

# REDISTRICTING *FAIR* *DISTRICTS* toolkit

**01**

WHAT THIS IS FOR

**02**

REDISTRICTING BASICS

**03**

FAQs

**04**

GRAPHICS

**05**

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

**06**

PRESENTATIONS + SLIDE DECKS

**07**

OPENERS + HOOKS WHEN SIGNATURE COLLECTING

**08**

RECORDINGS

**09**

TALKING POINTS

**10**

SPEAKERS BUREAU

**11**

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

# WHAT THIS IS FOR

This toolkit was designed to empower **Fair Districts** volunteers, members and local leaders of the **League of Women Voters of Ohio**, members of **Common Cause Ohio**, and supporters of redistricting reform everywhere as we all work to get the **Citizens Not Politicians** Amendment onto the ballot in 2024.

Our goal is to provide you with the essential tools and information needed to effectively communicate the importance of this amendment, equip you with persuasive talking points, eye-catching graphics, informative explainers, and best practices to engage and mobilize your communities. Together, we will end gerrymandering in Ohio and strengthen our democracy for generations to come.

# REDISTRICTING BASICS

## WHAT IS REDISTRICTING?

**REDISTRICTING:** process of drawing the boundaries of electoral districts, which happens every 10 years after the US Census to ensure each district has roughly equal population.

### **FAIR AND EQUAL REPRESENTATION IS THE GOAL**

- But when politicians are the ones drawing the districts, their goal is to protect their power, not voters.

## WHAT IS GERRYMANDERING?

**GERRYMANDERING:** When electoral districts are drawn by the political party in power to benefit their party and protect incumbent politicians to maintain their power with the intention of influencing elections to their advantage.

### **GERRYMANDERING MANIPULATES DISTRICT LINES BY EITHER:**

- **PACKING:** concentrating as many voters from a particular party or demographic group into one district to reduce their influence in other districts OR
- **CRACKING:** splitting voters from a particular party or demographic group up to dilute their voting power, making it harder for them to influence election.

### **RIGGING ELECTORAL DISTRICTS IN FAVOR OF POLITICIANS IN POWER IS THE GOAL**

- The purpose of gerrymandering is to rig political outcomes by creating districts that always vote for the same political party, keeping those districts "safe" for the incumbent party.

## WHY DOES THIS MATTER?

- ***Gerrymandered districts let representatives pick their voters*** instead of voters picking their representatives. That's not how democracy is supposed to work!
- ***Gerrymandering skews election results, making for a legislature that does not accurately reflect the will of the voters.***
- ***Gerrymandering undermines voter participation*** because voters don't see their votes affecting policies that improve their lives.
- ***Gerrymandering distorts democracy***, leading to political outcomes and policy decisions that aren't what the majority of voters actually want.
- ***Gerrymandering allows the party in charge to stay in charge by weakening the power of the opposing party***, and making individual voters less impactful.
- ***Gerrymandering creates uncompetitive districts*** so the incumbents and the party in power can't be held accountable.
- ***Politicians can do whatever they want*** when they know their seats are safe.
- ***Gerrymandering creates extreme candidates***: When there's no competition between parties, the competition happens in the primary, where voters are often more extreme than voters in general elections. To win, candidates have to promise to promote extreme policies. That's not what most Ohioans want.
- ***Gerrymandering creates a hyperpartisan environment***: Compromise is disincentivized between parties, and even with people of more moderate viewpoints within the same party.
- ***Gerrymandering makes our government dysfunctional***: real problems can't get solved because no one has reason to compromise, so nothing gets done.

Are you passionate about any kind of policy that is decided in the Statehouse? The future of that policy depends on whether we can get rid of gerrymandering... or not.

<p><b>WHAT'S THE SOLUTION?</b></p>	<p><b><i>PASS THE CITIZENS NOT POLITICIANS AMENDMENT IN 2024</i></b></p> <p><b><i>EMPOWER CITIZENS TO CREATE DISTRICT MAPS AND TAKE POLITICIANS OUT OF THE MAP-MAKING PROCESS</i></b></p>
<p><b>THE CITIZENS NOT POLITICIANS AMENDMENT WILL</b></p>	<p><b>AMEND THE OHIO CONSTITUTION TO:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Create the 15-member Ohio Citizens Redistricting Commission</b>, made up of Democratic, Republican, and Independent citizens who broadly represent the different geographic areas and demographics of the state.</li> <li>• <b>Ban current or former politicians, political party officials, and lobbyists from sitting on the Commission.</b></li> <li>• <b>Require fair and impartial districts</b> by making it unconstitutional to draw voting districts that discriminate against or favor any political party or individual politician.</li> <li>• <b>Require the commission to operate under an open and independent process.</b></li> </ul>

## FAQs

- [Redistricting and gerrymandering basics](#)
- [Citizens Not Politicians Amendment](#)
- [Petition circulating](#)



# GRAPHICS

- Citizens Not Politicians
- Fair Districts + LWVO

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

BASIC MODEL	TIPS
<p><b>INTRO + REASON FOR WRITING:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WHO YOU ARE + WHY THE AMENDMENT IS IMPORTANT TO ~YOU~OR</li> <li>• WHO YOU ARE + WHY YOU HAVE A UNIQUE OR INTERESTING POV</li> </ul>	<p><b>KEEP YOUR LETTER CONCISE + BRIEF</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 200-300 words- check to see if your paper has a word limit before writing</li> <li>• Stick with one idea- don't list all the reasons gerrymandering is bad or the amendment is good</li> <li>• Don't include attachments</li> </ul>
<p><b>WHY DOES THIS MATTER NOW?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WHY SHOULD PEOPLE IN YOUR COMMUNITY CARE?</li> <li>• HOW WILL THE AMENDMENT ADDRESS THIS?</li> </ul> <p><b>CONNECT REDISTRICTING TO COMMUNITY ISSUES OF SALIENCE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND YOU THAT PEOPLE ARE PASSIONATE ABOUT?</li> <li>• EDUCATION, CLIMATE, HEALTHCARE POLICIES, AND HYPERPARTISAN POLITICS ARE GOOD PLACES TO START</li> </ul>	<p><b>Proof for typos and accurate grammar</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bonus if you can get someone else to proofread your letter</li> <li>• It's best if you are writing as a citizen rather than a Leaguer but</li> <li>• If you are writing as a Leaguer, please share with Elisabeth so LWVO can sign off</li> </ul> <p><b>Write for a general audience</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Don't get in the weeds</li> <li>• Don't make assumptions about what people know</li> <li>• Write from a nonpartisan orientation</li> </ul> <p><b>For more tips and some great examples, see the <a href="#">LTE toolkit from the Citizens Not Politicians campaign</a></b></p>

BASIC MODEL	TIPS
<b>PROVIDE FACTS</b>	<b>Provide your name and contact info</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check submission guidelines for the paper to be sure you are giving them what they ask for—usually name, address, and phone number so the paper can follow up with you</li> </ul>
<b>WHAT DO YOU WANT?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>CALL TO ACTION- SIGN THE PETITION, READ THE AMENDMENT, SHARE THE AMENDMENT ON SOCIAL MEDIA, OR OTHER SPECIFIC ASK</b></li> </ul>	<b>Don't give up if your letter isn't published the first time you submit it</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check to be sure you're following the paper's guidelines and that your letter is accurate and engaging</li> <li>• Update to current circumstances</li> <li>• Resubmit</li> </ul>

## PRESENTATIONS & SLIDE DECKS

- [Citizens Not Politicians: Policy overview](#)
- [Fair Districts: Ambassador Training](#)
- [Fair Districts: Petition Circulator training](#)
- [Fair Districts: Policy Deep Dive](#)
- [LWVO: Adventures in Redistricting](#)

More content coming throughout the campaign, so be sure to keep checking.

# OPENERS + HOOKS WHEN SIGNATURE COLLECTING

KEEP IT SIMPLE	FOCUS ON VOTER POWER	FOCUS ON VOTER FRUSTRATION
Do you want to sign a petition to end gerrymandering in Ohio?	Do you think voters should choose their representatives and not the other way around?	Are you tired of politicians not listening to us?
Hello! Are you interested in fair and transparent elections in our state?	Do you believe our politicians should get to draw district lines to guarantee their re-election?	Are you frustrated with the current state of our elections? Sign our petition to put the power back in the hands of the people.
Hi there! Do you believe in giving the power of redistricting back to the people?	Do you think Ohio citizens could do a better job drawing district lines than politicians?	Sick of politicians choosing their voters instead of the other way around?
Want to empower Ohio voters and ensure fair elections?	Do you think it's time for voters, not politicians, to shape our electoral districts?	Want to take the power of redistricting away from politicians?

Questions? Need help?  
Reach out to Elisabeth  
[ewarner@lwvohio.org](mailto:ewarner@lwvohio.org)





# RECORDINGS

- [Fair Districts + Citizens Not Politicians: Ambassador Training](#)
- [Fair Districts: Petition Booklet Circulator Training - Citizens Not Politicians Ballot Initiative](#)
- [Fair Districts: Policy Deep Dive](#)

# TALKING POINTS

## GERRYMANDERING LETS POLITICIANS PICK THEIR VOTERS

- That's not how democracy works!
- The CNP amendment lets voters pick our representatives- that's how it should be

## GERRYMANDERING CREATES

- Unaccountable representatives
- Hyperpartisan representatives
  - and
- Representatives elected by a minority of the people

## REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT IS THE FOUNDATION OF DEMOCRACY THAT IS OF, FOR, AND BY THE PEOPLE

- Gerrymandered district maps violate that foundation

## GERRYMANDERING DISTORTS DEMOCRACY

- Leading to political outcomes and policy decisions that aren't what the majority of voters actually want.

## THE CITIZENS NOT POLITICIANS AMENDMENT

- bans lobbyists and politicians from the process and instead
- empowers voters to choose their politicians

## THE CITIZENS NOT POLITICIANS AMENDMENT

- Requires fair and impartial districts by making it unconstitutional to draw voting districts that discriminate against or favor any political party or individual politician

# SPEAKERS BUREAU

- [Fair Districts Speaker interest form](#)
- [Fair Districts Speakers Bureau Training](#)
- [Request a Fair Districts Speaker](#)

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Printable materials](#)
- [Fair Districts: volunteer sign-up](#)
- To look up voter registration: [vote4ohio.com](http://vote4ohio.com)
- [Citizens Not Politicians Amendment](#)



Fair Districts Ohio is a coalition of grassroots organizations committed to fairer state legislative and congressional maps. We are a non-partisan team of voting rights experts and organizations working to create a better and more equitable representational democracy. The coalition is led by Common Cause Ohio and the League of Women Voters of Ohio, and is joined by the Ohio A. Philip Randolph Institute, the Ohio Council of Churches, the Ohio Voter Rights Coalition, and other good government organizations.

**IF CONTACTED BY MEDIA, PLEASE REACH OUT  
TO THE FAIR DISTRICTS TEAM**

- Mia Lewis, Associate Director, Common Cause Ohio: [fairdistrictsohio2021@gmail.com](mailto:fairdistrictsohio2021@gmail.com)
- Jen Miller, Executive Director, League of Women Voters of Ohio: [director@lwvohio.org](mailto:director@lwvohio.org)
- Catherine Turcer, Executive Director, Common Cause Ohio: [cturcer@gmail.com](mailto:cturcer@gmail.com)
- Elisabeth Warner, Communication Coordinator, League of Women Voters of Ohio: [ewarner@lwvohio.org](mailto:ewarner@lwvohio.org)

