

As Introduced

**135th General Assembly
Regular Session
2023-2024**

S. J. R. No. 6

Senator Blessing

A JOINT RESOLUTION

Proposing to amend Section 2 of Article II and Sections 1, 3, 4, and 5 of Article XI of the Constitution of the State of Ohio to increase the membership of the General Assembly to 51 senators and 153 representatives beginning January 1, 2033.

Be it resolved by the General Assembly of the State of Ohio, three-fifths of the members elected to each house concurring herein, that there shall be submitted to the electors of the state, in the manner prescribed by law at the general election to be held on November 4, 2025, a proposal to amend Section 2 of Article II and Sections 1, 3, 4, and 5 of Article XI of the Constitution of the State of Ohio to read as follows:

ARTICLE II

Section 2. (A) Beginning January 1, 2033, the general assembly consists of one hundred fifty-three representatives and fifty-one senators. Before that date, the general assembly consists of ninety-nine representatives and thirty-three senators.

(B) Representatives shall be elected biennially by the electors of the respective house of representatives districts;

their term of office shall commence on the first day of January 21
next thereafter and continue two years. 22

(C) (1) Senators shall be elected by the electors of the 23
respective senate districts; their terms of office shall 24
commence on the first day of January next after their election. 25
~~All terms of senators which~~ 26

(2) Seventeen senators' terms shall commence on the first 27
day of January, ~~1969-2031,~~ and shall be four years, ~~and all .~~ 28
Thirty-four senators' terms which shall commence on the first 29
day of January, ~~1971-2033.~~ Of those thirty-four senators, 30
twenty-six senators' terms shall be four years and eight 31
senators' terms shall be two years, as designated in the general 32
assembly district plan used for the elections held in 2032. 33
~~Thereafter,~~ 34

(3) Thereafter, except for the filling of vacancies for 35
unexpired terms, senators shall be elected to and hold office 36
for terms of four years. 37

(D) No person shall hold the office of state senator for a 38
period longer than two successive terms of four years. No person 39
shall hold the office of state representative for a period 40
longer than four successive terms of two years. Terms shall be 41
considered successive unless separated by a period of four or 42
more years. Only terms beginning on or after January 1, 1993 43
shall be considered in determining an individual's eligibility 44
to hold office. A two-year senate term served under division (C) 45
(2) of this section shall not be considered in determining an 46
individual's eligibility to hold office. 47

ARTICLE XI 48

Section 1. (A) The Ohio redistricting commission shall be 49

responsible for the redistricting of this state for the general assembly. The commission shall consist of the following seven members:

(1) The governor;

(2) The auditor of state;

(3) The secretary of state;

(4) One person appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives;

(5) One person appointed by the legislative leader of the largest political party in the house of representatives of which the speaker of the house of representatives is not a member;

(6) One person appointed by the president of the senate;
and

(7) One person appointed by the legislative leader of the largest political party in the senate of which the president of the senate is not a member.

No appointed member of the commission shall be a current member of congress.

The legislative leaders in the senate and the house of representatives of each of the two largest political parties represented in the general assembly, acting jointly by political party, shall appoint a member of the commission to serve as a co-chairperson of the commission.

(B) (1) Unless otherwise specified in this article or in Article XIX of this constitution, a simple majority of the commission members shall be required for any action by the commission.

(2) (a) Except as otherwise provided in division (B) (2) (b) 77
of this section, a majority vote of the members of the 78
commission, including at least one member of the commission who 79
is a member of each of the two largest political parties 80
represented in the general assembly, shall be required to do any 81
of the following: 82

- (i) Adopt rules of the commission; 83
- (ii) Hire staff for the commission; 84
- (iii) Expend funds. 85

(b) If the commission is unable to agree, by the vote 86
required under division (B) (2) (a) of this section, on the manner 87
in which funds should be expended, each co-chairperson of the 88
commission shall have the authority to expend one-half of the 89
funds that have been appropriated to the commission. 90

(3) The affirmative vote of four members of the 91
commission, including at least two members of the commission who 92
represent each of the two largest political parties represented 93
in the general assembly shall be required to adopt any general 94
assembly district plan. For the purposes of this division and of 95
Section 1 of Article XIX of this constitution, a member of the 96
commission shall be considered to represent a political party if 97
the member was appointed to the commission by a member of that 98
political party or if, in the case of the governor, the auditor 99
of state, or the secretary of state, the member is a member of 100
that political party. 101

(C) At the first meeting of the commission, which the 102
governor shall convene only in a year ending in the numeral one, 103
except as provided in Sections 8 and 9 of this article and in 104
Sections 1 and 3 of Article XIX of this constitution, the 105

commission shall set a schedule for the adoption of procedural 106
rules for the operation of the commission. 107

The commission shall release to the public a proposed 108
general assembly district plan for the boundaries for each of 109
the ~~ninety-nine~~ house of representatives ~~districts~~ and the 110
~~thirty-three~~ senate districts. The commission shall draft the 111
proposed plan in the manner prescribed in this article. Before 112
adopting, but after introducing, a proposed plan, the commission 113
shall conduct a minimum of three public hearings across the 114
state to present the proposed plan and shall seek public input 115
regarding the proposed plan. All meetings of the commission 116
shall be open to the public. Meetings shall be broadcast by 117
electronic means of transmission using a medium readily 118
accessible by the general public. 119

The commission shall adopt a final general assembly 120
district plan not later than the first day of September of a 121
year ending in the numeral one. After the commission adopts a 122
final plan, the commission shall promptly file the plan with the 123
secretary of state. Upon filing with the secretary of state, the 124
plan shall become effective. 125

Four weeks after the adoption of a general assembly 126
district plan or a congressional district plan, whichever is 127
later, the commission shall be automatically dissolved. 128

(D) The general assembly shall be responsible for making 129
the appropriations it determines necessary in order for the 130
commission to perform its duties under this article and Article 131
XIX of this constitution. 132

Section 3. (A) The whole population of the state, as 133
determined by the federal decennial census or, if such is 134
unavailable, such other basis as the general assembly may 135

direct, shall be divided by the number ~~"ninety-nine"~~ of representatives in the house of representatives and by the number ~~"thirty-three"~~ of senators in the senate, and the quotients shall be the ratio of representation in the house of representatives and in the senate, respectively, for ten years next succeeding such redistricting.

(B) A general assembly district plan shall comply with all of the requirements of division (B) of this section.

(1) The population of each house of representatives district shall be substantially equal to the ratio of representation in the house of representatives, and the population of each senate district shall be substantially equal to the ratio of representation in the senate, as provided in division (A) of this section. In no event shall any district contain a population of less than ninety-five per cent nor more than one hundred five per cent of the applicable ratio of representation.

(2) Any general assembly district plan adopted by the commission shall comply with all applicable provisions of the constitutions of Ohio and the United States and of federal law.

(3) Every general assembly district shall be composed of contiguous territory, and the boundary of each district shall be a single nonintersecting continuous line.

(C) House of representatives districts shall be created and numbered in the following order of priority, to the extent that such order is consistent with the foregoing standards:

(1) Proceeding in succession from the largest to the smallest, each county containing population greater than one hundred five per cent of the ratio of representation in the

house of representatives shall be divided into as many house of 165
representatives districts as it has whole ratios of 166
representation. Any fraction of the population in excess of a 167
whole ratio shall be a part of only one adjoining house of 168
representatives district. 169

(2) Each county containing population of not less than 170
ninety-five per cent of the ratio of representation in the house 171
of representatives nor more than one hundred five per cent of 172
the ratio shall be designated a representative district. 173

(3) The remaining territory of the state shall be divided 174
into representative districts by combining the areas of 175
counties, municipal corporations, and townships. Where feasible, 176
no county shall be split more than once. 177

(D) (1) (a) Except as otherwise provided in divisions (D) (1) 178
(b) and (c) of this section, a county, municipal corporation, or 179
township is considered to be split if any contiguous portion of 180
its territory is not contained entirely within one district. 181

(b) If a municipal corporation or township has territory 182
in more than one county, the contiguous portion of that 183
municipal corporation or township that lies in each county shall 184
be considered to be a separate municipal corporation or township 185
for the purposes of this section. 186

(c) If a municipal corporation or township that is located 187
in a county that contains a municipal corporation or township 188
that has a population of more than one ratio of representation 189
is split for the purpose of complying with division (E) (1) (a) or 190
(b) of this section, each portion of that municipal corporation 191
or township shall be considered to be a separate municipal 192
corporation or township for the purposes of this section. 193

(2) Representative districts shall be drawn so as to split 194
the smallest possible number of municipal corporations and 195
townships whose contiguous portions contain a population of more 196
than fifty per cent, but less than one hundred per cent, of one 197
ratio of representation. 198

(3) Where the requirements of divisions (B), (C), and (D) 199
of this section cannot feasibly be attained by forming a 200
representative district from whole municipal corporations and 201
townships, not more than one municipal corporation or township 202
may be split per representative district. 203

(E) (1) If it is not possible for the commission to comply 204
with all of the requirements of divisions (B), (C), and (D) of 205
this section in drawing a particular representative district, 206
the commission shall take the first action listed below that 207
makes it possible for the commission to draw that district: 208

(a) Notwithstanding division (D) (3) of this section, the 209
commission shall create the district by splitting two municipal 210
corporations or townships whose contiguous portions do not 211
contain a population of more than fifty per cent, but less than 212
one hundred per cent, of one ratio of representation. 213

(b) Notwithstanding division (D) (2) of this section, the 214
commission shall create the district by splitting a municipal 215
corporation or township whose contiguous portions contain a 216
population of more than fifty per cent, but less than one 217
hundred per cent, of one ratio of representation. 218

(c) Notwithstanding division (C) (2) of this section, the 219
commission shall create the district by splitting, once, a 220
single county that contains a population of not less than 221
ninety-five per cent of the ratio of representation, but not 222
more than one hundred five per cent of the ratio of 223

representation. 224

(d) Notwithstanding division (C) (1) of this section, the 225
commission shall create the district by including in two 226
districts portions of the territory that remains after a county 227
that contains a population of more than one hundred five per 228
cent of the ratio of representation has been divided into as 229
many house of representatives districts as it has whole ratios 230
of representation. 231

(2) If the commission takes an action under division (E) 232
(1) of this section, the commission shall include in the general 233
assembly district plan a statement explaining which action the 234
commission took under that division and the reason the 235
commission took that action. 236

(3) If the commission complies with divisions (E) (1) and 237
(2) of this section in drawing a district, the commission shall 238
not be considered to have violated division (C) (1), (C) (2), (D) 239
(2), or (D) (3) of this section, as applicable, in drawing that 240
district, for the purpose of an analysis under division (D) of 241
Section 9 of this article. 242

Section 4. (A) Senate districts shall be composed of three 243
contiguous house of representatives districts. 244

(B) (1) A county having at least one whole senate ratio of 245
representation shall have as many senate districts wholly within 246
the boundaries of the county as it has whole senate ratios of 247
representation. Any fraction of the population in excess of a 248
whole ratio shall be a part of only one adjoining senate 249
district. 250

(2) Counties having less than one senate ratio of 251
representation, but at least one house of representatives ratio 252

of representation, shall be part of only one senate district. 253

(3) If it is not possible for the commission to draw 254
representative districts that comply with all of the 255
requirements of this article and that make it possible for the 256
commission to comply with all of the requirements of divisions 257
(B) (1) and (2) of this section, the commission shall draw senate 258
districts so as to commit the fewest possible violations of 259
those divisions. If the commission complies with this division 260
in drawing senate districts, the commission shall not be 261
considered to have violated division (B) (1) or (2) of this 262
section, as applicable, in drawing those districts, for the 263
purpose of an analysis under division (D) of Section 9 of this 264
article. 265

(C) The number of whole ratios of representation for a 266
county shall be determined by dividing the population of the 267
county by the ratio of representation in the senate determined 268
under division (A) of Section 3 of this article. 269

(D) Senate districts shall be numbered ~~from consecutively~~ 270
beginning with the number one through thirty three and as 271
provided in Section 5 of this article. 272

Section 5. (A) At any time the boundaries of senate 273
districts are changed in any general assembly district plan made 274
pursuant to any provision of this article, a senator whose term 275
will not expire within two years of the time the plan becomes 276
effective shall represent, for the remainder of the term for 277
which the senator was elected, the senate district that contains 278
the largest portion of the population of the district from which 279
the senator was elected, and the district shall be given the 280
number of the district from which the senator was elected. If 281
more than one senator whose term will not so expire would 282

represent the same district by following the provisions of this 283
section, the plan shall designate which senator shall represent 284
the district and shall designate which district the other 285
senator or senators shall represent for the balance of their 286
term or terms. 287

(B) The final general assembly district plan to be used 288
for elections conducted in the year 2032 shall designate all of 289
the following, in accordance with division (A) of this section 290
and with division (C) (2) of Section 2 of Article II of this 291
constitution: 292

(1) For each of the seventeen current senators whose terms 293
expire on December 31, 2034, the districts those senators shall 294
represent for the remainder of their terms; 295

(2) The thirty-four senate districts from which senators 296
shall be elected for terms beginning on January 1, 2033; 297

(3) Regarding those thirty-four senate districts, in which 298
twenty-six of those districts shall senators be elected to terms 299
of four years beginning on January 1, 2033, and in which eight 300
of those districts shall senators be elected to terms of two 301
years beginning on January 1, 2033. 302

EFFECTIVE DATE 303

If adopted by a majority of the electors voting on this 304
proposal, Section 2 of Article II and Sections 1, 3, 4, and 5 of 305
Article XI amended by this proposal shall take effect 306
immediately and the existing version of Section 2 of Article II 307
and the existing versions of Sections 1, 3, 4, and 5 of Article 308
XI of the Constitution of the State of Ohio shall be repealed 309
effective immediately. 310