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Steve Dyer weighs-in on the Issue 1 defeat.

Steve's perspective on policy issues is always factual and persuasive. His views regarding the defeat of Issue 1 provides a context.

Gerrymander Group Think

Ohio's Issue 1 is the inevitable result of politicians who have rigged the system thinking they can't lose because their ideas are great instead of because they've made it so.

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Last [night](#) was quite a rebuke to Ohio Republicans, who since 2010 have ruled all branches of government with an iron, [often corrupt](#) hand. But it shouldn't surprise anyone that they tried to push Issue 1, which, if it had passed, would have solidified their grip on power for decades.

That's because this kind of overreach is what happens when you start thinking your wins are based on your popularity rather than your rigging the system to keep you in power.

*Where gerrymandered politicians always make their mistake is misunderstanding the source of their power. It doesn't come from the people; it comes from **them** — the politicians.*

See, I know that the national narrative is that Ohio is a red state. Trump won in 2016 and 2020 pretty handily. And outside of Sherrod Brown's wins in 2012 and 2018, Obama's 2012 win and some Ohio Supreme Court wins when the parties weren't included on the ballot, Ohio Democrats have been consistently losing since the 2010 wipeout — the election that cost me my seat in the Ohio House.

[Read online to view the electoral map]

This electoral map isn't something I made up. It is Ted Strickland's electoral map from [2006](#). You can see he won what's called "Trump Country" now with 60+ percent of the vote in those counties.

What happened?

Ohio Democrats started losing hundreds of thousands of votes in Northeast Ohio and Republicans consolidated their power in the rural areas of the state.

More importantly, though, Ohio Republicans gerrymandered the hell out of the state, ensuring that regardless of the number of registered voters in either party, they would hold super majorities, or very nearly so, into the infinite horizon. This allowed them to push the most radical of ideas down all our throats with impunity — invigorating their base and discouraging the Democrats'.

That was supposed to change after voters passed a constitutional amendment to end [gerrymandering](#) in 2018, but Ohio Republicans in the gerrymandered Ohio legislature did what they have always done when the Ohio Supreme Court has told them they did something wrong — ignore the court and

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continue to do that illegal [thing](#). They did it with school [funding](#), the single subject rule on state [budgets](#) and now with the redistricting law.

The only recourse the people of Ohio have is direct action through constitutional amendment. And the Republicans knew this, which is why they tried to not just up the threshold of amendment passage to 60%, but require large numbers of signatures to come from all 88 counties — the only state that would have required such a number. Meaning that one Ohio county could prevent the other 87 from voting on anything.

Talk about minority rule.

What gerrymandering lets those who benefit from them do is push unpopular policies into law that benefit those whom the gerrymanderers like and harm those they don't.

But they always end up confusing these laws as “popular” when they are actually “poison” if ever put to a popular vote. Publicly funded private school tuition vouchers, abortion, guns, tax cuts for billionaires — all of these issues are losers in majority rule environments.

But if you cement minority rule as majority rule by gaming the system, then you *can* do all these unpopular things. Where gerrymandered politicians always make their mistake is misunderstanding the source of their power. It doesn't come from the people; it comes from *them* — the politicians.

And the lesson from Issue 1's failure last night is that until the people start picking their politicians again, Ohio will continue to be misconstrued as a Red state. Though I hope this result reveals more of the truth to the country than has been recently reported.

After all, it wasn't that long ago that an Ohio Democrat won every Appalachian county by more than 60 percent of the vote.

[Gerrymander Group Think - by Stephen Dyer - 10th Period \(substack.com\)](#)