



**Date:** March 1, 2022

**To:** Speaker Bob Cupp, Senate President Matt Huffman, and members of the Ohio General Assembly

**From:** The Ohio Voter Rights Coalition Steering Committee

**Re:** Ensuring Ohio Has Fair Maps First, Then One Primary Date

**CC:** Ohio Secretary of State Frank LaRose; OAEA Executive Director Aaron Ockerman; Ohio Statehouse Presscorps

Dear Speaker Cupp and Senate President Huffman:

On February 26, county Boards of Elections received a directive from Secretary of State Frank LaRose to prepare for a May 3 primary election. However, this order circumvents the fact that the Ohio Supreme Court is still ruling on state legislative district plans, and the congressional map is still being drawn. On February 28, the Ohio Association of Election Officials (OAE) wrote to Senate President Matt Huffman with their concerns about the primary proceeding as planned on May 3.

**As a coalition of nonpartisan voter advocates, we echo the concerns of Ohio's dedicated elections officials, and we urge the General Assembly to prioritize the approval of fair maps first before setting a date for the 2022 primary election.**

The OAE claims that their "ability to administer a fair and accurate election has been compromised" and "many counties around the state no longer have the ability to run a successful May 3<sup>rd</sup> election."

A rushed timeline for the Boards of Elections is likely to lead to technical errors as well as confusion among voters. Let's avoid these problems by making sure that constitutionally-compliant, fair districts are finalized first. We cannot jeopardize the integrity of our elections just to meet a date that the Ohio General Assembly has the power to move.

**The Ohio Voter Rights Coalition is asking the General Assembly to ensure that we have fair maps that are truly representative of Ohio voters by upholding the Ohio Constitution and meeting clear expectations set forth by the Ohio Supreme Court. The General**

**Assembly needs to delay the primary for all contests in order to administer a fair and accurate election with one primary.**

Ohio voters need to know they are exercising their right to vote in an election that is accurate, fair, well-planned, and secure. We cannot have faith in our electoral process until fair maps are finalized first so that our bipartisan county Boards of Elections have the time they need to administer the primary election.

We know the General Assembly shares our goal of holding a successful primary election that empowers all Ohioans. We ask that you immediately take the necessary steps to ensure our primary election is fair and accurate before these problems complicate the jobs of election officials and confuse voters.

Sincerely,

Ohio Voter Rights Coalition Steering Committee:

Gavin DeVore Leonard, Ohio Voice

Jen Miller, League of Women Voters of Ohio

Catherine Turcer, Common Cause Ohio

Kayla Griffin, All Voting is Local Ohio

Collin Marozzi, ACLU Ohio