motion should be re-submitted at a future date, if necessary.

The Democratic Commissioners understand, and share, the LWV Petitioners’ frustration. In *League IV*, the Court provided clear instructions. After sustaining objections to the Ohio Redistricting Commission’s fourth General Assembly–district plan, the Court ordered the Commission “to be reconstituted, to convene, and to draft and adopt an entirely new General Assembly–district plan that meets the requirements of the Ohio Constitution, including Article XI, Sections 6(A) and 6(B) as we have explained those provisions in each of our four decisions in these cases.” *Id.* at ¶ 78. The Court provided the Commission ample time—22 days—to carry out those orders. *Id.* at ¶ 79. The Republican Commissioners have wasted nearly all that time.

The media has accurately reported that after the Court issued its decision on April 14, Senator Sykes and Leader Russo sent letters and made telephone calls to the Republican Commissioners reminding them of their obligation and urging them to schedule and conduct

meetings. Senator Sykes and Leader Russo also asked the Republican Commissioners to quickly re-engage the independent map drawers, who had devoted so much time to developing constitutional maps, but the Republican Commissioners have failed to do so. Despite the Court's instructions, and despite the Democratic Commissioners' repeated efforts, when the LWV Petitioners filed their motion on April 25, the Commission had not conducted or even scheduled any meetings.

Eventually, the Republican Commissioners agreed to meet, but not until May 4. That initial meeting has now taken place, and the record of the Republican Commissioners' compliance or noncompliance with the Court's orders is still being developed. As a result, the Democratic Commissioners submit that the appropriate time to address any noncompliance with the Court's orders in *League IV* would be after May 6, the deadline for the Commission to finish and approve a constitutional district map. If additional show cause motions are filed after May 6, the Democratic Commissioners would, of course, respond in full at that time.

CONCLUSION

Because of their efforts, and for the reasons discussed above, Senator Sykes and Leader Russo respectfully ask that this Court not require them to show cause.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Charles H. Cooper, Jr.

C. Benjamin Cooper (0093103)

Counsel of Record

Charles H. Cooper, Jr. (0037295)

Chelsea C. Weaver (0096850)

Cooper & Elliott, LLC

305 West Nationwide Boulevard

Columbus, Ohio 43215

(614) 481-6000

(614) 481-6001 (fax)

benc@cooperelliott.com

chipc@cooperelliott.com

chelseaw@cooperelliott.com

*Special Counsel for Respondents Senator Vernon
Sykes and House Minority Leader Allison Russo*

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on May 5, 2022, the foregoing *Response of Respondents Senator Vernon Sykes and House Minority Leader C. Allison Russo to Petitioners' Motion for Order to Show Cause* was filed electronically and sent via email to the following counsel of record:

FREDA J. LEVENSON, flevenson@acluohio.org
DAVID J. CAREY, dcarey@acluohio.org
ALORA THOMAS, athomas@aclu.org
JULIE A. EBENSTEIN, jebenstein@aclu.org
ROBERT D. FRAM, rfram@cov.com
ALEXANDER THOMAS, athomson@cov.com
YALE FU, yfu@cov.com
ANUPAM SHARMA, asharma@cov.com

Counsel for Petitioners
League of Women Voters of Ohio, et al.

ERIK J. CLARK, ejclark@organlegal.com
ASHLEY MERINO, amerino@organlegal.com

Counsel for Respondent
Ohio Redistricting Commission

JOHN W. ZEIGER, zeiger@litoohio.com
MARION H. LITTLE, JR., little@litoohio.com
CHRISTOPHER J. HOGAN, hogan@litoohio.com

Counsel for Respondent
Governor Mike DeWine

JONATHAN D. BLANTON, jonathan.blanton@ohioago.gov
JULIE M. PFEIFFER, julie.pfeiffer@ohioago.gov
MICHAEL A. WALTON, michael.walton@ohioago.gov

Counsel for Respondents
Secretary of State Frank LaRose and Auditor Keith Faber

W. STUART DORNETTE, dornette@taftlaw.com
BETH A. BRYAN, bryan@taftlaw.com
PHILIP D. WILLIAMSON, pwilliamson@taftlaw.com
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
GREG MCGUIRE, greg.mcguire@nelsonmullins.com

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

/s/ C. Benjamin Cooper _____

C. Benjamin Cooper