

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF OHIO

Regina C. Adams, *et al.*,

Relators,

v.

Governor Mike DeWine, *et al.*,

Respondents.

Case No. 2021-1428

**Original Action Filed Pursuant to
Ohio Const., Art. XIX, Sec. 3(A)**

League of Women Voters of Ohio, *et al.*,

Relators,

v.

Ohio Redistricting Commission, *et al.*,

Respondents.

Case No. 2021-1449

**Original Action Filed Pursuant to
Ohio Const., Art. XIX, Sec. 3(A)**

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*** Pro Hac Vice Motion Forthcoming*

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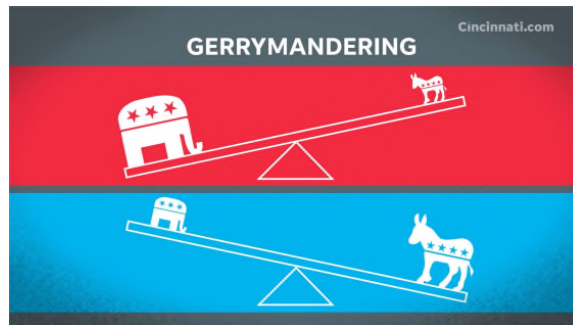
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'A missed opportunity': Ohio Redistricting Commission punts congressional mapmaking to legislature

Jackie Borchardt | The Columbus Dispatch



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The sole meeting of the panel tasked with drawing newlines for Ohio's congressional districts left at least one member frustrated, while others said it was productive.

The seven-member Ohio Redistricting Commission met Thursday to review proposed congressional maps, including **one offered by Senate Democrats**, and to hear from citizen mapmakers. Republicans did not put forward a map.

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More: Ohio is using a new process to draw state, congressional districts. Here's how it works

The state legislature had first crack at **drawing lines for Ohio's 15 congressional districts** but didn't meet its deadline, passing the job to the Ohio Redistricting Commission. The commission won't pass a map by Sunday's constitutional deadline, House Speaker Bob Cupp told reporters earlier in the week. That means state lawmakers will get another chance to draw a map, this time with a lower bar of bipartisanship needed to approve a map that lasts for 10 years.

Secretary of State Frank LaRose, a Republican on the commission, said after the meeting he was frustrated with the commission's inaction. He said his fellow commission members weren't interested in conversations about compromise and "some gave up on the concept of compromise a long time ago."

"It's a missed opportunity and it's a supreme disappointment for me," LaRose said.

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Cupp said hearing from citizen mapmakers about how and why they drew their maps Thursday was helpful to him and the other legislators on the panel: Senate President Matt Huffman, Minority Leader Emilia Sykes and Sen. Vernon Sykes.

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"I'd like to take some suggestions from some of the presenters today that we have as much transparency and open

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deliberation in the process so the public can be aware of what
the considerations are," Vernon Sykes said.

Cupp blamed the Census Bureau's delay in getting population data to the states and constitutional deadlines for not making the mark. Yet the panel heard testimony Thursday from several individuals who drafted maps they said met the constitutional criteria.



Geoff Wise, of Cincinnati, told the panel they still had time to set criteria Thursday afternoon and meet again Friday over draft maps.

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"If you're choosing not to do that, that is an express choice you are making," Wise said. "If one of the co-chairs says, 'we're not going to do a map,' that is that one person's vote. There are seven people on this commission. I want you to show that action."

LaRose said he suggested members, at the least, figure out a set of principles to guide mapmaking. For example, defining "competitiveness" as a certain percent breakdown among Democratic and Republican voters in a specific district – is it 50-50? 54-46?



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Cupp said those kinds of decisions are best made when working on the maps rather than in the abstract.

Senate President Matt Huffman said hearings on GOP and Democratic maps could be held next week, leaving time for public hearings and a vote before the Nov. 30 deadline. They'll need 60% of lawmakers and only one-third of Democrats in each chamber to make a 10-year map. Otherwise, the majority can **pass a four-year map** without Democrats' support.

Jackie Borchardt is the bureau chief for the USA TODAY Network Ohio Bureau, which serves the Columbus Dispatch, Cincinnati Enquirer, Akron Beacon Journal and 18 other affiliated news organizations across Ohio.

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

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Ohio Redistricting Commission to hold meeting, but won't approve congressional maps before adjourning

Updated: Oct. 27, 2021, 1:15 a.m. | Published: Oct. 26, 2021, 1:39 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



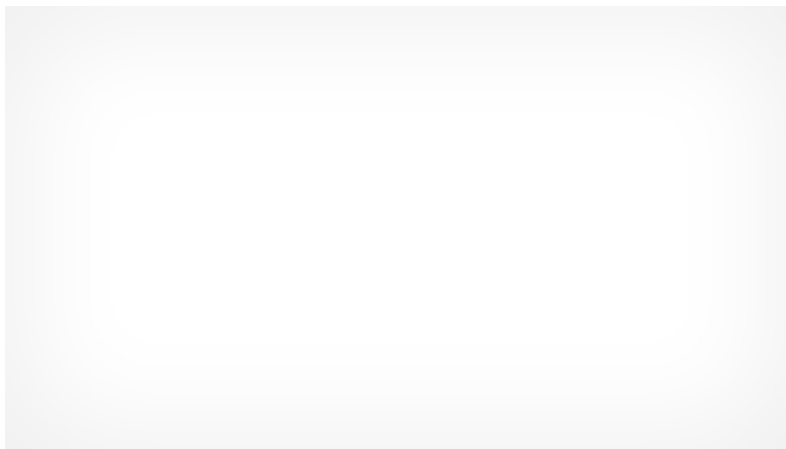
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By **Andrew J. Tobias, cleveland.com**

COLUMBUS, Ohio -- After weeks of public inactivity, the Ohio Redistricting Commission will hold its first and only meeting this week to consider congressional map plans. But it won't be passing anything before a Oct. 31 deadline, meaning responsibility to redraw Ohio's congressional maps is headed back to the Republican-controlled state legislature.

The redistricting commission will meet at 10 a.m. on Thursday at the Ohio Statehouse in Columbus to consider maps that have been introduced, including those by Ohio Senate Democrats, [according to a meeting agenda](#).

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The commission will give map sponsors the opportunity to testify about their proposals. But Ohio Republicans who control the commission won't be introducing a map of their own, much less voting on a Republican plan, according to House Republicans. And members of the public won't be allowed to comment on the plans or on the issue generally.

Under Ohio's new redistricting rules, the commission's authority to pass new congressional maps will expire at the end of the month, with responsibility then shifting back to the Republican-controlled state legislature. That means three Republicans on the seven-member Ohio Redistricting Commission -- Gov. Mike DeWine, Secretary of State Frank LaRose and state Auditor Keith Faber -- will be cut out of the process.

House Speaker Bob Cupp, a Lima Republican who co-chairs the redistricting commission, told reporters about his plans for the commission at the Statehouse on Tuesday. An official announcement is going out soon, according to a spokesman.

The leading Democrat on the redistricting commission, Akron Sen. Vernon Sykes, for weeks has been calling for the commission to hold hearings to consider map proposals. But Cupp, as the co-chair of the commission, has to also agree to hold a meeting. Republicans have stood pat, indicating they plan to run the clock until November. They've blamed legal challenges to the state legislative maps commission Republicans approved last month. The process also has been set back by the delayed completion of the U.S. Census, the results of which are used to design the maps.

But GOP legislative leaders also have said they think there are strategic advantages to bypassing the commission and waiting until November.

Senate President Matt Huffman, a Lima Republican who has played a lead role in redistricting, told reporters last week he thinks it will be easier to negotiate when the only involved parties are House and Senate Republican and Democratic leaders.

"I do think it makes a difference if we have this sort of seven-headed animal, the redistricting commission, come to a decision, versus the General Assembly, which is one vote in the Senate and one vote in the House," Huffman said.

The Republican-dominated legislature will have until the end of November to approve maps. In order to get maps that will last for the typical 10 years, at least one-third of Democrats in the House and Senate will have to approve them.

Legislative Republicans could approve maps with a simple majority vote and no Democratic support. But those maps would expire after four years.

Legislative Republicans missed another congressional redistricting deadline when they failed to introduce a map proposal by the end of September, giving temporary control over the process to the redistricting commission. Passing maps in September would have required votes from half of legislative Democrats, a higher bar for bipartisanship than the rules require in November.

Huffman told reporters last week his plan is to seek bipartisan, 10-year maps. But the redistricting process so far has shown little evidence of bipartisanship, with Republicans on the commission approving state legislative maps that are expected to award the GOP two-thirds of legislative seats, preserving their veto-proof majority while prompting lawsuits from a multitude of voter-rights groups, Democratic-linked groups and generally progressive advocacy groups.

Ohioans in 2015 and 2018 overhauled the state's redistricting process, overwhelmingly approving anti-gerrymandering reforms that created the Ohio Redistricting Commission and put in place new rules meant to promote bipartisanship, representational fairness and transparency while limiting how counties and cities can be split.

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But hundreds of pages of depositions and other legal filings, filed as evidence in the redistricting lawsuits, show that maps were drawn by Republican staffers with oversight from Huffman and Cupp, but with little input from anyone else on the seven-member redistricting commission. Republicans also have contended that language in the 2015 reform directing the maps to be politically representative of statewide voter preferences are not legally enforceable, an argument rejected by voting-rights advocates, Democrats and a leading state constitutional expert.

Anticipating that the redistricting commission would adjourn without approving a new congressional map, House Minority Leader Emilia Sykes, the second Democrat on the Ohio Redistricting Commission, on Tuesday called on Republican legislative leaders to make preparations for moving something through the legislature.

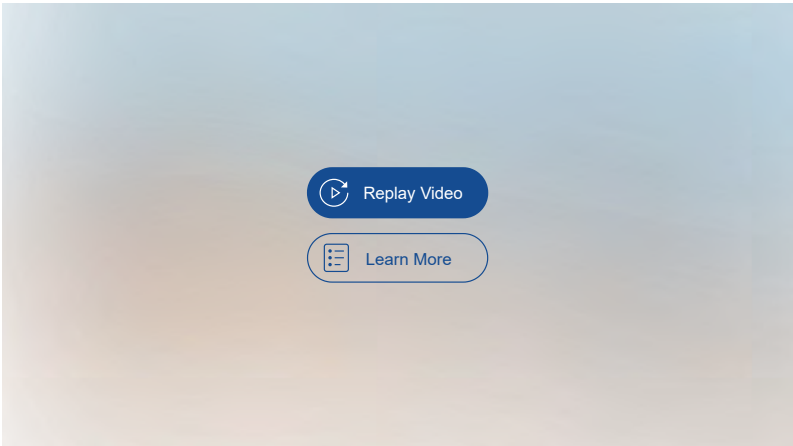
In a letter, Sykes called on Cupp and Huffman to organize a special redistricting committee, including naming committee members, by Nov. 4, to introduce a map proposal by Nov. 10 and to hold at least one of two mandatory public hearings on the maps by Nov. 15.

A proposal Senate Democrats introduced in late September is the only officially proposed congressional map plan, in a map that would draw eight Republican districts, six Democratic ones and a single toss-up district that would lean Democratic. The proposal was a nonstarter with Republicans, since it would cause the GOP to lose at least four congressional seats compared to the status quo.

Ohio's current congressional maps, drawn as a pro-Republican gerrymander in 2011, awarded 12 of the state's 16 congressional seats to Republicans, with no seat changing hands for the decade they appeared on the ballot, even though Republicans only got around 55% of the votes during that time. Ohio is losing a congressional seat after last year's U.S. Census found its population growth didn't keep up with other states.

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OHIO REDISTRICTING COMMISSION

ANNOUNCEMENT OF COMMISSION MEETING

TO:: Members of the Ohio Redistricting Commission

FROM: Speaker Robert Cupp, Co-Chair
Senator Vernon Sykes, Co-Chair

DATE: Thursday, October 28, 2021

TIME: 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

LOCATION: Ohio House Finance Hearing Room (Room 313)
Ohio Statehouse
1 Capitol Square
Columbus, Ohio 43215-4275

AGENDA

- The Ohio Redistricting Commission will hear testimony only from **sponsors who submitted complete, statewide congressional district plans.**¹ No other testimony will be accepted.
- Plan sponsors requesting to testify in person should submit a completed witness form² to: testimony@redistricting.ohio.gov. If testifying in person, be prepared to limit your testimony in the interest of time and other witnesses.
- Please (1) confirm that you are a plan sponsor, (2) indicate which plan you submitted and (3) confirm that your submission is a complete statewide congressional plan.
- If you have written testimony to accompany your in-person presentation, or if you are submitting written testimony only, you may send an electronic copy of your testimony to testimony@redistricting.ohio.gov.

Senate Contact: Giulia Cambieri, (614) 644-5533
House Contact: Aaron Mulvey, (614) 466-8759

¹ <https://www.redistricting.ohio.gov/maps>

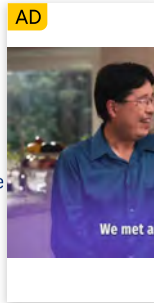
² <https://www.redistricting.ohio.gov/assets/organizations/redistricting-commission/witness-and-media-information-form.pdf>.

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More states to use redistricting reforms after 2020 census

By The Associated Press March 5, 2020

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that job to special commissions or made other changes that are intended to reduce the potential for partisan gerrymandering. The goal is to make the partisan composition of a state's congressional delegation or legislature reflect as closely as possible the sentiment of the voters.

Virginia could become the latest to change its redistricting procedures. A proposed constitutional amendment, needing only a final House vote to go on the November ballot, would create a 16-member bipartisan commission of lawmakers and citizens to draw congressional and state legislative maps. Their work would go to the General Assembly for an up-or-down vote and, if that process fails, the state Supreme Court would do the job.

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Citizen initiatives proposing redistricting reforms for the 2020 ballot also are being pursued in Arkansas,

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Here are details on states that have already committed to using commissions or nontraditional methods for redistricting when the 2020 census results are delivered to states next year.

ALASKA: A five-member commission draws districts for the state House and Senate under a 1998 amendment to the state constitution. Two members are appointed by the governor and one each by the presiding officers of the House and Senate and the chief justice of the

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member commission considered and a ballot measure approved by voters in 2000. Twenty-five potential redistricting commissioners are nominated by the same state panel that handles appeals court nominees. The Legislature's two Republican leaders choose two commissioners from 10 Republican candidates, and the two Democratic leaders chose two from their party's 10 nominees. Those four commissioners then select the fifth member, who must be an independent and serves as panel chairman. The constitution says "competitive districts" should be drawn as long as that doesn't detract from the goals of having compact, contiguous districts that respect communities of interest. The U.S. Supreme Court in 2015 upheld the constitutional amendment that created Arizona's redistricting commission.

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CALIFORNIA: Voters approved a pair of ballot measures, in 2008 and 2010,

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districts. A state auditor's panel takes applications and selects 60 potential redistricting commissioners — 20 Democrats, 20 Republicans and 20 others. The state Assembly and Senate majority and minority leaders each can eliminate two nominees from each political category. Eight redistricting commissioners — three Democrats, three Republicans and two unaffiliated members — are randomly selected from the remaining pool of candidates. Those

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interest together to the extent possible.

COLORADO: Congressional and state legislative districts will be drawn by a 12-member commission under a pair of constitutional amendments approved by voters in 2018. The commission will consist of four Republicans, four Democrats and four independents selected from a pool of applicants. Half will be chosen randomly and the rest by a judicial panel. Nonpartisan legislative staff will draft proposed maps for the commission's approval; maps will require at least eight votes, including two from independents. The state Supreme Court will then review the maps to determine whether legal criteria were followed. The districts must be compact, preserve communities of interest and "maximize the number of politically competitive districts."

HAWAII: Congressional and state legislative districts are drawn by a nine-member commission. The majority and minority party leaders in the House and Senate each appoint two commissioners. Those eight then pick a ninth commissioner. If they can't agree, the ninth member is appointed by the state Supreme Court. Districts cannot be

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political faction.

IDAHO: A six-member commission is responsible for drawing both congressional and state legislative districts. Two-thirds of the commissioners must vote to approve a map. The majority and minority party leaders in each legislative chamber each select one person to serve on the commission; the state chairmen of the Republican and Democratic parties also each select a commissioner. Mapmakers

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arguments for special districts must consist of “convenient contiguous territory” and be reasonably compact. Districts cannot be drawn to favor a political party, incumbent or other person or group.

MICHIGAN: Under a constitutional amendment approved by voters in 2018, congressional and state legislative districts will be drawn by a 13-member citizens’ commission. It will consist of four Democrats, four Republicans and five independents randomly selected by the secretary of state from among applicants. Approval of districts will require a majority vote with support of at least two Democrats, two Republicans and two independents. If that fails, each commissioner would submit a plan and rank their options by preference, with the highest-ranked plan prevailing. In case of a tie, the secretary of state would randomly select the final plan. Districts must be compact, contiguous, limit splitting of counties and cities, “reflect the state’s diverse population and communities of interest,” not favor or disfavor incumbents, and not provide a disproportionate advantage to any political party. The state Republican Party has filed a legal challenge claiming

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Amendment rights to free speech and association by prohibiting partisan elected officials, candidates and lobbyists from serving on the commission. The Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals is to hear arguments March 17 after a trial court denied a preliminary injunction.

MISSOURI: A constitutional amendment approved by voters in 2018 will require a new nonpartisan state demographer to draft maps for state

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districts are preferred but rank last among the criteria. The maps will be submitted to a pair of existing bipartisan commissions for approval. The governor will appoint a 10-member commission for the Senate districts, choosing five Republicans and five Democrats from among nominees submitted by the state parties. For the House, the governor will appoint an equal bipartisan commission of 16 members from nominees submitted by Republican and Democratic congressional district committees. Congressional districts still will be drawn by the state Legislature.

MONTANA: A five-member commission draws state legislative districts and would also draw congressional districts if Montana's population grows enough in the 2020 census to have two districts. The majority and minority leaders of each legislative chamber appoint one member each. Those four then select a fifth member, who serves as chairman. If they can't agree on the final member, the state Supreme Court makes the appointment. Districts must be compact and contiguous.

NEW JERSEY: Congressional districts are drawn by a 12-member commission

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approve a map. The majority and minority leaders of each legislative chamber and the chairmen of the state's two major parties each appoint two members. Those 12 select one more member. A separate 10-member commission draws state legislative districts, with the chairmen of the two major political parties each appointing five members. If they can't agree on a plan, the Supreme Court appoints an 11th member. State legislative districts



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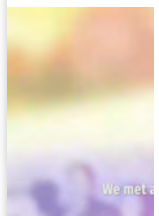
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minority leaders of each chamber each appoint two members to the commission. Those eight members then select the other two commissioners. Their maps are submitted to the Legislature for approval. Districts shall be compact and contiguous and shall not be drawn to discourage competition or to favor incumbents, particular candidates or political parties.

OHIO: A pair of voter-approved amendments will require minority-party support to enact new congressional and state legislative districts that last a full decade. Under a plan approved in 2015, state legislative districts will be drawn by a seven-member commission consisting of the governor, auditor, secretary of state and one person appointed by each of the majority and minority party leaders in the House and Senate. To last 10 years, the maps need support from at least two members of each party; otherwise, they are valid for just four years. For congressional districts, voters approved a measure in 2018 that requires the Legislature to pass a redistricting plan by a three-fifths majority with the support of at least half the members of the majority and minority parties. If that fails, districts

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commission and approval requires support from at least two members of each party. If that fails, the Legislature may pass a plan by a three-fifths vote with the support of at least one-third of the majority and minority party members. If that fails, the Legislature may pass a plan by a majority, but it would remain in effect for only four years.

PENNSYLVANIA: State legislative districts are drawn by a five-member

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and contiguous and respect municipal boundaries. Congressional districts are drawn by the Legislature and sent to the governor for approval.

UTAH: Congressional and state legislative districts will be drawn by a seven-member commission under a constitutional amendment approved by voters in 2018. The commission will be composed of one gubernatorial appointee, two appointees by Republican legislative leaders, two appointees by Democratic legislative leaders and two political independents appointed by the majority and minority party legislative leaders. The commission's recommended maps will be submitted to the Legislature for final approval, though lawmakers could pass their own plans instead. Districts shall be compact and contiguous, preserve communities of interest and not favor or disfavor incumbents. Partisan voting records may not be considered.

VERMONT: A commission submits plans for state House and Senate districts to the state Legislature, which can approve or change them. The governor appoints one commissioner from each of the state's political parties

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lawmakers for six of the past 10 years.

The chairs of those parties appoint one member each. The chief justice appoints the committee chair. Districts should be compact and contiguous and recognize "patterns of geography, social interaction, trade, political ties and common interests."

WASHINGTON: Congressional and state legislative districts are drawn by a five-member commission under a constitutional amendment approved by



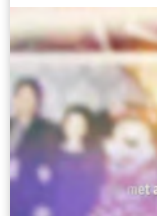
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commission's maps with a two-thirds vote of each chamber, but their changes can shift no more than 2% of the population among districts. Districts should be comprised of "convenient, contiguous and compact territory" and not drawn to purposely "favor or discriminate against any political party or group."

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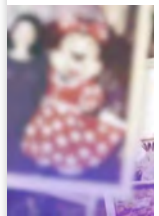
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The Detroit News

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Into southeast Michigan districts

Beth LeBlanc The Detroit News

Published 10:50 a.m. ET July 26, 2018 | Updated 11:10 p.m. ET July 26, 2018

Lansing — Republican aides suggested ways to contain “Dem garbage” to four congressional districts in southeast Michigan and joked about how one district could be shaped to give “the finger” to a Democratic congressman, according to 2011 emails revealed in a federal lawsuit alleging GOP gerrymandering.

The emails show Republicans “packed and cracked” legislative and congressional district maps to benefit GOP candidates and hurt Democrats, attorneys representing the League of Women Voters argued in a recent court filing.

The full emails provide better context, and one of the emails was from a GOP aide who wasn't involved in the map redrawing process, a lawyer representing the state told The Detroit News.

In a May 2011 email, Jack Daly, chief of staff for then-U.S. Rep Thaddeus McCotter, told Michigan Chamber of Commerce legal counsel Bob LaBrant and consultant Jeff Timmer that lines should be redrawn to swap some voters in Wayne County with others in West Bloomfield to ensure Democrats are in a “dem district and reps in a gop district” and increase the black population in black districts.

“In a glorious way that makes it easier to cram ALL of the Dem garbage in Wayne, Washtenaw, Oakland and Macomb counties into only four districts,” Daly said in another email first reported by Bridge Magazine. “Is there anyone on our side who doesn’t recognize that dynamic?”

The emails suggest a strategy to pack Democrats into certain districts, giving Republicans an easier path to victory in other areas of the state. Democrats represent the 9th, 12th, 13th and 14th congressional districts in Metro Detroit spanning the four counties referenced in the emails.

“Consultants to the Michigan Legislature left a written trail of not only partisan intent but in fact partisan animus” in an apparent effort to gerrymander districts favorable to GOP

The Detroit News

The GOP communications show Republicans intended to do a gerrymander, Brewer said Wednesday.

“It really is helpful to our case,” he said. “It demonstrates that the Republicans were openly gerrymandering congressional districts.”

Under current Michigan law, whichever party holds power in Lansing at the start of a decade can control redistricting, a process critics say gives partisans an avenue to draw districts for political gain.

The full emails, which are only referenced in the federal filing, provide greater context to the comments, said Peter Ellsworth, a Lansing-based Dickinson Wright attorney who is representing the state in the lawsuit.

The committee redrawing the districts often received “unsolicited comments” like Daly’s, but neither Daly nor McCotter were involved in the redistricting efforts, said Ellsworth, who was part of the 2011 redistricting effort and could be deposed in the current lawsuit.

“You can’t attribute these comments from Daly to the map drawing process,” he said.

Still, the idea that Democratic voters are highly concentrated in southeast Michigan is not new, Ellsworth said, and to change that reality would essentially involve a “reverse gerrymander.”

'Giving the finger' email

Other Republicans who drew the current boundaries also have publicly denied any overt bias and say existing laws such as the Voting Rights Act already limit manipulation. But the plaintiff lawyers said the emails referenced in the federal lawsuit suggest otherwise.

Another unnamed person emailed Timmer in June 2011, according to the filing, and noted that a district had a finger-shaped extension away from the base between Mound and Van Dyke down to 15 Mile.

“perfect. it’s giving the finger to sandy Levin. I love it,” said the email referenced in the lawsuit.

Since the lines have been redrawn, longtime Democratic U.S. Rep. Sander Levin of Royal Oak has beaten his Republican opponents by 28 percentage points in 2012, 24 points in 2014 and

The Detroit News

was not intentionally drawn like that to give Levin the finger. The land was not of political import," he said, and "didn't make any difference in terms of the composition of the district."

In a May 2011 exchange first reported last week by The Detroit News, LaBrant told a legislative aide to then-Congressman Dave Camp, R-Midland, that Republicans would "accommodate whatever Dave wants in his district."

"We've spent a lot of time providing options to ensure we have a solid 9-5 delegation in 2012 and beyond," LaBrant wrote, referencing the congressional majority Michigan Republicans now enjoy.

Republicans held a 9-6 delegation majority after the 2010 elections, but Michigan lost one congressional seat because of declining population. New maps forced then-Reps. Gary Peters and Hansen Clarke, both Democrats, into the same newly redrawn 14th District encompassing parts of Oakland and Wayne counties. Peters won the 2012 primary and general elections, but Democrats lost a seat.

'A great, fair map'

Republican strategist Jamie Roe, who responded to LaBrant's "9-5 delegation" email in 2011, said Thursday he does not remember the details of the eight-year-old discussion. But he said he does not think Republicans gerrymandered legislative or congressional district boundaries, calling it a "process" that adhered to state laws.

"I think we have a great, fair map," Roe told The News. "There are competitive races all over the state. I don't understand what the problem is."

The U.S. Department of Justice pre-cleared the Michigan maps in early 2012, which was required because of past voter discrimination issues in Clyde and Buena Vista townships. In a notice of consent, Obama-era department attorneys said the maps did not violate the Voting Rights Act of 1973.

The Michigan Republican Party declined comment on the new emails. Spokeswoman Sarah Anderson said "no one at MRP has any direct knowledge of what occurred."

LaBrant and the Michigan Chamber of Commerce helped steer the 2011 redistricting effort and has done so for nearly three decades. The chamber is one of the main opponents to the

The Detroit News

Michigan Chamber CEO Rich Studley called for all Michigan residents to be treated with respect in a Thursday tweet addressing the emails.

"In 2011 Jack Daly was a Congressional aide with no relationship to the MI Chamber. We were not aware of his negative remarks about Democratic voters then and categorically reject them now!" Studley said in the tweet.

Both Timmer and LaBrant declined comment on their emails because of pending depositions in the federal case. LaBrant said he did not know Daly well, only that he "was some sort of North Carolina political operative" on McCotter's payroll who fancied himself a redistricting expert.

The Detroit News was unable to reach Daly.

Former state Rep. Pete Lund, a Shelby Township Republican who chaired the House Redistricting and Election Committee that approved 2011 maps, said attorneys advised him not to talk to reporters during the ongoing lawsuit.

"I'd be happy to after it's over," Lund said. "In fact, I'd love to."

Other emails included in the federal lawsuit indicate Michigan Supreme Court Justice Beth Clement, while still working in Gov. Rick Snyder's office as chief legal counsel, was scheduled to meet with attorney LaBrant and other top GOP legal minds in June 2017 regarding redistricting.

The meeting was canceled but was to be rescheduled. It's not clear from the emails included in the suit whether the meeting ever took place.

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Gov. DeWine approves congressional map over objections of voting rights groups, Democrats

[Laura A. Bischoff](#) The Columbus Dispatch

Despite pleas from Democrats and voting rights groups for a veto, Republican Gov. Mike DeWine on Saturday signed into law a congressional redistricting map that will likely face court challenges.

Republicans who crafted the map said it offers seven competitive districts, divides only 12 counties and keeps seven of Ohio's eight biggest cities whole. DeWine touted the same points in a Saturday morning statement.

"When compared to the other proposals offered from House and Senate caucuses, both Republican and Democrat, the map in Senate Bill 258 makes the most progress to produce a fair, compact, and competitive map," DeWine said.

The GOP lawmakers defined "competitive" as within an 8 percentage point swing in the partisan index. Competitiveness isn't a requirement under the voter-approved changes to the Ohio Constitution.

Jen Miller, executive director of the League of Women Voters of Ohio said it was a "sad day for Ohio."

"This new congressional map is extremely partisan gerrymandered, violating the Ohio Constitution and prioritizing short-sided partisan considerations ahead of the rights of all Ohio voters," Miller said. "Ohio voters deserve better, and we will not stop our efforts until gerrymandering finally comes to an end in Ohio."

DeWine's signature on the map bill marks the culmination of years of fighting over how Ohio should draw its political maps. Voters embraced reforms in 2015 and 2018 that promised a more bipartisan process for how Ohio would craft state legislative and congressional district lines.

But it didn't pan out.

More: The threat of a 4-year map was supposed to inspire Ohio redistricting compromise. It didn't

Neither the legislative map or congressional map won a single vote from any Democrats on the Ohio Redistricting Commission or in the General Assembly. That means the maps will be in place for four years instead of 10.

Oral arguments for lawsuits challenging the legislative maps are scheduled before the Ohio Supreme Court for Dec. 8. And advocates for fair maps said this week they'd weigh their options for challenging the congressional maps as well.

"Ohio will be sued," Democratic attorney Marc Elias, whose firm filed a lawsuit over the state legislative maps on behalf of voters, said in a tweet after DeWine signed the bill.

Democrats opposed the congressional map bill, saying they were shut out of the process and the map will likely result in Republicans holding 13 of 15 seats. The map divides Hamilton County across three congressional districts and lumps the city of Cincinnati into a district with heavily Republican Warren County.

Democrats criticized DeWine for signing a bill they said fails to abide by the will of voters.

"There's only one thing you can count on Mike DeWine for: naked, partisan self-interest," Ohio Democratic Party Chair Elizabeth Walters said in a statement. "By signing these despicable maps into law, DeWine is leaving no doubt he will always put his own political interests over the interests of Ohioans he is supposed to serve. DeWine and the Ohio GOP are doing everything and anything they can to prevent voters from holding them accountable at the ballot box while they continue to betray Ohioans at every turn."

During his 2018 campaign for governor, DeWine told the Cincinnati Enquirer through a spokesman: "The rules are pretty clear – the voters said that the redistricting process should be done in a bipartisan way and when I am governor there will be an expectation that the new district maps honor the voters' wishes."

Ohio Republicans have won every statewide executive office and a majority of state legislative seats since 2010. Miller, of the League of Women Voters of Ohio, noted that although Republicans have won those offices, they didn't win 100% of the votes.

Democrats have argued that the political maps should reflect proportional voting patterns.

Voting preferences have averaged 54% for Republican candidates and 46% for Democratic candidates over the past decade. A map based on that proportion would favor Republicans 8-7.

The Ohio Constitution has no requirement that the congressional map matches the statewide preferences of voters, but it's one measure used to measure "fair maps."

Laura Bischoff is a reporter for the USA TODAY Network Ohio Bureau, which serves the Columbus Dispatch, Cincinnati Enquirer, Akron Beacon Journal and 18 other affiliated news organizations across Ohio.

Ohio's historic congressional redistricting reform: Frank LaRose (Opinion)

© cleveland.com/opinion/2018/02/ohios_historic_congressional_r.html

February 18, 2018





Ohio lawmakers achieved a bipartisan redistricting deal at the Ohio Statehouse earlier this month that will appear on the May 8 primary ballot. (Jackie Borchardt, cleveland.com, File, 2016)

By Guest Columnist/cleveland.com



State Sen. Frank LaRose of Hudson is the Republican candidate for Ohio secretary of state.

COLUMBUS, Ohio -- Hey Washington, look what's happening in the heartland. We're working together to solve problems, and we are governing.

For years, Ohioans have recognized the need to reform the winner-take-all process for redistricting following the census every ten years. Under the current process, the party with the majority draws the maps as they see fit, with no need for input from the minority party. Historically, this has resulted in partisan excesses regardless of whether Republicans or Democrats held the pen. The voters of Ohio wanted us to put people before partisanship and work to address this seemingly intractable problem. Thankfully, we did.

In a historic move earlier this month, Ohio Republicans and Democrats came together to pass a redistricting reform proposal.

The hard work and dedication from the Ohioans advocating for fair districts was instrumental in bringing the discussion to the fore.

While it may seem that the spirit of statesmanship and compromise is dead in American politics, Ohio's efforts to improve the current system is a shining example that good governance is possible when partisanship takes a backseat.

I have spent much of the last eight years working on this issue, often trying to bridge the partisan divide and bring people together around this sometimes esoteric but always significant issue. In fact, I introduced legislation last March which helped form the basis for the resolution passed this week.

As a longtime proponent of reform, I've often been asked: "The current process has benefited your party over the last two decades; why do you want to mess with it?"

This issue has resonated with me because I believe competition makes us stronger. I want my party to win elections because we have better candidates and better ideas - not because we use modern GIS mapping software and pinpoint-accurate polling data to draw district lines better than the other party.

Now that both chambers in the Ohio General Assembly have passed Senate Joint Resolution 5, Ohioans get to vote on the plan in the May primary.

Here is what you should know...

The reform keeps communities together by limiting divisions of counties, townships and municipalities. The plan seeks to create reasonably compact districts by specifying that at least 65 of the 88 counties will be kept whole, and limits how many total county splits can occur.

Additional safeguards are put in place to prevent unnecessary splitting of Ohio's municipalities and townships.

For example, large cities like Cleveland and Cincinnati will remain whole within their districts.

The plan also includes important protections to assure that Voting Rights Act principles are upheld in Ohio.

Finally, significant measures are taken to assure that the process is transparent throughout and inclusive of public input when it's time to draw the maps.

The plan for a 10-year map requires significant support from both parties, ensuring a fair process with bipartisan approval.

- Step one: A map proposed by the General Assembly requires a three-fifths vote in each chamber, with at least half of the minority party's vote. If that is not reached, the process moves to the bipartisan Redistricting Commission, which Ohio voters approved in 2015.
- Step two: A map drawn by the seven-member commission requires two minority votes to pass. If that fails, the map-drawing responsibility moves back to the state legislature.
- Step three: A map requires a three-fifths vote in each chamber with a one-third vote of the minority party. If this doesn't occur, a map can be passed with a simple majority, but triggers significant safeguards to protect against partisan excess, and that map will only be in place for four years, during which time the balance of power could change.

Our work to improve congressional redistricting embodies the spirit of civility and compromise that voters want to see from their elected officials.

Benjamin Franklin, responding to a woman's question after the 1787 Constitutional Convention as to what would be the form of our government, said, "a Republic, if you can keep it."

There is no magic formula or perfectly unbiased panel of experts to call upon for redistricting. The process relies on sensible leaders, accountable to the citizens, who will work in good faith to compromise on reasonable maps that do not unduly benefit a narrow political interest. It takes people to keep it.

If this plan receives final approval, it will ultimately fall to the people charged with carrying out this process to do so in the same spirit of compromise with which it was drafted. We've created a balanced redistricting process, it will be up to the people of Ohio to keep it.

Frank LaRose is a state senator representing Wayne County and parts of Stark and Summit counties, and the Republican candidate for Ohio secretary of state.

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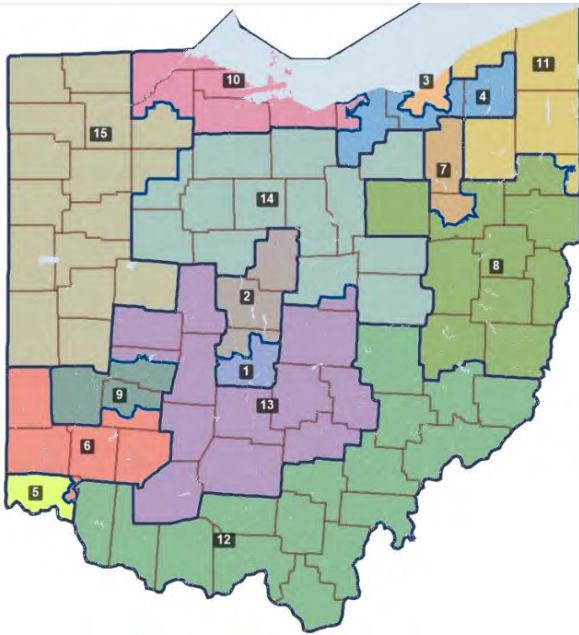
Senate Dems propose congressional map

BY: **SUSAN TEBBEN** - SEPTEMBER 30, 2021 12:40 AM

📷 Senate Minority Leader Kenny Yuko is pictured at the Ohio Statehouse. Official photo.

The day before the first deadline for congressional maps in Ohio, Democrats in the state Senate released a map of district lines which reduce the Republican lean in the state.

The map was released as [Senate Bill 237](#), and was introduced Wednesday by Ohio Senate Minority Leader Kenny Yuko, D-Richmond Heights, and state Sen. Vernon Sykes, D-Akron, who is also the co-chair of the Ohio Redistricting Commission.



© The Ohio Senate Dems proposed congressional district map.

The maps propose six seats that would be competitive, along with a likely breakdown of eight Republican districts to seven Democratic or nine Republican to six Democrats. Currently Republicans control Ohio U.S. Congressional seats 12-4.

The Democrats' proposed map shows a partisan lean between 45% and 55%, closely reflecting the 46-54 Democratic to Republican average percentage of vote split in the last 16 partisan statewide elections. Legislative maps approved in a partisan 5-2 vote by the redistricting commission give Republicans at least a 62 of 99 district advantage, according to their own numbers, and were deeply criticized by Democrats.

The deadline set out in the Ohio Constitution for the General Assembly to pass a congressional map is set to pass on Thursday, with no indication that legislators plan to meet it.

"Our plan demonstrates that if the majority had the will, we could have drawn a bipartisan map before the September 30 deadline," Sykes said in a Wednesday statement announcing the maps.

John Fortney, spokesperson for the Senate GOP said the caucus was still reviewing the maps, but after an initial review, Fortney called the Dem maps a "new experiment in geometric shapes."

"A fatter snake on the lake, the district around Columbus gives new meaning to the 'horseshoe' and the 7th looks like a big thumbs up for maybe a new member of Congress," Fortney told the OCJ.

The Senate maps have initial support from anti-gerrymandering group All On the Line Ohio.

"This proposed map is a great starting point for community-led conversation about how best to serve Ohioans under new district lines," said Katy Shanahan, state director for AOTL. "Now we need public hearings so we can share our thoughts."

The only progress the legislature has made in the congressional redistricting process is approving rules for the Ohio Redistricting Commission, who will now take the lead on map approval as the GA deadline passes.

Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine signed House Bill 92 into law on Wednesday. The main focus of the bill regards child abuse or neglect investigations involving the military, but at the last minute, language was added bringing the rules of the Ohio Redistricting Commission into the

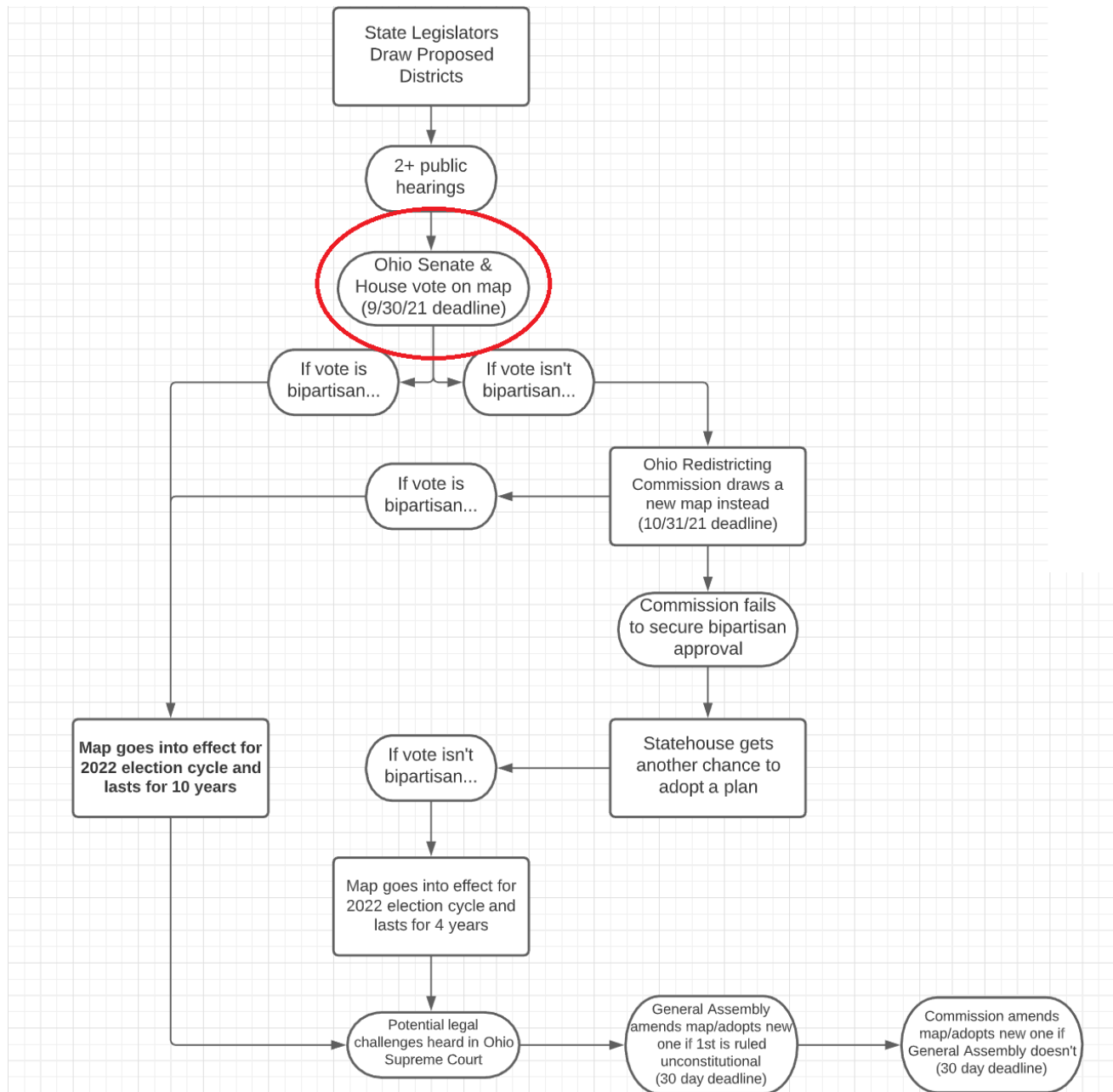
measure, such as the creation of a public website for submission of congressional district plans and access to data.

If the commission can't come to a bipartisan agreement by the end of October, the process goes back to legislators.

Currently, the democratic map in SB 237 only has the support of the Ohio Senate Democratic Caucus.

The legislative maps are [facing multiple court challenges](#), and if the Ohio Supreme Court finds the maps unconstitutional, the redistricting commission will then have to take up the legislative maps again as they decide on congressional maps.

The state's highest court has given parties in the three lawsuits against the legislative maps until December to plan their arguments for and against the maps.



📷 This flow chart shows the new process for redrawing congressional districts in Ohio. Circled is the deadline in question due to the U.S. Census data delay.



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**SUSAN TEBBEN**

Susan Tebben is an award-winning journalist with a decade of experience covering Ohio news, including courts and crime, Appalachian social issues, government, education, diversity and culture. She has worked for The Newark Advocate, The Glasgow Daily Times, The Athens Messenger, and WOUB Public Media. She has also had work featured on National Public Radio.

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Ohio lawmakers set to miss another redistricting deadline

By FARNOUSH AMIRI September 30, 2021



COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — State lawmakers in Ohio will miss their initial Thursday deadline for redrawing the state’s congressional district maps for the next decade, a key lawmaker says.

The lapse predicted by Senate President Matt Huffman punts the job to the [Ohio Redistricting Commission](#), a newly created panel already facing criticism and lawsuits challenging the fairness of the new map it passed for state legislative districts.

A new, voter-approved redistricting process is being used in Ohio for the first time this year. It has been complicated by a months-long delay in the release of 2020 census figures needed to draw the maps due to the coronavirus pandemic.

“This process is new. It’s complicated and it’s going to take some time to sort it through,” Huffman, a Lima Republican, told reporters. “My guys were working on the state maps for 25 straight days and nights, so there really wasn’t any practical way for us to get it done by this Thursday.”

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But Democrats say GOP efforts to protect partisan interests are to blame.

“When it comes down to it, (Republicans) are going to side with their legislative colleagues for partisan interests,” said Sen. Vernon Sykes, co-chair of the redistricting commission. “And that’s what’s stopping us. That’s what’s holding us up.”

An Associated Press analysis found that Republican politicians used census data after election victories 10 years ago to draw voting districts that gave them a greater political advantage in more states than either party had in the past 50 years. Voters in Ohio have some of the [nation’s most gerrymandered maps](#), the AP found.

What happens next in Ohio’s congressional redistricting process will be the scheduling of statewide public input sessions, similar to the more than a dozen hearings that took place over the summer about the drawing of the legislative districts.

In the meantime, the seven-member commission, already tasked with drawing legislative districts, will have until Oct. 31 to pass a 10-year congressional map with four “yes” votes and the support of both Democratic members.

If the panel does not submit a new map by that date, the process will go back to the Legislature with a reduced requirement of one-third of Democratic members voting in support by the end of November.

If lawmakers cannot reach that threshold, a simple majority can push through a 4-year congressional map.

The commission and then potentially lawmakers will also have to take into consideration that Ohio is set to lose a congressional seat because of slower population growth, bringing the total number to 15.

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Sykes and Senate Democrats introduced their version of a congressional map Wednesday. The proposal received immediate criticism from GOP leadership, with spokesperson John Fortney calling the map “a new experiment in geometric shapes.”

The congressional deadline comes weeks after the panel charged with redrawing state legislative districts [missed its Sept. 1 deadline](#) and went on to [approve new district boundaries](#) purely along party lines, meaning those maps, as they stand, will only last for four years.

The GOP-backed legislative district maps are now facing three lawsuits in the Ohio Supreme Court, which separately allege the process and end product are an example of “[extreme, partisan](#)” [gerrymandering](#) that violates [voters’ rights](#) and [the Ohio constitution](#).

Farnoush Amiri is a corps member for the Associated Press/Report for America Statehouse News Initiative. Report for America is a nonprofit national service program that places journalists in local newsrooms to report on undercovered issues.

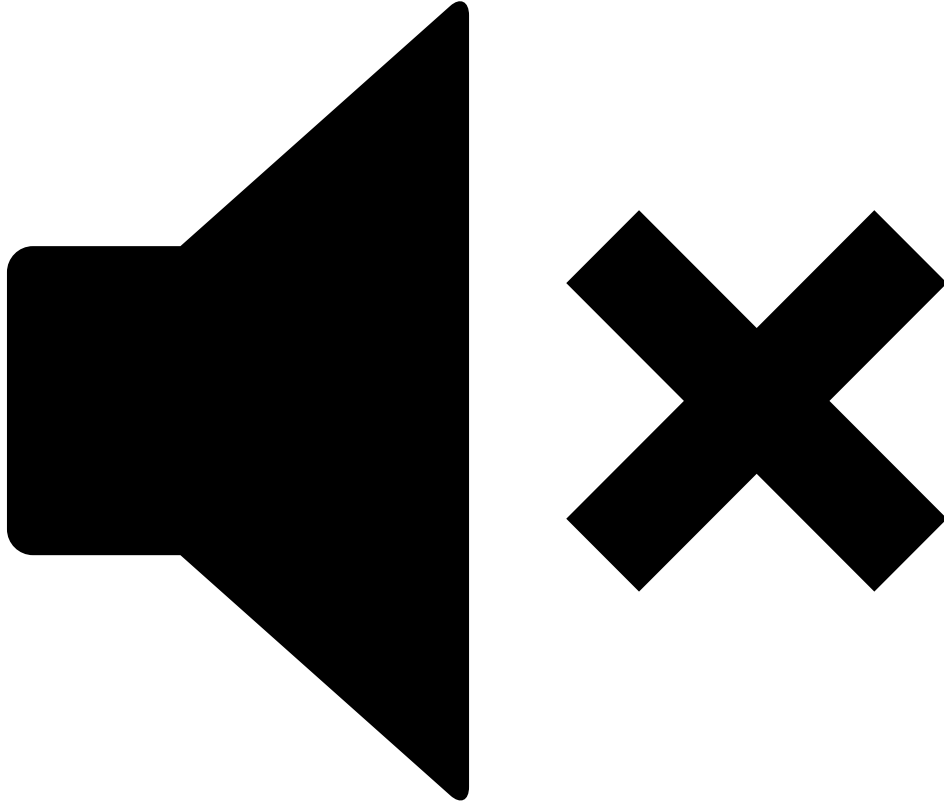
Ohio redistricting commission gives up on US House map

thehill.com/homenews/campaign/579405-ohio-redistricting-commission-gives-up-on-us-house-map

Reid Wilson

November 1, 2021





A new bipartisan commission tasked with redrawing Ohio's political boundaries every decade surrendered its authority to draw congressional districts without even considering a proposal, punting the decision to a state legislature overwhelmingly controlled by Republicans.

The commission, created three years ago with the support of more than 70 percent of Ohio voters, held just one meeting to consider congressional district boundaries. At that meeting, commissioners heard testimony from Ohio voters, one of whom used candy corn to aid his visual presentation.

Commissioners did not bring up or vote on any of their own proposals.

The commission had until Sunday to approve congressional district maps. Its failure to do so means the legislature will now have about a month to craft, consider and approve new U.S. House district lines.

The constitutional amendment voters approved created a unique type of commission, one that includes the governor, the secretary of state, the state auditor, two legislative Republicans and two legislative Democrats. The three statewide elected officials — Gov. Mike DeWine



Mike DeWine Ohio governor cancels appearances after coronavirus exposure Ohio redistricting commission gives up on US House map Ohio corrects Wright Brothers error on new license plates MORE, Secretary of State Frank LaRose and Auditor Keith Faber — are all Republicans; commissioners needed just four votes to approve district boundaries.

“In 2018 Ohioans sent a clear message on redistricting — we wanted a fair and transparent process. Today, once again, the Republican-led commission sent quite another message — they don’t care,” said Katy Shanahan, the Ohio state director for All On The Line, an affiliate of the National Democratic Redistricting Committee. “Not about transparency in map drawing, not about ensuring public engagement opportunities, not about the constitutional requirements, and not about our democracy.”

Dan Tierney, a spokesman for DeWine, said the commissioners simply ran out of time to draw new district lines after the U.S. Census Bureau delayed delivery of data used in the redistricting process. That delay, caused by lawsuits and the coronavirus pandemic, has left lawmakers in other states scrambling to complete their own redistricting in time to meet other deadlines.

“It essentially took five months out of the process,” Tierney said of the delay. “That is a significant reduction in time.”

Ohio is set to lose one of its congressional districts next year, after the state’s population grew at a slower rate than the rest of the country. The loss marks the sixth consecutive decade in which Ohio’s congressional delegation has dropped, after reaching its apex of 24 seats in the 1960s.

It is not clear how legislative Republicans will act. The state’s congressional delegation is made up of 12 Republicans and just four Democrats; one of those four districts, currently held by Rep. Tim Ryan



Timothy (Tim) Ryan Democrats brace for flood of retirements after Virginia rout Ohio Republicans swing for fences in redistricting proposals Ohio redistricting commission gives up on US House map MORE (D) and based east of Akron into Youngstown, favored President Biden



Joe Biden Pennsylvania's GOP-controlled Senate to spend up to 0K on election investigation Biden's pick for Arizona's US Attorney confirmed by Senate Overnight Health Care — Presented by Emergent Biosolutions — Boosters for all MORE by a slim 4-point margin in 2020.

Ryan is running for a U.S. Senate seat being vacated by retiring Sen. Rob Portman



Robert (Rob) Jones Portman Overnight Defense & National Security — Presented by Boeing — US mulls Afghan evacuees' future Hillicon Valley — Presented by Ericsson — DOJ unveils new election hacking charges GOP senators appalled by 'ridiculous' House infighting MORE (R), making his open district a potential candidate for elimination. The four neighboring districts, held by Reps. Bill Johnson



William (Bill) Leslie Johnson Ohio redistricting commission gives up on US House map Biden needs to be both Mr. Inside and Mr. Outside Maintain navigable waters rule to make homes more affordable MORE (R), Bob Gibbs



Robert (Bob) Brian Gibbs Ohio redistricting commission gives up on US House map
Pennsylvania Republican becomes latest COVID-19 breakthrough case in Congress Ohio
GOP congressman tests positive for COVID-19 MORE (R), Dave Joyce (R) and Anthony Gonzalez



Anthony Gonzalez The Hill's Morning Report - Presented by ExxonMobil - Will Biden's big bill
pass the House this week? Republican Rep. Upton unsure if he'll run again Sunday shows -
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President Donald Trump



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reverberates across polarized nation MORE by wide margins in 2020.

State Senate President Matt Huffman (R), also a member of the commission, told reporters the Senate would begin hearings on two proposed revisions to U.S. House maps, one backed by Republicans and one supported by Democrats.

The Democratic map would create six Democratic districts, eight Republican-leaning seats and a competitive district near what is now Ryan's district. The Republican plan has not yet been made public.

The constitutional amendment that created the commission did envision the prospect of a deadlocked panel, kicking the authority to draw districts to the legislature. The amendment allows the majority party to force through their maps, though if the winning proposal does not attract support from at least a third of the members of the minority party, it would be in place for only four years, instead of 10.

Tags [Mike DeWine](#) [Anthony Gonzalez](#) [Donald Trump](#) [Bill Johnson](#) [Rob Portman](#) [Joe Biden](#)
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Wednesday, Nov 3, 2021 · 3:19:12 PM EDT · David Nir

OH Redistricting: Republicans in Ohio's Senate and House **have each released a draft congressional map**, both equally extreme. **The House version** would likely send 13 Republicans and just two Democrats to Congress, while **the Senate plan** would do the same, albeit with districts configured differently.

Republicans have also made proper assessment of these proposals difficult: The Senate **only released a tiny image of its map** and none of the normal data files that would make any sort of detailed analysis possible. The House **did little better**, providing a data file that would normally be in spreadsheet format as a 5,882-page PDF instead. Fortunately we were able to convert the House's PDF and obtain proper data files for the Senate.

With new maps coming in 2021, days are numbered for Ohio's gerrymandered 'snake on the lake'

**LIZ SKALKA**

The Blade

lskalka@theblade.com

FEB 13, 2021

8:00 AM

Democrat Marcy Kaptur has represented her congressional district, as it's currently drawn, for almost a decade, and by now she's more than ready for a change.

Dubbed the "Snake on the Lake," Ohio's 9th Congressional District — often cited as a particularly egregious example of partisan gerrymandering — is due for an overhaul as state lawmakers prepare to draw new congressional and state legislative maps in 2021.

Redistricting occurs every 10 years to reflect new population trends, but this year marks the first time Ohio will update its maps since voters passed reform measures to curb the extreme partisan map-drawing that gave northern Ohio a bizarre Democratic congressional district extending from Toledo to Cleveland along Lake Erie.

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"They really hurt us," Ms. Kaptur said of the 2011 redrawing, when she lost some Toledo voting wards to Republican Rep. Bob Latta of Bowling Green. "They cobbled it up. They disrespected the community. I so resent what was done."

The first major mile-marker in congressional redistricting is expected by April, when the U.S. Census Bureau releases an initial batch of data that determines the number of U.S. House districts in each state. But NPR reported on Friday that other data needed to draw new voting districts could be delayed until Sept. 30, bumping up against deadlines for approving both state legislative and congressional maps.

Groups like All On The Line, Common Cause, and the League of Women Voters are already engaging voters about how they can participate in public input sessions.

"We are going through a brand new process with a brand new set of rules," said Katy Shanahan, the Ohio state director for All On The Line, an affiliate of former Attorney General Eric Holder's National Democratic Redistricting Committee. "Nobody has gone through this process the way we will this year. And so legislators owe it to their constituents to talk to them about what they can expect."

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While state legislative districts are redrawn by a redistricting commission that includes top executive officeholders and a bipartisan panel of lawmakers, the process for making new congressional maps occurs in the General Assembly, where Republicans have supermajorities in both chambers. The reform

measures passed in 2015 and 2018 are designed to promote bipartisan cooperation and give the minority more power in both situations.

But the process isn't unfolding how voters then might have imagined. The pandemic has delayed the release of necessary data and squeezed the 2021 timeline — map-drawing is now expected to begin in the late summer and state lawmakers will need an almost instant turnaround to meet current state deadlines.

At the same time, lawmakers are also preoccupied with confronting the ongoing effects of coronavirus and fallout from a corruption scandal involving the bailout of two northern Ohio nuclear power plants.

House Minority Leader Emilia Sykes, a co-chairman of the legislature's redistricting task force, said GOP lawmakers missed an opportunity to get an early head start when they ignored her request to release funds in 2019, after a court ruling almost forced lawmakers to redraw the congressional map for the 2020 election.

"We've known this was a requirement," Ms. Sykes said. "It's not like it snuck up out of nowhere, and we should have been preparing ourselves for it. That's one of the missed opportunities is not to have started this process a year or two years ago."

The reforms also leave plenty of room for political interpretation.

"The first thing we don't know is the degree to which the spirit of the redistricting reforms are really going to take hold of the process," said David Niven, a political science professor at the University of Cincinnati. "The spirit of the process is very clear. You don't needlessly chop towns and neighborhoods and counties into pieces ... but what's not clear is the operative reality that's going to come out of our new redistricting law."

There's still some sense of what's ahead in 2021. Ohio's sluggish population growth is expected to strip the state of at least one congressional seat, leaving it with 15 or fewer House members after the 2022 election.

That reality is having an immediate political impact as current congressmen consider whether to abandon re-election bids and instead run for the U.S. Senate seat being vacated by Republican Rob Portman, who announced last month that he won't seek re-election next year.

The reforms also guarantee that a district like Ms. Kaptur's can no longer exist. Lawmakers are required to pass a map that keeps 65 of 88 counties whole to prevent the kind of packing and cracking of communities that made the current configuration of the 9th District possible.

"Even if nobody cares about what the other side thinks and those incentives are ignored or not important enough, the new rules still require that better maps be drawn," said Senate President Matt Huffman of Lima, a leader on the 2018 reforms, who noted the 9th District was what Democrats asked for in 2011.

"If the minority [now] said, 'hey, we're OK if you draw that weird district that Marcy Kaptur's in, we think its better for us,' and the majority and minority both agree — you can't do that. It's bad governmental policy," he said.

Besides the "Snake on the Lake," Ohio is home to Republican Jim Jordan's mallard-shaped 4th Congressional District, which zigzags from Sandusky Bay to the Columbus suburbs and west toward Indiana. In southwest Ohio, Republican Steve Chabot's 1st Congressional District bifurcates Cincinnati and its suburban counties. Neither conforms to the rules voters passed for fairer districts.

But that doesn't mean those lawmakers are getting drawn out of a job.

Political insiders are mulling a few scenarios for eliminating a congressional seat, with the most likely being the erasure of Democrat Tim Ryan's district in northeast Ohio's Mahoning Valley, a part of the state that has become less hospitable to Democrats. Mr. Ryan is among those now weighing a bid to succeed Mr. Portman.

Several in Ohio's GOP delegation, including U.S. Reps. Anthony Gonzalez, Bill Johnson, and Steve Stivers, are also considering running.

Even if the 9th District returns to its roots as a northwest Ohio-based seat, that doesn't necessarily mean it's an easy transition for Ms. Kaptur, who had to compete against Cleveland Democrat Dennis Kucinich to retain her seat in 2012. The longest-serving woman in Congress, Ms. Kaptur's ties to Toledo and the region run deep, but some Republicans who view legacy Democrats as targets are hoping to create a more GOP-friendly Toledo district.

It's also possible that Cincinnati could gain a Democratic seat in a part of the state trending away from Republicans. The same goes for the Columbus suburbs.

"The transformative differences are likely to be in Cincinnati and in Columbus, where the mapmakers really took to those cities with surgical precision to try and create a Democratic Cincinnati with Republican representation and a Democratic Columbus with largely Republican representation," Mr. Niven said.

Ohio's map worked exactly as it was designed to for the past five elections. None of the state's four Democratic and 12 Republican districts switched parties, and for the most part general elections weren't close.

Ms. Shanahan, the All On The Line organizer, said there are enough loopholes in the new rules to keep advocates busy through the summer.

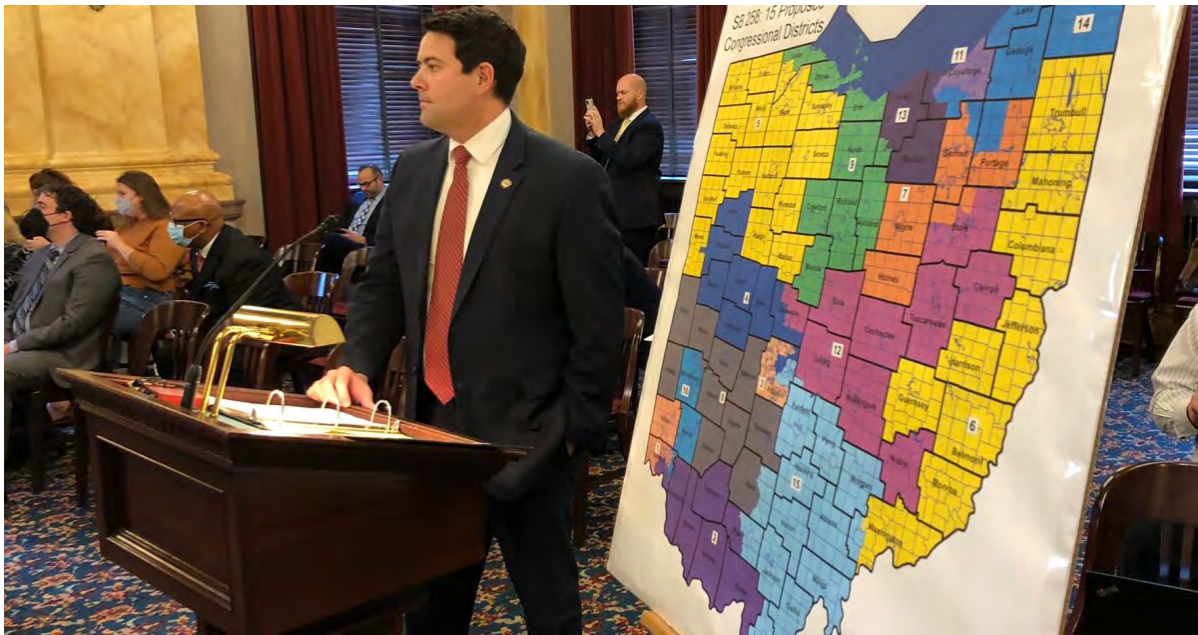
"My street that I live on is split in half between the 12th and 3rd Congressional Districts," she explained, joking that one of her goals is getting her entire Franklin County street into one district. Under the new rules, 18 counties are able to be divided once, and only five can be divided three times.

"Some of the worst offending districts will still be able to be drawn in quite the same way. There's still wiggle room in those rules, so it's going to be on us to make sure that those wiggles don't happen," she said.

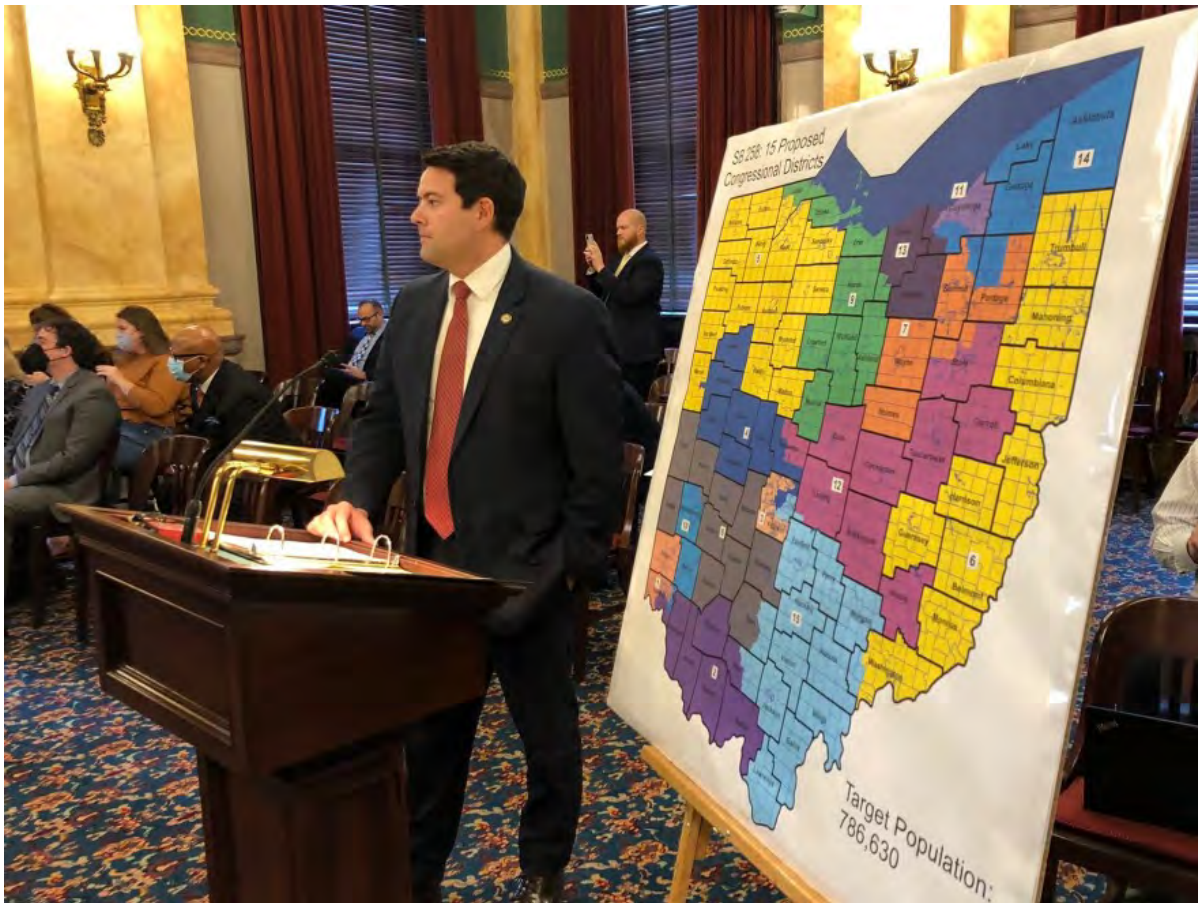
Proposed Congressional maps show different approaches to representation in Ohio

statenews.org/government-politics/2021-11-15/proposed-congressional-maps-show-different-approaches-to-representation-in-ohio

November 16, 2021



Government/Politics



Andy Chow

/

Statehouse News Bureau

Sen. Rob McColley (R-Napoleon) presents a new Congressional district map, drawn by the Senate Republican Caucus.

The plans from Republicans and Democrats in the House and Senate vary on competitiveness and partisan splits.

State lawmakers are preparing for the next step of the Congressional redistricting process which could pick up steam after the Senate Republicans unveil their new proposal.

The House and Senate have held separate committee meetings and two hearings by a joint panel to discuss the four plans put forth by lawmakers; HB479 (House Republicans), HB483 (House Democrats), SB237 (Senate Democrats), SB258 (Senate Republicans).

Supporters and opponents of the plans have argued over how each map breaks down politically to potentially determine how many seats could be won by either party.

Lawmakers must approve a new Congressional map with 15 districts, down from the 16 Congressional districts Ohio's had for the last decade.

Here is the partisan breakdown for each proposed map based on the national analytic tool, "Dave's Redistricting." The list compiles voter data and compares the amount of registered Republican voters and Democratic voters for every proposed district.

Update: Senate and House Republicans announced a new proposal for a Congressional district map Monday evening that will be introduced in the form of a substitute bill to SB258. The details needed for a full voter analysis per district were not yet available.

Senate and House Republicans in Ohio introduce a new Congressional district map proposal pic.twitter.com/PUGy7DsX7b

— Andy Chow (@andy_chow) November 16, 2021

Senate Republican map - SB258 (prior to amendments)

Very Strong Republican Districts (at or more than 20% gap) - 3

Strong Republican Districts (at or more than 10%) - 3

Very Strong Democratic Districts (at or more than 20% gap) - 1

Strong Democratic Districts (at or more than 10%) - 1

Competitive Leaning Republican Districts (under 10%) - 7

Competitive Leaning Democratic Districts (under 10%) - 0

The Senate Republican map would likely put two sets of incumbents in the same district; Bill Johnson (R-6th District) and Tim Ryan (D-13th District); and Joyce Beatty (D-3rd District) and Jim Jordan (R-4th District).

House Republican map - HB479

Very Strong Republican Districts (at or more than 20% gap) - 4

Strong Republican Districts (at or more than 10%) - 5

Very Strong Democratic Districts (at or more than 20% gap) - 0

Strong Democratic Districts (at ore more than 10%) - 2

Competitive Leaning Republican Districts (under 10%) - 4

Competitive Leaning Democratic Districts (under 10%) - 0

The House Republican map would likely put two sets of incumbents in the same district: Steve Chabot (R-1st District) and Brad Wenstrup (R-2nd District); and Joyce Beatty (D-3rd District) and Mike Carey (R-15th District).

Senate Democratic map - SB237

Very Strong Republican Districts (at or more than 20% gap) - 6
Strong Republican Districts (at or more than 10%) - 0
Very Strong Democratic Districts (at or more than 20% gap) - 2
Strong Democratic Districts (at or more than 10%) - 1
Competitive Leaning Republican Districts (under 10%) - 2
Competitive Leaning Democratic Districts (under 10%) - 4

The Senate Democratic map would put four sets of incumbents in the same district: Steve Chabot (R-1st District) and Brad Wenstrup (R-2nd District); Warren Davidson (R-8th District) and Bob Latta (R-5th District); Joyce Beatty (D-3rd District) and Mike Carey (R-15th District); and Troy Balderson (R-12th District) and Bill Johnson (R-6th District).

House Democratic map - HB483

Very Strong Republican Districts (at or more than 20% gap) - 6
Strong Republican Districts (at or more than 10%) - 0
Very Strong Democratic Districts (at or more than 20% gap) - 2
Strong Democratic Districts (at or more than 10%) - 2
Competitive Leaning Republican Districts (under 10%) - 3
Competitive Leaning Democratic Districts (under 10%) - 2

The House Democratic map would put four sets of incumbents in the same district: Steve Chabot (R-1st District) and Brad Wenstrup (R-2nd District); Bob Gibbs (R-7th District), Troy Balderson (R-12th District) and Bill Johnson (R-6th District); Tim Ryan (D-13th District) and David Joyce (R-14th District); and Warren Davidson (R-8th District) and Jim Jordan (R-4th District).

Lawmakers must follow provisions created by a statewide ballot issue in 2018 that was intended to stop gerrymandering, when leaders draw maps to favor one political party over another. Those mapmaking changes include a limit on how many times a county can be split.

Senate President Matt Huffman (R-Lima) said the goal is to keep districts compact and competitive.

"It's impossible to draw all competitive districts without violating the Constitution otherwise with the number of splits so there will be some districts that are in excess of a 60% likely in whatever map that we end up passing," said Huffman.

There's been a debate over the definition of a competitive district. Republican leaders have said they would consider a district competitive if it is within a 10% gap of Republican and Democratic voters. However, fair district advocates have said that number should be much lower to be considered competitive.

A final 10-year map would need approval from at least 1/3 of the Democratic members, a four-year map can pass by a simple majority.

Ohio House Approves Congressional District Map, Now Heads To Gov. DeWine

news.wosu.org/politics/2021-11-18/ohio-house-approves-congressional-district-map-now-heads-to-gov-dewine

November 18, 2021



Politics



Andy Chow

/

Ohio Public Radio

Sen. Rob McColley (R-Napoleon) presents a new Congressional district map, drawn by the Senate Republican Caucus.

Updated, November 19, 2021, 7:48 a.m.

It's now up to Gov. Mike DeWine (R-Ohio) whether to sign off on a new Congressional district map that gives Republicans an advantage in 12 of Ohio's 15 districts for four years.

In that House vote, every Democrat and four Republicans voted against the plan.

Rep. Stephanie Howse (D-Cleveland) says the Republican-drawn Congressional map goes against the anti-gerrymandering reforms passed by voters three years ago.

"So let's be for real like that is not what people voted for on May of 2018. They deserve better. We need to do better. And we need to absolutely vote this mess down," said Howse on the House floor.

Rep. Kyle Koehler (R-Springfield) was one of four Republicans who did not vote for the maps.

"I hear constituents' views on both sides of so many issues. I can't think of a time I have ever had all my constituents agree on one issue. They did not want Springfield carved out of Clark County. I voted 'no' splitting our county," Koehler said in a tweet on Thursday.

I hear constituents views on both sides of so many issues. I can't think of a time I have ever had all my constituents agree on one issue. They did not want Springfield carved out of Clark County. I voted "no" splitting our county. pic.twitter.com/DxHYEBUNnr

— Rep. Kyle Koehler (@repkoehler) November 18, 2021

Rep. Bill Seitz (R-Cincinnati) says Ohio is a "red state" -- electing Republicans in most of the statewide races for a decade. He says there are things that matter just as much as the partisan breakdown of a district, such as any given candidate.

"Fair, ladies and gentlemen, is in the eyes of the beholder. We have followed the Constitution. We have done our duty," said Seitz.

The map draws 15 Congressional districts in Ohio. Republican voters outnumber Democratic voters by more than 20% in five districts and by more than 10% in two districts. Another five districts, that fall within a 10% margin, lean in favor of Republicans. That's according to "Dave's Redistricting," a national tool to analyze new maps.

There are only two districts in the Congressional map approved by the Ohio Senate that heavily favor Democrats. Those districts are in Franklin County and Cuyahoga County.

Voter rights groups are now petitioning DeWine to veto the bill, which must be signed by the end of the month.



Andy Chow

Andy Chow is a general assignment state government reporter who focuses on environmental, energy, agriculture, and education-related issues. He started his journalism career as an associate producer with ABC 6/FOX 28 in Columbus before becoming a producer with WBNS 10TV.

[See stories by Andy Chow](#)

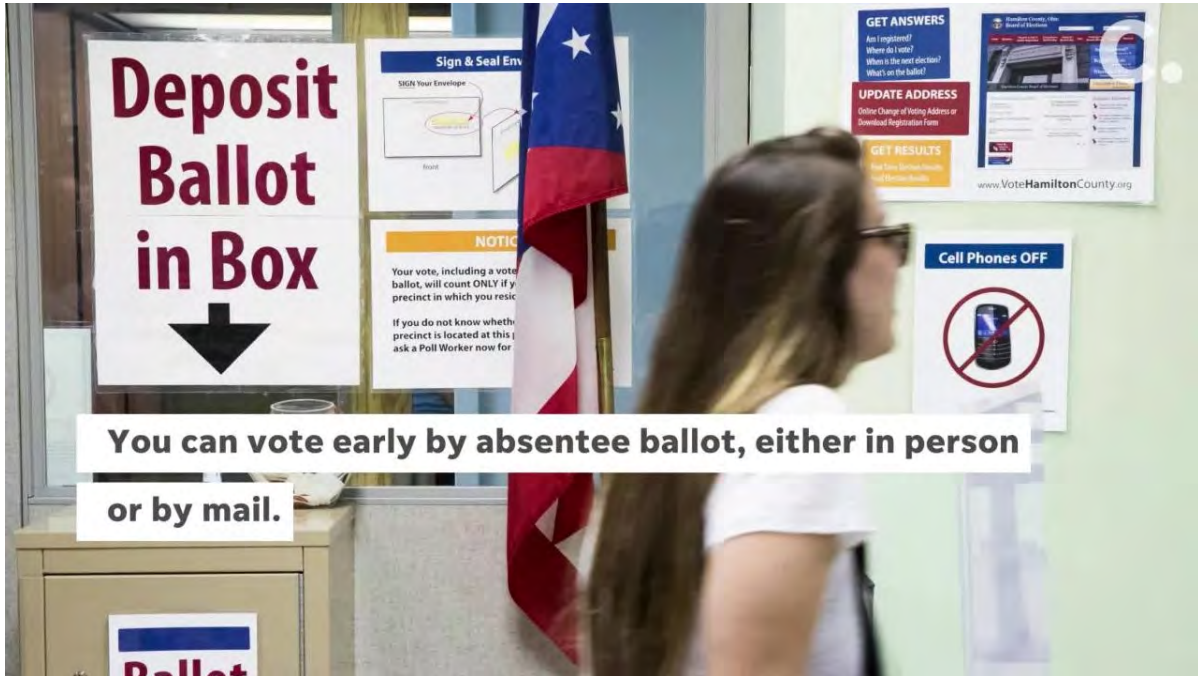
Gerrymandering: The secret issue Ohio will vote on in the midterm election

cincinnati.com/story/news/politics/elections/2018/10/23/midterm-election-decide-fate-gerrymandering-ohio/1663249002/

Jackie Borchardt, The Enquirer



[Jackie Borchardt](#) | Cincinnati Enquirer



Show Caption

COLUMBUS – Most Ohio voters are thinking about the economy or health care when they cast their ballots in the midterm election.

But there's another big issue looming in the background: whether Ohio's district maps will be gerrymandered for another decade.

Yes, Ohio already voted for redistricting reform -- twice. But politicians will still be in charge and have the final say on maps that will shape Ohio's political landscape for many years.

Whoever is elected governor, secretary of state and auditor will be part of a new seven-member panel drawing Statehouse district lines in 2021.

State senators elected now will weigh in on the next congressional map. And the governor elected in November -- likely to be either Republican Mike DeWine or Democrat Richard Cordray -- will have veto power over that map.

Democrats have made gerrymandering a part of their pitch to voters to upend years of GOP rule in Columbus. Republicans might not be as vocal, but they're thinking about redistricting too.

"This is a high-stakes political process that both parties care very much about, all the way up to the highest levels," Sen. Frank LaRose, a Republican running for secretary of state, said.

What's at stake

Republicans controlled both congressional and Statehouse redistricting processes in 2001 and 2011, the last two times Ohio updated its maps. Democrats, who refused to compromise on reform in 2009 because they thought they'd hold the redistricting pen next, were effectively shut out of the process.

The result: districts have consistently been won by the party they were drawn to favor. Republicans have held 12 of Ohio's 16 congressional seats since 2012 despite receiving 56 percent of the vote statewide.

Ohio has districts like the 9th, called the "snake on the lake," which stretches from Toledo to Cleveland, and the 1st, which splits Cincinnati and divides Hamilton County. Summit County, in Northeast Ohio, is represented by four congressmen but none live in the county.

Republicans regained control of the Ohio House and hold super majorities in both Statehouse chambers.

So it's understandable that redistricting has become a major issue for Ohio Democratic candidates and that national Democrats have taken an interest in changing the process.

The National Democratic Redistricting Committee, headed by former President Obama's attorney general Eric Holder, backed the congressional reform measure on the May ballot. The group also gave the maximum \$12,707 contribution to Democrats running for Ohio governor, attorney general, auditor and secretary of state.

Auditor candidate Zack Space, a former Democratic congressman, said he was talking about redistricting long before the Holder's group got involved. Space said gerrymandering has made primary elections the main event and, as a result, politicians are more extreme in their views and can't compromise or even talk to each other.

"Both parties bear responsibility now to do the right thing and doing the right thing is working for a government that can function well and restore faith and confidence that's been lost in this process," Space said. "Donald Trump's mantra that the system is rigged rings true for a lot of people and justifiably so."

The Libertarian Party candidates -- Travis Irvine for governor, Robert Coogan for auditor and Dustin Nanna for secretary of state -- say they're better suited to draw lines because they're not obligated to either major party.

New rules

The opposite might have happened had Democrats been in charge. Both parties agreed in 2014 there had to be a better, fairer way to draw the lines. The General Assembly put before voters constitutional amendments changing the redistricting process for Statehouse districts (Issue 1 in 2015) and congressional districts (Issue 1 in May 2018.)

Both set new rules for carving up the state into districts including limiting how counties and cities can be split. Both require votes from minority-party politicians to approve maps.

The redistricting commission, which will map Statehouse districts, will have seven members instead of five, including at least two from the minority party in the General Assembly. Republicans are expected to keep control of the legislature, so if Democrats can get two of the three statewide seats, they'll have the upper hand.

State Rep. Kathleen Clyde, a Democrat running for secretary of state, said two components of new process are especially important: keeping communities together and ensuring representational fairness. The latter, a favorite buzzword of reformers, means the breakdown of partisan-leaning districts should mirror past voting behavior averaged over several years of elections. No one knows exactly how that will be computed or applied in 2021.

"There is still room for partisan gamesmanship and we need to make sure we have leaders who are dedicated to transparency and fairness at all costs," Clyde said.

Republican auditor candidate Keith Faber, a state representative, doesn't like the term "representational fairness," and said mapmakers shouldn't create districts for the sake of partisan balance.

"We don't want to create another type of gerrymandering... to pick up some kind of a balance of voters that breaks up regional interests, local governments and political subdivisions," Faber said.

More: [Everyone complains about congressional gerrymandering. Ohio just did something about it.](#)

What the candidates would do

Ann Henkener, a longtime redistricting expert for the League of Women Voters of Ohio, said the new rules will make redistricting more fair and bipartisan, but people involved will have to make some hard decisions about how to break up counties and cities.

Which candidates are best suited for that responsibility?

"Ones that know how to follow the rules laid out in the Ohio Constitution and having some from both parties," Henkenner said. "Having folks who are willing to work across the aisle and compromise would be really good attributes for people who are going to be drawing the maps."

Here's what you need to know about the major party candidates' positions on the issue.

Governor

Mike DeWine (R): DeWine, Ohio's attorney general, supported the congressional redistricting measure in May. DeWine's running mate, Ohio Secretary of State Jon Husted, has advocated for redistricting reform since he served in the state legislature a decade ago. "The rules are pretty clear -- the voters said that the redistricting process should be done in a bipartisan way and when I am governor there will be an expectation that the new district maps honor the voters' wishes," DeWine told The Enquirer through a spokesman.

Richard Cordray (D): Cordray weighed in several times on social media while state legislators hammered out the congressional redistricting reform proposal. "As governor, I'll use my role in the redistricting process to ensure that we finally have fair and competitive maps that put the voters back in charge of our democracy -- not the special interests or the self-serving politicians," Cordray said through a spokesman.

Enough already with the redistricting shenanigans in the Ohio legislature. Give us a fair process with input from both sides, and don't try to cut the governor out. Voters should choose their representatives, not the other way around.

— Rich Cordray (@RichCordray) [January 18, 2018](#)

Auditor

Keith Faber (R): Faber was the No. 2 state senator when the 2011 maps were drawn. Emails from the time show he was angling to change the boundaries to move his Celina home from the 8th District, held by then-House Speaker John Boehner, to the 4th District held by Congressman Jim Jordan. Faber, now a state representative, said last week he wanted to keep Grand Lake St. Marys whole within one district.

Faber and three other lawmakers introduced a bipartisan redistricting reform proposal in 2012, but it failed to pass the House. After [the legislature passed Statehouse reform in December 2014](#), Faber, then Senate president, was hesitant to move ahead with changes to the congressional process.

Zack Space (D): Space represented Ohio's 18th congressional district from 2007 to 2010. Ohio lost two seats in the 2011 redistricting process, and Space's constituents were divided among five districts.

Secretary of state

Frank LaRose (R): LaRose voted for the gerrymandered map in 2011 as a state senator, but he says now he did so with a pit in his stomach. LaRose said the vote made him redouble his efforts for reform, and he introduced legislation the following session to change it. After the legislature passed the state legislative district reform in 2014, LaRose pushed for similar changes to congressional redistricting, breaking with GOP officials who were urging a "wait and see" approach.

We have to reform the redistricting process in OH. See this @AkronBeacon article about a group of us making it happen: <http://t.co/RXWvAxDq>

— Frank LaRose (@FrankLaRose) January 11, 2012

Kathleen Clyde (D): Clyde, a state representative from Kent, helped lead the effort to overturn the 2011 congressional map. Since then, she introduced several bills to reform the redistricting process. Clyde and the Democratic candidate for attorney general, Steve Dettelbach, have called for the 2021 mapmaking to be open and transparent, with regular public meetings and reports and the ability for the attorney general to take action if politicians get out of line.

Rep. Wenstrup announces intent to seek re-election in 2nd District

Today, conservative Republican Congressman Brad Wenstrup announced his intent to seek re-election to the U.S. House of Representatives in Ohio's Second Congressional District.

Due to constitutionally required redistricting, the Ohio House and Senate recently passed an updated congressional map, which keeps parts or all of the eight counties Wenstrup currently represents in the newly presented Second District.

"I look forward to continuing to represent the hard-working people of southern Ohio as I fight for the safety, security and economic prosperity of everyone I serve," Wenstrup said.

Wenstrup mentioned several key issues he's focused on, including strengthening the supply chain, increasing access to health care, border security, military readiness and caring for the nation's veterans.

"We must stop and think, are we leaving this world a better place for our kids and grandkids," Wenstrup said. "What we do today has an impact on those we love and the trajectory of our nation. Today matters and the future matters even more.

"I look forward to spending time in the new counties included in the district and listening, learning, and working tirelessly for all of our communities. We prepare now for 2022 when we can and will start re-building a healthier and stronger America."



Rep. Brad Wenstrup

Census: Two-thirds of Ohio counties lose population; Columbus passes 900,000 residents

 dispatch.com/story/news/2021/08/12/five-ohios-six-fastest-growing-counties-central-ohio/8098139002/

Mark Ferenchik, Bill Bush and Marc Kovac, The Columbus Dispatch



Nearly two-thirds of Ohio's counties lost population in the last decade, while fast-growing areas such as Franklin County continued to add residents.

Ohio's population grew by just under 263,000, according to population numbers for counties, cities, villages and individual census tracts released Thursday by the U.S. Census Bureau.

The largest population drop among counties occurred in Harrison County, west of Steubenville, which dropped 8.7% to 14,483.

Ohio is still the nation's seventh-largest state, but it could be eclipsed over the next 10 years by fast-growing Georgia, now the eighth-largest, which grew to 10.7 million in 2020 from 9.7 million in 2010, a 10.3% leap.

Growth in central Ohio counties in 2020 census

Central Ohio counties accounted for five of Ohio's six fastest growing population centers over the last decade, adding almost 235,600 residents and accounting for about 90% of the state's total growth between 2010 and 2020, the Census Bureau reports. The other major

growth county was Warren County near Cincinnati in southwest Ohio, where population rose just under 30,000 to 242,337.

Franklin County was by far the state's major growth center by number of residents, adding 160,000 people to become the state's largest at 1.32 million people. Cuyahoga County lost the most people: 15,305, a drop of 1.2%, to 1.26 million, but maintained its rank as the state's second-largest county.

US census data: Here's the central Ohio cities that have changed the most

Hamilton County (Cincinnati), gained slightly in population, 3.5%, from 802,374 in 2010 to 830,639.

Summit County (Akron) dipped slightly, by 0.2%, from 541,781 to 540,428. Stark County (Canton and Massillon) also dipped by 0.2%, from 375,589 to 374,853.

Delaware County topped Ohio's expansion percentage-wise by almost 23%, with its population now at 214,124. Delaware's percentage growth was followed by the counties of Union (20%), Warren (13.9%), Franklin (13.8%), Fairfield (8.7%) and Licking (7.2%).

Columbus-area growth data: Delaware and Union counties in Columbus area grow the most in Ohio

Scott Sanders, executive director of the Delaware County Regional Planning Commission, expected his county's numbers. "We had projected it would be 218,000 based on building permits," he said.

Increase in Black, Asian and Latino populations contribute to Columbus growth

Remaining the fastest growing county in the state get harder as the population grows, he said.

Growing responsibly will be the ongoing challenge, Sanders said.

"There's always that tension to make sure we can provide services," he said.

Meanwhile, Columbus' population is now 905,748 — up 15% from the 787,033 in 2010 — making it by far the state's largest city.

All of Columbus' growth can be attributed to an increase in the Black, Asian, Latino and other community groups, as the city's white population dipped slightly.

The United States overall experienced unprecedented multiracial population growth and a decline in the white population for the first time in the nation's history, according to U.S. Census officials, revealing the most sweeping picture of America's racial and ethnic makeup

in a decade.

“These changes reveal that the US population is much more multiracial, and more racially and ethnically diverse, than what we measured in the past,” said Nicholas Jones, the director of race, ethnicity, research and outreach for the Census Bureau's Population Division.

Cleveland, Akron Dayton, Canton and Toledo and Youngstown shrink

Cincinnati's population is back over 300,000 growing from 296,943 to 309,317.

But many of the state's largest cities continue to shrink, including Cleveland, Akron Dayton, Canton and Toledo and Youngstown.

Cleveland's population dropped 6% from 396,815 to 372,624. Akron was down 4.3%, from 199,110 to 190,469.

Akron population changes in 2020 census: Akron's population dropped by 4% between 2010 and 2020; Summit's population dropped only slightly.

Dayton's population dropped almost 3%, from 141,527 to 137,644. Canton's is down almost 3%, from 73,007 to 70,872.

Toledo population fell almost 6%, from 287,208 to 270,801. Youngstown plummeted 10%, from 66,982 to 60,068.

The city of Marion dropped 2.3% to just less than 36,000, with its white population dropping and its Black population growing 7%.

The city of Newark grew 5% to 49,934, with its white population holding steady and its Black population growing 7.4%. Lancaster grew by 4.6%, to 40,552, with its white population holding steady at around 37,000 and its Black population more than doubling to 817 people.

Circleville grew 4.6% to just under 14,000.

The city of Athens basically stayed the same size, adding just 17 people for a total of 23,849. Black residents now comprise 9.2% of Athens' total population, up from 4.4% a decade ago.

Trends in the data for Columbus and Ohio, and how the 2020 census will impact elections

Columbus has long been Ohio's largest city, bolstered by a combination of aggressive annexation policies decades ago that grew its geographic footprint and a diverse economy that has drawn people from other areas of the state, country, and in recent decades, a growing number of immigrants from across the globe.

Jason Reece, an assistant professor of city and regional planning at Ohio State University's Knowlton School of Architecture, said Columbus and central Ohio continue to pull people from other parts of Ohio because of the area's strong economy.

Ohio continues to deal with a 40-year economic transition from manufacturing, Reece said, but he added that he is surprised to see the state's growth so anemic.

He pointed out, though, that states such as Illinois and West Virginia lost population. And while Ohio is expected to lose one congressional seat after reapportionment, it lost two after the 2010 census.

"For being here in the Great Lakes, we are holding our own," Reece said. "From a policy perspective, we've tried so many things here to stem that tide. Other than fixing the weather, I don't know what response is."

The Cincinnati area benefits from growth in northern Kentucky and a strong regional economy, Reece said. "You cannot overestimate the influence of being part of a tri-state economy," he said, and the renaissance to some degree in the city's urban core and across the Ohio River in Kentucky in the cities of Newport and Covington.

"Look back at urban design characteristics of downtown Cincinnati: the appealing architectural infrastructure, amenities, things of that nature," he said. "That benefits a geographically relatively small city."

The white, non-Hispanic population, without another race, decreased by 8.6% since 2010, Jones said during a Census bureau press briefing. He cautioned that some of the changes can be attributed to improvements to the survey. The White, non-Hispanic population is still the largest racial group in the U.S.

3 numbers to know from census data: Columbus' population now over 900,000, more stats

The release bolstered expert predictions and estimates in past years that showed continued expansion of the Hispanic, Black and Asian American populations and growing numbers of multiracial residents – only a fraction in past surveys.

The nation's population grew by 7.4%, to 331,449,281. But 52% of all counties across the country lost population, according to the census bureau. Population growth was basically limited to metro areas.

Ohio's racial makeup in 2020 was: 77% white, 12.5% Black, and 4.4% Latino, one of the least diverse states in the country.

Paul Beck, a professor emeritus of political science at Ohio State University, said that the shrinking population of rural areas in Ohio may mean congressional districts may be redrawn to reach more into metropolitan areas and making them less of a slam dunk for Republicans.

Columbus is becoming a much more diverse city, with the percentage of white residents dipping from 61.5% to 53.2%, and the white population dropping from 483,677 to 482,058.

Meanwhile, Columbus' Black population grew by 17.8% to 259,483, the Asian population rose by 76% to 56,218, and Latino residents grew by 58% to 70,179.

Angie Plummer, the executive director of the Community Refugee & Immigration Services, said immigrants come to Columbus not only because family members live here, but for economic opportunities.

"We're currently seeing a huge need for workers. That's attractive," Plummer said. "Without those immigrants filling that gap, we'd be in a more difficult situation."

Plummer said immigrants and refugees pay taxes, start businesses, have that work ethic and willingness to do the jobs that need to be done. "We see time and time again the second generation goes to college," she said.

"I think it's a win-win for our community to see Columbus as a destination for refugees and immigrants."

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



Jim Gaines, Springfield News-Sun, Ohio

October 1, 2021 · 4 min read



Oct. 1—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.

- ADVERTISEMENT -

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.

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."

[Ohio Politics](#)

Ohio Redistricting Commission to hold meeting, but won't approve congressional maps before adjourning

Updated: Oct. 27, 2021, 1:15 a.m. | Published: Oct. 26, 2021, 1:39 p.m.



Members of the Ohio Redistricting Commission. They are (from top to

<https://web.archive.org/web/20211027161850/https://www.cleveland.com/open/2021/10/ohio-redistricting-commission-to-hold-perfunctory-meeting-bu...> 1/10

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](https://www.cleveland.com/author/andrew-j-tobias/)

COLUMBUS, Ohio -- After weeks of public inactivity, the Ohio Redistricting Commission will hold its first and only meeting this week to consider congressional map plans. But it won't be passing anything before a Oct. 31 deadline, meaning responsibility to redraw Ohio's congressional maps is headed back to the Republican-controlled state legislature.

The redistricting commission will meet at 10 a.m. on Thursday at the Ohio Statehouse in Columbus to consider maps that have been introduced, including those by Ohio Senate Democrats, [according to a meeting agenda](#).

The commission will give map sponsors the opportunity to testify about their proposals. But Ohio Republicans who control the commission won't be introducing a map of their own, much less voting on a Republican plan, according to House Republicans. And members of the public won't be allowed to comment on the plans or on the issue generally.

Under Ohio's new redistricting rules, the commission's authority to pass new congressional maps will expire at the end of the month, with responsibility then shifting back to the Republican-controlled state legislature. That means three Republicans on the seven-member Ohio Redistricting Commission -- Gov. Mike DeWine, Secretary of State Frank LaRose and state Auditor Keith Faber -- will be cut out of the process.

House Speaker Bob Cupp, a Lima Republican who co-chairs the redistricting commission, told reporters about his plans for the commission at the Statehouse on Tuesday. An official announcement is going out soon, according to a spokesman.

The leading Democrat on the redistricting commission, Akron Sen. Vernon Sykes, for weeks [has been calling for the commission to hold hearings](#) to consider map proposals. But Cupp, as the co-chair of the commission, has to also agree to hold a meeting. Republicans have stood pat, indicating they plan to run the clock until November. They've blamed legal challenges to the state legislative maps commission Republicans approved last month. The process also has been set back by the delayed completion of the U.S. Census, the results of which are used to design the maps.

But GOP legislative leaders also have said they think there are strategic advantages to bypassing the commission and waiting until November.

Senate President Matt Huffman, a Lima Republican who has played a lead role in redistricting, told reporters last week he thinks it will be easier to negotiate when the only involved parties are House and Senate Republican and Democratic leaders.

“I do think it makes a difference if we have this sort of seven-headed animal, the redistricting commission, come to a decision, versus the General Assembly, which is one vote in the Senate and one vote in the House,” Huffman said.

The Republican-dominated legislature will have until the end of November to approve maps. In order to get maps that will last for the typical 10 years, at least one-third of Democrats in the House and Senate will have to approve them.

Legislative Republicans could approve maps with a simple majority vote and no Democratic support. But those maps would expire after four years.

Legislative Republicans missed another congressional redistricting deadline when they failed to introduce a map proposal by the end of September, giving temporary control over the

process to the redistricting commission. Passing maps in September would have required votes from half of legislative Democrats, a higher bar for bipartisanship than the rules require in November.

Huffman told reporters last week his plan is to seek bipartisan, 10-year maps. But the redistricting process [so far has shown little evidence of bipartisanship](#), with Republicans on the commission approving state legislative maps that are expected to award the GOP two-thirds of legislative seats, preserving their veto-proof majority while prompting lawsuits from a multitude of voter-rights groups, Democratic-linked groups and generally progressive advocacy groups.

Ohioans in 2015 and 2018 overhauled the state's redistricting process, overwhelmingly approving anti-gerrymandering reforms that created the Ohio Redistricting Commission and put in place new rules meant to promote bipartisanship, representational fairness and transparency while limiting how counties and cities can be split.

[But hundreds of pages of depositions and other legal filings](#), filed as evidence in the redistricting lawsuits, show that maps were drawn by Republican staffers with oversight from Huffman and Cupp, but with little input from anyone else on the seven-member redistricting commission. Republicans also have contended that language in the 2015 reform directing the maps to be politically representative of statewide voter preferences are not legally enforceable, an argument rejected by voting-rights advocates, Democrats [and a leading state constitutional expert](#).

Anticipating that the redistricting commission would adjourn without approving a new congressional map, House Minority Leader Emilia Sykes, the second Democrat on the Ohio Redistricting

Commission, on Tuesday called on Republican legislative leaders to make preparations for moving something through the legislature.

In a letter, Sykes called on Cupp and Huffman to organize a special redistricting committee, including naming committee members, by Nov. 4, to introduce a map proposal by Nov. 10 and to hold at least one of two mandatory public hearings on the maps by Nov. 15.

A proposal Senate Democrats introduced in late September [is the only officially proposed congressional map plan](#), in a map that would draw eight Republican districts, six Democratic ones and a single toss-up district that would lean Democratic. The proposal was a nonstarter with Republicans, since it would cause the GOP to lose at least four congressional seats compared to the status quo.

Ohio's current congressional maps, drawn as a pro-Republican gerrymander in 2011, awarded 12 of the state's 16 congressional seats to Republicans, with no seat changing hands for the decade they appeared on the ballot, even though Republicans

only got around 55% of the votes during that time.
Ohio is losing a congressional seat after last year's U.S. Census found its population growth didn't keep up with other states.

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Ohio GOP lawmakers unveil Congressional map proposals

The Statehouse News Bureau | By Andy Chow

Published November 3, 2021 at 4:53 PM EDT



Andy Chow / Statehouse News Bureau

Sen. Rob McColley (R-Napoleon) presents a new Congressional district map, drawn by the Senate Republican Caucus.

Democratic lawmakers and voter rights groups criticized the GOP leaders for not providing more information about their redistricting proposals.

State Republican lawmakers are introducing two proposals, one from the House and one from the

Senate, for new Congressional district maps.

The roll-out comes with confusion over how exactly the maps break down, with voter rights groups arguing a lack of transparency in the process.

The maps were presented during House and Senate committee meetings Wednesday, but Republican leaders did not provide the detailed files needed to see where the districts lines lie and how they break down politically.

Rep. Stephanie Howse (D-Cleveland) said the Republicans failed to provide all the information needed to understand their maps.

"If I can't figure it out and I'm here, what do you think the average Ohioan is going to do," said Howse.

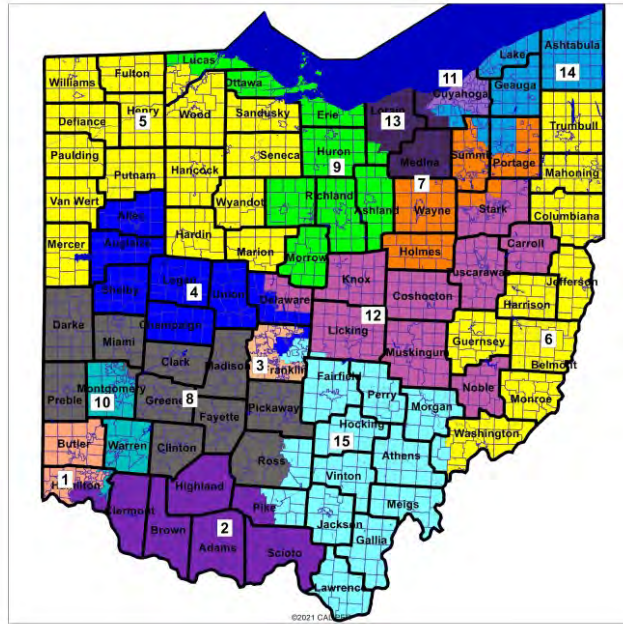
The Republican maps differ on how many are strong GOP districts and competitive districts. But both only have two strong Democratic districts.

According to Dave's Redistricting, a national legislative district analyst, the House GOP proposal, HB 479, creates 13 districts that heavily favor Republicans and two districts that favor Democrats.



The 15-district Congressional map proposed by House Republicans in HB 479

The Senate GOP's proposal for a new Congressional district map, SB 258, creates six districts that favor Republicans, two districts that favor Democrats, and seven districts that lean Republican.



Ohio Senate Republicans' proposed Congressional map in SB 258

Voter rights groups are questioning the definition of competitive districts by Republican leaders. House Republicans were basing competitiveness on districts that split 55% Republican and 45% Democratic.

Sen. Rob McColley (R-Napoleon) introduced the Senate GOP map in committee. He argued the proposal created more competitive districts than the current maps, where Ohio has 12 Republican congressional members and 4 Democratic congressional members.

"I know there's been some discussion about whether it unduly favors or does favors a political party or it's incumbent. That is not a requirement unless we were to draw a four-year map," said McColley. "Additionally, I would say that our goal and our hope is that we get the opportunity to draw a ten-year map."

Ohio voters approved reforms to the Congressional redistricting process in 2018. Those changes included

rules for mapmakers to limit the amount of times counties could be split. Most of Ohio's counties are required to be kept whole with the five largest counties allowed to be split twice, creating three different districts.

McColley says the Senate plan only splits 14 counties. Eleven counties split with one line, and three counties are split with two lines. Those three counties are Franklin, Cuyahoga, and Hamilton. The Senate map puts two sets of Congressional incumbents in the same district; Republican Bill Johnson and Democrat Tim Ryan in one, and Democrat Joyce Beatty and Republican Jim Jordan in the other.

But members of Congress are not required to live in the districts they represent - only the state they represent.

The House plan splits 13 counties, keeping the rest whole. That Congressional map creates three districts out of four counties; Franklin, Cuyahoga, Hamilton, and Summit.

Tags Government/Politics redistricting Congressional redistricting



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See stories by Andy Chow

Ohio House approves congressional maps largely along party lines

By: [Nick Evans](#) - November 19, 2021 1:00 am



The Ohio Statehouse. Photo by Jake Zuckerman.

The Ohio House has approved new congressional districts that will give Republican candidates a significant electoral advantage for the next four years. The map will only be in place for those two election cycles because not a single Democratic member voted for it. The map now heads for Gov. Mike DeWine's desk. If DeWine signs it, legal challenges seem sure to follow.

A rushed process



The GOP congressional map passed through the state Senate on Tuesday afternoon.

The map approved Thursday in the House was introduced just Monday night as an amendment replacing the maps previously discussed in committee hearings. After the map was unveiled, it had one hearing in which a committee heard public comment. Every speaker was an opponent. The Princeton Gerrymandering gave the map a flunking grade.

The map's sponsor, state Sen. Rob McColley, R-Napoleon, argued those last-minute revisions were responsive to arguments he'd heard in committee. The Mahoning Valley is kept whole, ditto that for Starke and Lucas counties. Dayton and Springfield are wrapped into one district.

McColley also argued his map was the "most competitive offered by any caucus." He insisted on looking to statewide federal elections over the past ten years, which shows an average partisan breakdown of 54% Republican and 46% Democratic. But rather than applying that 'competitive' partisan index statewide — either with 15 competitive districts, or a map likely to yield results in line with the index — McColley instead brags that just seven districts fall within those parameters.

In both the Senate and the House, lawmakers cut corners — advancing the measure to the floor without first passing through the chamber's Rules Committee.

On the House floor Thursday, Democrats argued forcefully against the proposal. Rep. Stephanie Howse, D-Cleveland, read ballot issue language verbatim. Rep. Tavia Galonski, D-Akron, tried to amend the map to an earlier version proposed by Democrats.

Rep. Brigid Kelly, D-Cincinnati, made an all-politics-is-local argument. Cincinnati's Brent Spence Bridge is in desperate need of repairs, but Kelly noted none of the three Republican congressmen who would represent Hamilton County under the new map voted in favor of the federal infrastructure bill that will help fund those improvements.

"When you crack communities apart and group them and dissimilar areas, you don't end up with three representatives," Kelly said. "You effectively end up with zero representatives."

Meanwhile, Rep. Thomas Brinkman, R-Mt. Lookout, retorted he had a smile as "wide as the Ohio River" knowing that the county would have three representatives in Congress. And Rep. Bill Seitz, R-Cincinnati, taunted Democrats listing off Ohio's statewide officeholders, all of whom are Republicans.

"Is the whole state gerrymandered? Or have we become a red state?" Seitz needed. "Perhaps those arguing for fairness might next propose a constitutional amendment that we somehow reach up and draw Detroit into the state of Ohio — to make it more fair! Or to draw Pittsburgh over the Ohio river — to make it more fair!"

After the floor session, House Speaker Bob Cupp defended the maps a significant improvement on any previous congressional boundaries.

"It does have two districts that lean solidly to the Democrats, it has six districts that lean totally Republican," Cupp said. "But there are seven competitive districts have within plus-or-minus four percentage points and this is quite a change from what the current maps are."

What's next

Voting rights groups are urging Gov. DeWine to veto the maps now on their way to his desk. DeWine has yet to weigh in on the congressional maps proposal.

Speaking after the vote, Andrew Washington from the A. Phillip Randolph Institute argued the map is bad for communities of color.

"We stand here and I stand here with these organizations, petitioning the governor asking him to please veto this bill," Washington said. "Let the voters pick the politicians, not the politicians pick the voters. Do not pack and crack communities of color, keep communities of interest in place."

Jen Miller of the League of Women Voters of Ohio and Catherine Turcer of Common Cause Ohio said legal action or even a ballot referendum are on the table if the governor decides to approve the maps.

Miller in particular expressed frustration with the whispers that some conservatives in the chamber used their votes on the map as leverage to gain passage for a measure limiting employer vaccine mandates. She says nothing was more important than passing fair maps.

11/20/21, 2:04 PM

“The fact that this vote would be hijacked potentially as a political chit for an entirely different piece of legislation shows me that this General Assembly does not respect to voters and does not respect the Constitution,” Miller said. “There is nothing more important than getting this right and they have failed.”

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POLITICS & GOV

Future of joint redistricting committee and congressional maps unknown

BY: [SUSAN TEBBEN](#) - NOVEMBER 15, 2021 12:40 AM



📷 Ohio's joint committee on congressional redistricting meets on Friday morning to hear more public input on four proposed congressional maps. (Photo: Susan Tebben, OCJ)

Ending a whirlwind week of testimony before three separate committees, Ohioans pleaded with members of the General Assembly on Friday to consider their wishes in congressional redistricting maps.

Some speakers broke down in tears, as others did in [a previous redistricting hearing](#), saying their time volunteering on elections and

in the campaign that changed the constitution to reform the redistricting process shouldn't be in vain.

"The ultimate feeling of Ohioans is exasperation about what else we have to do to make clear about what we want out of this process and what we want our democracy to look like in Ohio," said Katy Shanahan, leader of All on the Line Ohio, fighting back her own tears.

The committee heard testimony on [four different maps](#), each from the Republican and Democratic caucuses from the House and Senate. The most recent map proposed was from the [House Democratic Caucus](#), released after the House and Senate GOP and Senate Dems.

When asked by state Sen. Vernon Sykes, D-Akron, if the leader of the anti-gerrymandering group's Ohio chapter, who trains volunteers and keeps up with all inner-workings of redistricting as part of her job, knew the role of the joint committee, she couldn't say.

"I don't actually know what the function of this body is in the form that it's taken now," Shanahan said. "I think it's just to hold the bare minimum two hearings that are contemplated in the constitution and then, at least from the comments that I've heard from (House) Speaker (Bob) Cupp and Senate President (Matt) Huffman, this will then retreat back to the chamber-specific committees."

The [constitutional rules regarding congressional redistricting](#) states before the General Assembly can approve of a plan, "a joint committee of the general assembly shall hold at least two public committee hearings concerning a proposed plan."

Joint committee co-chair Theresa Gavarone, R-Bowling Green, said she understood the constitution similarly in that it requires two hearings from the joint committee, but said the rules don't preclude further hearings.

But Gavarone said she wasn't aware when or if more hearings would be scheduled for the joint committee, or when more hearings would be scheduled for the Senate-specific bills in her committee, Senate Local Government & Elections.

"I can't say that any of these maps are the final maps, I think we're continuing to work through the process and continuing to make sure we are listening and working to find maps that best achieve the requirements that are in constitution," Gavarone said.

Still, Gavarone said she has “no doubt we’ll meet the constitutional deadline of November 30th.”

During the committee meeting on Friday, state Rep. Beth Liston, D-Dublin, pushed the chairs on a plan for the maps and the body itself.

“Me and the co-chair will be discussing that after this meeting and we’ll let everyone know as quickly as possible,” said co-chair state Rep. Shane Wilkin, R-Hillsboro.

Gavarone encouraged members of the public to [contact her office](#) and get on an email list to be notified of future meetings.

As the journey toward congressional maps continue, the legislative maps are working their way through the judicial process. The Ohio Supreme Court officially consolidated the [three lawsuits](#) challenging the [General Assembly district lines](#) approved by the Ohio Redistricting Commission in September.

With the cases combined, the state’s highest court will hear oral arguments on Dec. 8.



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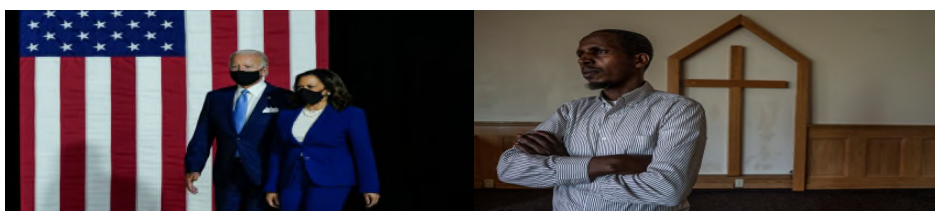
SUSAN TEBBEN



Susan Tebben is an award-winning journalist with a decade of experience covering Ohio news, including courts and crime, Appalachian social issues, government, education, diversity and culture. She has worked for The Newark Advocate, The Glasgow Daily Times, The Athens Messenger, and WOUB Public Media. She has also had work featured on National Public Radio.

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



OHIO NEWS

By Jim Gaines, Staff Writer

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.

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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.

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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.

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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.”

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POLITICS

Joint redistricting committee leaves public with more questions than answers

BY JOSH RULTENBERG | COLUMBUS
PUBLISHED 5:26 PM ET NOV. 12, 2021

COLUMBUS, Ohio — The details surrounding when Ohioans might see a new congressional district map and what it could look like remain a mystery.

What You Need To Know

- The Joint Committee on Congressional Redistricting held its second of two required meetings
- The Ohio legislature is tasked with drawing new congressional district boundaries

- The state is required to draw new boundaries for U.S. House seats every 10 years to account for shifts in population

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CLEVELAND — Despite Ohio going from 16 to 15 seats, Republicans drew maps to maintain at least 12 seats where they would maintain an electoral advantage

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The special bipartisan committee made up of Ohio House and Senate members held its second of two constitutionally-mandated hearings on proposals Friday, but did not say what the next steps would be.

The Joint Committee on Congressional Redistricting listened to hours of testimony. Those that spoke denounced the two Republican proposals while urging the committee and the rest of the general assembly to seriously consider passing the Senate Democratic map that calls for eight Republican-leaning and seven Democratic-leaning districts. Witnesses also lambasted the redistricting process for not being open and transparent.

Katy Shanahan, the state's director for All On The Line, got emotional during her testimony. She said Ohioans, who were clear in 2015 and 2018 about their expectations for redistricting, have expressed their disappointment to her about the actions of the Republican-led legislature and the GOP's proposals.

"They call us crying, asking us what the point is in engaging in this process if ultimately the message that you all are sending is that you don't care about what any of us have to say," said Shanahan.

Her statement received applause from the crowd and an apology from Senator Vernon Sykes, D-Akron.

"I'm sorry that you and the public are disappointed about this process," said Sykes.

Meanwhile, the chair of the committee, State Rep. Shane Wilkin, R-Hillsboro, focused on maintaining order.

"We set the rules out early on — applause, cheers, boos will not be tolerated," said Wilkin.

Others addressed the committee echoed similar sentiments to Shanahan, including Richard Gunther, a member of the Ohio Citizens Redistricting Commission which introduced its own 'Unity Map' at the hearing. ^{32°}

CLEVELAND, OH - DECEMBER 8, 2021

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"I see no reason why any democratic legislature would vote for these outrageously biased maps which are even worse than our current map," said Gunther.

As Wilkin was ending the meeting, State Rep. Beth Liston, D-Dublin, tried to figure out what is next in the process.

"Do we know if this committee is going to meet and if there's going to be a unified proposal coming before the committee," Liston questioned.

Wilkin responded, "Me and the co-chair (Sen. Theresa Gavarone, R-Bowling Green) will be discussing that after this meeting and we will let everyone know as quickly as possible."

A person in the crowd asked how they would know to which Wilkin replied, "We'll get it out just like we have everything else. At this point, committee stands adjourned."

After the hearing, Ohio Senate Majority Whip Rob McColley, R-Napoleon, the sponsor of his caucus' plan, said his idea is the most competitive map. The Senate GOP, like the House GOP, have laid out proposals to maintain or increase the GOP's current congressional representation despite voters voting closer to a 50-50 split over the last 10 years. However, McColley did make one acknowledgement.

"I'd be very surprised if any one of the four maps is the map that proceeds. I think we're going to take into consideration a lot of what we've heard here," said McColley.

Now that the joint committee has done what it is obligated to do, and that is just hold hearings, it would appear the focus shifts back to the full legislature. Whichever proposal moves forward will have to pass out of both chambers and then be signed by the governor no later than Nov. 30. A 10-year map hinges on support from Democrats. Otherwise, it will be a four-year map.

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Lawmakers miss first congressional redistricting deadline

 spectrumnews1.com/oh/columbus/news/2021/09/30/ohio-lawmakers-miss-first-congressional-redistricting-deadline



COLUMBUS, Ohio — Ohio lawmakers have missed another deadline related to redistricting. The state legislature's first constitutionally-mandated target to get a congressional district map drawn for the next decade was midnight Thursday.

What You Need To Know

- The Ohio General Assembly was supposed approve a new congressional district map
 - The deadline was Thursday, Sept. 30 at midnight
 - Democrats introduced a last-second map while Republicans had not submitted a proposal
 - The Ohio Redistricting Commission has until the end of the month to host hearings and approve a map
-

The Ohio General Assembly was supposed approve a new congressional district map. That did not happen.

"I'm profoundly disappointed that they're not honoring the Constitution and even trying to bring a map to the people," said Jen Miller with the League of Women Voters of Ohio.

Hearings were also supposed to have been scheduled and taken place by the deadline with an official map being introduced, adopted and publicly debated.

"In 2018, almost 75% of the voters voted to approve a new way of mapmaking that would be transparent and bipartisan and collaborative," Miller said. "And instead, we're seeing absolutely no respect for voters."

On Wednesday, Ohio Senate Democrats unveiled a last-second proposal calling for eight Republican and seven Democratic districts.

"I think it's important that we meet these deadlines and so our introduction of the bill demonstrates that it can be done," said Sen. Vernon Sykes, D-Akron.

Unsurprisingly, Ohio Senate Republicans, who have not introduced its own map, were not fans of the Dem's idea.

A majority caucus spokesperson said the maps include "A fatter snake on the lake, the district around Columbus gives new meaning to the 'horseshoe' and the 7th looks like a big thumbs up for maybe a new member of Congress."

The congressional process now goes to the Ohio Redistricting Commission which has until the end of the month to host hearings and approve a map before the second constitutionally-mandated deadline comes around.

"We haven't really arranged a date yet. I'll have discussions with the Senate President (Matt Huffman) and the others and co-chair (Vernon) Sykes to see when we can do that," said Ohio House Speaker Robert Cupp, R-Lima.

Just like in the legislative map making process, in order for the commission to pass a 10-year map, both Democrats on the seven-member panel have to approve of them. If not, it will be another four-year map.

Should the commission not get the job done by Oct. 31, it goes back to the state legislature. From there, a 10-year map only works if at least 50% of Democrats in the Ohio House and Ohio Senate are on board.

Miller said if what she called another partisan, gerrymandered map gets approved, the League of Women Voters of Ohio will either file a lawsuit and/or look to bring another ballot initiative to Ohioans.

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Huffman, Matt	Ohio	Wednesday, September 15, 2021	Download

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Sykes, Vernon	House & Senate Democratic Caucus	Monday, September 13, 2021	Download
Huffman, Matt	Ohio Senate President	Thursday, September 9, 2021	Download
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No meetings, no map mean Ohio Redistricting Commission could punt mapmaking to lawmakers

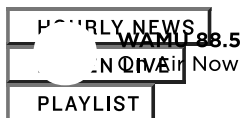
JESSIE BALMERT | Cincinnati Enquirer

With just over a week left before its deadline to pass congressional maps, the Ohio Redistricting Commission has done nothing publicly to meet that goal.

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Despite voter-approved anti-gerrymandering reforms, Ohio GOP still draws lopsided map

November 24, 2021 · 3:41 PM ET

Heard on All Things Considered

ANDY CHOW (STATEHOUSE NEWS BUREAU)

FROM THE STATEHOUSE NEWS BUREAU

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Republican state Sen. Rob McColley presents a new congressional district map, drawn by the Senate Republican Caucus.

Andy Chow/Ohio Public Radio

Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine, a Republican, has signed into law a congressional map that creates 15 new districts in the state, but anti-gerrymandering advocates are slamming the map saying it was drawn to keep a Republican stronghold in Ohio.

The plan has 12 seats that either heavily favor or lean in favor of Republicans. That's 80% of the districts in a state that voted for former President Donald Trump with 53% of the vote in 2020.

Voter rights groups say Republican lawmakers went out of their way to carve the map in a way that gives them an advantage.

"It is full of weird shapes and squiggly lines," says Jen Miller, executive director of the League of Women Voters of Ohio. "Maps don't look like this unless you're trying to secure a partisan outcome rather than fairly representing voters."



NATIONAL

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Republicans defended the districts saying that they keep most of Ohio's largest cities whole and split fewer counties than the districts drawn 10 years ago.

There are six districts where the margin between Republican voters and Democratic voters is less than 10%. But of those six districts, five still lean in favor of the GOP.

"I don't think we should go into any map-making process and say, 'Okay, we have to have seven that are guaranteed to be one party and eight guaranteed to be the other party,' " says Republican State Sen. Rob McColley. "I don't think that's what the voters wanted."

2018 Ohio redistricting reforms

State lawmakers created the map under a new process approved by Ohio voters in 2018. The change was part of a movement to reform redistricting and prevent

gerrymandering. A provision in the state constitutional amendment says leaders could not draw a map that "unduly favors or disfavors a political party or its incumbents."

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Democratic State Rep. Stephanie Howse from Cleveland chided Republicans in a heated floor debate, saying this map ignores the will of the voters.

"That is not what people voted for in May of 2018. They deserve better. We need to do better. And we need to absolutely vote this mess down," Howse said.

In the same debate, Republican state Rep. Bill Seitz from Cincinnati said Ohio has been trending red and that elections depend on any given candidate.

" 'Fair', ladies and gentlemen, is in the eyes of the beholder," Seitz said. "We have followed the Constitution. We have done our duty. We have listened to the people. Listening to them does not mean agreeing with them."



We have listened to the people. Listening to them does not mean agreeing with them.

Ohio Republican state Rep. Bill Seitz

The result of the new map could have national implications. It takes a state that previously had 12 Republican and four Democratic delegates and potentially tips the scales of power in the U.S. House of Representatives by eliminating two safe Democratic seats and creating a possible 13th district that's winnable for the GOP.

Ohio has become the latest state to finalize a new map. Democrats in states such as Illinois and Maryland have been criticized for proposing maps that favor their party. But the new maps around the country have, so far, resulted in more safe districts for Republicans.

Since the Ohio map did not get bipartisan support from Democrats, it will only be in place for four years, instead of the regular 10-year span, another provision of the 2018 redistricting reforms.

And advocates say they're not going down without a fight.

"This map is unconstitutional because it slices and dices communities purely to unduly favor one political party," says Miller.

The National Redistricting Action Fund, an affiliate of the National Democratic Redistricting Committee, filed a challenge in the Ohio Supreme Court saying the new map violates the state Constitution.

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POLITICO



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The GOP-controlled state legislature plans to pass a new congressional map this week that shreds two Democratic seats, but it will only stand for the next four years.





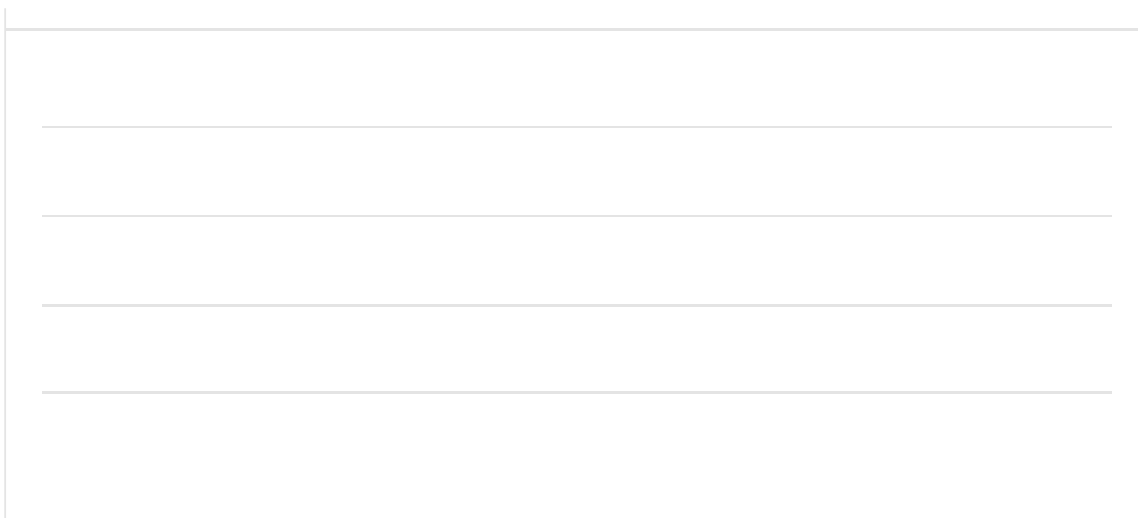
Ohio voters in 2018 overwhelmingly approved a ballot measure that put guardrails on state legislators ahead of the next redistricting.

But now that Republicans in Columbus are working to finalize a new congressional map this week, they're essentially ignoring those limits.

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The constitutional amendment passed three years ago gave state legislators a choice: Pass new district lines that earn support from both parties, and they will stand for the full decade. If the map passes on a party-line vote, it will only be in effect for the next two elections and need to be replaced in four years.

The goal of the amendment was to encourage lawmakers in both parties to work together in redistricting and produce maps that reflect the state's political orientation. But the GOP, which controls every lever of state government in Ohio, is instead moving at break-neck speed on congressional lines that could favor the party in 13 of its 15 districts.



Democrats can only rail against the process — and vote no.

“The overwhelming mandate and desire in Ohio was to have fair maps. That’s what they wanted,” said state Rep. Richard Brown, the leading Democrat on the state House’s Government Oversight committee. “Well, that’s not what they’re getting. They’re getting the same old gerrymandered maps as they got in 2011 — and actually it’s probably worse now than it was in 2011.”

The congressional map proposal is on a less-than-four-day trek through the legislative process: First proposed in the state Senate on Monday night and passed on Tuesday, the bill is expected to receive an up-or-down vote in the state House on Thursday.

Republicans insist their maps are fair, despite Democratic opposition. State Sen. Rob McColley, who sponsored the bill in the state Senate, did not respond to a request for comment. But in a statement earlier this week, he bragged that [the map keeps seven of the state's eight largest cities](#) — Cleveland, Cincinnati, Akron, Toledo, Youngtown, Dayton and Canton — wholly contained within one district each.

“Not since the mid-’60s have these seven major cities been whole, and for the first time in more than 150 years Cincinnati will be contained in a single district,” McColley wrote in the statement. “This is truly historic.”

But Democrats and other critiques of the map design refute his claims. The proposed map, which must account for the one district Ohio lost in reapportionment after the 2020 census, would keep deep-blue seats in Cleveland and Columbus, but targets the other two Democratic districts for defeat.



Democratic Rep. Tim Ryan is vacating his seat to run for Senate, but the new map eliminates what was a district now-President Joe Biden carried narrowly in 2020. Meanwhile, the GOP map would break up Democratic Rep. Marcy Kaptur's current district, which snakes along the shore of Lake Erie to keep Democrats away from GOP held seats around it. Instead, the Lakeshore would be divided among red-leaning seats.

McColley, as the sponsor of the substitute bill, was questioned about the quality of his map at Wednesday's state House Government Oversight Committee hearing. In addition to questions about the partisan advantage, he was asked about the combination of urban communities with Appalachian communities within a single district and how other counties were divided into different districts, including Hamilton County and its Black population.

Without any Democratic support, this map will only be allowed to be used for four years as opposed to the usual 10 years because of one of the new reforms. Brown, the top Democrat on the state House committee, said he believes Republicans might have been OK with using that loophole all along.

That's because they redrew the state legislative lines using the same process: A party-line vote that, combined with the state's political orientation — an

increasing Republican lean, though still competitive — will likely keep the GOP in charge come 2025.

“The Republicans in Ohio have done absolutely everything they can to maintain their unearned supermajorities ... so they can maintain power without ever being accountable to the people in this state,” said state House Minority Leader Emilia Strong Sykes. “It is not only harming our state, it is harming our democracy and devastating the public trust that people have in their government.”




Democrats are already telegraphing their intentions to sue if the map is approved, and the state court system is rife with cases regarding state legislative maps approved earlier this year, brought by the American Civil Liberties Union and other voting rights groups.

Good-government advocates also balked at the speed with which the state legislature is working. Catherine Turcer, the executive director of Common Cause of Ohio, said the latest Republican map couldn't fully be evaluated before its first hearing, which was [about 16 hours after it was released](#). And the initial bill was missing shapefiles for the redrawn maps, which are needed for analysis.

Earlier this year, hundreds of residents testified before the state Redistricting Commission, which redraws state legislature district lines, and participated in field hearings with state officials — but no one will be able to weigh in specifically on this congressional map before the votes this week.

“[Republicans] established a pattern of ensuring that they’re not going to have good participation, they’re not going to have good input on the maps,” said Turcer. “And I don’t think we should procrastinate and wait until the very last minute ... But there’s no reason to go this quickly unless it’s to ram it through with no real questions and no real public input.”



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OHIO NEWS

Ohio Republicans release redistricting map, hearing set for Wednesday

by: [Daniel Griffin](#)

Posted: Nov 15, 2021 / 08:59 PM EST

Updated: Nov 16, 2021 / 03:08 PM EST

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COLUMBUS (WCMH) — Ohio's Speaker of the House has released the Republicans' Congressional redistricting map proposal, saying it could be voted on by the full House this Thursday.

Speaker Robert Cupp called the proposed map “rational, constitutional, and it achieves the objectives Ohio voters overwhelmingly endorsed in May of 2018.”

The congressional map can determine who represents Ohio in Washington D.C. and can also impact how and what issues get attention.

Ohio Statehouse likely to miss upcoming redistricting deadline >

In a memo to Republican House members, Cupp listed the following as highlights of the proposed map:

- The map does not unduly favor or disfavor any political party or its incumbents.
- Seven of Ohio's eight largest cities are wholly contained within congressional boundaries. This is the first time in fifty years this has been achieved. The exception is Columbus, whose population exceeds the population limit.
- Cincinnati is wholly contained in one congressional district for the first time in over 100 years.
- 76 of Ohio's 88 counties are not split by congressional district lines. The Ohio Constitution permits up to 23 county splits. This map has only 12 county splits.
- The map contains more competitive districts than any map introduced in the Ohio General Assembly.

The House Government Oversight Committee will meet Wednesday to consider the proposal, with a full House vote expected Thursday.

Democrats are already saying the map doesn't go far enough to address the state's current gerrymandered map, noting that 13 of the 15 districts lean Republican.

Lawmakers have until the end of November to finalize a map which Gov. Mike DeWine will then need to sign.

The proposed map is below.

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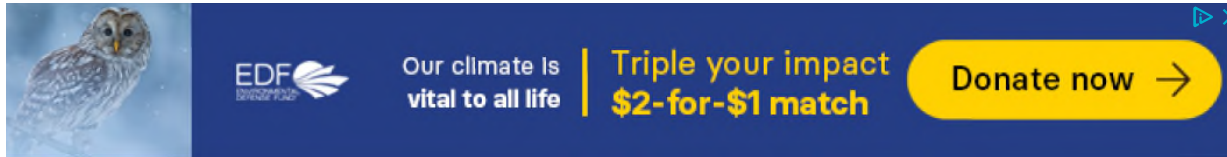
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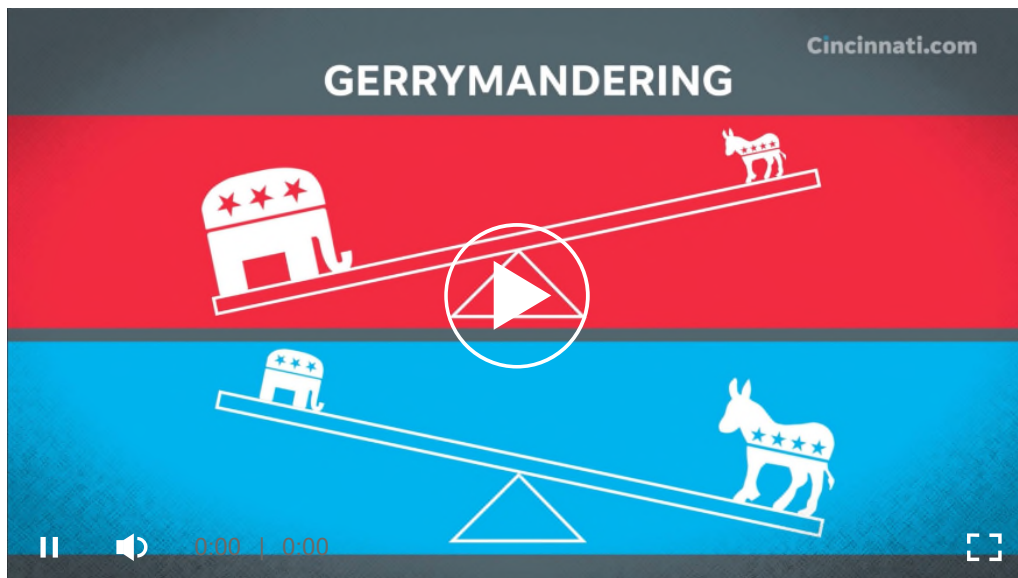



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Ohio Republicans unveil new congressional map. See it here.

JESSIE BALMERT , LAURA A. BISCHOFF | The Columbus Dispatch



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☰ The Ohio Senate Republicans unveiled a proposed congressional district map. It is expected to be approved this week, though it's unclear whether Democrats will support ... **Show more** ▾

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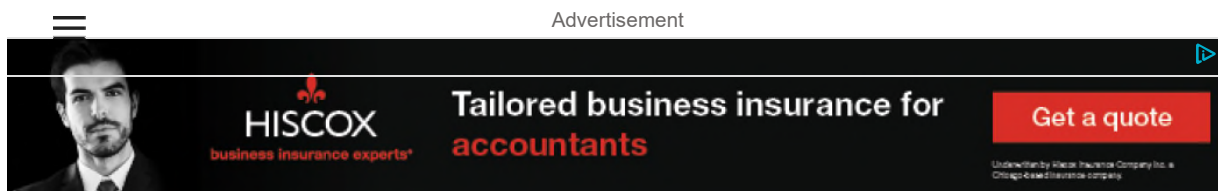
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CINCINNATI > | DECEMBER 8, 2021

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Matt Huffman, Ohio Senate President (File photo/AP)

POLITICS

Ohio Senate to resume redistricting process

BY JUSTIN BOGGS | OHIO

PUBLISHED 11:56 AM ET NOV. 15, 2021

COLUMBUS, Ohio — After a joint committee of Ohio House and Senate members held two required meetings to consider Ohio's proposed U.S. House districts, there were questions on what would happen next.

What You Need To Know

- The Ohio Senate will hold a committee hearing Tuesday on proposed districts for Ohio's U.S. House seats
- Lawmakers are required to finalize new districts by the end of November in time for the 2022 election

- If lawmakers fail to gain bipartisan consensus, the districts will have to be redrawn in four years instead of 10 years

40°

CINCINNATI > DECEMBER 8, 2021
 • Advocates for equal districts are also planning on being at the Statehouse Tuesday as they claim proposals give Republicans an unfair advantage LOG IN

On Monday, Ohio Senate Republicans announced that the Local Government and Elections Committee will hold a hearing on Tuesday to consider Senate Republicans' version of the map. According to analysis by Dave's Redistricting, [the map would give Ohio Republicans](#) an advantage in 13 seats while Democrats would hold an advantage in two seats.

The process, known as gerrymandering, packs Democratic-leaning voters into two districts, centered in Cleveland and Columbus, in an effort to maximize the number of Republican districts.

Ohio will have its number of U.S. House seats reduced from 16 to 15 due to changes in population.

The last time lawmakers drew new maps was in 2011. In all five elections since, Ohio Republicans won 12 of the 16 seats. According to official results from the Ohio Secretary of State, Republican U.S. House candidates averaged 55% of the vote share in the five elections from 2012-20.

As lawmakers hold a hearing Tuesday, advocates for fair districts are scheduled to [hold a news conference at the Statehouse and meet with lawmakers](#).

"Based on Ohio's average vote share for the past ten years, a fair congressional map will consist of seven Democratic seats and eight Republican seats. Initial analyses say this Republican-drawn map might allow Democrats only two seats," said the advocacy group Equal Districts in a statement. "This proposal is worse than the current gerrymandered map Ohioans soundly rejected at the polls."

Senate Majority Whip Rob McColley, R-Napoleon, said his caucus' plan is constitutional because Ohio's 11.7 million people are equally divided.

"This map truly balances 'one person, one vote' with 13 districts having exactly 786,630 people and two districts having 786,629. That is as close as we can get as possible to 'one person, one vote,'" said McColley.

The General Assembly has until the end of the month to either pass a 10-year bipartisan map or a one-sided map that lasts four years. **40°**

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Spectrum News 1 reporter Josh Rultenberg contributed to this report.

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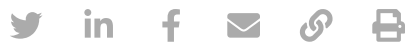
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POLITICS & GOV

The money and interests targeting Ohio's legislature and Supreme Court in 2020

BY: TYLER BUCHANAN - FEBRUARY 17, 2020 1:00 AM



A photo of the Ohio Statehouse from Wikimedia Commons.

It's not an understatement to say this November's General Election will have monstrous

implications.

Everything comes to a head in this 2020 cycle: the legislatures, the courts, the census, control of the new redistricting effort and a presidential race sure to bring immense turnout this fall.

As such, both political parties are doing everything they can in Ohio to ensure a successful November at the polls. Republicans want to maintain their power in the legislature and the courts. Democrats want to take hold of the courts for the first time in decades and put an end to partisan gerrymandering.

Various Republican and Democratic groups are targeting Ohio with political power – current and in the future – on the line.

Major political interests, from charter schools to energy companies, are pouring vast sums of money into these efforts, reporting from the Capital Journal finds.

GOP fighting to maintain control



 Pictured is the Thomas J. Moyer Ohio Judicial Center where the Ohio Supreme Court meets. [Photo courtesy Wikimedia Commons..](#)

The Republican Party sees the Ohio Supreme Court as an important cog in its effort to maintain political control. The outcome of two judicial elections this November may have a wider impact on state politics.

This is why: Ohio's legislative districts are redrawn after each decennial census. In 2018, voters here approved a new process in which the new map will be drawn by the state legislature. The map will require bipartisan support in order to be adopted, or else a separate Ohio Redistricting Commission will draw and approve the districts.

Republicans have supermajorities (more than 60 percent representation) in both the Ohio House and Senate. Their hold on the chambers is unlikely to be challenged in this year's elections, meaning the GOP will have a heavy hand in drawing the new map.

If there is a resulting legal battle stemming from this redistricting process, the Ohio Supreme Court may get involved. The [U.S. Supreme Court ruled last year](#) that partisan gerrymandering is an issue best adjudicated by state supreme courts.

To have a majority in both the Statehouse and the Ohio Supreme Court would give Republicans control of both ends of the process.

The Republican State Leadership Committee, an organization focused on down-ballot races at the state level, has several initiatives related to this effort.

RSLC's Judicial Fairness Initiative specifically deals with state courts and previously named Ohio a target state in 2014 and 2016.

The leadership committee and its Judicial Fairness Initiative have each spent a considerable sum with FlexPoint Media, a New Albany company. In total, FlexPoint Media received around \$900,000 to conduct "media placement" work. The company is led by Tim Cameron, a former Republican strategist who once worked for a Super PAC supporting Newt Gingrich's 2012 presidential campaign.

(That \$900,000 expenditure followed a \$5,000 contribution by FlexPoint to the RSLC in early 2019, a return on investment approaching 18,000%.)

Another RSLC initiative known as Right Lines GOP is focused on winning state legislatures ahead of the impending redistricting efforts.

The Buckeye State is among 14 across the country being targeted by Right Lines GOP.

"Our Party's success nationally depends on our Party's success in the states," [its website notes](#).

RSLC conducted a similar campaign a decade ago for the 2010 redistricting cycle [known as REDMAP](#).

The 2020 effort features a "Speakers Advisory Council" of former U.S. House Speakers Paul Ryan, John Boehner and Newt Gingrich. Ryan's involvement led to criticism from the largest newspaper in his home state of Wisconsin, [which wrote](#) in an editorial that Ryan is "doubling down on gerrymandering that has helped his GOP."

The impact of gerrymandering

Ohio gerrymandering has unquestionably favored Republican candidates over the past decade.

To use the 2018 elections as an example, Republicans did receive the most total votes in Ohio's 16 Congressional districts: 52 to 47 percent. That resulted in the GOP earning 12 seats to the Democrats' four.

The districts are drawn to produce an entrenched, unshakable lead for the political parties in their respectively held districts. In the 2014, 2016 and 2018 elections combined, only two out of 48 Congressional races in Ohio were decided within a 10 percent margin.

There has not been a flipped district in a decade, because of how compacted Democratic and Republican voters are placed in these Ohio districts.

Who is funding these GOP initiatives?

The Republican State Leadership Committee brings in tens of millions of dollars per year in contributions. According to the Center for Responsive Politics, which tracks political spending, RSLC raised well over \$40 million in the 2018 election cycle. With so much on the

line in 2020, a host of major corporations and right-leaning donors have donated to RSLC this cycle.

Koch Industries and interests connected to Las Vegas businessman Sheldon Adelson have been major donors to RSLC over the past decade, as have companies such as Amazon, Wal-Mart, Paypal, NASCAR, Coca-Cola, Monsanto and Raytheon.

In Ohio, top donors include Marathon Petroleum based in Findlay (\$201,000 in 2019); Anthem based in Cincinnati (also \$201,000); and AT&T Services (\$50,000).

Others with an interest in having a friendly Ohio Supreme Court and Ohio Statehouse have also contributed money to RSLC over the years.

This includes FirstEnergy Corporation, which has donated \$160,000 since 2006. FirstEnergy was involved in a legal dispute last year which led to the [Ohio Supreme Court ruling](#) that a charge FirstEnergy had imposed on customers was improper. The Court later ruled 6-1 against a motion to reconsider, with one Republican justice dissenting. That was Sharon Kennedy, whose reelection effort will be bolstered by the RSLC's Judicial Fairness Initiative.

FirstEnergy was able to keep the hundreds of millions of dollars it had imposed on customers prior to the Supreme Court's ruling.

FirstEnergy also has interest in keeping the Statehouse's status quo. The corporation benefited in 2019 from the signing of House Bill 6, [which subsidizes](#) several of its power plants to the tune of \$150 million per year.

The charter school industry also features high-profile supporters of RSLC. K12 Management Inc., a for-profit online charter school company, has donated more than \$300,000 to the committee over the past decade, according to the Center for Responsive Politics.

K12 operates the Ohio Virtual Academy, which became the largest online charter school in the state following ECOT's demise in early 2018. [The charter benefited](#) when it convinced lawmakers not to punish Ohio Virtual Academy for poor academic scores of former ECOT students.

One of the biggest financial supporters of K12 Management is [the DeVos family](#). The most well-known is Betsy DeVos, who now serves as the U.S. Secretary of Education. Her husband, Richard DeVos Jr., and his three siblings, Doug, Daniel and Suzanne, are big supporters of RSLC as well – the four have donated \$1.15 million to the committee since 2015.



U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos. Photo by Alex Wong/Getty Images.

Dem group working to position party for redistricting

The Democratic Party is also focusing its sights on Ohio, though in narrower fashion and with far less money than the Republicans.

The National Democratic Redistricting Committee is led by Eric Holder, who served as attorney general under President Barack Obama. NDRC is targeting 12 states this election cycle.

According to a filing with the IRS, the committee's purpose is to "build a comprehensive plan to favorably position Democrats for the redistricting process through 2022."

NDRC plans to spend millions of dollars on state legislative and judicial elections over the next nine months, though it only plans to spend a small amount in Ohio.


Each of the committee's 12 target states outline different focuses; in Ohio, NDRC will only be supporting the House of Representatives. Republicans hold a 61-38 advantage in the House, meaning it will almost certainly have the upper hand in the map design process next year.

Still, the process will require at least 50 percent support from the minority party in each chamber.

"(A)n increase in Democratic Party representation in the legislature will help ensure more bipartisan map-drawing process," an NDRC news release states.

The news release, publicized on Friday, outlines just over \$33,000 in Ohio spending. This includes around \$20,000 in spending to the Ohio House Democratic Caucus and another \$13,300 to House Minority Leader Emilia Sykes, D-Akron.

NDRC has far less corporate support than its Republican counterpart, but several well-known donors have donated in the past few years. This includes George Soros, who contributed \$2.6 million to the committee in 2018, an IRS filing shows.

 State Rep. Emilia Sykes, D-Akron. Photo courtesy the Ohio House website.

Ohio Democrats are hoping to flip the Supreme Court, eat into Republicans' Statehouse control and deliver a win to their party's presidential nominee. Republicans, with a political and financial advantage headed into the remainder of 2020, hope to maintain power as the redistricting process approaches.

It will all come down to Nov. 3, 2020.

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TYLER BUCHANAN

Tyler Buchanan is an award-winning journalist who has covered Ohio politics and government for the past decade. A Bellevue native and graduate of Bowling Green State University, he most recently spent 6 1/2 years as a reporter and editor of The Athens Messenger and Vinton-Jackson Courier newspapers. He is a member of the BG News Alumni Society Board and was a 2019 fellow in the Kiplinger Program in Public Affairs Journalism.

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



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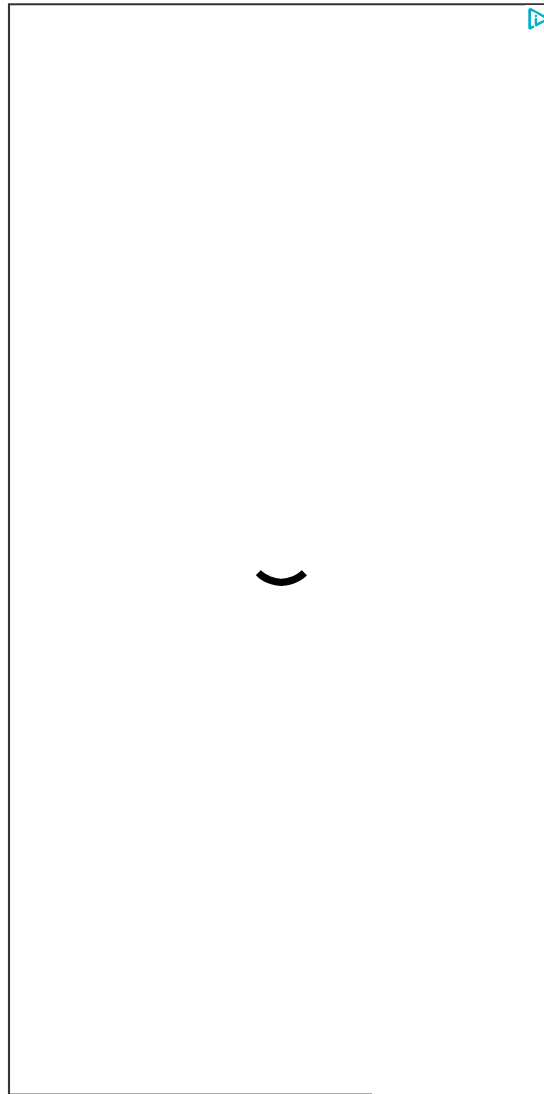
By Jim Gaines, Staff Writer

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.

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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.

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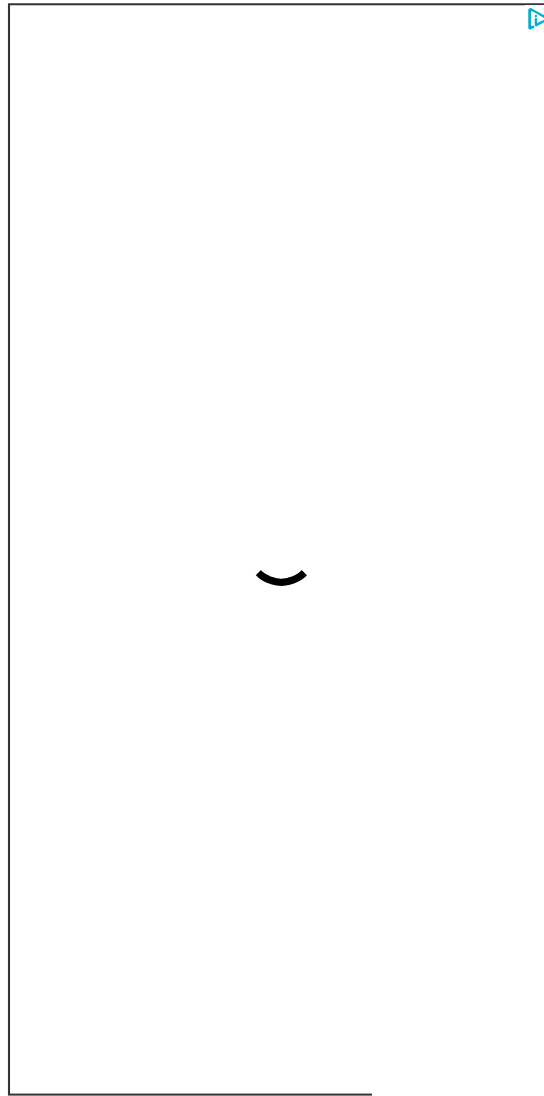
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The new process for drawing those districts, established in 2018 via state constitutional amendment, says legislators must hold at least two public hearings before approving a map.

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.

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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.”

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Ohio Politics

Ohio Redistricting Commission to hold meeting, but won't approve congressional maps before adjourning

Updated: Oct. 27, 2021, 1:15 a.m. | Published: Oct. 26, 2021, 1:39 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



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

COLUMBUS, Ohio -- After weeks of public inactivity, the Ohio Redistricting Commission will hold its first and only meeting this week to consider congressional map plans. But it won't be passing anything before a Oct. 31 deadline, meaning responsibility to redraw Ohio's congressional maps is headed back to the Republican-controlled state legislature.

The redistricting commission will meet at 10 a.m. on Thursday at the Ohio Statehouse in Columbus to consider maps that have been introduced, including those by Ohio Senate Democrats, [according to a meeting agenda](#).

The commission will give map sponsors the opportunity to testify about their proposals. But Ohio Republicans who control the commission won't be introducing a map of their own, much less voting on a Republican plan, according to House Republicans. And members of the public won't be allowed to comment on the plans or on the issue generally.

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Under Ohio's new redistricting rules, the commission's authority to pass new congressional maps will expire at the end of the month, with responsibility then shifting back to the Republican-controlled state legislature. That means three Republicans on the seven-member Ohio Redistricting Commission -- Gov. Mike DeWine, Secretary of State Frank LaRose and state Auditor Keith Faber -- will be cut out of the process.

House Speaker Bob Cupp, a Lima Republican who co-chairs the redistricting commission, told reporters about his plans for the commission at the Statehouse on Tuesday. An official announcement is going out soon, according to a spokesman.

The leading Democrat on the redistricting commission, Akron Sen. Vernon Sykes, for weeks [has been calling for the commission to hold hearings](#) to consider map proposals. But Cupp, as the co-chair of the commission, has to also agree to hold a meeting. Republicans have stood pat, indicating they plan to run the clock until November. They've blamed legal challenges to the state legislative maps commission Republicans approved last month. The process also has been set back by the delayed completion of the U.S. Census, the results of which are used to design the maps.

But GOP legislative leaders also have said they think there are strategic advantages to bypassing the commission and waiting until November.

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Senate President Matt Huffman, a Lima Republican who has played a lead role in redistricting, told reporters last week he thinks it will be easier to negotiate when the only involved parties are House and Senate Republican and Democratic leaders.

“I do think it makes a difference if we have this sort of seven-headed animal, the redistricting commission, come to a decision, versus the General Assembly, which is one vote in the Senate and one vote in the House,” Huffman said.

The Republican-dominated legislature will have until the end of November to approve maps. In order to get maps that will last for the typical 10 years, at least one-third of Democrats in the House and Senate will have to approve them.

Legislative Republicans could approve maps with a simple majority vote and no Democratic support. But those maps would expire after four years.

Legislative Republicans missed another congressional redistricting deadline when they failed to introduce a map proposal by the end of September, giving temporary control over the process to the redistricting commission. Passing maps in September would have required votes from half of legislative Democrats, a higher bar for bipartisanship than the rules require in November.

Huffman told reporters last week his plan is to seek bipartisan, 10-year maps. But the redistricting process so far has shown little evidence of bipartisanship, with Republicans on the commission approving state legislative maps that are expected to award the GOP two-thirds of legislative seats, preserving their veto-proof majority while prompting lawsuits from a multitude of voter-rights groups, Democratic-linked groups and generally progressive advocacy groups.

Ohioans in 2015 and 2018 overhauled the state's redistricting process, overwhelmingly approving anti-gerrymandering reforms that created the Ohio Redistricting Commission and put in place new rules meant to promote bipartisanship, representational fairness and transparency while limiting how counties and cities can be split.

But hundreds of pages of depositions and other legal filings, filed as evidence in the redistricting lawsuits, show that maps were drawn by Republican staffers with oversight from Huffman and Cupp, but with little input from anyone else on the seven-member redistricting commission. Republicans also have contended that language in the 2015 reform directing the maps to be politically representative of statewide voter preferences are not legally enforceable, an argument rejected by voting-rights advocates, Democrats and a leading state constitutional expert.

Anticipating that the redistricting commission would adjourn without approving a new congressional map, House Minority Leader Emilia Sykes, the second Democrat on the Ohio Redistricting Commission, on Tuesday called on Republican legislative leaders to make preparations for moving something through the legislature.

In a letter, Sykes called on Cupp and Huffman to organize a special redistricting committee, including naming committee members, by Nov. 4, to introduce a map proposal by Nov. 10 and to hold at least one of two mandatory public hearings on the maps by Nov. 15.

A proposal Senate Democrats introduced in late September is the only officially proposed congressional map plan, in a map that would draw eight Republican districts, six Democratic ones and a single toss-up district that would lean Democratic. The proposal was a nonstarter with Republicans, since it would cause the GOP to lose at least four congressional seats compared to the status quo.

Ohio's current congressional maps, drawn as a pro-Republican gerrymander in 2011, awarded 12 of the state's 16 congressional seats to Republicans, with no seat changing hands for the decade they appeared on the ballot, even though Republicans only got around 55% of the votes during that time. Ohio is losing a congressional seat after last year's U.S. Census found its population growth didn't keep up with other states.

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OHIO POLITICS

Ohio Redistricting Commission will not meet congressional redistricting deadline

BY JOSH RULTENBERG | COLUMBUS
PUBLISHED 7:45 PM ET OCT. 26, 2021

COLUMBUS, Ohio — The Ohio Redistricting Commission will not approve a new congressional district map before an Oct. 31 deadline, according to Ohio House Speaker Robert Cupp, R-Lima.

What You Need To Know

- A new congressional district map before an Oct. 31 deadline
- Ohio House Speaker Robert Cupp, R-Lima, blamed receiving census data late
- The task will go to the General Assembly

- The General Assembly's deadline is Nov. 30

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"I think it's apparent that it's not going to be possible," Cupp said Tuesday.

Cupp said not to expect a new congressional district map from the Ohio Redistricting Commission because the census data was late.

"It delayed the state legislative district maps and now the folks that were working on those on the Republican side are involved in a variety of support and information and involved in the litigation," Cupp said.

A lawsuit before the Ohio Supreme Court over the legislative maps sheds new light on how the maps were passed.

Court documents contain text messages between Secretary of State Frank LaRose, R-Ohio, and his chief of staff, Merle Madrid. LaRose questioned the rationale behind the maps calling it "asinine." LaRose went on to say that he should vote against them.

However, Madrid responded, "It will be cited in court against the GOP. Probably not worth it."

The maps were passed the next morning with LaRose siding with the rest of the Republicans on the commission.

A spokesperson for LaRose told Spectrum News he had no further comment.

"I was incredibly disappointed in the secretary because he was following his gut and he understood that the explanations that the maps weren't good. He understood how bad things were, and he still chose not to follow his conscience but to vote for an unfair map," said Catherine Turcer with Common Cause Ohio.

Meanwhile, as the redistricting process heads back to the state legislature, Ohio House Minority Leader Emilia Sykes, D-Akron, is calling for lawmakers to take steps so the state legislature may hit the ground running when it takes over Nov. 1.

Sykes sent a letter Monday to Cupp and Senate President Matt Huffman, R-Lima, asking for a joint legislative committee to meet no later than Nov. 4, details of how many officials will be appointed to the committee, details for the

congressional plan to be released by Nov. 10 and a public hearing schedule to be released with hearings beginning no later than Nov. 15.

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"Looking at prior history of the commission not being prepared and asking questions and figuring things out as we go, I suggested that before we get to it, before it comes to the General Assembly, we should spend the time figuring out these basic details that are constitutionally mandated," said Sykes.

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According to the constitutional reforms passed in 2018, the legislature must create a joint committee to hear testimony on two occasions on a proposed map. Cupp said an announcement on that and other things are still being "mapped out."

The state legislature, which went first in the congressional redistricting process, already missed its first constitutionally-mandated deadline in September.

Turcer said she is not optimistic the congressional process will be any better than the legislative process.

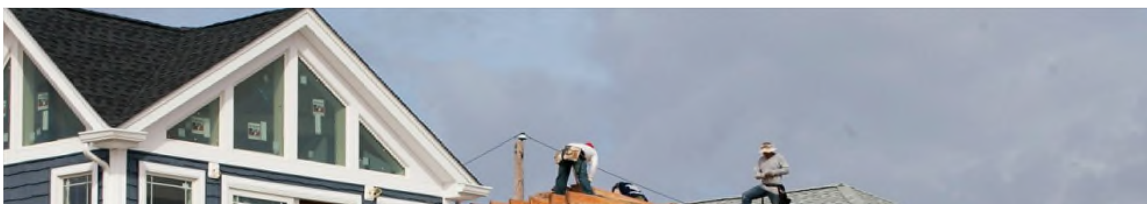
"I assume that they are being worked on behind closed doors, but we can't see what's actually happening," said Turcer. "I assume that they're checking in with members of Congress. I assume they're checking in with people who might want to run for Congress. That is not how this process should work. These maps are created for voters of Ohio. These are voting districts, and we deserve better."

The Ohio Redistricting Commission will meet Thursday morning at 10 a.m. to go over maps that have already been proposed. Cupp said there will not be a Republican map introduced nor will any maps get approved.

As far as the General Assembly's role to approve a 10-year map, 60% of lawmakers in the House and Senate and a third of the Democratic caucus in each chamber must support it. If not, there will be a four-year map.

The deadline is Nov. 30.

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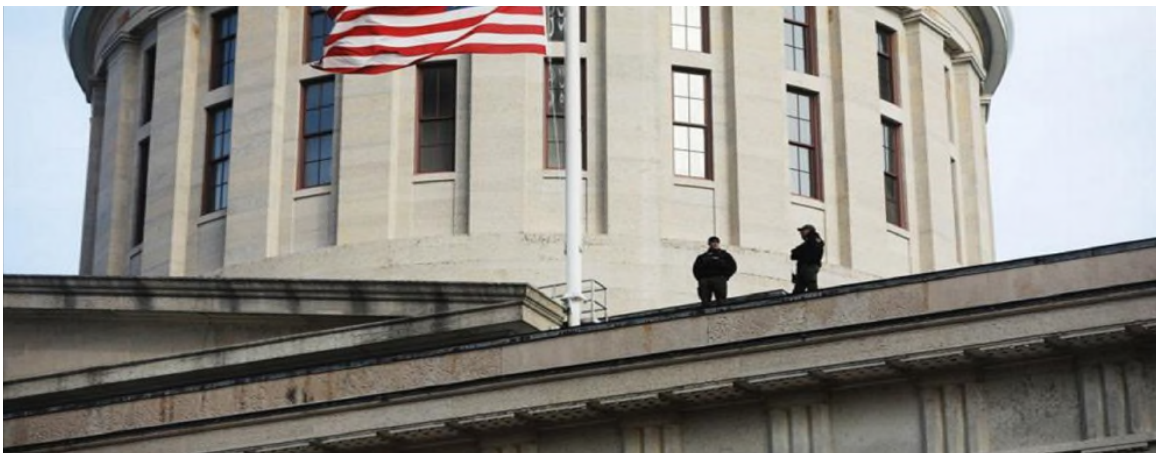




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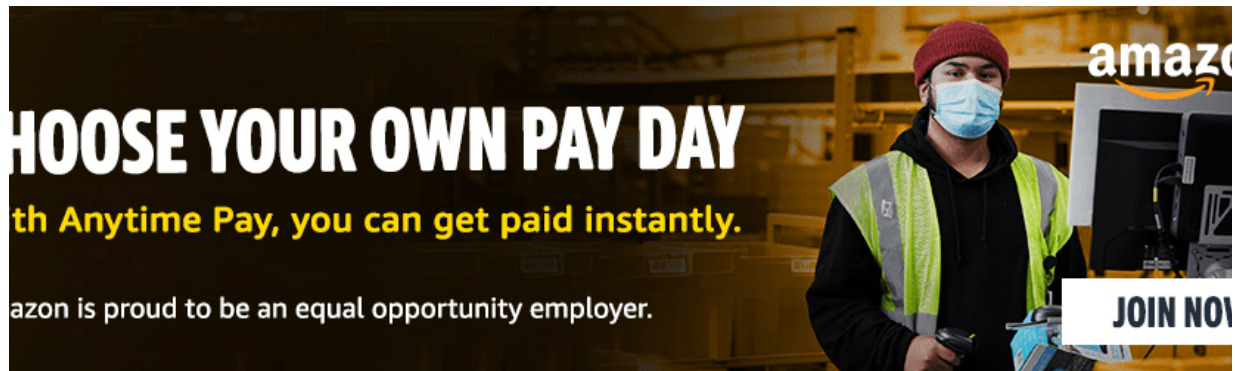
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Ohio Republicans propose congressional district maps advantaging the GOP. See them here

Jessie Balmert | The Columbus Dispatch

Republicans in the Ohio House and Senate unveiled two different maps Wednesday for the state's 15 congressional districts. Both would leave Democrats with two safe seats despite voter-approved changes to curb gerrymandering.

Ohio's current congressional delegation includes 12 Republicans and four Democrats. Maps proposed by Ohio House Republicans and Ohio Senate Republicans could give the GOP as much as a 13-2 advantage. The Senate plan has more competitive districts than the House's, according to popular redistricting analysis website Dave's Redistricting App.

See the **House GOP map here** and **Senate GOP map here**.

Neither map would give Cincinnati a Democratic district even though 57% of Hamilton County voted President Joe Biden in 2020.

More: What U.S. Census data tell us about how Ohio's congressional. Statehouse maps will be drawn



More: Ohio Senate Democrats pitch congressional map ahead of redistricting deadline

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The House GOP proposal would keep Cincinnati with Warren County, a heavily Republican area, for the 1st Congressional District, which would include both Reps. Steve Chabot, of Westwood, and Brad Wenstrup, of Columbia Tuscum, as drawn. The Senate GOP map would combine Cincinnati and several GOP counties to its east, stretching to Portsmouth.

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“People are frustrated now with how the district has been split,” said Rep. Brigid Kelly, a Democrat from Cincinnati's Hyde Park neighborhood. She said the new proposal doesn't solve those problems and wanted to know why the 1st District was crafted in that way.

Maps divide urban counties

In both maps, Columbus's 3rd Congressional District and Cleveland's 11th Congressional District would remain heavily Democratic, but the surrounding districts would give Republicans the advantage. Both GOP maps would move current Democratic Rep. Joyce Beatty's downtown condominium into GOP districts, one proposal with newly elected Rep. Mike Carey and another with Rep. Jim Jordan.

The longest-serving woman in Congress – Democratic Rep. Marcy Kaptur, of Toledo – would have little chance of reelection if either GOP proposal were enacted. The House GOP map would split the city and Senate GOP map would combine the Democratic city with several GOP counties, including Richland County's Mansfield.



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Both maps have changes that are likely to be nonstarters with legislative Democrats. For example, the 4th Congressional District represented by Jordan, of Urbana, would include Democratic strongholds in Columbus, such as Linden and Clintonville.

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The House Republican map would split Akron, dividing it into two GOP districts even though 54% of Summit County backed Biden in 2020. The Senate GOP map would not divide Akron but would combine parts of Summit County with Holmes County, home of the state's largest Amish community.

"This nakedly partisan attempt to further rig the system in their favor is not only unacceptable, it's unconstitutional," Ohio Democratic Party spokesman Matt Keyes said of the House map. "There's no world in which Ohio Democrats are going to stand by silently as the Ohio GOP tramples on the Constitution and the will of Ohio voters."

But Republican Rep. Scott Oelslager, R-North Canton, said their map would create five competitive districts, defined as a partisan index of between 45% and 55%. Sen. Rob McColley, R-Napoleon, said his map would create eight competitive districts.

"The map that you have in front of you is much more competitive than what we have right now," McColley said Wednesday.



According to Dave's Redistricting App, the House map would have nine safe seats for Republicans, two safe seats for Democrats and four "competitive" districts with the 1st Congressional District being the closest to a tossup.

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The Senate GOP map would give Republicans six safe seats and Democrats two safe seats. The remaining seven districts would be between 45% and 55% on a partisan index, including two highly competitive districts in the 13th and 15th, according to Dave's Redistricting App.

GOP mapmakers were meticulous with each district's population count, holding to the principle of "one person, one vote." Recent court decisions have offered some wiggle room for mapmakers to dispense with near-identical populations.

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The Senate GOP map splits 14 counties, far fewer than the current congressional map, which divides 23 counties. Several counties must be divided because their populations exceed that of a congressional district.

What comes next?

Ohio is one piece of the nationwide redistricting puzzle where 429 U.S. House districts in 44 states are being redrawn. The outcome of those maps could help flip control of the U.S. House of Representatives to Republicans after 2022.

After missing two deadlines, Ohio's GOP-controlled Legislature once again holds the pen for drawing congressional districts. House and Senate committees will review the proposed maps with hearings starting Thursday morning at the Ohio Statehouse.

More: Ohio is using a new process to draw state, congressional districts. Here's how it works

The map must receive support from 60% of lawmakers and 33% of Democrats to last 10 years. If the GOP can't cobble



together enough bipartisan support, Republicans could approve a map that lasts four years instead. That map must meet certain constitutional criteria, such as not unduly favoring one party over the other.

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Lawmakers have until Nov. 30 to approve a map.

Senate President Matt Huffman, R-Lima, said his goal, aspirationally, is to avoid last-minute work on a final map in late November. Hearings are set for Thursday morning so the public can provide feedback on the maps.

Huffman said any map will be limited by the geography of the state and where Ohioans live. And in the end, "we are a Republican state at this point."

Senate Minority Leader Kenny Yuko, D-Richmond Heights, said he hopes to use his experience as a union negotiator to reach a deal that matches Ohioans' voting preferences. But he's also aware that Republicans could seek a few Democratic votes to approve a map that doesn't work for everyone.

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"My expectations are they are going to try to pick us off," Yuko said. "I was not born yesterday."

Akron Beacon Journal reporter Doug Livingston contributed to this article.

Jessie Balmert is a reporter for the USA TODAY Network Ohio Bureau, which serves the Akron Beacon Journal, Cincinnati Enquirer, Columbus Dispatch and 18 other affiliated news organizations across Ohio.

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Posted: Oct 26, 2021 / 06:58 PM EDT

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COLUMBUS (WCMH) — After nearly two months of inaction, this Thursday the Ohio Redistricting Commission plans to meet, but leaders admit that it's already too late to make their second deadline.

Lawmakers missed two deadlines for the Congressional district maps. Now they are on to plan C. Why should people be concerned?

The congressional map can determine who represents Ohio in Washington D.C. and can also impact how and what issues get attention.

This process was created after voters were unhappy with maps drawn 10 years ago, but voting rights advocates say they are being let down.

As Ohio redistricting battle goes to court, commission facing second redistricting task



Lawmakers and the commission have already missed one deadline and will miss another on Sunday for the Congressional district maps. This will leave the general assembly one month to get together and agree on a map that determines who represents Ohioans in Washington.

Republicans said late census results and the litigation are to blame for the slow process, but the League of Women Voters call that an excuse.

“Ultimately I think what they’re showing is politicians can’t be trusted with something so important as creating Congressional maps,” said Jen Miller, director of the League of Women Voters of Ohio.



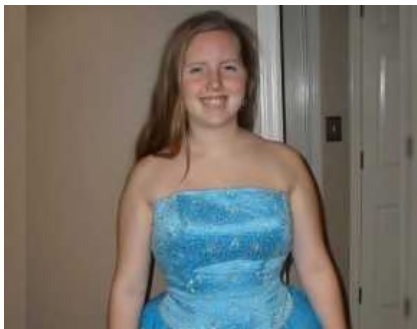
The commission will meet Thursday in a good faith effort, according to Cupp, but added there will not be a Republican map proposal available.

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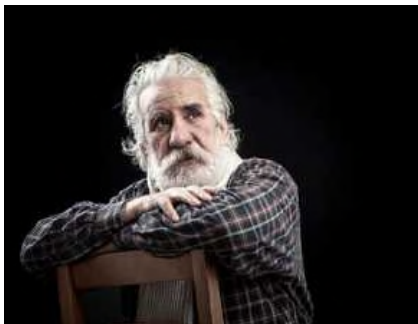
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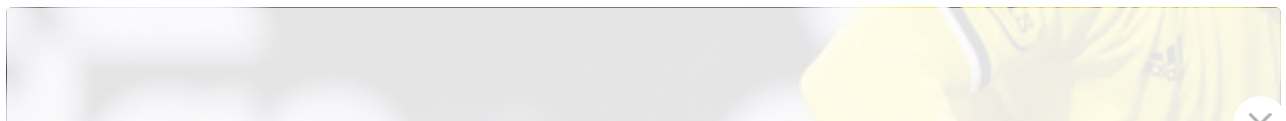
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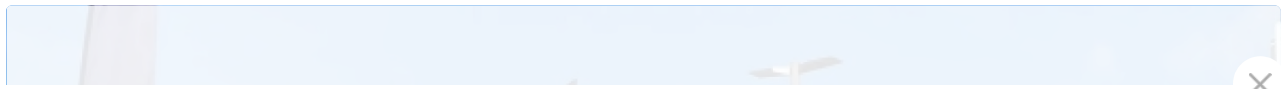
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Gerrymandering: Shading the Lines

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.

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

WKSU | By Karen Kasler

Published December 21, 2017 at 5:15 AM EST



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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

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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

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.

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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.

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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."

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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."

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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

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.

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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

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

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"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.

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

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Karen Kasler

Karen is a lifelong Ohioan who has served as news director at WCBE-FM, assignment editor/overnight anchor at WBNS-TV, and afternoon drive anchor/assignment editor in WTAM-AM in Cleveland. In addition to her daily reporting for Ohio's public radio stations, she's reported for NPR, the BBC, ABC Radio News and other news outlets. She hosts and produces the Statehouse News Bureau's weekly TV show "The State of Ohio", which airs on PBS stations statewide. She's also a frequent guest on WOSU TV's "Columbus on the Record", a regular panelist on "The Sound of Ideas" on ideastream in Cleveland, appeared on the inaugural edition of "Face the State" on WBNS-TV and occasionally reports for "PBS Newshour". She's often called to moderate debates, including the Columbus Metropolitan Club's Issue 3/legal marijuana debate and its pre-primary mayoral debate, and the City Club of Cleveland's US Senate debate in 2012.

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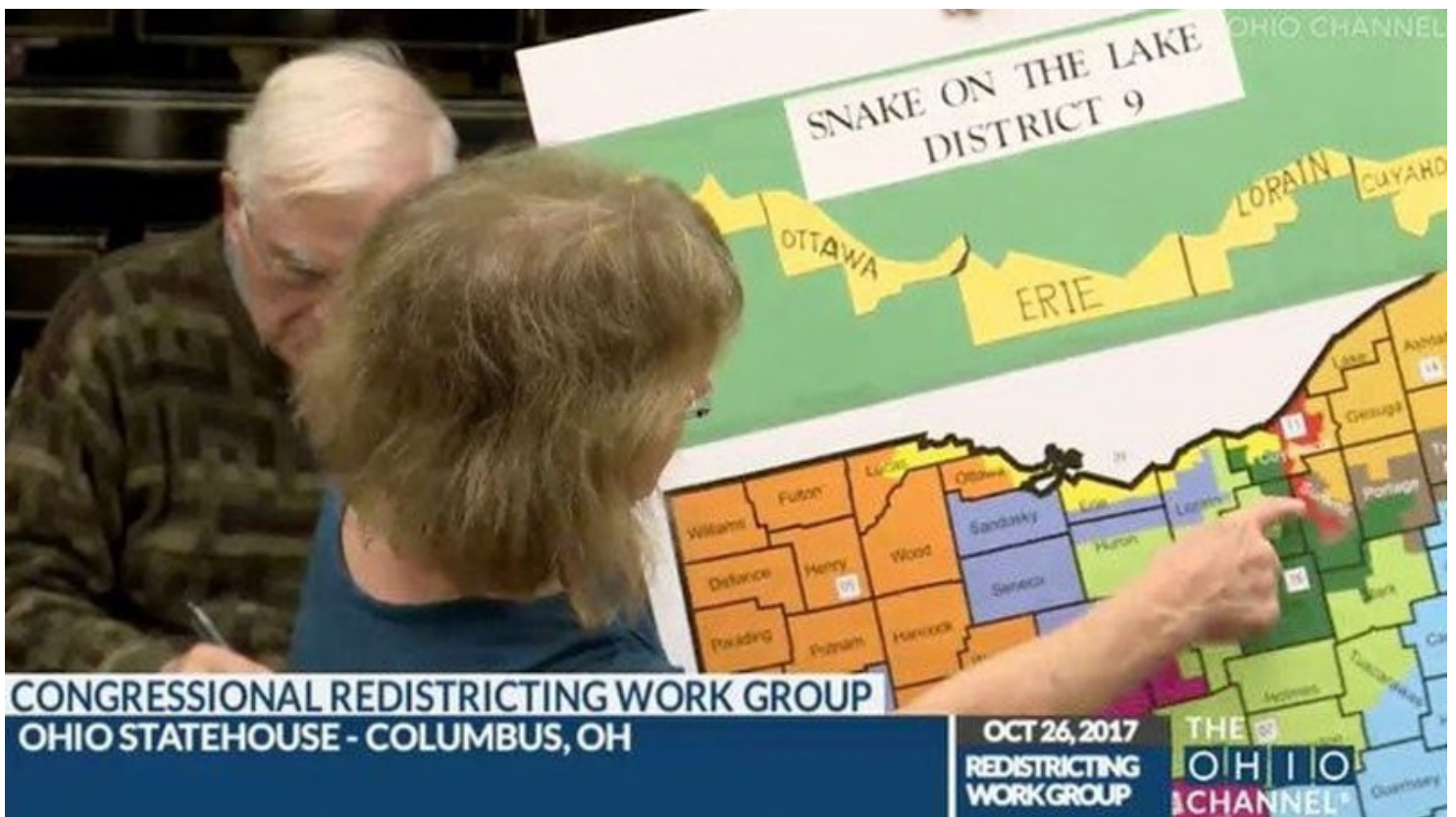
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Ohio Politics

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.

"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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Redistricting commission to miss deadline, state lawmakers to try again

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LOCAL NEWS

By Jim Gaines, Staff Writer

Updated Oct 29, 2021

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The Ohio Redistricting Commission held its only meeting to review new congressional district maps on Thursday, with members acknowledging they would not consider any maps for approval, throwing the process back to the General Assembly.

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More than 50 people showed up to the public hearing at the Ohio Statehouse, with close to half wearing Fair Districts Ohio shirts. Members of that group, the Ohio Citizens Redistricting Commission and a few others took turns — usually running over their 10-minute limit — presenting the maps they'd created and urging commissioners to act.

Explore Ohio GOP running out clock on new U.S. House maps

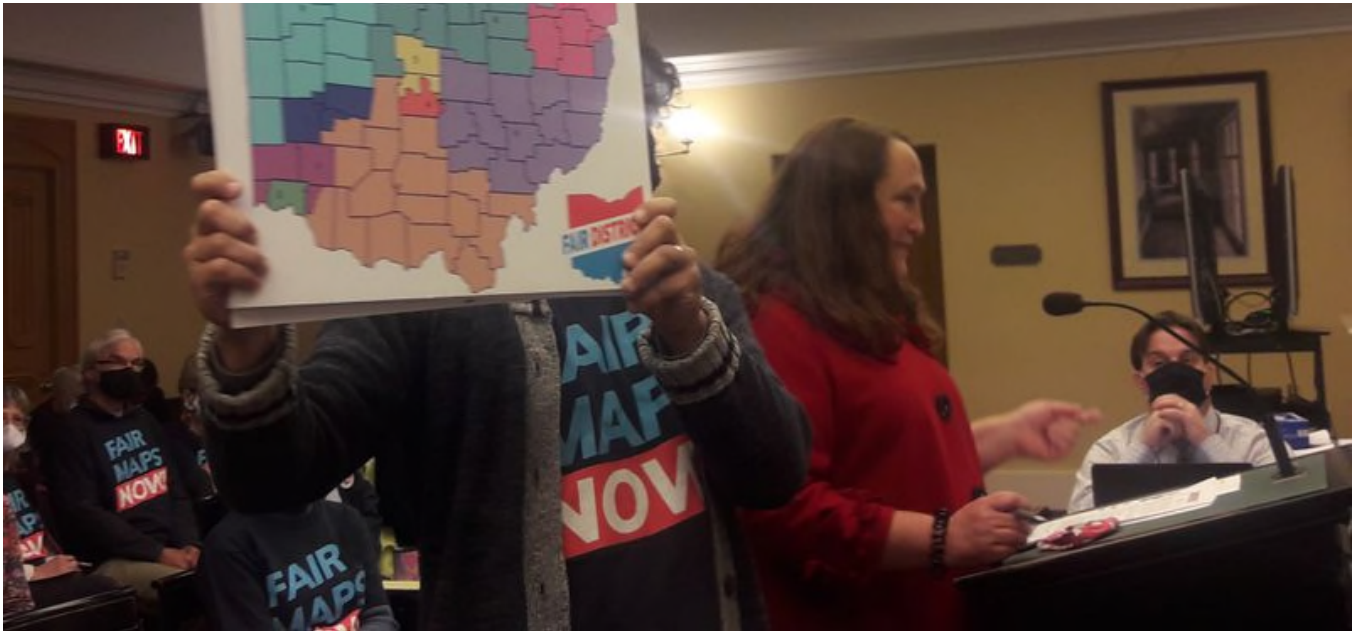
They presented maps showing various combinations of safe Republican and Democratic districts and a few competitive ones. The commission received about 60 map submissions, and on Thursday agreed to only hear testimony from people who submitted complete district plans.

Commissioners questioned how much of a difference in population between districts the courts would find acceptable.

Commission co-chair House Speaker Bob Cupp, R-Lima, showed particular concern in his questions for protecting incumbents from having to run against each other.



< Caption



Credit: Jim Gaines

Gary Gale of Stark County spoke first. His map would create six Republican, five Democratic and four competitive districts, while splitting only 10 counties — all of them among the state's most populous. Gale asked commission members to protect Ohio's rural counties from being divided, and to create districts that reflect recognizable regions of the state.

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Ohioans voted 53% Republican and 45% Democratic in the 2020 presidential election. Its current U.S. House delegation contains three Democrats and 11 Republicans, with two vacant seats to be decided in the election Nov. 2. The 11th District was previously held by a Democrat and the 15th District by a Republican.

Fair Districts Ohio sponsored a public map-drawing contest. Catherine Turcer, executive director of Common Cause Ohio — a member of the Fair Districts Ohio coalition — brought

the winning submissions.

“It is clear that it is possible to create fair, functional and constitutionally compliant maps,” Turcer said.

She said the three winning maps took care not to dilute minority representation. Creating more competitive districts will improve accountability among Ohio’s congressional delegation, something Ohioans want, Turcer said.

State Auditor Keith Faber, a commission member, said it’s inevitable that some districts will always be dominated by one party or the other.

Turcer agreed, but said mapmakers should strive for a balance between competitiveness and other factors such as compactness and following existing jurisdictional lines.

Samuel Gresham, a member of Common Cause and the Ohio Citizens Redistricting Commission, warned Republicans that their current electoral advantage would not last forever, as earlier Democratic control didn’t. He urged the commission to draw fair maps, saying voters were watching.

Minorities have long been the ones suffering the most negative impacts of gerrymandering, Gresham said, framing the redistricting debate as a civil rights issue.

“I hope you will find a way to be fair and honest about this process,” he said.

Following the three-hour hearing, commission co-chair state Sen. Virgil Sykes, D-Akron, said members gleaned useful data from the presentations, giving them a better understanding of what the public wants. Cupp called it “a good beginning” to the General Assembly’s process.

Sykes said map-drawing hearings in the legislature could start next week. He pledged to be as open and informative as possible with the public.

Cupp said, however, that while there will be additional public meetings, holding open negotiations among legislators is “not a practical, feasible process.”

“I have yet to see any negotiations that take place in full view of everybody that lead to anything productive,” he said.



Credit: Jim Gaines

Ohio must lose one of its 16 U.S. House districts, as required by 2020 census results. Each of the 15 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.

The General Assembly missed a Sept. 30 deadline to create a new congressional district map, without holding any public discussions. That threw the job to the Ohio Redistricting Commission, which has a Oct. 31 constitutional deadline.

The redistricting commission includes Gov. Mike DeWine; Secretary of State Frank LaRose; Faber; Cupp; Senate President Matt Huffman, R-Lima; Vernon Sykes; and House Minority Leader Emilia Sykes, D-Akron. Co-chairs Cupp and Vernon Sykes must both agree to convene a meeting.

The General Assembly will have from Nov. 1 to Nov. 30 to ratify a map. If a proposal can earn support of a three-fifths majority, including one-third of Democrats — three in the Senate and 12 in the House — it will be valid for 10 years.

Failing that, legislators can pass a map by simple majority vote, but it would have to be redone in four years.

Mapping Ohio Politics

Who's drawing new electoral maps and why?

In 2015 Ohio voters overwhelmingly approved a constitutional amendment creating a bipartisan commission to draw new state legislative maps, in an effort to reduce partisan gerrymandering. In 2018 voters approved another amendment on how to draw new district maps for Ohio's seats in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Reflecting state government's current makeup, the Ohio Redistricting Commission has five Republican and two Democratic members.

New districts for both the Ohio General Assembly and U.S. House seats must be drawn based on the results of a new U.S. Census. The 2020 census resulted in Ohio losing one of its 16 current U.S. House seats. The release of census data was also delayed four months by COVID-19, which some commission members blamed for the group's slow progress.

So what is the redistricting process?

For Ohio House and Senate seats, the redistricting commission faced a Sept. 15 deadline to agree upon new maps. The body held public hearings around the state but negotiated in private. If they approved a map with support from at least two members of each party — in effect, requiring support of both Democratic members — it would be valid for a decade, until the next census. If the commission approved maps without bipartisan support, it would have to be redone in four years.

For U.S. House seats, the General Assembly had until Sept. 30 to draw a new district map. But legislators made little or no attempt to do so, which sent the task back to the redistricting commission. Under the 2018 amendment, the commission has until Oct. 31 to agree on a map. If it doesn't do so, it reverts to the General Assembly with a Nov. 30 deadline.

Where do things stand now?

Commissioners barely met the deadline for new Ohio House and Senate maps, approving them at midnight Sept. 15. But they passed on a 5-2 vote without Democratic support. That means the process must be redone in four years. Already three lawsuits have been filed arguing that the maps remain gerrymandered to maintain the Republican supermajority in both House and Senate.

Two public hearings are required for approval of new congressional district maps. The redistricting commission has held one, but members acknowledge they won't meet the Oct. 31 deadline. Now the General Assembly steps back in; if legislators can create a 15-district map that garners a three-fifths overall majority and support from one-third of Democrats, it will be valid for a decade. If not, they can accept a map by simple majority vote without bipartisan support. But, like the state district maps, it would then have to be redone in four years.

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Congress & Courts

Redistricting marches toward another passing deadline

By Susan Tebben

 Ohio Capital Journal 2021-10-29



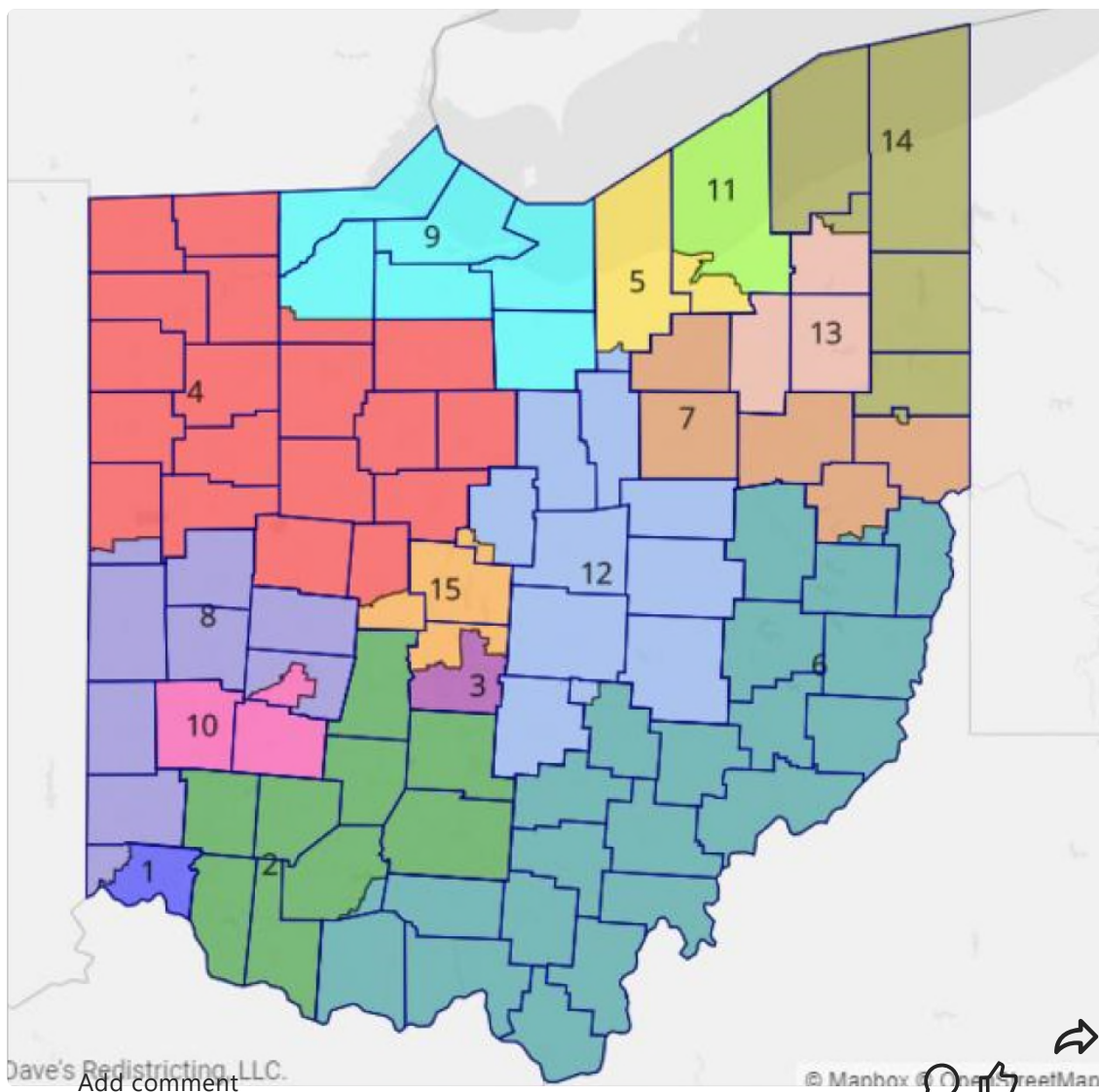
Congressional redistricting is still headed for a missed deadline even as the official commission heard proposed maps from advocates and public citizens Thursday morning.

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Ohio Redistricting Commission co-chairs House Speaker Bob Cupp and state Sen. Vernon Sykes both said they are committed to hearing from the public and conducting several public hearings beyond the one held Thursday, which appears to be the last the commission will have before the process moves back to the legislature.

Commission members saw some familiar faces turn up for the public hearing to present proposed maps they'd drawn up to present before the Oct. 31 deadline.



The first-place map, designed by John Hagner, for the Fair Districts Ohio Coalition redistricting contest. The map was one of three presented during the Ohio Redistricting Commission's Thursday meeting.

The Fair Districts Ohio Coalition was represented by Catherine Turcer, executive director of Common Cause Ohio, who presented three maps, the winners of a congressional map contest held by the coalition.

She said the maps were not meant to be final drafts, but a good jumping off point for commissioners to get to work.

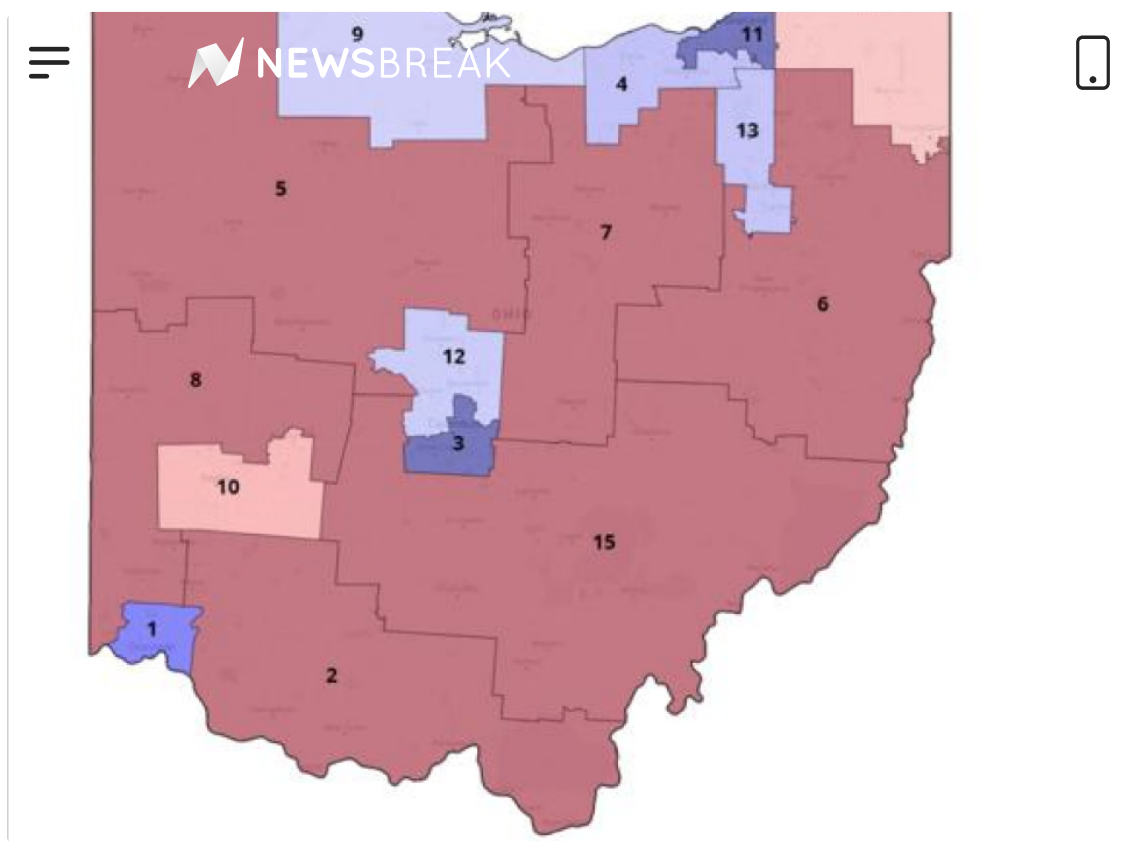
"I am really hoping when we go through this congressional process that we're actually able to see some deliberation," Turcer told the commission.

In the report on the maps, Fair Districts called the maps "vastly superior to Ohio's current congressional map on a number of specific criteria," including equal populations, adherence to the Voting Rights Act, minority representation and the fewest amount of county splits.

In the three maps that won the contest, the first place entry had six competitive districts, the second place had five, and third place also had six competitive districts. This is a significant increase from the current congressional maps, which the coalition says have only one district with party competitiveness.

Creating competitive districts is not a requirement via the constitutional amendment that dictates how the redistricting process is going this year, but the coalition took it into account as a reason a majority of voters supported the constitutional amendment.





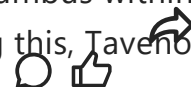
Congressional map proposed by the Ohio Citizens Redistricting Commission.



The independent Ohio Citizens Redistricting Commission also presented the congressional version of their unity maps, just as they did during the [legislative redistricting period](#).

"In our map, both Cincinnati and Cleveland exist within their own congressional district," said Chris Tavenor, a member of the OCRC. "Columbus is too big to include in just one congressional district, but it must be split responsibly to protect communities of interest."

With that in mind, the OCRC proposed maps keep 69% of Columbus within one district, and the remaining 31% in a second district. Doing this, Tavenor

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said, still “honors recognized neighborhood boundaries and attempts to avoid breaking apart communities of interest within Columbus.”  

Akron, Dayton and Toledo are all in their own congressional districts as well, under the OCRC map.

Fellow OCRC member Samuel Gresham, who made the formal presentation for the legislative unity maps, said he’s been through this redistricting process before, and has been fighting for decades against gerrymandering in the state. That has not changed with the passing years, he said.

“Look at the room of these volunteers,” Gresham said. “We’re serious as a heart attack. We are not going away. We are going to stay here ... until we get what we deserve.”

The anti-gerrymandering groups weren’t the only people presenting maps. Paul Miller said he’s part of a group called Ohioans Defending Freedom, and accused Democrats, the OCRC and “other activist groups” of trying to create “an artificial competitiveness.” He said the redistricting commission should aim for the average of statewide voting margins in developing their maps, to avoid disenfranchising voters based on what some groups may want.

“If the Democrats want more seats, they can win them at the ballot box by being reasonable and ending the ongoing destruction of our country and way of life with their radical Socialist agenda,” Miller said. “That’s my opinion.”

All the submitted maps can be viewed at the Ohio Redistricting Commission’s [website](#), along with notifications for future meetings and other public resources.

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House Speaker Bob Cupp, at left, and state Sen. Vernon Sykes, right, co-chairs of the Ohio Redistricting Commission, speak before the Thursday meeting of the ORC. Photo by Susan Tebben, OCJ.



The co-chairs of the redistricting commission say they are working to keep the process transparent and Cupp said the commission will have "plenty of public meetings" to incorporate public input.

"I'll be working as much as we can to make sure the meetings are announced well in advance," Sykes said.

Sykes said it is "still up to the will of the General Assembly" to make sure fairness is enforced as the process goes back to the legislature, and the rules in place can only do so much to avoid gerrymandering.

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"(Having rules in place) minimize how you can gerrymander, but they don't eliminate the ability to gerrymander," Sykes said.  

When asked if the legislature would be working on guidance and process for redistricting as they await legislative committees and the formulation of official map proposals, Cupp said leading a process without maps would be hard.

"I'm not sure you can do that in the abstract; I think you have to do it as you're looking at something more concrete and specific," Cupp said.

Secretary of State Frank LaRose said after talking to each other member of the commission, he's "not seeing a great interest by many others in finding that middle-ground solution."

"What I thought would be a much more productive way to do this and the way that sometimes a complex negotiation can be carried out is to find an opportunity to agree on principles, and so that was my focus from the beginning," LaRose said after the commission meeting.

But as to whether LaRose thinks the redistricting process is flawed: "To be determined."

The ORC has until Oct. 31 to approve a map, before the process heads back to the General Assembly who needs to put together a committee to decide the map makeup for the next ten years, if they can come up with bipartisan agreement. If there is no bipartisan agreement, a four-year map could be approved by a majority vote.

Nick Evans contributed to this article.

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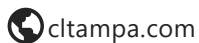
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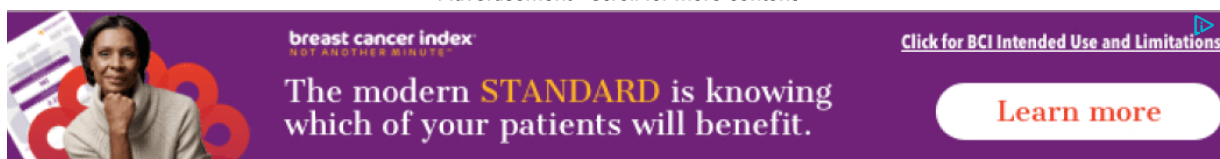
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Redistricting: Ohio to miss second congressional map deadline; Lawmakers to hold mapmaking pen

Jessie Balmert | The Columbus Dispatch

It's official: Ohio's congressional districts will be drawn by the GOP-controlled Legislature.

House Speaker Bob Cupp, R-Lima, said the seven-member Ohio Redistricting Commission ran out of time to approve a 10-year map for the state's 15 congressional districts. The commission will miss its Oct. 31 deadline – the second missed deadline for a congressional district map.



"It's apparent that it's not going to be possible to have congressional district maps drawn in time. The Census delay really has had a cascading effect," Cupp said Tuesday.

The commission will meet Thursday to review congressional maps, including one **offered by Senate Democrats**, but the map being crafted by GOP legislative staff members will "not be available yet," Cupp said.

More: Ohio lawmakers likely to miss first congressional redistricting deadline

More: No meetings, no map mean Ohio Redistricting Commission could punt mapmaking to lawmakers

House Minority Leader Emilia Sykes, D-Akron, suggested a timeline for Ohio lawmakers to get to work on a congressional map that could win over bipartisan support and thus last for 10 years.

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Sykes wants to convene a joint legislative committee by Nov. 4, introduce a bill detailing the congressional map by Nov. 10 and start public hearings by Nov. 15.

Ohio lawmakers need 60% of all members and 33% of Democrats in each chamber to pass a 10-year map. To pass a four-year map, Republicans need only a majority vote and to explain how their map meets voter-approved changes to ensure maps do not favor one party.

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Cupp questioned whether the current process for drawing congressional maps was a good one.

"There is a question about whether this multi-step process is really a workable one in retrospect, but I think that's for another day," Cupp said. "We're focused now on getting the congressional maps done on time."

Jessie Balmert is a reporter for the USA TODAY Network Ohio Bureau, which serves the Akron Beacon Journal, Cincinnati Enquirer, Columbus Dispatch and 18 other affiliated news organizations across Ohio.

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What is session? What is a caucus? Find out about these and other commonly used terms related to the Ohio Senate.

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Stark County leaders express disappointment with proposed GOP congressional maps

Robert Wang | The Repository

Some Stark County Republican and Democratic officials are unhappy with the congressional maps proposed this week by state GOP lawmakers, saying local residents would be in danger of being shortchanged in their representation in Congress.

Both maps proposed by the House and Senate split the county into two districts. Stark County now has three congressional districts.

"I'm kind of upset they split Stark County in half," said Stark County Commissioner Richard Regula, a Republican who referred to the Ohio House GOP map. "I think they were supposed to leave the bigger counties whole. ... Now we have three congressman and we're going to back to two and split the county down the middle."

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Regula is the son of the late longtime Congressman Ralph Regula, who represented all of Stark County from 1973 to 2007. Except the 1990s when a piece of Lake Township was in a Summit County district, Stark County was in one congressional district from the 19th century to 2012.

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Richard Regula has long advocated that a congressional district include all of Stark County and all of Wayne County just like it was when his father served.

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Today, Rep. Bob Gibbs, R-Lakeville, represents the 7th Congressional District, which includes Canton, Massillon and most of Stark County. Rep. Tim Ryan, D-Howland Township, represents the 13th District, which includes Alliance and Lexington Township. Rep. Anthony Gonzalez, R-Rocky River, represents the 16th District, which includes Jackson Township, North Canton, Lawrence Township, part of Plain Township, part of Lake Township and part of Perry Township.

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What's are the redistricting proposals now?

Under the GOP House plan, Gibbs would no longer be in the same district with a part of Stark County. Under the GOP Senate plan, Gibbs' 7th District would include Lawrence Township, Canal Fulton, Jackson Township, Lake Township and northern Plain Township.

Gonzalez has announced he's not seeking re-election. The 16th District would disappear with pieces of it going to other districts.

Ryan has seen Republican support in his district rise as he fended off a challenge in 2020 from Republican former state Rep. Christina Hagan of Marlboro Township by less than 8

[Home](#)[percentage points. Ryan has chosen not to seek re-election and to run for the U.S. Senate.](#)[Local](#)[Crime](#)[Education](#)[State](#)[Nation & World](#)[Politics](#)[Subscribe](#)

See them here: Ohio Republicans propose congressional district maps advantaging the GOP.

Hagan has said she's interested in looking at running for Congress again. Under the GOP House plan, Marlboro Township where she lives would be part of a new 13th District with large areas of Ryan's current 13th District. But under the GOP Senate plan, none of Stark County would be part of the same district as the rest of the current 13th.

Regula said that until 2008, many people in Stark County knew his father was their congressman. Today, people are confused about who represents them. A resident may be represented by one congressional member while his neighbor across the street may be represented by another. And the new maps would not end that confusion.

"The bottom line is congressmen are there to help people and help with constituent services and we (should) make it as easy as possible," Regula said.

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'I would prefer for Stark County being entirely in one congressional district'

State Rep. Scott Oelslager, R-North Canton, who introduced the House Republican **redistricting bill** Monday and is a former congressional aide to Ralph Regula, could not be reached for comment.

Oelslager told the **Columbus Dispatch** and **Cleveland.com** that his bill, if approved, would create five competitive congressional districts where voters inclined to support one party would not make up more than 55% of the electorate. Five districts would be comprised of more than 55% of voters usually supporting Republican congressional candidates. It

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appears Stark County would be divided into two of these districts. And Ohio would have two districts where more than[Subscribe](#)

55% of voters usually support Democratic congressional candidates.

Currently, Republicans hold 12 congressional seats and Democrats hold four. Under the maps, Republicans could have 13 seats and Democrats two.

Oeslager said his bill complies with the requirements of the 2018 constitutional amendment, which prohibits the General Assembly from approving a redistricting bill that greatly favors one political party over another. The amendment also says the legislature should seek to avoid splitting counties into multiple congressional districts.

The bill has been assigned to the Ohio House Government Oversight Committee for hearings. The Ohio General Assembly is facing a Nov. 30 deadline to approve a congressional redistricting map. If less than a third of Democratic legislators in the Ohio House and Senate approve the map, it could be valid for only four years instead of 10.

In text messages, Sen. Kirk Schuring, R-Jackson Township, wrote, "The proposed maps are not final. They still must go through the legislative hearing process along with maps submitted by the public. We'll have a better idea for how a map will look when we're further in the process. ... I would prefer for Stark County being entirely in one congressional district. But understand that drawing the map is a complicated jigsaw puzzle regulated by federal population requirements and also the state and federal constitutions."

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Former state Rep. Johnnie Maier: 'It's a joke'

Former Democratic state Rep. Johnnie Maier said the constitutional amendment that voters approved in 2018 to end

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"It's a joke. And our legislators should not be voting to split Stark County," said Maier, now the Massillon clerk of court. "There's nothing good in it for Stark County. Anyone who says, 'Well, we'll get two representatives,' that means you get no representatives because no one has to make Stark County critical in their election plans. We become a small nothing."

Under the amendments, all Democrats can do is force the redistricting process to take place again in four years rather than in 10 years after the U.S. Census' next decennial population count takes place. Prior to passage of the amendments, congressional district lines were redrawn every 10 years to reflect new population shifts. Because Ohio's population growth was less on average than the nation, Ohio has lost one member of Congress and will have only 15 for at least a decade.

In the Ohio House GOP map, Canton and western Stark County would be attached to a 12th District that would extend southwest as far as Hocking County. Canton's mostly Democratic voters would find their voices in congressional elections outweighed by the staunch rural Republican who would comprise most of the district.

Who is where in the new maps?

The portions of Stark in a new 12th District besides Canton would be Lawrence Township, Canal Fulton, Jackson Township, Plain Township, North Canton, Canton Township, Massillon, Perry Township, Tuscarawas Township, Sugar Creek Township, Bethlehem Township and most of Pike Township.

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The parts of Stark County in a new 13th District would be Lake Township, Marlboro Township, Nimishillen Township, Louisville, Osnaburg Township, a northeastern chunk of Pike


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would include all of Portage County, eastern Summit county, most of Trumbull County and most of Ashtabula County.

In the Ohio Senate GOP map, Lawrence Township, Canal Fulton, Jackson Township, northern Plain Township and Lake Township would be attached to the 7th District that would include most of Portage County, most of Summit County, all of Wayne County and all of Holmes County.

The rest of Stark County would be in the 12th, which would include Carroll County, Tuscarawas County, Coshocton County, Muskingum County, Noble County, Knox County, nearly all of Licking County and about half of Delaware County in the greater Columbus area.

In both plans, the incumbent congressman for the new 12th would become U.S. Rep. Troy Balderson, R-Zanesville, who now represents a very different 12th District that stretches northwest from his county.

State Rep. Thomas West, D-Canton, said: "My first instinct were these were trash. ... They egregiously gerrymandered these maps unfairly to favor Republicans 13 to 2. They split our largest counties in half. They cracked and packed our Black and brown communities to dilute their voting power."

Daryl Revoldt, a Republican North Canton councilman at-large who was a district director for Ralph Regula, said he's concerned under the proposed maps that the person representing his city in Congress would seldom, if ever, visit the area or get to know the people on the other end of the district.

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"They become less geographically compact. The challenge is how does that guy on the weekend when he's home get from Point A to Point B," said Revoldt, who said it was a challenge for Regula's staffers to regularly visit parts of the former 16th



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Congressional District outside of Stark County. "If you're three hours away by car, how often are you going to get to Canton, Ohio, with a meeting with officials or get to a chamber breakfast?"

Reach Robert at (330) 580-8327 or
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Sykes, Yuko Introduce Congressional District Map | Senator Vernon Sykes

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Today, Ohio Senate Minority Leader Kenny Yuko (D-Richmond Heights) and state Senator Vernon Sykes (D-Akron), co-chair of the Ohio Redistricting Commission, introduced Senate Bill 237, the Ohio Senate Democratic Caucus' proposal for a congressional district map.

"The plan we are introducing today is fair, keeps communities together and doesn't gerrymander our state," Yuko said. "Most importantly, it doesn't favor or disfavor any political party. I'm hopeful that it can be a starting point to create a bipartisan map that meets the constitutional reforms Ohio voters demanded in 2018."

S. B. 237, which is co-sponsored by all members of the Ohio Senate Democratic Caucus, does not illegally split contiguous municipalities or townships in any district in the state. Counties are only split to account for population requirements.

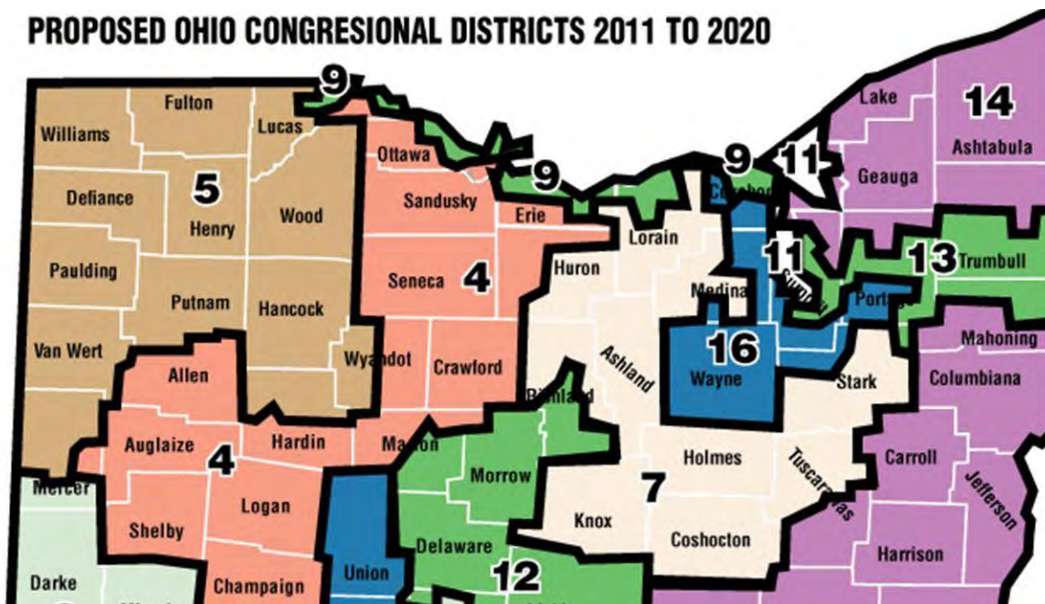
"Our plan demonstrates that if the majority had the will, we could have drawn a bipartisan map before the September 30 deadline," Sykes said. "It is not too late for the majority to work with us on a plan that fulfills the reforms overwhelmingly approved by Ohioans in 2018."

The legislature is required to create a congressional map by September 30. If a plan is not adopted by this date, the Ohio Redistricting Commission is responsible for adopting a congressional district map by October 31. If a plan is not adopted by this date, the legislature once again becomes responsible. During the later stages of this process, maps must adhere to stricter requirements if it fails to receive the support of at least a third of the minority members of the general assembly. These requirements include the following:

- The plan must not unduly favor or disfavor a political party or its incumbents;
- The map shall not unduly split governmental units, giving preference to keeping whole, counties, townships and cities.
- The districts shall be compact.

The plan Senate Democrats introduced today proactively accounts for these additional requirements.

To review the map, click [here](#). To see the map on Dave's Redistricting, click [here](#).

PROPOSED OHIO CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS 2011 TO 2020**Ohio Senate OKs redistricting plan**

BY JIM PROVANCE
The Blade

SEP 21, 2011

4:09 PM

COLUMBUS — The Ohio Senate Wednesday voted 24-7 to rubber stamp a proposed congressional map that slices the city of Toledo between three districts.

The House was waiting in the wings to ratify changes made to the bill that was, in part, designed to sidestep a voter referendum threatened by Democrats. The map is likely destined for a court challenge.

Hours before the vote, Toledo Deputy Mayor Tom Crothers urged lawmakers to change course, arguing that Toledo will not be well served by slicing it into three congressional districts, two of which would be primarily rural.

“I implore you to base your decision whether to support HB 319 in its present state upon what is best for the citizens of Ohio,” he told the Senate Government Oversight and Reform Committee. He argued that the map would make Toledo “politically irrelevant.”

Toledo City Council unanimously adopted a resolution Tuesday in opposition to the proposed map.

“...(I)t divides six Ohio counties into three or more districts and in the City of Toledo creates a district that would allow for the representative for downtown Toledo to live over 100 miles from the city center, and two other districts where Toledo residents living in the same neighborhoods of South Toledo would have different congressional representation....,” reads the resolution.

But Sen. Mark Wagoner (R., Ottawa Hills) argued later on the Senate floor that divided representation may not be “altogether a bad thing.”

“First, it would give us more clout in Congress,” he said. “Three voices are better than one. Second, it would require bipartisan cooperation from Congress to move our area forward... It is incumbent by all of those three to work together and put politics aside.”

Sen. Edna Brown (D., Toledo) didn’t see it that way.

“This map is an outrageous example of gerrymandering...,” she said. “This map does not represent Ohio history as a 50-50 battleground state... The acceptance of this map not only marginalizes Toledo residents’ votes, but also dramatically weakens our voices.”

Under the map, Toledo would be divided between the 9th District held by U.S. Rep. Marcy Kaptur, of Toledo; the 5th held by U.S. Rep. Bob Latta, a Bowling Green Republican, and the 4th District held by U.S. Rep. Jim Jordan, an Urbana Republican. The latter district encroaches on Lucas County from the east, picking up downtown Toledo and stretching as far south as Springfield.

Ms. Kaptur’s 9th District would snake thinly along the Lake Erie shoreline from Toledo to Cleveland, pitting her in a 2012 primary battle with another veteran Democrat, U.S. Dennis Kucinich.

Just before forwarding the bill to a full chamber vote, the Republican majority on the committee added \$2.75 million to help county boards of elections to implement the new maps. Democrats opposed the last-minute amendment, knowing that its addition may have put the new map out of reach of a voter referendum.

Unless a court disagrees, the appropriation would ensure that the bill would take effect immediately upon the signature of Gov. John Kasich. The bill assumes that the 2012 presidential election will be held on March 6. Lawmakers have apparently shelved a proposal that would have delayed it until May.

All Republicans supported the bill, and they were joined by two African Americans who were pleased with how the map preserves a black majority district straddling Cleveland and Akron and creates an opportunity for a black candidate in a new Columbus-based district that would be solidly Democrat.

Contact Jim Provance at:

jprovance@theblade.com

or 614-221-0496.



POLITICS & GOV

THE RUNDOWN

Coalition rallies at Statehouse, demands redistricting hearings

BY: **SUSAN TEBBEN** - OCTOBER 21, 2021 12:40 AM

📷 Prentiss Haney, co-executive director of the Ohio Organizing Collaborative, speaks at a rally for the Equal Districts Coalition. The coalition stood on the steps of the state capitol to urge public hearings on congressional redistricting. Photo by Susan Tebben, OCJ.

The Equal Districts Coalition held a rally on the Ohio Statehouse steps on Wednesday, calling for public hearings on congressional redistricting maps that they said should have already been held by the official Ohio Redistricting Commission.

“The lack of leadership to follow through with the will of the people is troubling to say the least,” said Chris Tavenor, a staff attorney for the Ohio Environmental Council, one of the members of the coalition.

The coalition asked for public hearings from the official commission, which [have yet to be scheduled](#), but they plan to have their own virtual public hearings on Thursday and Oct. 25 and 26.

The official redistricting commission has until the end of the month to approve a map. If they fail to do so, the process heads back to the legislature.



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SUSAN TEBBEN


Susan Tebben is an award-winning journalist with a decade of experience covering Ohio news, including courts and crime, Appalachian social issues, government, education, diversity and culture. She has worked for The Newark Advocate, The Glasgow Daily Times, The Athens Messenger, and WOUB Public Media. She has also had work featured on National Public Radio.

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

Aryeh Alex, April 24, 2017



TWEET



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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 38 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.

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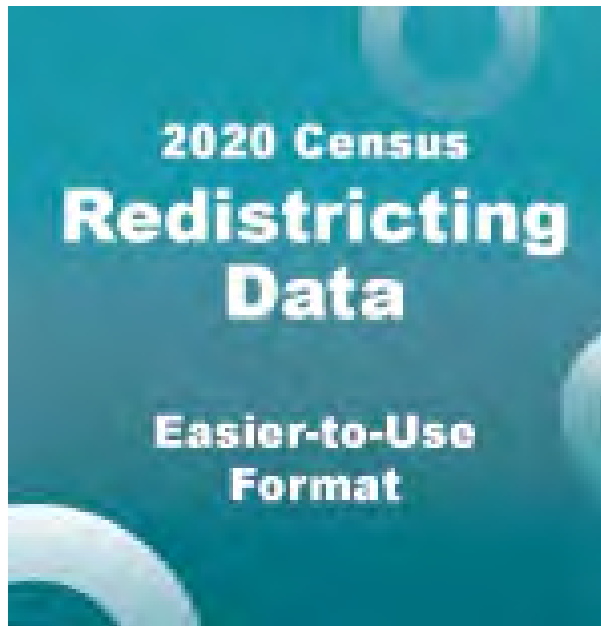


Table 1. APPORTIONMENT POPULATION AND NUMBER OF REPRESENTATIVES BY STATE: 2020 CENSUS

STATE	APPORTIONMENT POPULATION (APRIL 1, 2020)	NUMBER OF APPORTIONED REPRESENTATIVES BASED ON 2020 CENSUS ²	CHANGE FROM 2010 CENSUS APPORTIONMENT
Alabama	5,030,053	7	0
Alaska	736,081	1	0
Arizona	7,158,923	9	0
Arkansas	3,013,756	4	0
California	39,576,757	52	-1
Colorado	5,782,171	8	1
Connecticut	3,608,298	5	0
Delaware	990,837	1	0
Florida	21,570,527	28	1
Georgia	10,725,274	14	0
Hawaii	1,460,137	2	0
Idaho	1,841,377	2	0
Illinois	12,822,739	17	-1
Indiana	6,790,280	9	0
Iowa	3,192,406	4	0
Kansas	2,940,865	4	0
Kentucky	4,509,342	6	0
Louisiana	4,661,468	6	0
Maine	1,363,582	2	0
Maryland	6,185,278	8	0
Massachusetts	7,033,469	9	0
Michigan	10,084,442	13	-1
Minnesota	5,709,752	8	0
Mississippi	2,963,914	4	0
Missouri	6,160,281	8	0
Montana	1,085,407	2	1
Nebraska	1,963,333	3	0
Nevada	3,108,462	4	0
New Hampshire	1,379,089	2	0
New Jersey	9,294,493	12	0
New Mexico	2,120,220	3	0
New York	20,215,751	26	-1
North Carolina	10,453,948	14	1
North Dakota	779,702	1	0
Ohio	11,808,848	15	-1
Oklahoma	3,963,516	5	0
Oregon	4,241,500	6	1
Pennsylvania	13,011,844	17	-1
Rhode Island	1,098,163	2	0
South Carolina	5,124,712	7	0
South Dakota	887,770	1	0
Tennessee	6,916,897	9	0
Texas	29,183,290	38	2
Utah	3,275,252	4	0
Vermont	643,503	1	0
Virginia	8,654,542	11	0
Washington	7,715,946	10	0
West Virginia	1,795,045	2	-1
Wisconsin	5,897,473	8	0
Wyoming	577,719	1	0
TOTAL APPORTIONMENT POPULATION ¹	331,108,434	435	

¹ Includes the resident population for the 50 states, as ascertained by the Twenty-Fourth Decennial Census under Title 13, United States Code, and counts of U.S. military and federal civilian employees living overseas (and their dependents living with them overseas) allocated to their home state, as reported by the employing federal agencies. The apportionment population excludes the population of the District of Columbia. The counts of overseas personnel (and dependents) are used for apportionment purposes only.

² The U.S. Census Bureau prepared these calculations using the existing size of the U.S. House of Representatives (435 members) and the Method of Equal Proportions, as provided for in Title 2, United States Code, Sections 2a and 2b.



[\[/newsroom/press-releases/2021/2020-census-redistricting-data-easier-to-use-format.html\]](#)
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: THURSDAY, AUGUST 12, 2021

2020 Census Statistics Highlight Local Population Changes and Nation's Racial and Ethnic Diversity

AUGUST 12, 2021

RELEASE NUMBER CB21-CN.55

U.S. Census Bureau Delivers Data for States to Begin Redistricting Efforts

AUG. 12, 2021 — The U.S. Census Bureau today released additional 2020 Census results

[\[https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial-census/decade/2020/2020-census-results.html\]](https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial-census/decade/2020/2020-census-results.html) showing an increase in the population of U.S. metro areas compared to a decade ago. In addition, these once-decade results showed the nation's diversity in how people identify their race and ethnicity.

"We are excited to reach this milestone of delivering the first detailed statistics from the 2020 Census," said acting Census Bureau Director Ron Jarmin. "We appreciate the public's patience as Census Bureau staff worked diligently to process these data and ensure it meets our quality standards."

These statistics, which come from the 2020 Census Redistricting Data (Public Law 94-171) Summary File [\[https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial-census/about/rdo/summary-files.html\]](https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial-census/about/rdo/summary-files.html), provide the first look at populations for small areas and include information on Hispanic origin, race, age 18 and over, housing occupancy and group quarters. They represent where people were living as of April 1, 2020, and are available throughout the nation, states and communities down to the block level.

The Census Bureau also released data visualizations [\[https://www.census.gov/library/visualizations.html\]](https://www.census.gov/library/visualizations.html), America Counts stories [\[https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial-census/decade/2020/2020-stories.html\]](https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial-census/decade/2020/2020-stories.html), and videos [\[https://www.census.gov/data/academy/topics/2020-census.html\]](https://www.census.gov/data/academy/topics/2020-census.html) to help illustrate and explain these data. These resources are available on the 2020 Census results page [\[https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial-census/decade/2020/2020-census-results.html\]](https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial-census/decade/2020/2020-census-results.html). Advanced users can access these data on the FTP site [\[https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial/2020/data/01-Redistricting_File--PL_94-171/\]](https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial/2020/data/01-Redistricting_File--PL_94-171/).

Population Changes Across the Country Since the 2010 Census

Today's release reveals changes in the size and distribution of the population across the United States. The population of U.S. metro areas grew by 9% from 2010 to 2020, resulting in 86% of the population living in U.S. metro areas in 2020, compared to 85% in 2010.

"Many counties within metro areas saw growth, especially those in the south and west. However, as we've been seeing in our annual population estimates, our nation is growing slower than it used to," said Marc Perry, a senior demographer at the Census Bureau. "This decline is evident at the local level where around 52% of the counties in the United States saw their 2020 Census populations decrease from their 2010 Census populations."

County and metro area highlights:

- The largest county in the United States in 2020 remains Los Angeles County with over 10 million people.
- The largest city (incorporated place) in the United States in 2020 remains New York with 8.8 million people.
- 312 of the 384 U.S. metro areas gained population between 2010 and 2020.
- The fastest-growing U.S. metro area between the 2010 Census and 2020 Census was The Villages, FL, which grew 39% from about 93,000 people to about 130,000 people.
- 72 U.S. metro areas lost population from the 2010 Census to the 2020 Census. The U.S. metro areas with the largest percentage declines were Pine Bluff, AR, and Danville, IL, at -12.5 percent and -9.1 percent, respectively.

A data visualization released today shows the population change at the county level from the 2010 Census to the 2020 Census [<https://www.census.gov/library/visualizations/interactive/2020-population-and-housing-statistics.html>]. Read more about population change in the America Counts story, More Than Half of U.S. Counties Were Smaller in 2020 Than in 2010 [<https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2021/08/more-than-half-of-united-states-counties-were-smaller-in-2020-than-in-2010.html>].

2020 Census Findings on Race and Ethnicity

The 2020 Census used the required two separate questions (one for Hispanic or Latino origin [<https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial-census/technical-documentation/questionnaires/2020/response-guidance.html>] and one for race [<https://www.census.gov/topics/population/race/about.html>]) to collect the races and ethnicities of the U.S. population — following the standards [<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-1997-10-30/pdf/97-28653.pdf>] set by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in 1997. Building upon our research over the past decade [<https://www.census.gov/about/our-research/race-ethnicity.html>], we improved the two separate questions design and updated our data processing and coding procedures for the 2020 Census. This work began in 2015 with research and testing centered on findings from the 2015 National Content Test [<https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-kits/2017/nct.html>], and the designs were implemented in the 2020 Census Test [<https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-kits/2018/2018-census-test.html>].

The improvements and changes [<https://www.census.gov/newsroom/blogs/random-samplings/2021/08/improvements-to-2020-census-race-hispanic-origin-question-designs.html>] enabled a more thorough and accurate depiction of how people self-identify, yielding a more accurate portrait of how people report their Hispanic origin and race within the context of a two-question format. These changes reveal that the U.S. population is much more multiracial and more diverse than what we measured in the past.

We are confident that differences in the overall racial distributions are largely due to improvements in the design of the two separate questions for race data collection and processing, as well as some demographic changes over the past 10 years.

Today's release of 2020 Census redistricting data provides a new snapshot of the racial and ethnic composition of the country as a result of improvements in the design of the race and ethnicity questions, processing and coding.

“As the country has grown, we have continued to evolve in how we measure the race and ethnicity [https://www.census.gov/library/visualizations/interactive/decennial-census-measurement-of-race-and-ethnicity-across-the-decades-1790-2020.html] of the people who live here,” said Nicholas Jones, director and senior advisor for race and ethnicity research and outreach at the Census Bureau. “Today’s release of 2020 Census redistricting data provides a new snapshot of the racial and ethnic composition and diversity of the country. The improvements we made to the 2020 Census yield a more accurate portrait of how people self-identify in response to two separate questions on Hispanic origin and race, revealing that the U.S. population much more multiracial and more diverse than what we measured in the past.”

Race and ethnicity highlights:

- The White population remained the largest race or ethnicity group in the United States, with 204.3 million people identifying as White alone. Overall, 235.4 million people reported White alone or in combination with another group. However, the White alone population decreased by 8.6% since 2010.
- The Two or More Races population (also referred to as the Multiracial population) has changed considerably since 2010. The Multiracial population was measured at 9 million people in 2010 and is now 33.8 million people in 2020, a 276% increase.
- The “in combination” multiracial populations for all race groups accounted for most of the overall changes in each racial category.
- All of the race alone or in combination groups experienced increases. The Some Other Race alone or in combination group (49.9 million) increased 129%, surpassing the Black or African American population (46.9 million) as the second-largest race alone or in combination group.
- The next largest racial populations were the Asian alone or in combination group (24 million), the American Indian and Alaska Native alone or in combination group (9.7 million), and the Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone or in combination group (1.6 million).
- The Hispanic or Latino population, which includes people of any race, was 62.1 million in 2020. The Hispanic or Latino population grew 23%, while the population that was not of Hispanic or Latino origin grew 4.3% since 2010.

It is important to note that these data comparisons between the 2020 Census and 2010 Census race data should be made with caution, taking into account the improvements we have made to the Hispanic origin and race questions and the ways we code what people tell us.

Accordingly, data from the 2020 Census show different but reasonable and expected distributions from the 2010 Census for the White alone population, the Some Other Race alone or in combination population, and the Multiracial population, especially for people who self-identify as both White and Some Other Race.

These results are not surprising as they align with Census Bureau expert research and corresponding findings [https://www.census.gov/about/our-research/race-ethnicity.html] this past decade, particularly with the results on the impacts of questions format on race and ethnicity reporting from the 2015 National Content Test.

The Census Bureau uses several measures to analyze the racial and ethnic diversity [https://www.census.gov/newsroom/blogs/random-samplings/2021/08/measuring-racial-ethnic-diversity-2020-census.html] of the country.

The Census Bureau uses the Diversity Index (DI) to measure the probability that two people chosen at random will be from different racial and ethnic groups.

The DI is bounded between 0 and 1. A value of 0 indicates that everyone in the population has the same racial and ethnic characteristics. A value close to 1 indicates that almost everyone in the population has different racial and ethnic characteristics.

We have converted the probabilities into percentages to make them easier to interpret. In this format, the DI is the *chance* that two people chosen at random will be from different racial and ethnic groups.

Using the same DI calculation for 2020 and 2010 redistricting data, the chance that two people chosen at random will be from different racial or ethnic groups has increased to 61.1% in 2020 from 54.9% in 2010.

In general, the states with the highest DI scores are found in the West (Hawaii, California and Nevada), the South (Maryland and Texas; along with the District of Columbia, a state equivalent), and the Northeast (New York and New Jersey).

Hawaii had the highest DI score in 2020 at 76%, which was slightly higher than 2010 (75.1%).

Information on the racial and ethnic composition

[<https://www.census.gov/library/visualizations/interactive/race-and-ethnicity-in-the-united-state-2010-a-2020-census.html>] of your state and county, and various measures of diversity

[<https://www.census.gov/library/visualizations/interactive/racial-and-ethnic-diversity-in-the-united-state-2010-and-2020-census.html>] are available in the following America Counts stories: 2020 U.S. Population More Racially and Ethnically Diverse Than Measured in 2010

[<https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2021/08/2020-united-states-population-more-racially-ethnically-diverse-than-2010.html>] and Improved Race and Ethnicity Measures Reveal U.S. Population Is Much More Multiracial [<https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2021/08/improved-race-ethnicity-measures-reveal-united-states-population-much-more-multiracial.html>].

The Adult and Under-Age-18 Populations

The 2020 Census showed that the adult (age 18 and older) population group grew 10.1% to 258.3 million people over the decade.

“More than three-quarters, 77.9%, of the U.S. population were age 18 and over,” said Andrew Roberts, chief of the Sex and Age Statistics Branch in the Census Bureau’s Population Division. “The adult population grew faster than the nation as a whole. By comparison, the population under age 18 was 73.1 million in 2020, a decline of 1.4% from the 2010 Census.”

Changes to the adult and under-age-18 populations:

- The District of Columbia had the largest population age 18 and over as a percentage of population at 83.4%. Utah had the largest population under age 18 as a percentage of population at 29.0%.
- Utah also had the fastest-growing adult population at 22.8% growth.
- North Dakota had the fastest-growing population under age 18 at 22.1% growth.

Additional age breakdowns will be available in future 2020 Census data releases scheduled for 2022.

As part of today’s release, the Census Bureau provided a new data visualization that highlights the adult and under-age-18 populations [<https://www.census.gov/library/visualizations/interactive/adult-and-under-the-age-of-18-populations-2020-census.html>] across the United States down to the county level. More information is available in the America Counts story, U.S. Adult Population Grew Faster Than Nation’s Total Population From 2010 to 2020 [<https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2021/08/united-states-adult-population-grew-faster-than-nations-total-population-from-2010-to-2020.html>].

2020 Census Housing Units

The 2020 Census showed that on April 1, 2020, there were 140,498,736 housing units in the United States, up 6% from the 2010 Census.

“While the national number of housing units grew over the past decade, this was not uniform throughout the country,” said Evan Brassell, chief of the Housing Statistics Branch in the Census Bureau’s Social, Economic and Housing Statistics Division. “Counties that composed some part of a metropolitan or micropolitan area saw increases of 3.8%, on average, while counties outside of these areas showed decreases of 3.9% on average.”

State highlights:

- Texas had the largest numeric growth in housing units with 1,611,888.
- The county with the largest percent increase in housing was McKenzie County, North Dakota, with a 147.9% increase.
- West Virginia and Puerto Rico were the only two states or state equivalents that lost housing units.
- There were 126,817,580 occupied housing units and 13,681,156 vacant units in the United States.

Housing unit statistics for the nation, states and counties are available in the 2020 Population and Housing data visualization [<https://www.census.gov/library/visualizations/interactive/2020-population-and-housing-sta-data.html>] . More information is available in the following America Counts stories: Growth in Housing Units Slowed in the Last Decade [<https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2021/08/growth-in-housing-units-slowed-in-last-decade.html>] and U.S. Housing Vacancy Rate Declined in Past Decade [<https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2021/08/united-states-housing-vacancy-rate-declined-in-past-decade.html>] .

2020 Census Findings on Group Quarters

The U.S. population for group quarters was 8,239,016 as of April 1, 2020. This was an increase of 3.2% over the 2010 Census group quarters population. Group quarters include such places as college residence halls, residential treatment centers, skilled-nursing facilities, group homes, military barracks, correctional facilities and workers' dormitories.

"In 2020, the group quarters population represented 2.5% of the total U.S. population, down from 2.6% in 2010," said Steven Wilson, chief of the Population and Housing Programs Branch in the Census Bureau's Population Division. "We also saw that college and university student housing was the most populous group living arrangement at 2,792,097, up 10.7% since 2010."

Group quarters highlights:

- The second-largest group quarters population was correctional facilities for adults at 1,967,297, which decreased from the 2010 Census at 296,305 (13.1%).
- The state with the largest group quarters population was California at 917,932, with the largest share of that population counted at out-of-state noninstitutional group quarters.
- The group quarters population in Puerto Rico decreased 1.2% since 2010 to 37,509.

Read more about these results in the America Counts story, 8.2 Million People Counted at U.S. Group Quarter in the 2020 Census [<https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2021/08/united-states-group-quarters-in-2020-census.html>] . You can also access more statistics in the 2020 Census Demographic Data Map Application [<https://www.census.gov/library/visualizations/2021/geo/demographicmapviewer.html>] .

Quality of Results

All indications show the census results are in line with expectations.

"We are confident in the quality of today's results," said acting Census Bureau Director Ron Jarmin.

In keeping with our commitment to transparency, the Census Bureau will release additional operational quality metrics [<https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2021/timeline-2020-census-operational-quality-metrics.html>] on August 18 and August 25, providing more detail on the conduct of specific operations.

Producing Quality Data While Protecting Anonymity

The redistricting data are the first from the 2020 Census to use differential privacy, a mathematical method that applies carefully calibrated statistical noise to a dataset and allows a balance between privacy and accuracy. More information is available in 2020 Census Data Products: Disclosure Avoidance Modernization

[<https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial-census/decade/2020/planning-management/process/disclosure-avoidance.html>] and Redistricting Data: What to Expect and When [<https://www.census.gov/newsroom/blogs/director/2021/07/redistricting-data.html>] .

In addition to the redistricting data released today, the Census Bureau has released a set of demonstration data [https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial/2020/program-management/data-product-planning/2010-demonstration-data-products/ppmf20210608/] that illustrate the impact of the differential privacy production settings on published 2010 Census redistricting data. The Census Bureau released similar demonstration datasets over the course of the new method's development.

Legacy Data vs. Final Delivery of P.L. 94-171 Redistricting Data

These data released today are in the same format that the 2000 and 2010 redistricting data were provided. The term "legacy" refers to its prior use. By September 30, we will release these same data to state officials with an easy-to-use toolkit of DVDs and flash drives and we will make it available to the public on data.census.gov. The Census Bureau will notify the public in September when it makes these same data available.

Accessing These Data

Data are available in the 2020 Census Demographic Data Map Application

[https://census.gov/library/visualizations/2021/geo/demographicmapviewer.html] through different data visualizations [https://www.census.gov/library/visualizations.html] and QuickFacts

[https://www.census.gov/quickfacts]. Data files are also available on the Decennial Census P.L. 94-171

Redistricting Data Summary Files [https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial-census/about/rdo/summary-files.html] page and includes the geographic support files, technical documentation and additional support materials needed to access these data.

The Census Bureau has also produced a variety of America Counts stories on population change and distribution [https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2021/08/more-than-half-of-united-states-counties-were-smaller-in-2020-than-in-2010.html], group quarters [https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2021/08/united-states-group-quarters-in-2020-census.html], the adult population

[https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2021/08/united-states-adult-population-grew-faster-than-national-total-population-from-2010-to-2020.html], housing changes

[https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2021/08/growth-in-housing-units-slowed-in-last-decade.html], housing vacancy [https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2021/08/united-states-housing-vacancy-rate-declined-in-past-decade.html], race and ethnicity

[https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2021/08/improved-race-ethnicity-measures-reveal-united-states-population-much-more-multiracial.html] and the diversity index

[https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2021/08/2020-united-states-population-more-racially-ethnically-diverse-than-2010.html]. Videos [https://www.census.gov/data/academy/data-gems.html] are also available that explain how to access these data and what these data show about the changing nation.

###

Contact

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Related Information



Press kit

[\[https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-kits/2021/2020-census-redistricting.html\]](https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-kits/2021/2020-census-redistricting.html)

Last Revised: October 8, 2021

Politics

Ohio GOP looks to cement 2010 gains with overhauled congressional map

By [Aaron Blake](#)

September 13, 2011

A [proposed congressional map](#) in Ohio would draw six of the state's House incumbents into districts with each other, but would leave Republicans with an advantage in 12 of the remaining 16 districts.

The new map, which is set to be released Tuesday, comes courtesy of the state Republican Party, which controls all levers of the redistricting process in the Buckeye State.

Despite that power, the GOP already holds virtually every competitive district in Ohio, and with the state losing two of its current 18 seats thanks to the new Census numbers, Republicans were essentially forced to eliminate one of their districts in order to keep the other districts winnable.

In the end, the state GOP created what it hopes will be a map in which it can lock down 75 percent of the districts over the course of the next decade — giving the GOP a major advantage in one of the biggest swing states in the country.

A few highlights:

* The map creates potential matchups between three sets of Republicans. GOP Reps. **Steve Austria** and **Mike Turner** are drawn into the same Republican-leaning Dayton district; Democratic Reps. **Dennis Kucinich** and **Marcy Kaptur** are drawn into the same Democratic-leaning district spanning Cleveland to Toledo along Lake Erie; and Reps. **Jim Renacci** (R) and **Betty Sutton** (D) are drawn into the same Republican-leaning district south of Cleveland.

* So, how come there are three sets of incumbents drawn together when only two seats were eliminated? That's because the GOP created a new, solidly Democratic district in the Columbus area. Republicans are doing this because Columbus has grown bluer in recent years, and the GOP incumbents in that region are very vulnerable as the map stands right now. The hope is that Renacci dispatches Sutton, and either Kaptur or Kucinich is replaced by a Columbus Democrat in a safe district. In other words, two Cleveland-area Democrats are swapped for a Columbus one, and the Columbus-area Republicans get safer.

* Several Republicans get shored up. Reps. **Pat Tiberi**, and freshman **Reps. Steve Stivers** and **Steve Chabot** get the most help, with Tiberi and Stivers giving many of their Democrats to the new Columbus district and Chabot picking up much of Warren County to the north of his suburban Cincinnati district.

According to GOP numbers obtained by The Fix, the districts held by Tiberi, Stivers and Chabot all go from seats that went 45 percent for Sen. **John McCain (R-Ariz.)** in the 2008 presidential race to districts that he would have won with at least 52 percent of the vote.

In the southeast, freshman Rep. **Bill Johnson (R)** gets a little bit of help, while neighboring freshman Rep. **Bob Gibbs (R)** gets a better district geographically, if a slightly less conservative one. Both of their future districts lean Republican despite being held by Democrats last Congress. These will likely be the most vulnerable districts going forward, but they are populated by plenty of West Virginia-style conservative Democrats.

* Sutton and Kucinich don't have any great options. We've been talking for awhile now about how Sutton was [most likely to get the shaft](#) in redistricting – even more so than Kucinich. In the end, they both suffered.

Sutton has to choose between challenging Renacci in a GOP-leaning district and running in a primary against Rep. **Tim Ryan (D)**; in both cases, the district includes very little of her current territory. Kucinich, meanwhile, could challenge either Kaptur or Rep. **Marcia Fudge (D)** in her majority-black Cleveland district, but his best option might actually be running in a new district in Washington state, which coincidentally was set to release its own draft map today. (Fate?)

* It's not immediately clear who would be the favorite in the Austria/Turner or Kaptur/Kucinich races, but Renacci would have a clear edge against Sutton in a district that would have gone for McCain in 2008 and easily for President Bush in 2004. And in the new Democratic-leaning Columbus district, former congresswoman **Mary Jo Kilroy (D)** and Columbus Mayor **Michael Coleman (D)** would start as the odds-on favorites.

* It's important to note that, while many of these Republicans get better districts under this plan, not all of them will be completely safe for the foreseeable future. Ohio is a swing state, and drawing 12 Republican-leaning districts out of 16 is not easy.

That said, Republicans have packed as many Columbus- and Cleveland-area Democrats into as few districts as possible, and will be favored to hold 75 percent of the state's House seats in the coming years.

This is yet another example of how the GOP, which won nearly all the competitive seats along the Rust Belt in 2010, is simply looking to cement those gains rather than add new winnable seats.

We will likely see a similar map when it is released in Pennsylvania, where the GOP controls 12 of 19 House seats.

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 **3 Comments**

Aaron Blake

Aaron Blake is senior political reporter, writing for The Fix. A Minnesota native, he has also written about politics for the Minneapolis Star Tribune and The Hill newspaper. **Follow** 

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OHIO POLITICS

Ohio lawmakers miss first congressional redistricting deadline

BY JOSH RULTENBERG | COLUMBUS
PUBLISHED 6:45 PM ET SEP. 30, 2021

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Ohio lawmakers have missed another deadline related to redistricting. The state legislature's first constitutionally-mandated target to get a congressional district map drawn for the next decade was midnight Thursday.

What You Need To Know

- The Ohio General Assembly was supposed approve a new congressional district map
- The deadline was Thursday, Sept. 30 at midnight
- Democrats introduced a last-second map while Republicans had not submitted a proposal

- The Ohio Redistricting Commission has until the end of the month to host hearings and approve a map **33°**

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The Ohio General Assembly was supposed approve a new congressional district map. That did not happen.

"I'm profoundly disappointed that they're not honoring the Constitution and even trying to bring a map to the people," said Jen Miller with the League of Women Voters of Ohio.

Hearings were also supposed to have been scheduled and taken place by the deadline with an official map being introduced, adopted and publicly debated.

"In 2018, almost is 75% of the voters voted to approve a new way of mapmaking that would be transparent and bipartisan and collaborative," Miller said. "And instead, we're seeing absolutely no respect for voters."

On Wednesday, Ohio Senate Democrats unveiled a last-second proposal calling for eight Republican and seven Democratic districts.

"I think it's important that we meet these deadlines and so our introduction of the bill demonstrates that it can be done," said Sen. Vernon Sykes, D-Akron.

Unsurprisingly, Ohio Senate Republicans, who have not introduced its own map, were not fans of the Dem's idea.

A majority caucus spokesperson said the maps include "A fatter snake on the lake, the district around Columbus gives new meaning to the 'horseshoe' and the 7th looks like a big thumbs up for maybe a new member of Congress."

The congressional process now goes to the Ohio Redistricting Commission which has until the end of the month to host hearings and approve a map before the second constitutionally-mandated deadline comes around.

"We haven't really arranged a date yet. I'll have have discussions with the Senate President (Matt Huffman) and the others and co-chair (Vernon)

Sykes to see when we can do that," said Ohio House Speaker Robert Cupp, R-Lima. 33°

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Just like in the legislative map making process, in order for the commission to pass a 10-year map, both Democrats on the seven-member panel have to approve of them. If not, it will be another four-year map.

Should the commission not get the job done by Oct. 31, it goes back to the state legislature. From there, a 10-year map only works if at least 50% of Democrats in the Ohio House and Ohio Senate are on board.

Miller said if what she called another partisan, gerrymandered map gets approved, the League of Women Voters of Ohio will either file a lawsuit and/or look to bring another ballot initiative to Ohioans.

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E.T.'s finger, LeBron James, and 'confusion:' Why Ohio's new congressional maps are causing headaches

Jessie Balmert | The Columbus Dispatch

Ohio Republicans unveiled two congressional maps that Democrats immediately panned as unconstitutional gerrymanders.

Even Gov. Mike DeWine, a Republican, said there's some work to do on maps that could give the GOP as much as a 13-2 advantage in a state that voted for then-President Donald Trump with 53% of the vote in 2020.

"It's pretty clear neither one of these maps are going to fly," said DeWine, calling them a starting point.



As Ohio lawmakers hammer out the final version of the state's 15 congressional districts, here's a look at some key points of conflict.

What is competitive?

One goal of the voter-approved changes in 2018 was to give Ohioans more competitive maps. But what does that mean and are proposed maps hitting the mark?

Popular redistricting website, Dave's Redistricting App, measures competitiveness as any district with a partisan index of between 45% and 55%.

Under that measure, the **Senate Republican map** offers seven competitive districts – more than the **House GOP map** with four or **Senate Democratic proposal** with six. The Senate GOP's map has the highest score for competitiveness of the three introduced maps.

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By that measure, the current 15th District is considered competitive. Still, GOP candidate Mike Carey won 58.3% of the vote Tuesday over Democrat Allison Russo in a race that the **Cook Political Report rates as 9 percentage points more Republican** than the country as a whole.

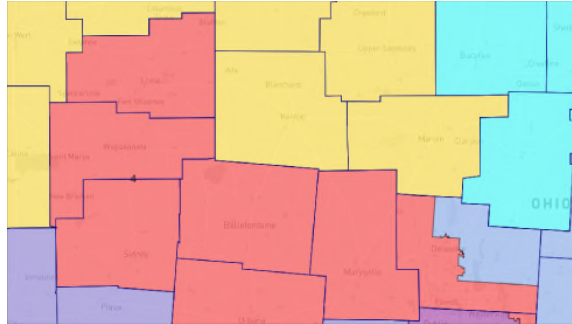
By that measure, the Senate GOP's 4th District, which stretches from GOP Rep. Jim Jordan's Champaign County to Columbus' heavily Democratic neighborhoods of Linden and Clintonville, would be competitive. But opponents of the map say that district

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simply dilutes Democratic votes in Franklin and Delaware counties.

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Each map has at least one district that would be within 3 percentage points – a virtual tossup. In the House GOP's map, it's the 1st District, which includes the city of Cincinnati and Warren County. The Senate Democrats' plan would create a highly competitive district in Cuyahoga County.

The Senate Republicans' plan would have two: the 13th District, which would include Lorain, Medina and portions of Cuyahoga County, and the 15th District, which would stretch from Columbus and western Franklin County to the Ohio River in southern Ohio.

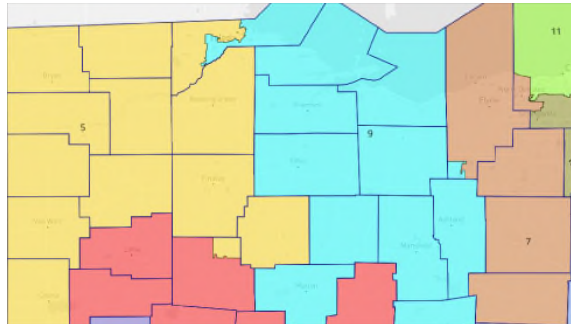
Is Rep. Marcy Kaptur doomed?

Both GOP maps would draw Rep. Marcy Kaptur, D-Toledo, into a Republican district, slaying the "snake on the lake" 11th District that stretches from Toledo to Cleveland.

Both Republican proposals would put Kaptur's Toledo home in a district that stretches into several rural counties in north-central Ohio. The House map divides



Toledo into two GOP districts while the Senate plan leaves it whole.



Kaptur, in a statement, called the proposed maps "a clear violation" of fair congressional districts.

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"A legitimate redistricting of Ohio could have easily achieved a balanced result without elongated, far-reaching boundaries that break apart metropolitan areas, split Ohio's communities of affinity, defy natural topography and shatter economic regions," Kaptur said.

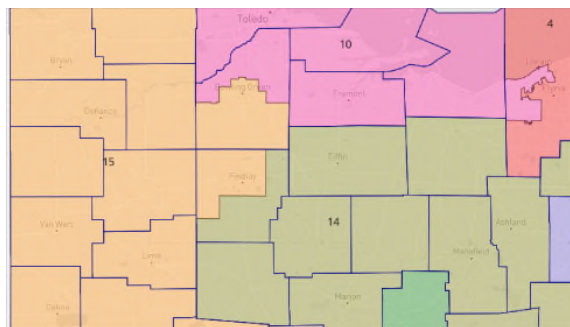
The Senate Democrats' plan would keep Lucas County with Ottawa, Sandusky and Erie counties in a district that Democrats could easily win. What Democrats can't do is revive the snake – that district would be forbidden under the new voter-approved changes.

"Keeping our largest cities and counties together is a priority," said House Minority Leader Emilia Sykes, D-Akron. "It is reasonable for us to be suspicious as to why there are splits and cracking of our largest urban counties."



Sykes said at this point, Democrats won't support these maps.

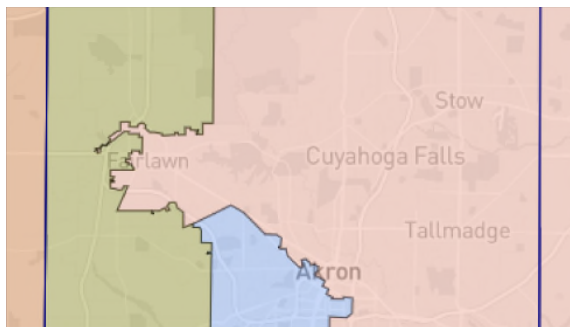
“There’s still time to turn it around. There’s still time to ensure we get a bipartisan map.”



Conneaut or Hocking Hills: an Akron problem

Akron and Summit County are used to being sliced and diced. Under the current map, Summit County is divided into four congressional districts and none of its U.S. representatives live in the county.

Under the House Republicans' map, Summit County is divided three times. Combined, those districts stretch from Conneaut in the state's far northeast corner to Hocking Hills, hundreds of miles south.





David Niven, a political science professor at the University of Cincinnati, said Conneaut and Hocking Hills have little in common with Akron. Those testifying about the maps Thursday agreed.

"Akron is a Rust Belt city with a rich history of industry, home of tires and rubber and LeBron James," said Carrie Coisman with All on the Line Ohio, an advocacy organization affiliated with the National Democratic Redistricting Committee. Those voters shouldn't be included with voters in southeastern Ohio, she added.

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Niven said Summit County's divides aren't practical; they're political.

"This is the price that the Republicans are imposing on folks because they don't vote in a Republican enough manner," Niven said.

The Senate GOP map splits Summit County twice, creating two districts where Republicans would be favored.

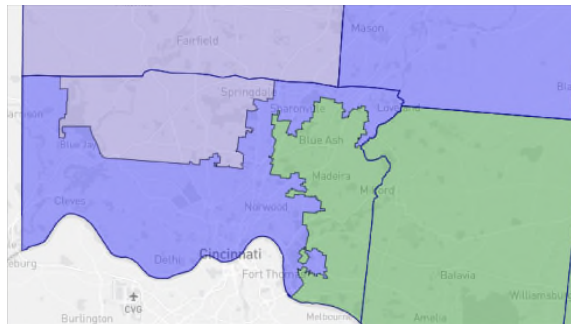
Hamilton County and E.T.'s finger

When voter-approved changes to the Ohio Constitution required Cincinnati to be kept in one district, Democrats wondered whether they would have a shot at a blue district there.

But both GOP proposals dashed those hopes. The House plan would keep Cincinnati with Warren County, a GOP stronghold.



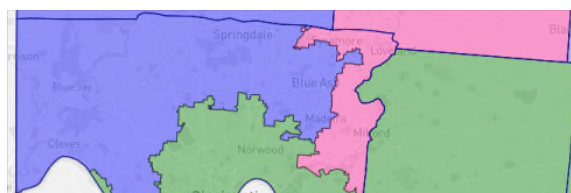
"In northeast Hamilton County, there's almost an E.T. finger reaching from one side to the other that brings three congressional districts together in Hamilton County," said Niven, adding that illogical districts can make it difficult for Ohioans to know their representative. "What you get out of that is confusion. What you get is diminished representation."

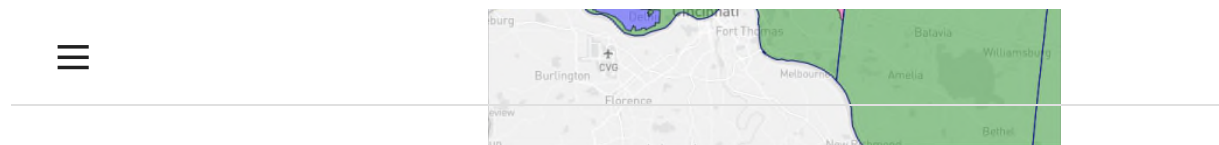


The Senate plan would take the city's district east to Portsmouth's Scioto County. Both maps would divide Hamilton County into three congressional districts – something that's not required based on population and isn't the case under the current map.

Both plans would draw Republican Reps. Steve Chabot, of Westwood, and Brad Wenstrup, of Columbia Tusculum, into the same congressional district. Wenstrup also owns property in Highland County, which could solve the problem under the House proposal but not under the Senate's.

Members of Congress do not need to live in the district they represent, but they almost always do.





Redistricted

Each map sets up potential matches between current members of Congress or candidates likely to win the seat.

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In Columbus, Democratic Rep. Joyce Beatty's downtown condominium was drawn into a district with Jordan under the Senate proposal and into a district with newly elected Rep. Mike Carey under the House proposal. Carey and Beatty live about a mile apart.

The House Republicans' map would create a problem for Max Miller, former President Donald Trump's pick to replace Rep. Anthony Gonzalez, a Rocky River Republican who announced he wouldn't run for reelection.

The House GOP map draws Miller into the same district as Democrat Shontel Brown, who just won the 11th Congressional District in Cleveland. Without a revision, Brown would almost certainly defeat Miller in the heavily proposed Democratic district.

And Rep. Tim Ryan, D-Niles, made the choice to run for U.S. Senate at the right time. Under both GOP



plans, his district would be much more favorable to Republicans, but that's been the trend in the Mahoning Valley since Trump won the state twice.

What's next?

Lawmakers will get input on their proposed maps in committee hearings next week. The exact times and dates have not yet been released.

The Ohio Constitution also requires that a joint committee of the House and Senate to hold at least two public committee hearings on a proposed plan before it passes.

The map must receive support from 60% of lawmakers and 33% of Democrats to last 10 years. If the GOP can't cobble together enough bipartisan support, Republicans could approve a map that lasts four years instead. That map must meet certain constitutional criteria, such as not unduly favoring one party over the other.

DeWine will have an opportunity to either sign or veto the final plan. The map would be subject to a referendum from voters or a legal challenge in the Ohio Supreme Court.

USA TODAY Network Ohio Bureau reporter Haley BeMiller and Akron Beacon Journal reporter Doug Livingston contributed to this article.

Jessie Balmert is a reporter for the USA TODAY Network Ohio Bureau, which serves the Akron Beacon Journal, Cincinnati



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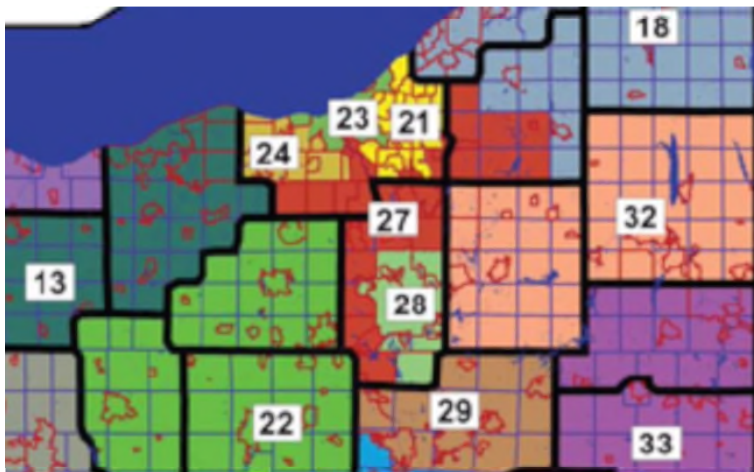
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With deadline for Congressional maps near, Ohio Redistricting Commission yet to schedule a meeting



null

Photo by: Ohio Redistricting Commission

The oddly shaped new Ohio Senate District 27 stretches from Geauga County to Western Cuyahoga then down the west side of Summit to the Stark County border.



By: John Kosich

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Posted at 5:24 PM, Oct 21, 2021 and last updated 2:24 PM, Oct 21, 2021

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COLUMBUS, Ohio — At the close of the state legislative redistricting process last month that resulted in a party line vote on new four year districts now being challenged by three

lawsuits in the State Supreme Court, Republican Secretary of State Frank LaRose warned his colleagues "this process will be different it is not going to work this way next time."

And he's been right, it hasn't, because while the commission came under fire for the way they drew those maps—they at least did draw some. To date there hasn't been a single meeting ahead of the Oct. 31 deadline to even begin the process. This despite calls from Democratic Co-Chair Vernon Sykes and LaRose himself to do so.

"It is time for this commission to meet," LaRose told News 5. "I can tell you that I've been working on my drafts of different ideas of how I think that we could reach a compromise, but until we can all come together as a commission and talk about those sort of basic principles of how we can draw these maps and reach that 10 year consensus, the clock's going to run out if we don't meet soon and that would be deeply disappointing to me."

He's not alone. Catherine Turcer is executive director of Common Cause Ohio. She's one of the people who fought for the constitutional change in 2018 that created this process.

"I have no idea what they're waiting for," Turcer said. "There are only 10 more days so we have to assume that they are just not going to actually get together, that they're not actually going to create 10 year congressional maps and they're going to leave it to the state legislature."

Yes—the same legislature that failed to act on the drawing of these congressional districts by a Sept. 30 deadline, which then caused it to go to the seven member redistricting commission, would then get the job back November first if the commission fails to act.

"If it's complicated to do bi-partisan map making with seven people," Turcer said. "It is definitely going to be complicated with 132 people."

That's why LaRose is trying to, in a sense, get the band back together.

"I want to avoid this going to the courts. I don't want to see this resolved in more litigation, I want to see us as Republicans and Democrats come together as statesmen and women and solve this for Ohioans," he said.

If it goes back to the legislature though, Turcer points out there are some additional protections that were not there in the state legislative map drawing process.

"There's an instruction that they explain the choices that they make and I think this is incredibly important because at the end of the day if the map is gerrymandered or inappropriate or doesn't reflect the voting patterns of the state of Ohio shall we say, it can go to court. When you put things in writing it's much easier to make the case that the map is unfair and they have to go back to the drawing board."

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Gavarone announces candidacy against Kaptur in reworked 9th Congressional District

The state Senator from Bowling Green joins two other Republicans looking for a chance to unseat the longtime Democratic incumbent.

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Gavarone announces candidacy against Kaptur in reworke...

Author: Victoria Dugger, Caylee Kirby (WTOL)
Published: 6:23 PM EST November 29, 2021
Updated: 8:43 PM EST November 30, 2021



COLUMBUS, Ohio — Republican state Sen. Theresa Gavarone filed her intent to run for Ohio's 9th Congressional District, for the seat currently held by Democrat Marcy Kaptur.

Gavarone, 55, joins two other Republicans who have also signaled their intent to run: [J.R. Majewski of Port Clinton](#) and [Madison Gesiotto Gilbert, a Canton lawyer who was the former Miss Ohio USA in 2014.](#)



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Gavarone, of Bowling Green, started out as a BG council member, then served in the state House from 2016-2019, when she began serving in the Ohio Senate.

After telling WTOL 11 on Monday to expect a big announcement soon, she officially announced her candidacy on Tuesday.

"After a lot thought and encouragement from my family and countless constituents, I have decided to seek the Republican nomination for Ohio's 9th Congressional District," Gavarone said in a statement. "For the past four decades, Marcy Kaptur has occupied this seat in Congress, but has delivered nothing except runaway inflation driven by unprecedented government spending. Northwest and Northern Ohio families need a representative who works for them, not for Nancy Pelosi and the radical left. I am running for Congress to deliver real, conservative results for families across the 9th District."

Her candidate statement gives an address of Huron, Ohio, with a campaign committee address of Columbus.

A new face and a fresh outlook are what Gavarone says is needed on Capitol Hill and she thinks she fits the bill.

"The direction that we're heading right now is really scary and it's controlled at the presidential level, congressional level, by the Democrats. I think we need to really look in a new direction," she said.

The state senator feels her potential opponent has not done what needs to be done and if voters agree, she wants to make changes that have a direct impact on the people she'd represent.

"I think it's really important that we work on the economy, that we reduce inflation, gas prices, look at policies that are going to make a real difference to the people in our area," Gavarone said.

Gavarone's announcement comes just a few weeks after Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine approved a new congressional map.

The newly redrawn 9th Congressional District now more greatly favors Republicans, and Gavarone had a hand in the creation of the new maps, as co-chairman of the local Government

and Elections Committee, plus approving the map on the Senate floor.

The new map of the 9th District puts Lucas, Ottawa, Erie, Defiance, Henry, Fulton, Sandusky and Williams counties together, as well as part of northern Wood County.

WTOL 11 reached out to Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur for a response on the announcement and the new maps. Her reelection team sent us this statement:

"While Columbus politicians game the system and pick their voters, Congresswoman Kaptur remains focused on bringing infrastructure dollars home, securing a clean energy future for Ohio, and creating the high-wage jobs Ohioans deserve".

Kaptur, 75, has represented the district since 1983 and is a Toledo native, graduating local from St. Ursula Academy. The previous iteration of the 9th Congressional District stretched from Cleveland to Toledo and was oftentimes referred to as "The Snake on the Lake" for its layout.

Kaptur is the longest-serving woman in the history of the U.S. House of Representatives and is among the most senior members of Congress.



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I hereby certify that the foregoing was sent via email this 10th day of December, 2021 to the following:

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