



**For Immediate Release**

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**PRESS CONTACT**

Nick Tuell, 513-602-5258, [tuell@InnovationOhio.org](mailto:tuell@InnovationOhio.org)

Jen Miller, 614-563-9543, [director@lwvohio.org](mailto:director@lwvohio.org)

## **Equal and Fair Districts Coalitions statement on adopted statehouse maps, calls for constitutional change**

*Politicians stack the deck for political pals by cheating voters out of fair districts.*

COLUMBUS - Tonight, the GOP-controlled Ohio Redistricting Commission voted to adopt statehouse district maps that tip the scales for Republican candidates and solidify GOP majorities in both chambers. The two coalitions, Equal Districts and Fair Districts condemn the latest political power-grab by both the Republican and Democratic members of the commission.

**“Politicians are getting in our way,” said Molly Shack and Prentiss Haney, Co-Executive Directors of the Ohio Organizing Collaborative speaking on behalf of Equal Districts.** “It has become obvious that we cannot trust politicians to deliver the fair maps Ohioans deserve. We must remove politicians from the process and give power back to the people. We look forward to making that change by amending the Ohio Constitution in November 2024.”

Despite five rulings from the Ohio Supreme Court calling for fair maps that reflect the 54% Republican - 46% Democratic partisanship of our state, the Commission unanimously adopted maps that relegate Democrats to just 35 (35%) safe seats in the House and 9 (27%) safe seats in the Senate. These maps will likely relegate Democrats to super-minorities in both legislative chambers for the rest of the decade despite the fact that they have earned nearly 50% of our votes in the last decade.

Ohio's redistricting process started publicly nearly 800 days ago and all we have to show for it at this point are 5 sets of illegally gerrymandered maps by Republicans and 5 strike downs from a bipartisan majority of the Ohio Supreme Court. Now, this 6th version of maps, that are still illegally gerrymandered, shockingly garnered the support of the two lone Democratic Commission members.

"This process that kept the map-making out of the public eye has resulted in rigged maps that help politicians and their friends get re-elected at the expense of Ohio families and communities," said **Catherine Turcer, Executive Director of Common Cause Ohio**. "We are working together on an amendment to ban politicians from map drawing so that Ohio voters get the impartial districts they fundamentally deserve, and lawmakers will be responsive to the people rather than mega-donors and lobbyists."

The new set of maps – which received no public input and will potentially be in place until 2030 – do not keep our communities together in sensible districts, they do not reflect how we vote, and they do not empower communities of color by creating new and real pathways to political representation. Instead, just like at every other stage of the process, these maps undermine Ohioans' political power and our democracy writ large. These maps were drawn with one purpose: to protect partisan politicians. They do not meet the needs of the people nor the requirements of our state constitution or the Ohio Supreme Court's orders.

The Equal Districts and Fair Districts coalitions now turn their focus towards assisting the [Citizens Not Politicians](#)' citizen-driven constitutional amendment proposal for the November 2024 ballot.

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