



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Wednesday, July 5, 2017

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Driven by Volunteer Enthusiasm, Fair Congressional Districts for Ohio Continues to Collect Signatures for the November 2018 Ballot

COLUMBUS, OH – Today, the Fair Congressional Districts for Ohio ballot issue campaign announced that the first month of the petition effort is off to a great start.

“Not only did we celebrate America’s birthday on this Fourth of July weekend,” said Carrie Davis, executive director of the League of Women Voters of Ohio, “for us it also marked the one-month point for this campaign to protect the democratic value of giving Ohio voters a voice and a choice by halting gerrymandering of our Congressional districts.”

“We have been thrilled by the level of enthusiasm we’ve seen in volunteers picking up petitions in our office,” added Aryeh Alex, Political Director of the Ohio Environmental Council. “We have thousands of volunteers spread across the state, carrying tens of thousands of petitions.”

The Fair Congressional Districts for Ohio proposal was certified by the Ohio Attorney General on May 22, 2017, and by the Ballot Board on May 30, paving the way for signature collection to begin. The Fair Districts campaign began circulating petitions on June 2, 2017.

“We are well on our way to collecting the needed signatures to place Fair Districts on next year’s ballot,” said Catherine Turcer, Policy Director for Common Cause Ohio. “And for only being one month into the petition signature gathering, we are way ahead of schedule. That’s a real testament to all the hard work of Fair Districts volunteers!”

“We have over 250 volunteers at work who’ve gathered thousands of petition signatures at locations around Greater Cleveland,” said Catherine LaCroix, the Fair Districts coordinator for the League of Women Voters of Greater Cleveland. “We can’t make our representatives listen to us until they have to. We can’t fix political gridlock until we fix Congress.”

The campaign needs to collect 305,591 valid signatures from Ohioans, including a minimum number

in 44 of Ohio's 88 counties. Ohio law permits citizen initiative campaigns to continue collecting signatures and file whenever they wish. However, state law establishes a cut-off of early July for filings to appear on the fall ballot, 125 days before the November election, so that election officials have adequate time to prepare ballots.

"We offer a sincere thank you to all the volunteers who have canvassed the state to collect signatures!" said Turcer. "With this level of enthusiasm to 'slay the gerrymander', Ohioans can count on seeing this essential Fair Districts reform on the November 2018 ballot."

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