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**Fair Districts = Fair Elections Coalition Releases
Congressional Redistricting Reform Proposal for Public Comment**

COLUMBUS—Today, the Fair Districts = Fair Elections Coalition announced that it is seeking public comment on a congressional redistricting reform proposal. Members of the public are encouraged to visit www.fairdistrictsohio.org and share their concerns and recommendations.

Last year, Ohio voters overwhelmingly supported redistricting reform for the state legislature. More than 71% of voters approved Issue 1 “Fair Districts Ohio” in 2015, which passed in all 88 counties. It established the bipartisan Ohio Redistricting Commission and a ban on gerrymandering or drawing lines for partisan advantage.

“Gerrymandering effectively rigs the election by creating safe seats, and whichever party controls district map drawing makes sure that party has considerably more safe seats,” said Catherine Turcer of Common Cause Ohio. “It leaves Ohioans with elected officials who are more accountable to their political party than to the voters in their districts. This leads to dysfunction and gridlock in Congress.”

“The current partisan makeup of Ohio’s congressional districts perfectly predicted which political party would win in every single race in 2012 and 2014, and it doesn’t look like 2016 will be any different,” said Carrie Davis of the League of Women Voters of Ohio citing its [Predictable Results](#) study.

“Ohio voters spoke loud and clear last year,” added Turcer. “They want fair districts and they don’t want to wait another decade or more.”

Ohio House Speaker Cliff Rosenberger (R-Clarksville) and Senate President Keith Faber (R-Celina) have expressed opposition to addressing congressional redistricting reform, wanting to wait to see what happens after last year’s state reform takes effect in 2021. The legislature has two pending proposals, [SJR 2](#) (LaRose-R, Sawyer-D) and [HJR 2](#) (Curtin-D, Clyde-D), that are similar to the 2015 reform passed by voters, but neither one has yet received a hearing.

Ohio’s statewide officeholders have a different view. Governor John Kasich, in this year’s State of the State address, said congressional gerrymandering should be relegated to “the dustbin of history.” Ohio Secretary of State Jon Husted has called the way congressional districts are drawn as “fractured foundation on which our legislative branch of government is based.”

“We’re tired of waiting for the Ohio General Assembly leadership to act,” concluded Davis. “The Fair Districts = Fair Elections Coalition wants to see congressional reform on next year’s ballot. Today, we are putting forward a draft plan for public comment that we hope will prompt action in the legislature when they return after the election.”

The Fair Districts = Fair Elections Proposal makes the newly created bipartisan Ohio Redistricting Commission responsible for congressional as well as state legislative redistricting and includes the following key reforms:

- A transparent, public process for mapmaking and an opportunity for the public to submit maps to the Ohio Redistricting Commission for consideration.
 - Rules for mapmaking that focus on fostering representational fairness, the principle that the number of districts leaning toward each party closely corresponds to the preferences of the voters of Ohio.
 - A prohibition on drawing congressional districts that favor or disfavor a political party or candidate.
 - A prohibition on a member of Congress serving on the Ohio Redistricting Commission that draws congressional lines.
 - Rules for mapmaking that focus on community representation and keeping communities or political subdivisions in the same congressional district.
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Ohioians who don’t have access to the Internet but would like a copy of the congressional redistricting proposal should call Common Cause Ohio at 614-441-9145.

www.fairdistrictsohio.org

The Fair Districts = Fair Elections Coalition seeks to reform the way Ohio's Congressional Districts are drawn with the **goal of prohibiting, or at least reducing, partisan gerrymandering**. Additionally, the Coalition seeks to **increase fairness and accountability** in the Congressional map-making process. **The Coalition is currently urging the state legislature to place Congressional Redistricting Reform on the 2017 ballot.**

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