

# Citizens Together

Building Democracy, Making a Better World

**Our first Digital Edition of the  
CitizensTogether.com website**

May 2014 Volume 1

Welcome to Citizens Together

The future of CitizensTogether.com

Should the MCDP Constitution be changed?

The MCDP Constitution Forum

Analyzing selected Ohio constitutions

Democrats in Montgomery County, Ohio







# The Citizens Together Website Magazine

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Join the conversation at:  
**[www.CitizensTogether.com](http://www.CitizensTogether.com)**



# Welcome to Citizens Together!



Thanks for stopping by. I'm hoping this website will be a platform for good discussion on topics of civic importance. To structure conversations, I've added some great features — forums from **bbPress** and surveys from **POWr** — that I can't wait to try out.

This first Citizen Together edition focuses on how the local Montgomery County Democratic Party should be structured. At the May 29 MCDP "reorganization meeting," only a simple majority of those delegates in attendance is needed to change the MCDP constitution, so this is a timely topic. I hope delegates to the meeting will consider making this big change to the MCDP Constitution: **Allow participation / voting in the MCDP Central / Executive meetings via the internet.**

I hope this website can get the ball rolling.

Here is some background: The MCDP Central Committee is an elected legislative body charged with representing Democrats residing throughout Montgomery County. Every four years, Democrats in each of the county's 360 precincts are empowered by Ohio Revised Code to elect one representative to the MCDP Central Committee. It says something about the state of the MCDP that this year only 132 of Montgomery County's 360 precincts elected a member to the MCDP Central Committee.



Welcome! (continued from previous page)

As it is now, in order to vote on Central / Executive Committee issues, a member must attend evening meetings at MCDP headquarters in downtown Dayton. These meetings, unsurprisingly, are poorly attended. Because most precincts fail to elect a member of the Central Committee and because those who are elected often fail to attend meetings, many Montgomery County Democrats are disenfranchised of the opportunity to be represented in their local party.

To me, it only make sense that the MCDP should use 2014 technology to become a stronger organization. Organizations larger and more complex than the MCDP have found a way to use the internet to empower their members to work productively together. The MCDP should do the same. Rank and file Democrats want their party to be successful. They want the younger generation to get interested in politics. They are looking to the MCDP for leadership.

If Central Committee members could fully participate in the decisions and governance of the MCDP from their own homes, the quality and amount of their participation would greatly increase. There would be more creative brainstorming. And, the MCDP has a big problem to brainstorm about. The local party needs to figure out how to engage and to motivate more Montgomery County Democrats. The consequences of our inaction are astounding. Consider this: In 2010, a big drop off in turn-out by Montgomery County Democratic voters sunk Fred Strahorn's chance for reelection to the Ohio Senate and contributed to pushing Ted Strickland from the office of Ohio Governor. **Plunderbund complained: "Whomever is in charge of the**





Welcome! (continued from previous page)

## Montgomery County Democratic Party should resign. 11.1% drop off in turnout! Seriously?!"

I've read the **25 constitutions** of the Democratic Party organizations in Ohio's 25 largest counties. If the Ohio Democratic Party has any hope of becoming modernized, all of these constitutions need to be changed to allow full use of the internet. Wouldn't it be great if the MCDP would lead the way? I'm posting a [survey](#) as a way of structuring discussion about this matter. In the survey, I outline seven suggested changes to the MCDP Constitution and ask for a yes / no and a comment. Responses will be anonymous when accumulated. All visitors to this site are welcome to participate in the survey.

I believe it would be valuable to have an in-depth conversation about the MCDP constitution just among MCDP stakeholders. I'm sealing off one part of this website — **The MCDP Constitution Forum** — and making it available exclusively for use by Montgomery and Greene County Democrats. I'm sending an e-mail invitation to join the Forum to all local Democrats whose e-mails I can find. I'm telephoning MCDP Central / Executive members whose e-mails I don't have. If I've not contacted you, please e-mail me with your name and address. I will check the Board of Elections's database to confirm you have voted in Democratic Primaries and then I will send you a temporary password (which you may change after log-in). [Click here to send me an email.](#)

Sincerely,

*Michael Bock*



# The Future of Citizens Together

## Wouldn't It Be Great?

This first edition of Citizens Together deals with changing the MCDP constitution. It illustrates what I have in mind for the future of this site. It contains:

- 1. Background information** — a PDF for each of the constitutions of the Democratic Party in Ohio's 25 most populous counties, and articles about the MCDP previously posted on DaytonOS. Comments are allowed on each of these.
- 2. A Survey — open to all registered visitors** — with the opportunity to make open ended responses. The results will be posted. Participants in this survey can live anywhere in the world and can have any political POV.
- 3. A Forum —open only to an identified group.** The idea is that by restricting participation to the group most central to the discussion, the conversations will be more in-depth. Since this first edition concerns the MCDP constitution, this first Forum invites all registered Democrats in Montgomery and Greene Counties to participate.

This structure of background information, surveys and forums shown in this first edition will be expanded in future editions. Possible topics for future editions of Citizens Together include:

- The State Budget, the history of Ohio taxation and the future of taxation in Ohio.
- The Future of Public Education
- The Affordable Care Act and the Future of Health Care in America
- Elizabeth Warren's new book, [\*\*A Fighting Chance\*\*](#).

Our democracy is failing, in part, because we lack effective communities of individuals who respect each other, who work to understand each others' points of view, and who practice democracy within their own groups. The goal of Citizens Together is to help build grassroots democracy by empowering individuals to gain in-depth understanding of civic issue and by helping groups to become authentic, democratic communities. Wouldn't that be great?



# Survey: How Should The MCDP Constitution Be Changed?

This survey outlines seven proposed changes to the MCDP constitution. These proposed changes to the MCDP constitution seek to make the MCDP a “direct democracy” by greatly expanding grassroots participation and by empowering each MCDP member with the opportunity for direct participation.



The seven proposed changes to the constitution would:

- make the MCDP an on-line community,
- give each elected member an equal voice on the “Executive Committee,”
- expand the size of the “Executive Committee,”
- make new rules for “transparency.”

The answers to this survey will be shown as accumulated anonymous responses. This survey is open to all visitors on the site.

**[Click here to view the survey and participate!](#)**

# Forum: What Changes Should Be Made To The MCDP Constitution?

Welcome to the Citizens Together Forum. This Forum will focus on ideas on how the Montgomery County Democratic Party might change its constitution at the May 29 Reorganization Meeting. Personally, I'm urging that [Our Local Democratic Party Should Stream Meetings On The Internet And Let Members Vote On-Line](#). (See [About](#) for ideas concerning future Citizens Together Forums.)

Citizens Together Forums will sometimes be restricted to members of specific groups. The forum in this edition is restricted to registered Democrats who live in Montgomery and Greene Counties. The idea is that it would be valuable to have an in-depth conversation just among MCDP stakeholders, those most invested in making the MCDP successful. These stakeholders are easy to identify: local Democrats who vote in Democratic Primaries.

All Montgomery County and Greene County Democrats are invited to participate in this Forum. To request an invitation, please fill out the [contact form](#). I need your name and zip code so that I can check your name with the Board of Elections voting records.



If you not a Democrat living in Montgomery and Greene Counties, I hope you will participate in the [Survey](#) and I hope you will read and make comments on the articles.



# Analysis of selected Ohio County Constitutions

Here is a chart of the top 24 Ohio Counties, ranked by population, and compared on these five important points: 1) How often they reorganize. 2) Are primary endorsements made prior to filing. 3) If the Executive Committee responsible for endorsements. 4) How many votes needed for endorsement. 5) Are all Central Committee members of the Executive Committee. Notes on next page >>

Rank by Population	County	Population	How often reorganized (years)	Primary endorsements prior to filing?	Executive Committee responsible for endorsements?	Votes needed for endorsement	Central Committee Members are members of Executive Committee?
01	Cuyahoga	1,314,241	4	not specified	Yes	60%	No
02	Franklin	1,095,662	4	Yes	Yes	majority	No
03	Hamilton	822,596	4	not specified	not specified	not specified	No
04	Summit	545,931	2	unclear	no	majority	No
05	Montgomery	542,237	4	Yes	no	2/3	No
06	Lucas	445,281	4	No	no	majority	No
07	Stark	380,575	4	yes	yes	2/3	No
08	Butler	354,992	4	Yes	yes	60%	Yes
09	Lorain	301,993	4	not specified	not specified	not specified	No
10	Mahoning	251,026	2	no	no	majority	No
11	Lake	232,892	2	not specified	no	2/3	No
12	Trumbull	217,362	4	not specified	no	majority	No
13	Warren	201,871	not specified	yes	Yes	60%	Yes
14	Clermont	192,706	not specified	yes	Yes	2/3	No
15	Medina	169,353	4	not specified	not specified	not specified	No
16	Delaware	156,697	not specified	yes	yes	60%	Yes
17	Licking	156,287	4	not specified	not specified	not specified	No
18	Portage	155,012	not specified	yes	yes	majority	Yes
19	Fairfield	140,591	not specified	yes	no	60%	No
20	Richland	127,010	4	yes	yes	not specified	not specified
21	Wayne	113,950	not specified	not specified	not specified	not specified	not specified
22	Columbiana	110,542	not specified	yes	yes	60%	not specified
23	Allen	105,788	not specified	yes	yes	60%	No
24	Ashtabula	102,703	not specified	no	no	2/3	No



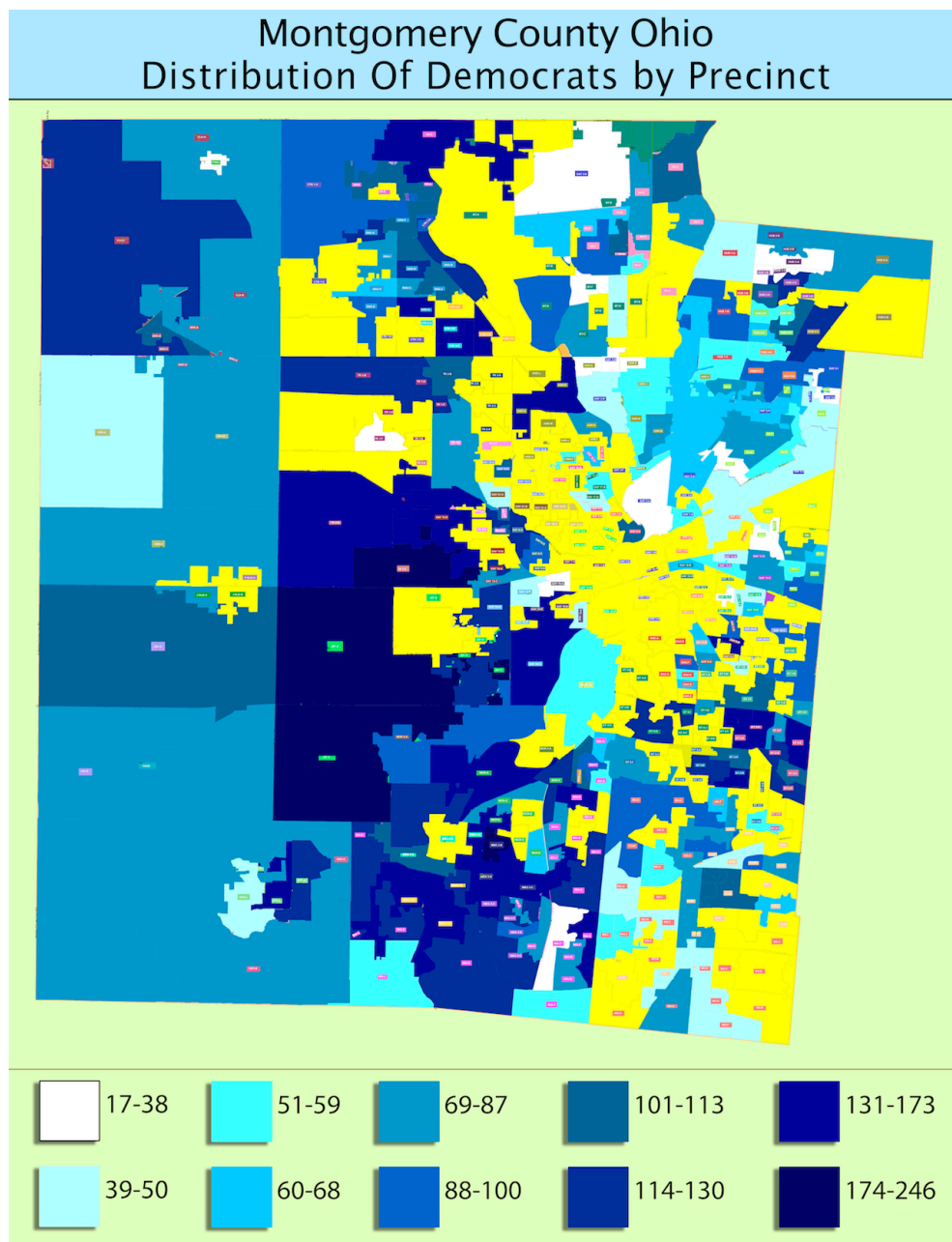
## Analysis of Selected Ohio County Constitutions (continued from previous page)

Notes on selected Ohio Counties from previous chart

County	Notes
Allen	Treasurer shall compile a list once a year of all monies and contributions received and make report to Central Committee
Ashtabula	The policy is to not endorse for open seats. Members may be removed from the Executive Committee if they miss three consecutive meetings.
Butler	There is an Executive Council that screens candidates for endorsements
Clermont	No pre-primary endorsements unless 66% of Executive Committee agrees.
Columbiana	Calls itself : Columbiana County Democrat Party.
Cuyahoga	Chair may appoint up to 350 members to the Executive Committee, who may or may not be Precinct leaders. Members of the Executive Committee three months or more in arrears on payment of dues may be removed by the Chair. "Party Cabinet" of leaders meets monthly. Chair may add members to this cabinet.
Franklin	Chair may appoint to Central Committee up to one less than those elected to the Committee.
Hamilton	Each city, village and township shall have a Central Committee composed of the Central Committee persons of the respective city, village or township. Each Ward shall have a Democratic Club with precinct leaders and all other interested Democrats.
Lorain	Each political subdivision may adopt its own By-laws.
Lucas	"Executive Director" may be chosen by Executive Committee Chair to run the affairs of the organization.
Mahoning	Only those Central Committee members who live in the political subdivision of a candidate seeking endorsement may participate in voting to approve or not approve the candidate.
Medina	If member of Executive Committee misses three meetings he or she may be removed from the Committee by majority vote
Montgomery	Endorsement of candidates on the ballot for the May primary may take place as early as the December Central Committee meeting. (This is prior to the deadline for the filing date.) The Screening Committee may begin meeting at least three weeks before the December Central Committee meeting to begin consideration of endorsements for the May primary election.
Summit	There is a Steering Committee.
Trumbull	Endorsements only for district or county offices
Warren	Complete financial report made each year for all Central Committee members.
Wayne	Has Jackson Day Banquet Committee that plans the annual Jackson Day Banquet, a major fund raising event.



# Maps Show — Precincts With Lots Of Dems Will Have No Representation At The MCDP Reorganization Meeting



 [Click HERE  
to view  
map full  
size in  
browser](#)

## Maps Show — Precincts With Lots Of Dems Will Have No Representation At The MCD Reorganization Meeting (con't)

Of the total 360 precincts in the county, only 132 precincts (37%) — shown in yellow — are participating in the May 4 Democratic Primary to elect a member of the MCDP Central Committee. The first task of these elected members will be to act as a voting delegate to the reorganization meeting where the leaders and the direction of the party for the next four years will be determined.

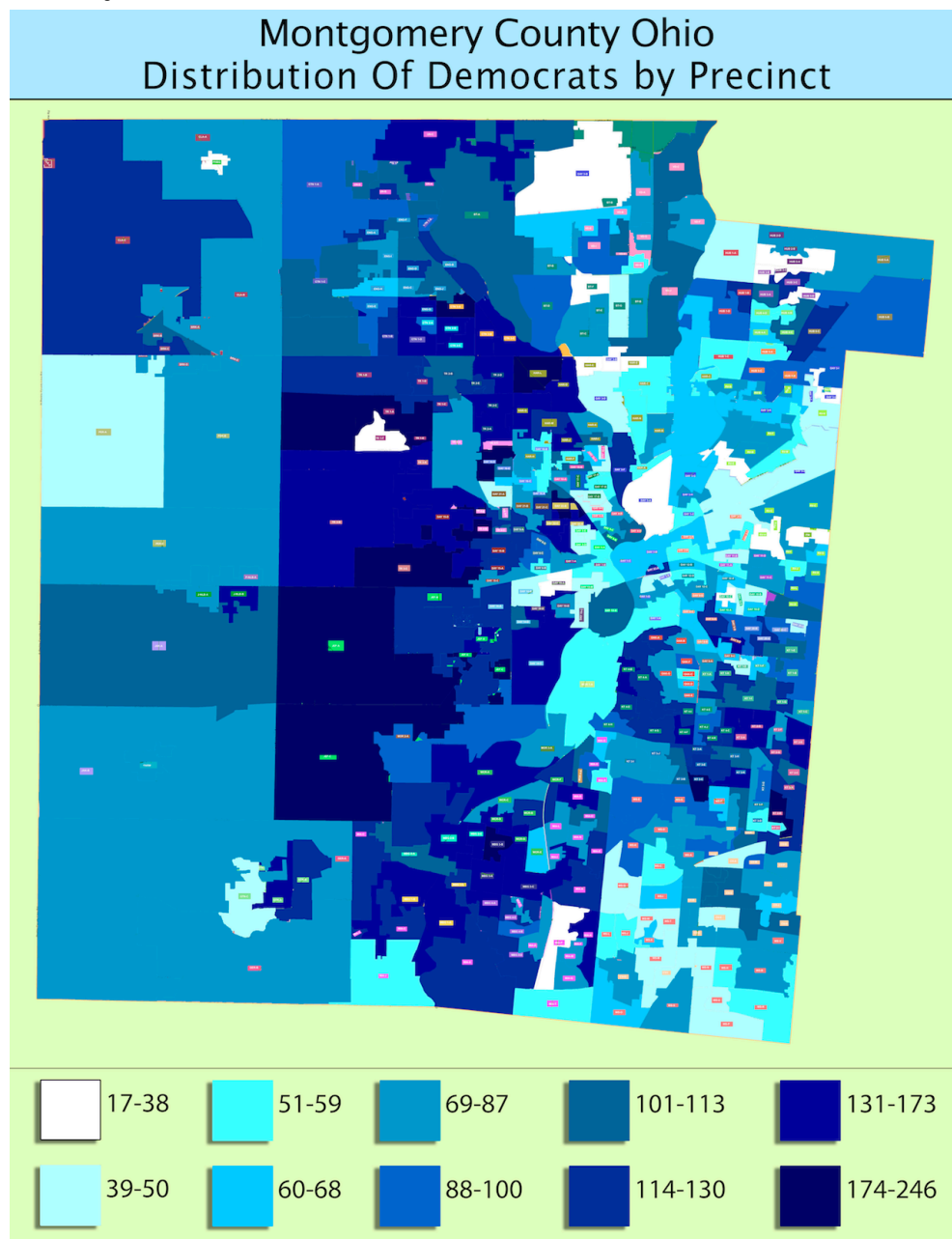
The map shows that many of the 228 precincts without a candidate — shown in shades of blue — have a lot of Democrats. One question the party needs to address is why the suburbs, where many of Democrats live, there has been little effort or success in meaningfully organizing the local party. If you click the link on the bottom right of the map, you can view full-size in your browser.



*President Franklin Roosevelt, along with Orville Wright, during a visit to Wright Field on Oct. 12, 1940. FDR's motorcade went downtown to Courthouse Square where he addressed a crowd estimated at 100,000*

## Maps Show — Precincts With Lots Of Dems Will Have No Representation At The MCD Reorganization Meeting (con't)

According to the board of elections, Montgomery County has 33,265 registered Democrats and most of these vote in Democratic primaries. The map below is the same as the first map, minus the yellow indicator of precincts with candidates. It shows each of Montgomery County's 360 precincts and shows by color how many Democrats live in each precinct. If you click the link at the bottom right, you can view the map full-size in your browser.



[Click HERE](#)  
to view  
map full  
size in  
browser



## Related Posts on CitizensTogether.com



[Mark Owens, MCDP Chairman, Says Most Montgomery Dems Approve The Party's Suppression Of Primary Participation](#)



[The Montgomery Democrats Decide to Suppress Democracy — Just Like the Republicans](#)



[Montgomery County Democratic Party Dominated By Appointed Gov. Workers And Elected Gov. Officials](#)

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