

Ohio Redistricting Competition

- [Winning Plans](#)
- [Other Submitted Plans](#)
- [Additional Details on the Competition, Scoring and Next Steps](#)

For Immediate Release
June 18, 2009

OHIO REDISTRICTING COMPETITION PARTNERS ANNOUNCE COMPETITION WINNERS

COLUMBUS, Ohio – On Thursday the Ohio Redistricting Competition partners announced the results of the successful Ohio Redistricting Competition, a project years in the making. According to the partners, the competition provides concrete proof that Ohio can rely on an open process based on objective criteria to produce fair legislative districts in Ohio.

OBJECTIVE CRITERIA

The objective criteria considered in the competition refers to the following:

- *Compactness.* Sometimes referred to as the “look” of a district, compactness assures that bizarrely-shaped legislative districts are minimized. This measure helps promote fair representation within a district.
- *Communities of Interest.* Counties, municipalities, and other government boundaries give Ohioans a sense of place and shared interests. This measure seeks to minimize counties divided between districts, while opening a dialogue about the role of municipal, township and other community divisions given the rapid growth of suburban and exurban communities in Ohio.
- *Competitiveness.* Our democracy thrives when the marketplace of ideas is truly competitive, especially on Election Day. This measure seeks to maximize the number of legislative districts that could be won by either party, providing Ohioans with a stronger voice in choosing their representatives.
- *Representational Fairness.* The counterbalance for competitiveness is assuring that a final redistricting plan does not unfairly bias one party over another. This measure seeks to minimize this outcome by comparing the partisan bias of legislative districts to the real world voting history of Ohioans.

The competition was launched in March 2009 by a partnership of organizations and individuals, including Former Republican State Representative Joan Lawrence, The League of Women Voters of Ohio, State Representative Dan Stewart, Professor Richard Gunther - Department of Political Science

at The Ohio State University, Ohio Citizen Action, and Common Cause Ohio.

After being approached by the partners, Ohio Secretary of State Jennifer Brunner agreed to host the process, and to make resources and training available to the public. The competition began on April 10, 2009, and concluded on May 11, 2009.

RESULTS

- Fourteen plans were submitted by members of the public.
- Three plans were disqualified because they did not meet three threshold requirements that current plans must meet (at least one district with a majority of African-American voters as required by the Voting Rights Act; roughly equal numbers of voters in each district; and all points in a district connected without “single point” contiguity or overlap with any other districts)
- Three plans were declared the winning plans based on the scoring criteria used in the competition.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Even the worst-scoring plan submitted in the competition was quantitatively fairer than the actual 2000 redistricting plan.
- The scoring criteria are extremely strong, making it very hard for anyone to “game” the system for one party or another.
- Discretion, while limited, is necessary with this objective process.

WINNING PLANS

Of the fourteen plans that were submitted, three were rated as the winning plans. They are detailed with the following winning criteria as follows, but in no preference of order. Click on a plan to view the map and data sheet. All links open in PDF format (all map files are formatted for 4' X 3' printing and may take additional time to download).

- **Plan 1 ([Map](#) | [Data](#))** (USER PLAN 32) Tim Clarke, Avon, Ohio.

- An even split of likely district representation with 9 leaning Republican and 9 leaning Democratic.
- 10 of 18 Congressional Districts rated as competitive for either political party.
- 7 county fragments, providing a high level of community preservation.
- Appropriately compact districts, providing districts that “look” fair.

- **Plan 2 ([Map](#) | [Data](#))** (USER PLAN 5B) Stuart Wright, Columbus, Ohio.

- An even split of likely district representation with 9 leaning Republican and 9 leaning Democratic.
- 11 of 18 Congressional Districts rated as competitive for either political party.
- 20 county fragments, providing a moderate level of community preservation.
- Appropriately compact districts, providing districts that “look” fair.

- **Plan 3 ([Map](#) | [Data](#))** (USER PLAN 80) Mike Fortner, Current State Representative (Dist. 95 –

R), former mayor of West Chicago, also an Associate Professor of Physics at Northern Illinois University, West Chicago, Illinois.

- A moderate split of likely district representation with 10 leaning Republican and 8 leaning Democratic.
- 12 of 18 Congressional Districts rated as competitive for either political party.
- 8 county fragments, providing a high level of community preservation.
- Appropriately compact districts, providing districts that “look” fair.

- **Current Plan (Map | Data)**

- A partisan split of likely district representation with 13 leaning Republican and 5 leaning Democratic.
- 7 of 18 Congressional Districts rated as competitive for either political party.
- 44 county fragments, providing a low level of community preservation.
- Highly uncompact districts, creating districts that do not “look” fair.

[Click here](#) for maps and data sheets from other users (all in PDF format).

[Click here](#) for additional details on the competition (including the winning maps), scoring and next steps.

PARTNER QUOTES

“Even though I have worked on these concepts for years, I am amazed at how well they work in actual practice. The competition has demonstrated that our districting system can be far fairer for voters and candidates.”

-Joan Lawrence, Former Republican State Rep.

"This competition proves we can draw districts that are both compact and competitive, and will produce representatives who reflect the political values of Ohioans."

-Meg G. Flack, President, League of Women Voters of Ohio

"A picture's worth a thousand words. The Ohio Redistricting Competition provides an opportunity for Ohioans to see reform goals, like compactness and competition, put into action."

-Catherine Turcer, Ohio Citizen Action

WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING ABOUT THE OHIO REDISTRICTING COMPETITION

“The competition shows that it is possible to have an open process to bring in a number of outside groups to participate in redistricting. A public process like this can help improve confidence in the political system.”

-Illinois State Representative Mike Fortner and author of one of the winning plans.

“I really enjoyed the experience and thank the Secretary of State’s office for running the competition. It was very interesting to learn the software and experience the issues facing those who must redistrict.”

-Tom Wakefield, competition participant

There was no cost to take part in this historic opportunity to demonstrate that an open process based on objective criteria can produce fair legislative districts in Ohio.

###

Media Contacts:

Ann Henkener, League of Women Voters of Ohio, 1-877-LWV-OHIO

Dr. Richard Gunther, (614) 292-6266

Catherine Turcer, Ohio Citizen Action, (614) 221-6077

Joan Lawrence, (740) 965-2820

Ohio Secretary of State Media

Jeff Ortega, Assistant Director of Communications, 614.466.0473

Kevin Kidder, Media Relations Coordinator, 614.995.2168