



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF OHIO**

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**Testimony on SJR 8, General Assembly Redistricting  
Before the State Government Oversight and Reform Committee  
Presented on behalf of the  
League of Women Voters of Ohio  
December 3, 2014**

The League of Women Voters has advocated for redistricting reform for many, many years. We supported then Sen. Husted's bi-partisan proposal in 2009 and more recently the bi-partisan LaRose-Sawyer proposal in the last and this General Assembly. Either of those proposals would have achieved progress in making Ohio's legislature and Congressional delegation more reflective of the political values of Ohio voters. SJR 8 does nothing to advance bi-partisanship.

Ohio is a "battleground" state – its voters are roughly divided evenly between the two major political parties. Single party gerrymandering has produced artificially large majorities for whichever political party held the pen for redistricting the General Assembly districts and Congressional districts.

SJR 8 begins the redistricting process in a facial bi-partisan way, requiring some level of approval by the two major parties. The League supports this part of the process. However, if agreement isn't reached with the minority party, a "majority party rules" default can be used – exactly the same system we currently have. In fact, there is a provision that current districts must be maintained as much as possible. Worst scenario - with a minimal amount of work, the majority can adopt another gerrymandered plan. This process can continue through the decade.

I urge this Committee to reject this proposal and begin deliberations on a bi-partisan proposal such as the one proposed by Senators LaRose and Sawyer.

*The League of Women Voters of Ohio, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.*