



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF OHIO**

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Ohio Constitutional Modernization Commission  
Committee on the Legislative Branch and the Executive Branch  
Ann Henkener, League of Women Voters of Ohio  
October 8, 2015

Thank you for this opportunity to share the League's thoughts with you. The League strongly supports reforming the way Ohio draws districts for both the General Assembly and our representatives to Congress.

The proposal on the November 2015 ballot, state Issue 1, to reform how Ohio draws its General Assembly districts has received wide bi-partisan support, as well as support from a wide variety of organizations. Any Constitutional barriers to how we draw Congressional districts have been removed by the United States Supreme Court in its recent decision concerning the Arizona redistricting commission. There is no reason to delay moving forward with placing a similar reform on the ballot in 2016 to extend Issue 1's reforms to how we draw Congressional districts. The task is important because current Congressional districts (federal) are more highly gerrymandered than General Assembly (Ohio) districts.

A good reform proposal need meet only a few simple goals. Ohio voters are relatively evenly split between the two major parties, and generally speaking, its General Assembly and Congressional delegations should reflect those political choices. The districts should also be drawn to provide voters choices in general elections and to have geographical shapes and boundaries that make sense to voters.

Currently there are proposals in both the Ohio House and Senate for reform, HJR 2 and SJR 2. They are very similar and easily reconciled and both provide an already understood and accepted method for drawing districts. The League urges this committee to adopt something along these lines and send it to the full Commission for its approval.

*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.*