



November 2015 Ohio League Leader Updates

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1. Issue 1 Win Report & Plans for Congressional Reform

a. Ohio Voters Pass Redistricting Reform!

On November 3, 2015, Ohio voters made history by passing Issue 1, a ballot measure that will make it harder for politicians to manipulate state legislative districts for partisan gain. The Ohio General Assembly passed HJR 12 in December 2014 with overwhelming bipartisan support, and it then became Issue 1, a measure on the November 2015 statewide ballot.

Issue 1 enjoyed broad support including the Ohio Democratic Party, the Ohio Republican Party, the Ohio Green Party and over 125 local and state organizations. There was no organized opposition. The support of a broad, diverse coalition shows us how campaigns and government should work, setting partisan politics aside and working in the best interest of the people.

b. "Fair Districts = Fair Elections" Coalition Report

Our coalition started with several initial goals when we formed in August, including set up a website to provide regularly-updated public information about the issue, endorsements, news coverage, and how supporters could help. Our coalition recruited many of the 125+ organizational endorsements for Issue 1. We pushed out weekly press releases (rotated as to which coalition partner sent them) and posted to the blog almost daily from late August through Election Day. We reached out to media regularly and reaped a significant boost in press coverage of Issue 1 as a result. Every major newspaper in Ohio published an editorial in support of Issue 1.

We supplemented the official campaign with outreach to many groups and individuals. We also produced additional printed materials, including "Yes on Issue 1" literature cards to distribute at events, canvassing, and vote centers. To supplement our shoestring budget, we asked for a modest donation for yard signs, bumper stickers, and buttons. We relied exclusively on partners and volunteers to distribute materials around the state.

We greatly appreciate all of the Local Leagues, League members, partners and volunteers who pitched in to help by drafting blog posts for the www.yesforissue1.org website, participating in a press release or press conference, writing letters to the editor or op-eds, recruiting endorsers, helping raise money or donating funds to print materials, distributing materials around the state, and so much more - THANK YOU!

c. Election Results

Based on the unofficial election results from election night on November 3, 2015:

Issue 1 passed by a strong margin in all 88 counties. Only 2 counties were less than 60% -- Adams 59.79, Vinton 58.31. All counties where we had a ground game were over 70%. Some notables include:

- Athens 73.93
- Cuyahoga 77.69
- Delaware 75.54
- Franklin 78.10
- Hamilton 70.52
- Lake 72.98
- Lorain 73.68
- Lucas 74.01
- Mahoning 70.97
- Montgomery 72.11
- Summit 75.48 ******(especially significant since Summit also had two competing local redistricting issues on the ballot)
- Wood 73.17

These numbers demonstrate that we had significantly higher voter support in communities where we held Issue 1 events, distributed materials, had positive media coverage, and other forms of local engagement. We did this, and we should be proud of our work.

d. Next steps: Congressional Redistricting Reform

We're not done yet. Issue 1 was a significant victory to stop gerrymandering for Ohio General Assembly districts. Now we need to extend these new rules to U.S. House districts.

We are reaching out to all Issue 1 supporters to ask if they will join us in continuing to work on fair districts for ALL legislative districts, including Ohio's Congressional districts.

The Fair Districts Coalition has already transitioned into planning how to get Congressional redistricting reform on the ballot. The coalition meets weekly, every Tuesday at 1-2pm in Columbus. All interested partners are welcome to attend in person or by phone.

Currently, we are exploring all options. These include working with the legislature and/or the Ohio Constitutional Modernization Commission (OCMC) to place the issue on the ballot, and doing a citizen initiative (petition process) to put the issue on the ballot. The coalition testified before OCMC earlier this month, where they are considering a draft proposal that combines HJR2 and SJR2, which are pending in the legislature. That language is our starting point.

We are also reaching out to key stakeholders and funders to gauge their support for moving forward and any concerns they may have. We know we will face opposition this time, so we need to have a strong base of support and financing in order to succeed.

Individuals and organizations who are interested in helping pass Congressional redistricting reform can contact Carrie Davis at the LWVO office (cdavis@lwvohio.org or 614-469-1505) for more information and to be added to the list to receive updates.

2. December All-Member Call

Our next all-member conference call will be held on **Tuesday, December 1, 12-1 pm (Eastern Time)**.

Topic: 2016 Election Planning. Join us to hear about plans for getting Congressional redistricting reform on the 2016 ballot, rolling out Vote411 statewide, the next stage of Judicial Votes Count, and voter registration & engagement in the digital age (including how to implement online voter registration).

CALL-IN NUMBER: 866-740-1260

PIN NUMBER: 4691505#

The recording of the all-member call will be available on the LWVO website following the call until the end of the month. Please note that the podcast is intended for LWV members and guests (just like the calls) and, therefore, should not be shared with anyone outside the League family. Thank you.

3. MLD Tip of the Month: *Translating League activities and events into membership and leadership growth - Part One*

Create a plan to engage new member and emerging leader participants following League activities and events. How can we grow membership and provide leadership opportunities from these events?

After the event:

- Say Thank You! Remember all the members and leaders who helped make your League event a success, from the most prominent speaker to the friend who brought ice and drink cups! Thank everyone who helped contribute to the event by sending an e-card, making a phone call, or acknowledging them at a meeting or in your newsletter.
- Always Follow-Up with individuals who signed the sign-in sheet. Ask someone to call or email everyone on the list, thanking them for attending and inviting them to join the League. Remember to do this in a timely manner- a potential member will feel more welcomed if an email comes a few days after the event, rather than a few weeks. If someone shows a particular interest in the event topic or other aspects of the League, contact them and connect them with a committee or other League members who are working on that area. Feeling connected helps retain members and leaders.
- Remember the new leaders who helped out with the event for your next event. Make a spreadsheet of who did what to ensure you're keeping track and can call upon them again.

Extract. See full article: <http://forum.lwv.org/member-resources/article/welcoming-new-members-and-engaging-leaders>

4. Membership Updates

- **Per Member Payment (PMP) Reminder**

Thank you to the Leagues who have already paid in full (you know who you are!). Leagues that do not pay in full will receive quarterly invoices. Your local League Treasurer will soon receive the second PMP statement in the next few weeks. The membership count and PMP amount on the invoice are based on the numbers your League entered into the national database by February 1, 2015. Our state PMP will remain at \$25 per member as it has for the past five years, and this freeze will extend to two more years.

- **Send LWVO your updated membership rosters by Nov. 20**

During the database downtime, please send your updated membership rosters to the state League office at lwvoinfo@lwvohio.org by Friday, November 20, 2015. This will help the state office to maintain a comprehensive, current statewide membership list until LWVUS has their new membership database fully operational and available online. This will also ensure that all of our members receive LWVO newsletters, updates, legislative alerts, and other announcements regularly.

- **New LWVUS Online Database is Almost Here!**

We have received word that the new LWVUS membership database will be rolled out to states in stages. Ohio is scheduled to be one of the last states to be included in the rollout. We are included in "Group Six" of the LWVUS's rollout, with a target date of December 28, 2015. We expect that local Leagues in Ohio will be able to update their information with LWVUS regarding new members, members' changes of address and status, etc. by the January 31, 2016, deadline for roster reporting.

5. LWVUS 2016 National Convention Dates Announced

Mark your calendars! The 52nd National Convention will be held June 16-19th, 2016, in Washington D.C.

Several innovative features are planned, including a "first-timer" orientation, streamlined plenary and speaker sessions, and hands-on demonstrations of League activities with proven impact.

6. Congratulations to Barbara Brothers of LWVGY!

Congratulations to Barbara Brothers on being selected for the Youngstown Academic Commission. Barbara has been the chair for the League of Women Voters of Greater Youngstown's Education Committee for several years. Under Barbara's leadership the LWVGY Education Committee has studied Ohio public school financing, charter school transparency, public money to private educational uses, charter school requirements, etc. She has spearheaded two Mahoning county-wide forums on education, one collaborating with Doug Oplinger, Akron Beacon journalist, and the other a collaboration with the Youngstown Rotary.

Barbara has firsthand personal experience in education. She has taught in the public school systems and is a retired professor from Youngstown State University as well as the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. Her accomplishments and awards are varied and many, and include YSU's Heritage Award for contributions to the University and community.

According to the Youngstown *Vindicator* (<http://www.vindy.com/news/2015/nov/12/dr-brothers-named-youngstown-schools-distress-comm>), she was appointed to the five member commission by Youngstown mayor John A. McNally, who described Barbara as a "tireless advocate for public education", and added, "I am thrilled that she has accepted my invitation to represent the entire city, including our students, parents and teachers, on the academic distress commission." The Commission is charged with on-going monitoring of the district's Academic Recovery Plan, which includes

actions to improve the district's academic performance, resources and procedures for monitoring and evaluating improvement efforts.

We are so proud of you, Barbara. Congratulations!