

Ohio GOP Chair: 'Confusing Ohioans was not such a bad strategy'

By Roger LaPointe
Fremont News-Messenger

Ohio Republican Party Chairman Alex Triantafilou declared that Ohio is no longer a swing state during a special event held in Fremont by the Sandusky County Republican Party.

Triantafilou attributed Republican successes in the last election to continued party unity, from the Ohio Statehouse to the U.S. Congress and the presidency.

He also spoke at length about Issue 1, the gerrymandering issue.

"What else did we do? We got on a bus. I don't think we came to Fremont. We should have come to Fremont. We got on the bus and we turned this thing around," Triantafilou said. "When I say we, it was all of us. Not just me, Alex. Not just the state central committee, but the entire family of the Republican Party."

He was surprised in the final week when he saw polling.

"Wow, I saw we got some momentum on this thing and realized we might actually pull this out," Triantafilou said.

He explained the campaign strategy.

"A lot of people were saying, 'We're confused! We're confused by Issue 1.' Did you all hear that? Confusion means we don't know, so we did our job," Triantafilou said. "Confusing Ohioans was not such a bad strategy."

He said that for Inauguration Day, the party will be leading a group of 1,200 Ohioans to Washington, D.C.

"Our big focus for going into 2025 will be on disengagers. Disengagers are people who do not vote on midterm elections. They are people who just turned out for President Trump. We saw the same thing, frankly, for people who voted for Barack Obama," Triantafilou said.

He also spoke about the Ohio Supreme Court.

"We've got to finish the job with the (Supreme) Court, which is 6-1," Triantafilou said. "We're going to go for that seventh Supreme Court seat."

Justice Jennifer Brunner is now the only Democrat on the Ohio Supreme Court.

He also pointed out that he does not know who will be appointed to replace J.D. Vance's Senate seat.

The Wednesday night event was heavily attended despite heavy snows by more than 50 party faithful from across the region, including Ottawa, Seneca and Huron Counties.

Triantafilou closed out by answering a few questions and expanded on his gerrymandering comments.

He briefly outlined the history of anti-gerrymandering efforts in the courts, followed by Republican wins in Columbus that led to multiple years with super-majorities.

"We have the power. Ohioans have entrusted us to draw lines consistent with a state that Donald Trump won by 11 percentage points. So, I hope that we redistrict in a way that is consistent with what Ohioans told us, and that this is a Republican state," Triantafilou said.

Ben Decker, vice chairman of the Sandusky County Republican Party, asked about Donald Trump and Issue 1 outperforming pollster predictions.

"That was great for Republicans," Decker said. "But...How do we get back to being able to anticipate and do a little bit better polling?"

Triantafilou said, "I don't have a great answer for how to improve it."

He did note that, due to technological changes, the pollsters have had to change their methods, but Trump employed Republican pollster Tony Fabrizio and won.