

Ohioans love sports: OSU football, Indians and Reds Baseball, Crew Soccer, Blue Jackets Hockey, etc. We admire great athletes, appreciate well-executed plays, and give credit to exceptional coaching. What we cannot stand is cheating in athletic contests. Why then should we tolerate Gerrymandering in politics?

If Ohio's Gerrymandered districts were football, the endzone for the Republicans would start at midfield and the one for the Democrats would be buried at the back of their own end zone. And Ohioans would boo and call foul. In fact, they did. In 2015 and 2018, Ohio voters passed ballot mandates for redistricting to reduce the gerrymandered districts that produce unfair elections and unbalanced representation.

More than 74% of Ohioans voted for Issue 1 in 2018. Ohioans want fair districts—districts that represent the wishes and opinions of the citizens of Ohio. According to Pew Research, 42% of Ohio voters are Republicans or lean Republican while 40% are Democrats or lean Democrat. That leaves 18% as independents. When Ohio voters are not trapped in Gerrymandered districts, they elect one Republican and one Democratic senator, which reflects a balanced electorate. Realistically a fair map would be more likely to produce 8 Republican and 7 Democrat Representatives. Fair districts might produce more competitive districts, which benefits the voters, with candidates of both parties having to pay closer attention to their constituents.

Ohio used to be considered a "swing state" because we had large cities with unions and agrarian rural areas—a mix of Democrats and Republicans. Now we are a Red state. Why? Because of gerrymandering—the manipulation of districts to provide more representatives of one party than another.

Fair is fair and Ohioans are fair. Which is why, regardless of which party does it, Gerrymandering is cheating. No "redistricting" that continues to produce districts like "the snake on the lake" and districts 12 and 15 can be called fair. Be heroes for democracy! Trust the voters, give us a level playing field—fair maps, and let the best team win.