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Election 2014 Results Demonstrate Rigged Redistricting Needs to be Fixed

COLUMBUS - Today, Common Cause Ohio (CCO) and the League of Women Voters of Ohio (LWVO) released preliminary figures on how Ohio's 2011 gerrymandered districts impacted the 2014 Election. In nearly every race for the US House of Representatives and the Ohio General Assembly, the winner was from the political party favored by the gerrymandered districts.

The preliminary analysis, released today, examines the impact state legislative and congressional map-making had on the 2014 election. The study highlights how gerrymandered district lines create uncompetitive races and amplifies the crucial need for reform.

While official election results will be released by the Secretary of State soon, the analysis of unofficial results shows:

- Predicted partisan percentages (known as partisan indexes) of both the Ohio Senate districts and the US House districts perfectly predicted the winners, based on political party.
- Partisan leaning also predicted the results of 96 out of 99 Ohio House races.
- Even more troubling, four of the Ohio Senate winners (23%) faced no opponent in the general election, and 14 of the Ohio House winners (14%) faced no opponent. One U.S. Congressman, Bob Gibbs, also faced no opponent.

"Our winner-take-all system of drawing district lines means that the voters lose, because the results are predetermined long before voters cast their ballots. We need a fairer system now," said Ann Henkener of the League of Women Voters of Ohio.

"District lines manipulate the voters and their vote, and Ohioans deserve better. Elections should reflect the will of the people, rather than partisan map-making," said Catherine Turcer of Common Cause Ohio. "This analysis highlights the pressing need to create a fair system."

This preliminary analysis of 2014 election results follows LWVO's report on the 2012 election, [Predictable Results: A Report from the League of Women Voters of Ohio Examining 2011 Gerrymandering and 2012 Election Results](#). Once the final, official 2014 election results are released by the Secretary of State, a comprehensive report will be released by LWVO and CCO analyzing

both the 2012 and 2014 races.

In recent weeks, the Ohio Legislature and Constitutional Modernization Commission have been hearing competing proposals for reforming Ohio's redistricting process. LWVO and CCO strongly suggest that any proposal include the following best practices:

Establish a genuinely bipartisan panel of map-makers - The entity responsible for drawing new congressional and state legislative district lines must be genuinely bipartisan or nonpartisan. In a bipartisan panel, at least one member of the minor party must agree to procedural rules governing the panel's operation and sign off on the plan for it to take effect.

Preserve Communities - Legislative districts should not unnecessarily split political subdivisions such as counties, municipalities, townships, and wards. Detailed instructions on the order in which political subdivisions must be combined and divided are especially important, if other constraints are lacking.

Explicit Prohibition on Favoritism - There must be an express prohibition on any district or plan being drawn to favor or disfavor a political party, incumbent, or potential candidate.

Ensure Transparency & Public Participation - Statewide hearings need to be held *before* and *after* the introduction of a proposed plan to allow for meaningful public input before enactment. The public must be given adequate time to review a proposed plan before public hearings at which that plan is considered. Before final approval of a specific plan, the public must have the opportunity to comment on that specific plan. All meetings, documents, and activities of the Redistricting Commission must be public.

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