

SELF-APPOINTED EXPERTS

Now that the Ohio Redistricting Commission is scheduled to meet this month, the media begins to comment from its unanimous liberal corner. Once again, the media trotted out its panel of "self-appointed experts" to weigh in on the subject. God save us from self-appointed experts. Who are these paragons of virtue always ready with an opinion on all things political? What makes them experts, other than self-acclaim? Let's look at three of the loudest voices in the liberal corner regarding redistricting.

First we have former Chief Justice Maureen O'Connor. O'Connor, who finds herself suddenly on the fast track to canonization by the Democrats, is suddenly an expert on redistricting. She has even proposed a remedy and I would urge everyone to read it. It is what those of us with an agricultural background would call a "pig's breakfast." The more you know what's in it, the less you like it. So, is she an expert at redistricting? I say no. In fact, truth be told, Ms. O'Connor is a political creation of the late Alex Arshinkoff, the former Summit County Republican Chairman. He was a powerful and capable fundraiser who was able to promote individuals from Summit County into the statewide political conversations. Arshinkoff politically put Ms. O'Connor on third base. She has spent the last 25 years telling everyone she hit a triple (alas, all of us politicians have our beginnings).

Moving on, our next "self-appointed expert" is Catherine Turcer, the Executive Director of Common Cause Ohio. Ms. Turcer has been quoted on all things political for as long as I can remember. I must admit I know very little about Ms. Turcer's climb to "expert status;" however, she has been proclaimed a National Redistricting Champion by no less than Eric Holder, President Obama's former Attorney General. Now there's a non-partisan endorsement for you. I do find it strange that in my entire political career I have never knowingly met a member of Common Cause. I have met members of Right to Life, Planned Parenthood, The National Rifle Association, and Mothers Against Drunk Driving. I have not met a member of Common Cause. I am sure they must exist. Perhaps I'm wrong and they have all faded away like the Knights Templar.

The third "self-appointed expert" on redistricting is the President of The Ohio League of Women Voters, Jen Miller. Ms. Miller is constantly asked by the media for her expert opinion and the subject of redistricting is no exception. I suppose that being the head of this organization gives her the right to voice her opinion. However, The League of Women Voters is slowly descending into irrelevancy. Having become an auxiliary wing of the Democrat Party, despite its claim of non-partisanship, the League finds itself in the same situation as many fraternal organizations. It was a good idea in the 1950's when they actually were non-partisan, but their usefulness to the public no longer exists. I am sure my comments will be rebuked by League members; however, I am confident that my statement will be validated over time. The fact remains that the League does have a "self-appointed expert" in Ms. Miller.

Let me close by making a suggestion: Ms. O'Connor has been age limited out of the Supreme Court, but she can still run for any other political office. Ms. Turcer and Ms. Miller need to pull a petition and run for office. They can only sit in the bleachers and complain about the players for so long. After a while, those of us in the game stop listening to the whining. That's my suggestion. But what do I know. I'm no expert.

State Senator Sandra O'Brien

Ohio 32nd District