

The structure of voting districts effect lives. Fair districts gives every vote the opportunity to be heard and to choose those persons to represent the voter. Gerrymandered voting districts take away the ability of voters to determine how their lives can be lived.

For example, it is well known that the overwhelming majority of persons want responsible gun legislation to be able to live their lives free of the worry that a public event could turn into a massacre. We want our children to go to school with having to learn how to protect themselves against an active shooter or outfit our children with bullet proof backpacks. However, due to gerrymandering and the pandering to a radical few, Ohio has open carry of firearms and stand your ground. Both of which are dangerous situations. Mass shootings have become commonplace in the US and this has to be stopped. One person's freedom should not mean the loss of someone else's life.

Another issue is abortion. Overwhelmingly Ohioans favor safe and legal access to abortions. When I was 12 my next door neighbor's daughter was brutally murdered. She had agreed to testify against the person who had performed the illegal abortion. Her name was Peachy Fox. (As I was 12 at the time I do not know if this is her legal first name - the last name is correct.) No one was ever arrested for her murder. Peachy fought for her life - but she was bound with barbed wire, bound to cement blocks, and thrown in the river. A month later her body was found.

Every year for years the local news paper carried the story. By doing so every woman was reminded that her life meant nothing and no one would pay a price for murdering her.

Many years later, I went for a 6-weeks check up after the birth of my daughter and the doctor, male and white, looked me in the eye and said "you will not survive another pregnancy, but I'm catholic and I'm not going to do anything about it." I was literally told my life was nothing. This was still before abortion was legal.

Today, our gerrymandered state of Ohio was able to pass a law forbidding an abortion 6 weeks into a pregnancy. Most women will not know they are pregnant at that time. A few short years ago I spoke with Rick Perales when he was my state Representative. I presented him with literature explaining that if we used the criteria for declaring someone brain dead and no longer in need of life support, then an abortion should be legal up to the 5th month of pregnancy. The so-called heart beat at 6 weeks is not the result of a formed human heart. That so-called beat is nothing more than a flutter not a regular beat. The heart and other organs are not fully formed for several more weeks.

The only reason a so-called heart beat can be heard at 6 weeks is due to the increase in sophisticated technological equipment.

However, gerrymandering has resulted in a few radical groups pushing a religious agenda onto the public. Separation of church and state is a founding principle of our democracy. Unfortunately, that is being lost due to partisan gerrymandering. And that gerrymandering effects lives.

Gerrymandering is voter suppression. Packing like party voters into a district and then cracking apart districts of other parties creates a situation that favors only one party. And, in the current environment that is resulting in the will of the majority of voters being denied. Laws are passed that are not the laws that the majority of voters desire and often against the desires of the majority of the voters. Politicians choosing the voters rather than voters choosing the politicians is Democracy upside down.

Please, do as the voters of Ohio have asked you to do twice at the ballot box, create fair voting districts.