



## Facts and Fiction about Fair Maps

### **FACT 1.) A map that is fair is by definition not gerrymandered**

Gerrymanderers like to say that any intentionality in drawing district lines is inherently gerrymandering, but this is not true.

**Fact:** Map drawers have to make choices with every district line they draw. Should a district include certain school districts? Should a district exclude a large swath of agricultural property in order to make the district more compact? They often make decisions that make a district lean red or blue – but if the end result of that is a FAIR and balanced map, then that’s the opposite of gerrymandering. Only when the combined effect of all the decisions is an unnatural benefit or harm for one party political party is that gerrymandered map.

### **FACT 2.) The Ohio Constitution includes language requiring fairness.**

Politicians who like to create rigged maps say that the word “fairness” isn’t in the Ohio Constitution. That’s silly.

**Fact:** Ohio’s Constitution clearly states, “No map shall unduly favor or disfavor a political party or its incumbents.” That essentially defines fair and is the heart of the anti-gerrymandering criteria in Article 19 of the Ohio Constitution. It’s true, the word “fairness” does not appear in this specific section, but any reasonable person would look at this criteria and know it speaks to fairness.

### **FACT 3.) There are three deadlines for mapmaking in the Ohio Constitution.**

Politicians who don’t want to draw a fair map like to say there’s only one “real” deadline in the Ohio Constitution – November 30 – but that’s not true.

**Fact:** The Ohio Constitution says the legislature shall create and pass a map by September 30. If the legislature fails to obtain the necessary votes to pass a map in September, then the Ohio Redistricting Commission shall adopt a map by October 31. *Shall* is mandatory, not aspirational. November 30th is not the “real” deadline. It is the last deadline. The September and October deadlines are just as real, and the Constitution requires a public map and an up or down vote each month of this process.

**FACT 4.) Map-making can and should be done out in the open**

Politicians with a lot to hide like to say or imply that map negotiations need to happen in secret, but that is not true.

**Fact:** The people of Ohio deserve to know who is saying what and what decisions are being made about our right to representation. To negotiate in secret is a violation of the transparency requirements in the Ohio Constitution and Ohio Sunshine Laws. The idea that politicians need to be shielded from public view in order to speak honestly and freely is a harrowing admission. The people of Ohio deserve a full debate in open proceedings, full stop.

**FACT 5.) Fair maps are easier to create**

Politicians drawing rigged maps love to talk about how hard it is to draw fair maps, but that is the opposite of the truth.

**Fact:** The hardest map to draw is a gerrymandered map. Gerrymandered maps take the longest to create, because you need to scrupulously dissect communities into partisan buckets by looking at voting behaviors of each household. Fair maps, where communities are respected and voters are empowered are some of the easiest and fastest maps to create that prioritize keeping communities together that have more similar backgrounds, values, interests, and experiences.

**The truth is that fair maps:**

- Are usually more compact
- Are easily made in public
- Often have fewer splits of local and county jurisdictions
- Result in many districts that can swing back and forth by responding to voter preference during any given election cycle
- Combine communities with more similar representational needs

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