

Ohio Legislature: Aggregate Vote Share vs. Mean District Vote: 1966-1996

Year	Democratic Aggregate Vote Share (\underline{v})	Democratic Mean District Vote (ν)	Difference
Senate:			
1966	45.57	46.65	1.08
House:			
1966	46.82	47.90	1.08
1968	46.10	48.10	2.00
1970	50.52	52.68	2.16
1972	51.64	53.01	1.37
1974	55.57	57.13	1.56
1976	56.82	57.99	1.17
1978	53.86	55.02	1.16
1980	51.79	53.29	1.50
1982	56.15	57.04	0.89
1984	50.98	53.27	2.29
1986	53.37	54.96	1.59
1988	52.63	54.61	1.98
1990	53.68	55.85	2.17
1992	52.57	54.01	1.44
1994	45.97	48.06	2.09
1996	46.98	49.02	2.04
1998	47.07	49.30	2.23

In concluding our survey of the Democrat-drawn legislative plans of 1971 and 1981---and the Republican-drawn plan of 1991---it is important not to blame Republican electoral failures over the period 1972-1990, and Democrat electoral failures since 1992, *entirely* on the gerrymander. This table shows that throughout the former period Republican legislative candidates *did* receive a minority of the statewide vote. Since 1994 Democrat candidates have received a minority of the statewide vote. Of course, one can argue that the "out" party's candidates, in each case, would have received a higher percentage of the vote if the party had been assured a level playing field: It's hard to recruit your strongest candidates, and to make a maximum effort in their behalf, when you and they know the deck is stacked against them. Defenders of discretionary districting will argue that partisan gerrymandering doesn't make much difference in the overall

number of seats won or lost and will point out that Republicans controlled the state senate for 12 of the 20 years of Democrat-drawn senate districts; and that Democrats maintained control of the house in 1992 despite the Republican-drawn districts of 1991. One can get into long, inconclusive arguments of this sort, because it is impossible to know how many seats a party would have won had the districts been drawn impartially. Distortion of the seats-votes relationship is weak grounds for opposing discretionary districting. There is a much better, and more fundamental reason.