

CLERGY JOINT STATEMENT ON OHIO ISSUE 1

On November 5th, 2024, Ohioans will decide on Issue 1, and whether to “VOTE NO” to prevent unelected bureaucrats from overhauling our redistricting process. This important map-making process will impact 99 state representatives, 33 state senators, and 15 members of Congress. According to the drafted language of the proposed Constitutional Amendment, Issue 1 will create “an appointed redistricting commission not elected by, or subject to removal by the voters of the state.”

According to the ballot language, Issue 1 would also:

- Prevent a commission member from being removed, except by a vote of their fellow commission members, even for incapacity, willful neglect of duty or gross misconduct
- Impose new taxpayer-funded costs on the State of Ohio to pay the commission members, the commission staff, and appointed special masters, professionals, and private consultants that the commission is required to hire; and an unlimited amount of for legal expenses incurred by the commission

It is our opinion Issue 1 will take away the power from the people. If Issue 1 passes with a majority vote, the proposed amendment would repeal constitutional protections against gerrymandering approved by nearly three-quarters of Ohio electors participating in the statewide elections of 2015 and 2018 and would eliminate the longstanding ability of Ohio citizens to hold their representatives accountable for establishing fair state legislative and congressional districts.

The Ohio faith community has consistently advocated for election integrity. While no congressional map process is perfect, as lead clergymen from ninety-three (93) congregations, we believe Issue 1 will give a blank check to unaccountable officials and hijack the will of the voters.

If we follow the money, this scheme is supported by the Washington D.C.-based 1630 Fund, the anti-GOD ACLU, and George Soros’ Open Society. These out-of-state interests openly oppose the Judeo-Christian values that make our Buckeye State so great.

In 2 Peter 3:17, the Bible says, “You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked.”

Unfortunately, an approved constitutional amendment is much harder to reverse than laws which can be changed with each legislative session. If this convoluted Issue 1 passes, the Ohio Legislature will not be able to modify or regulate this language. Further, this unreasonable language cannot be challenged in Ohio’s Supreme Court since the Court is obligated by law to abide by the State Constitution as approved by the voters of the state.

As key stakeholders leading ninety-three (93) diverse congregations across fourteen counties, we formally oppose the radical Issue 1 which will allow unelected and unaccountable individuals to take away our right to ensure our government works. This Fall on Tuesday November 5th, we encourage Ohioans to protect our elections from foreign interference, and “VOTE NO” on Issue 1.

List of lead clergymen representing ninety-three (93) congregations across fourteen counties in Ohio calling for registered voters to vote “NO” against the passage of Issue 1 in the November 5th general election:

Pastor David Rentzel, Shelby Life Church
Pastor Dan Barker, Cortland Trinity Church
Pastor Lucian Baker, Christ the King Church
Pastor Denny Nezrick, Lexington Presbyterian
Pastor Eric Byrom, Mansfield Grace Fellowship
Pastor Mark Wireman, Shiloh Pentecostal Church
Pastor Les Vnasdale, Cornerstone Grace Brethren
Bishop J.C. Church, Victory in Truth Ministries
Pastor Ken Ginter Jr., Ontario Abundant Life
Pastor Jason Price, Mansfield Victory Baptist
Pastor Rick Lewis, Shelby Connect Church
Pastor Ben Gregg, Plymouth Church of GOD
Dr. Jeff Mills, Mifflin Little Flock Fellowship
Pastor Dink Porter, Mansfield Open Bible Church
Pastor John Campos, Bowman St. Church of GOD
Pastor Mark Meyer, Grace Point Lexington
Pastor Brian Phillips, New Beginnings Freewill
Pastor Steve Brenneman, Awakening Christian Ctr.
Pastor Miler Montoya, Kingdom Vision Church
Pastor Walter Moss, Canton Foursquare Church
Pastor Rich Hurles, Plymouth LifePoint Church
Pastor Rob Ratcliff, North Woodbury Freewill
Pastor Larry Hill, Bethel Freewill Baptist
Pastor Russ Smith, Shiloh Wesley Evangelical
Pastor Clint Zeigler, Mansfield Sovereign Christ
Pastor William Cole, Mansfield Recovery Church
Pastor Faron Cole, Eastern Road Church of GOD
Pastor Patrick Bailey, North Bend Church
Pastor David Koehler, Loudonville Baptist Temple
Dr. Dana Gammill, Canton Cathedral of Life
Pastor Eric Steward, Mt. Zion Lutheran Church
Pastor Robert Caw, Newark Church Triumphant
Pastor LaMont Lindsay, Book of Life Church
Pastor Gary Click, Fremont Baptist Temple
Pastor Steve Burkhalter, Ontario Potter’s House
Pastor Mark Galambos, Aurora Awakening Church
Pastor Paul Lintern, Southside Christian Church
Pastor Matt Merendino, Clear Fork Alliance
Pastor Robert Bird, Vermillion Baptist Church
Pastor Danny Akers, Galion Victory Rock Church
Pastor Rick Wiseman, Promised Land Fellowship
Pastor Jack Keister, Mansfield Church of GOD
Pastor Matt O’Harra, Calvary Community Church
Pastor Troy Thompson, Church on the North Coast
Rabbi Michael Oyler, Star in the East Congregation
Pastor James Mitchell, Polk New Liberty Baptist
Pastor Steve Baldrige, Rome Community Church
Pastor Chad Berry, Lexington New Liberty Baptist
Dr. Ricky Branham, Willard Ripley Chapel
Pastors Joe & Amanda Nichols, ARC Empowerment Ctr.
Pastor Robert O’Brian, Apostolic Faith Assembly
Pastor Duane Hennen, Warren Restoration Bible Church
Pastors Les & Grace Farley, Lexington Irresistible Church
Pastor Mark Dettmer, Pleasant Grove Community Church
Pastor Matt Pond, Shelby First Freewill Baptist
Pastor Michael Constantino, Girard New Life Church
Rabbi William Hallbrook, Ontario Sar Shalom Center
Pastor John Bouquet, Savannah Bethel Chapel
Pastor Christopher Spencer, Crestline Grace Baptist
Pastor Dan Rebon, Father’s Heart Healing Center
Bishop Greg Griffith, Willard Church of GOD
Rabbi Bob Bauer, Crestline Beit El Elyon Congregation
Pastor Jeremy Huff, Mansfield Church of Jesus Christ
Pastor David Bates, Galion Unity Freewill Baptist
Pastor James Hill, Mansfield Paradise Church
Pastor Matt Schwartz, Church of GOD at Bladensburg
Pastor George Lewis, Shelby Temple of GOD
Pastor Nickolas Kelly, North Liberty Church
Pastor Joe Smith, Ontario Westside Baptist
Pastor Robert Kurtz, Mansfield Baptist Temple
Pastor David Guild, Wooster Foursquare Church
Pastor Matt Potosky, Albion Brethren Church
Pastor Joe Silvestri, Wooster Bible Church
Pastor Charles Burgess Jr., West Salem Church of GOD
Pastor Patrick Bailey, Danville North Bend Church
Reverend El Akuchie, Godsfield House of Prayer
Pastor Jerry O’Brien, Orville Faith Harvest Fellowship
Pastor Art Kennard, Maranatha Christian Ctr.
Pastor Kevin Evans, Ganges Liberty Lifesong Ministries
Pastor James Marshall, Ganges Community Church
Pastor David Mahon, Galion Apostolic Assembly
Pastor John Temple, Loudonville Trinity Community Church
Pastor Paul Lintern, Oakland Lutheran Church
Pastor David Parsons, Zion’s Refuge Baptist
Pastor Paul Bartholomew, Mohican Church Brethren
Pastor Clyde Kerby, Hope & Healing Ministries
Pastor Ferlie Yates, Hanna Road Church of GOD
Pastor Ed Colegrove, Edison Enterprise Baptist
Pastor Jack Williams, Walker Lake Baptist
Pastor Bill Fox, Crestline Faith Community Church
Bishop Sylvester Ginn, Ontario Hesus Agape Fellowship
Pastor Glen Phillips, Hillside Church of GOD
Pastor Randy Raynes, Mansfield Fellowship Baptist

The above listed clergy co-signers have congregations located in (14) counties throughout Ohio: Richland (52), Crawford (7), Wayne (7), Ashland (6), Knox (4), Morrow (4), Stark (3), Trumbull (3), Huron (2), Licking (1), Lorain (1), Marion (1), Portage (1) & Sandusky (1).