

What Ohioans Need to Know About The Citizens Not Politicians Amendment

Revised July 2024



Main Points

Ohio is one of the 10 most gerrymandered states.

When politicians draw biased voting districts to ensure their own re-election, it's called gerrymandering, and independent, nonpartisan experts have found that Ohio is one of the 10 most gerrymandered states.

Ohio courts ruled 7 times that politicians gerrymandered our maps.

In fact, Ohio courts ruled 7 times that gerrymandered voting district maps, crafted by politicians under the current system, were unconstitutional.

Politicians work with lobbyists to benefit themselves in the current system.

Ohio's current system allows politicians and their lobbyist friends to gerrymander voting districts in secret backroom deals to manipulate the outcomes to benefit themselves.

We need to ban politicians and lobbyists from abusing the system behind closed doors.

This amendment would ban politicians and lobbyists and make it illegal to manipulate voting districts to discriminate against or favor any political party or any individual politician, while creating an open and transparent process with checks and balances to draw fair and impartial districts.

Vote yes to restore power to where it belongs: with Ohio citizens, not politicians.

This amendment is supported by a broad spectrum of Ohioans, including Republicans, Independents, and Democrats.

This amendment is supported by a broad coalition including small business owners, police officers, veterans, faith leaders, strong conservatives, and Republicans.

Opponents of this amendment will say anything to keep our current broken system that lets them manipulate voting districts to discriminate against Black voters. This amendment is supported by civil rights leaders like the NAACP, Ohio Unity Coalition, and Ohio Organizing Collaborative.

Details with Citations

- **Ohio is among the most gerrymandered states in the country.** Ohio's gerrymandered maps, rated poorly by the Princeton University Gerrymandering Project, highlight the need for reform. ([Source](#)).
- **The Brennan Center released a study this year that found nearly 8 of 10 Ohioans lives in an Ohio House district that is uncompetitive.** This is because of gerrymandering, and it is insidious and corrosive to our democracy. ([Source](#)).
- **We all know what it means when politicians don't have to worry about the people back home. They work on the priorities of special interests, and not what we need them focused on: Making Ohio a better place.**
- Gerrymandering's negative impact:
 - **Ohio's gerrymandered maps take voting power away from Black communities,** fair map advocates said recently on a media call. ([Source](#)).
 - **Gerrymandering fosters political dysfunction and division, creating an unstable environment where politicians just squabble and don't solve problems and move Ohio forward.**
 - In Congress: Haven't had a real, stable budget in years, relying on repeated continuing resolutions
 - In the Ohio General Assembly: The Ohio General Assembly set a record last year – state legislators passed the fewest bills into law of any year since at least 1955. ([Source](#)).
 - Before you joke that this is a good thing, consider what priorities and important issues got overlooked.
 - Independent voters are voiceless:
 - According to the Ohio Secretary of State, there are about 8 million registered voters in Ohio. More than 71% of them are registered Independents. ([Source](#)).
 - They all live in gerrymandered districts. Whether these happen to be gerrymandered safe Republican districts or safe Democratic districts, the result is the same for the 3 out of 4 Ohio Independent voters: You don't get to decide who will represent you in the Statehouse or Congress.
- Other states have commissions similar to the one proposed by Citizens Not Politicians.
 - The Campaign Legal Center (CLC) recently published a [landmark report](#) highlighting key elements of effective redistricting commissions, including how they should be structured, equipped, and administered to achieve fair representation — we're doing exactly what the report recommends.
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- Amendment Summary ([Source](#)):
 - Creates the 15-member Ohio Citizens Redistricting Commission made up of Republican, Democratic and independent citizens who broadly represent the different geographic areas and demographics of the state.
 - Bans current or former politicians, political party officials, and lobbyists from sitting on the commission.

- Requires fair and impartial districts by making it unconstitutional to draw voting districts that discriminate against or favor any political party or individual politician.
 - Requires the commission to operate under an open and independent process.
- The campaign was certified by the Ballot Board and began collecting signatures in November 2023.
 - On July 1, the campaign submitted 731,306 signatures from every county in Ohio – well more than the 413,000 valid signatures needed to qualify for the November 5 ballot.
 - The Secretary of State has until July 23 to certify the signatures, then the Ballot Board will draft ballot language.
 - When we prevail, Ohio will have new, fair maps in 2025.