

[Columbus, Ohio] — My name is Lauren Blauvelt-Copelin, and I am the Vice President of Government Affairs and Public Advocacy for Planned Parenthood Advocates of Ohio. We have seen firsthand the impact gerrymandering has had on reproductive freedom in Ohio.

Under the last ten years of gerrymandered maps, the Republican supermajority has enacted 31 abortion restrictions, although the majority of Ohioans believe abortion should be legal in all or most cases. These extreme, harmful policies do not represent the people of Ohio, and they are the direct result of rigged, gerrymandered districts. Lines are drawn so certain political parties always win, and then Ohio ends up with harmful policies that only support the extreme ideology of the few which in turn controls the many.

Republicans hold a supermajority in the Ohio House and the Senate and control 75% of state Senate seats, even though Ohio only votes about 55% for Republicans. When districts were gerrymandered last time, not only did Ohio get more Republicans in the legislature than people voted for, but Ohio also got more conservatives in the legislature. Uncompetitive districts allowed legislators to pursue more extreme measures without any backlash from the electorate. There is no need for politicians to listen to constituents, public opinions, and polls when the only competition is in the primary. Long story short, gerrymandering has given politicians who adopt extreme positions on abortion a much better chance of winning packed and cracked districts than politicians who respect personal freedom and bodily autonomy.

Ohioans voted for a fair, transparent redistricting process. Just days ago, the Ohio Supreme Court has affirmed what Ohioans have been saying, the maps that were passed by the Republican supermajority violates the constitution. In 2015 and 2018, Ohioans voted in huge numbers to create a fair, transparent system for redrawing state district lines. The people made their wishes clear: They don't want anyone rigging the maps to help certain political parties win. Over the past decade, Ohio has voted an average of 55% Republican. A fair map will have no more than 55% Republican seats. Fair maps keep communities together. We need to unrig Ohio's maps.

After the Ohio Supreme Court's ruling, legislators now have the opportunity to do right by Ohioans and deliver the maps Ohioans deserve. Redistricting impacts every aspect of our lives. We need a fair redistricting process so voters can elect politicians to the Statehouse who work for us, not against us. Ohioans deserve to be able to choose their politicians and not have the

politicians choose their voters.