



GERRYMANDERING

**Voters Should Select Their Elected Officials Instead of
Elected Officials Selecting Their Voters**

Voters Don't Like Congress- but Representatives Keep Getting Reelected.

- In the last decade, the approval rating for Congress has averaged 17% while the disapproval rating has averaged 77%.
- Yet in the last 12 election cycles, 94.3% of all members of Congress have been reelected.
- If voters do not approve of the jobs their representatives are doing, why are so many constantly reelected?
- The reason is simple- with Gerrymandering- **representatives draw their own election districts to protect their incumbency.**
- In other words, **with gerrymandering politicians are selecting their voters instead of voters selecting their representatives.**

When Politicians Draw Election Districts

- Voters end up with weirdly gerrymandered districts that look like earmuffs, ducks, dragons, snakes, and pterodactyls that result in:
 - Noncompetitive elections, in which many candidates run with no or only token opposition.
 - Incumbents winning by very safe margins, as they custom design their own districts.
 - Low turnout.
 - Polarized political parties.
 - Lack of moderate candidates and representatives,
 - The end of one-person-one-vote, as the party winning a majority of the popular vote ends up with less seats than the other party.

This is not a partisan issue. Both parties gerrymander. Having politicians pick their voters, instead of the other way around is a threat to our Democracy.

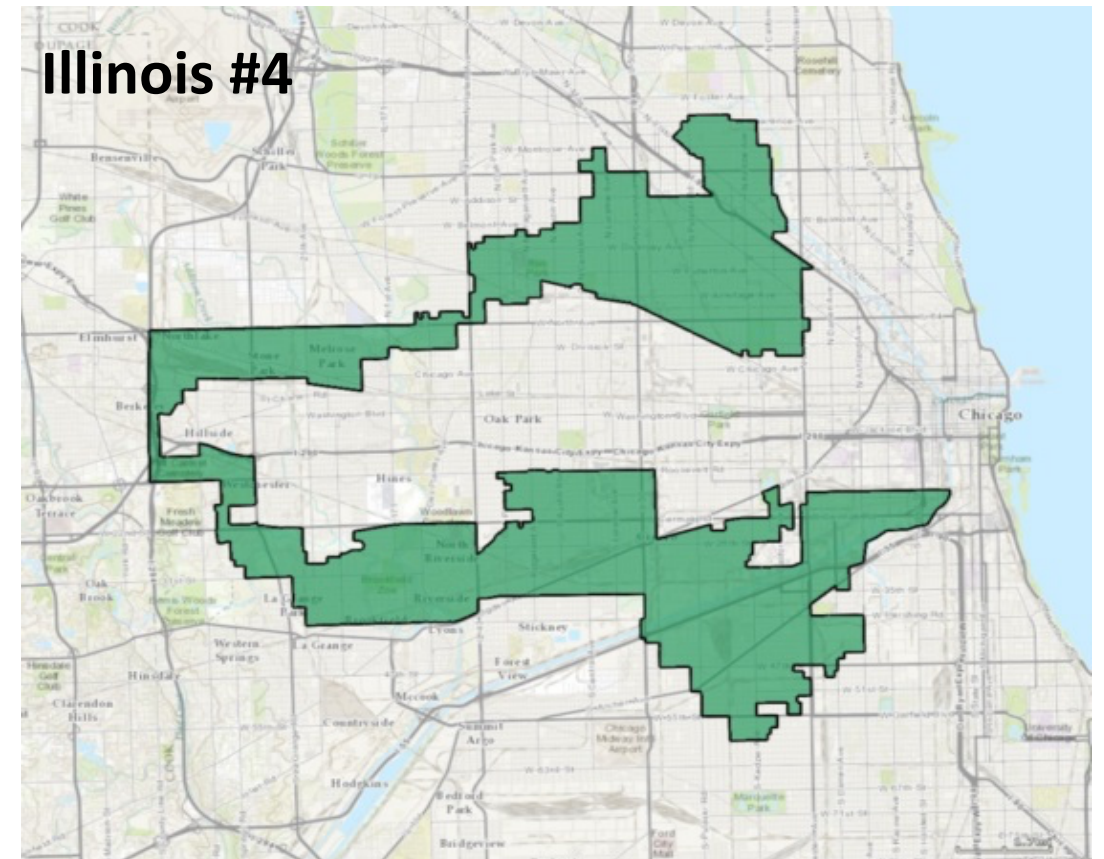
Earmuffs for Hispanics in Illinois

Politicians draw creative looking election maps.

Illinois Congressional District #4 is the Earmuff district for Hispanics.

- The district is 68% Hispanic.
 - Finding and cramming all the Hispanics into one district wasn't easy. Some parts of the district are no more than one block wide.
 - Jesus "Chuy" Garcia was elected with 86.6% of the vote.

While Hispanics are crammed into this district, their influence is diluted in others.



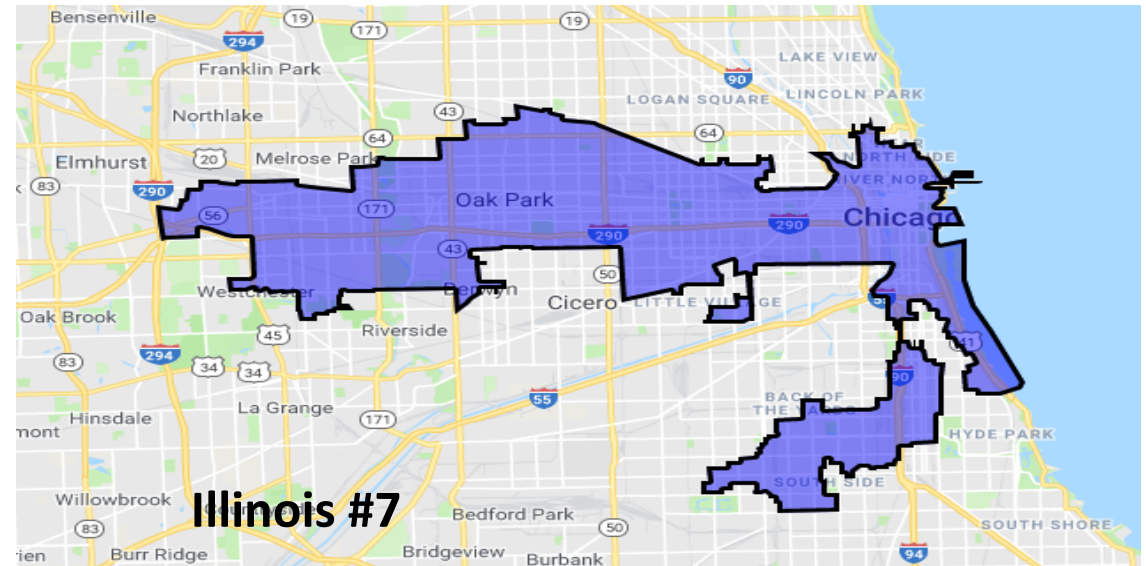
A Dragon Eating a Kangaroo for Blacks-Illinois #7

Wrapped around the Earmuff district, the artists in Illinois gave Blacks their own district: a Dragon Eating a Kangaroo.

These politician artists were very creative, because they managed to include all the Blacks who lived on the south side of Chicago.

- Danny Davis won this seat with 87.4% of the vote.

The huge electoral victories by the Democrats in these districts diluted their votes in other districts.

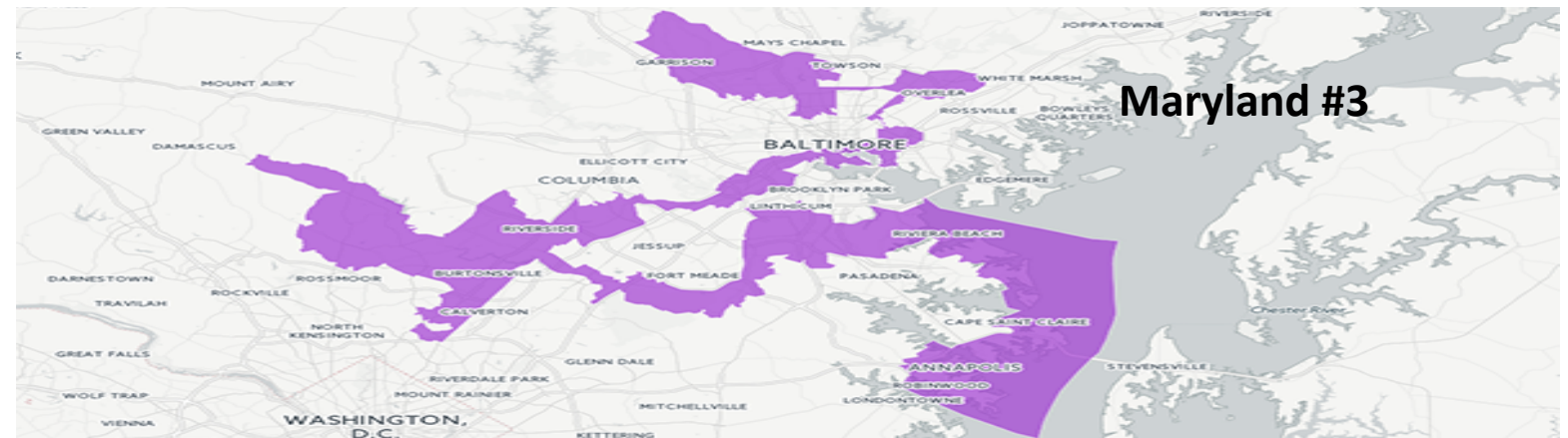


Broken Wing Pterodactyl Lying Prostrate in Maryland

Democrats in Maryland had to be creative to get rid of Republicans and select their favorite Democrat. They:

- Shifted Black voters from a “majority minority” district to defeat a Republican.
- Cut a Tea Party Republican’s district in half, so he would lose, and then
- Created this weirdly drawn district, which is the least compact district in the nation.

They drew this Broken Wing Pterodactyl, according to “The Nation”, to give John Sarbanes, the son of a former Senator, wealthy voters in Montgomery County, who could help him finance a future run for Senate.

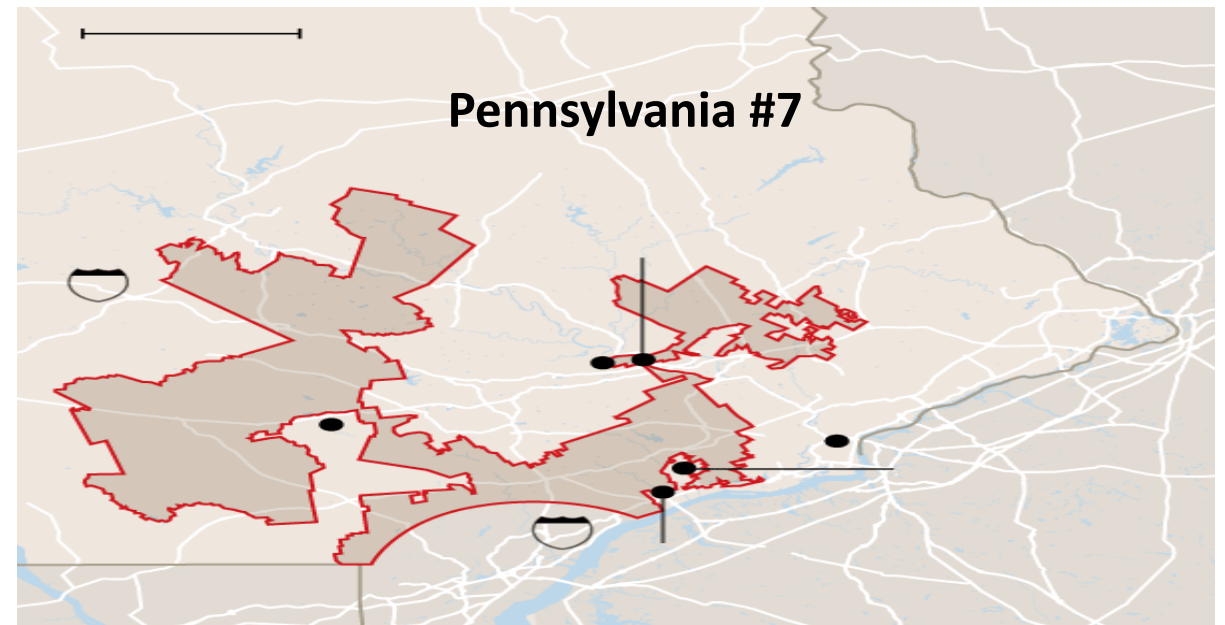


Goofy Kicking Donald Duck in Pennsylvania

Republicans in Pennsylvania drew election districts by political voting patterns on a block by block basis, not by city and municipal boundaries as is supposed to be the practice.

Republicans found every conservative voting area around Philadelphia and created this district that slices and dices parts of 5 counties and 26 municipalities.

- At the juncture where Goofy's head connects to his body, the district is only as wide as the parking lot at Creed's Seafood and Steak.
- Where Goofy's foot contacts Donald Duck's rump, it is as wide as Brandywine Hospital.
- Unfortunately, for the Republicans, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court forced redistricting, but you have to appreciate the great design capabilities.



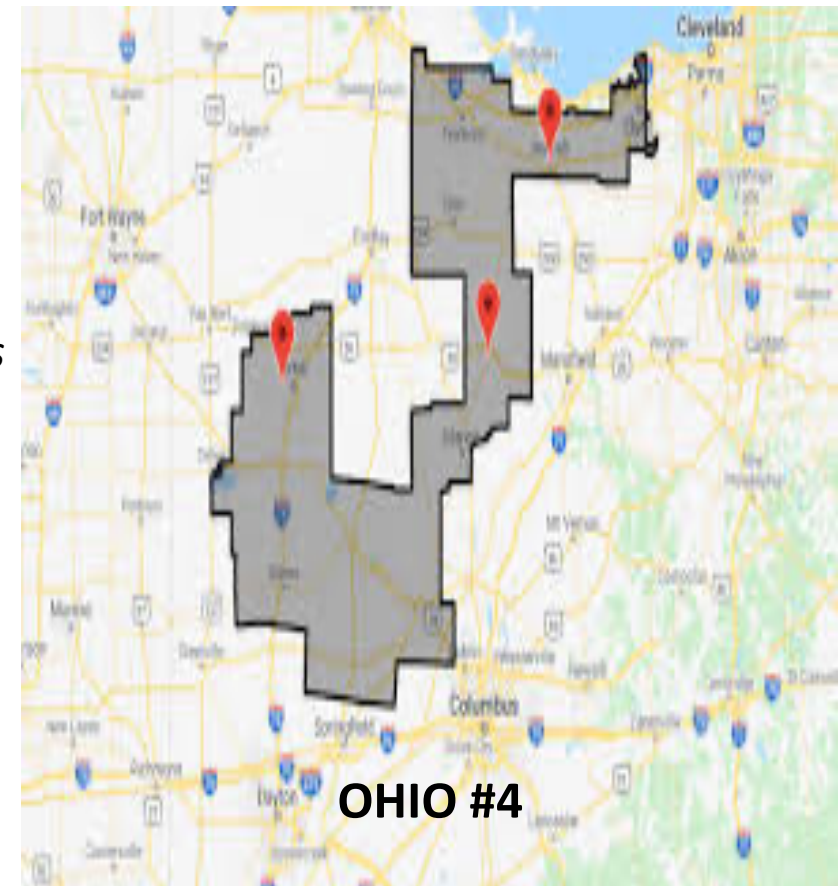
Daffy Duck in Ohio

Republicans in Ohio also like to draw districts that look like ducks.

- Ohio #4 zig zags west from the Cleveland suburbs all the way to the Indiana border, avoiding every city in its path.
- The district is represented by Jim Jordan, a former Chair of the Freedom Caucus and one of the most conservative members of Congress.

Jordan appears worried that courts may cook his duck. As he wrote:

- *“(Eric) Holder has been focusing his energy on (stealing) Conservative seats in Congress...And now his sights are set on me!!*



The Snake By The Lake- Ohio #9

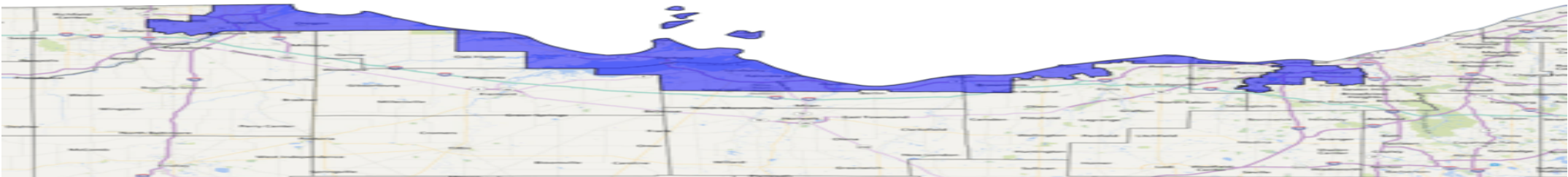
While drawing Daffy Duck,, Ohio’s lawmakers also created- “The Snake By The Lake.”

- If water level in Lake Erie rises, this district could be cut into pieces, making it noncontiguous.
- **Republicans created The Snake By The Lake** to get rid of Dennis Kucinich, a controversial Democratic Congressman from Cleveland.
 - They combined two Democratic Districts, with incumbents, Kucinich and Marcie Kaptur, living 100 miles apart.
 - They made sure a majority of the population came from Kaptur’s western side, so she would win the primary and Kucinich would be sent into retirement.

The Snake by the Lake is an example of incumbent gerrymandering.

- **Republicans drew the map to get rid of the Democratic incumbent they did not like.**

Ohio's 9th Congressional District



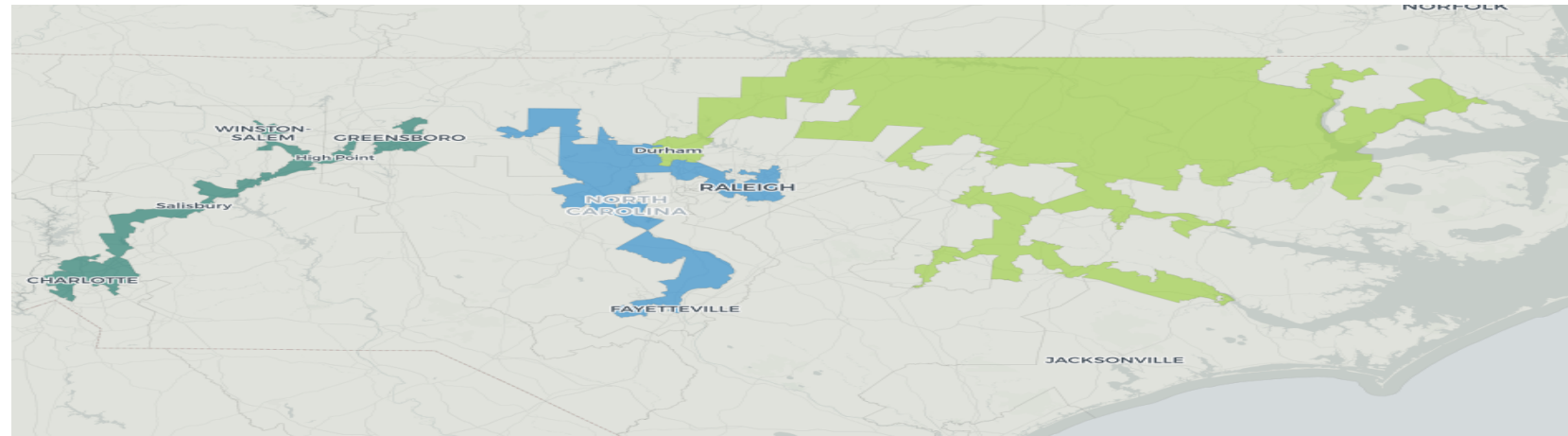
Chutzpah in North Carolina

Representative David Lewis won the 2016 Chutzpah award for explaining how Republicans drew districts:

- ***“I propose we draw the maps to give a partisan advantage to 10 Republicans and 3 Democrats because I do not believe it’s possible to draw a map with 11 Republicans and 2 Democrats.”***

In the 2018 Congressional Elections,

- Republicans received 1,846,041 votes and Democrats received 1,771,061 votes, a 2% differential.
- Republicans won 9 seats and Democrats won 3. (One seat subject to a re-run.)
- The map below shows the original three Democratic gerrymandered districts.
 - The district on the left was at times no wider than a highway lane causing one Representative to comment, ““If you drove down the interstate with both doors open, you’d kill most of the people in the district.”



The Louisiana Snake Found the Minorities



Guess where minorities live in Louisiana?

- Many live in New Orleans
- Some live near Baton Rouge.

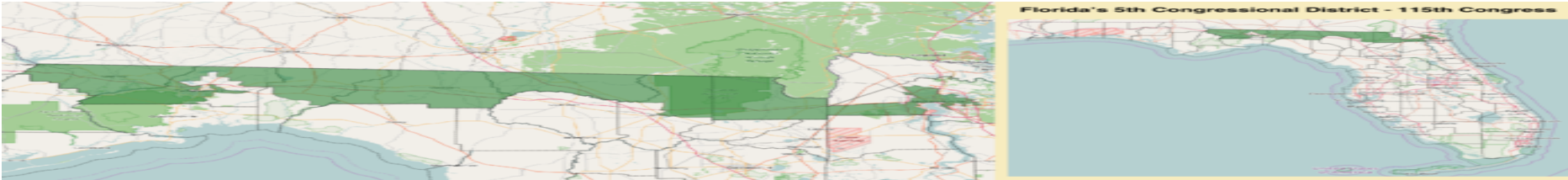
After the 2010 census, the legislature:

- Moved New Orleans neighborhoods with mostly white residents into District #1
- Moved Baton Rouge neighborhoods with mostly Black residents into District #2
- After the redistricting, 60% of the people in District #2 are African Americans.
 - Other districts in Louisiana have between 14% and 36%..

In the 2018 Congressional Elections

- The Democrat was elected with no Republican opposition.

How Wide is Florida?-Check out District #5



- Legislators in Florida created district #5 that stretched 200 miles from Jacksonville past Tallahassee, grabbing every urban dweller and minority they could find.
- Democrats brought a lawsuit against the drawing of this district.
 - In 2014, the Florida Circuit Court ordered Florida to redraw the maps.
 - Then came the opposition. Corrine Brown, the Democratic representative in the 5th District, blasted the judge's ruling saying, *"We will go all the way to the United States Supreme Court, dealing with making sure African Americans are not disenfranchised."*
 - Unfortunately, despite her protests, Florida #5 was redistricted, and Brown lost in a primary to another minority.
- **Gerrymandering appears to benefit both the party in control and the member of the other party that holds the gerrymandered seat.**

Democrats Play the Same Game in Virginia

- For decades, Virginia Republicans gerrymandered to their advantage.
 - Democrats were crammed into Congressional District #3 to create a “majority minority district.
 - In 2014, the Democrats challenged the gerrymandering. A Federal Court instructed the Commonwealth to redraw the maps to remove racial bias.
- In 2019 Democrats, who had campaigned on a platform of creating an independent commission to end gerrymandering, won control of the state government.
- When the bill for the independent commission came up for a vote, every Republican voted for it, but most Democrats voted against it.
 - One minority legislator called the measure “piss poor.”

Like Republicans in other states, Democrats in Virginia figured now that they had total control, they could get some payback by gerrymandering the Republicans out of some of their seats.

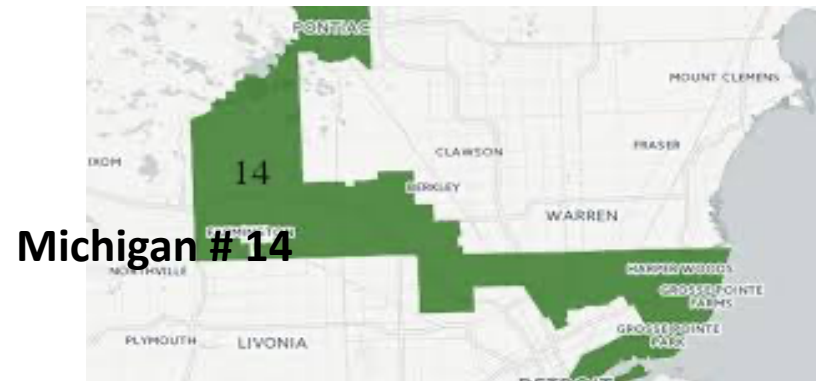
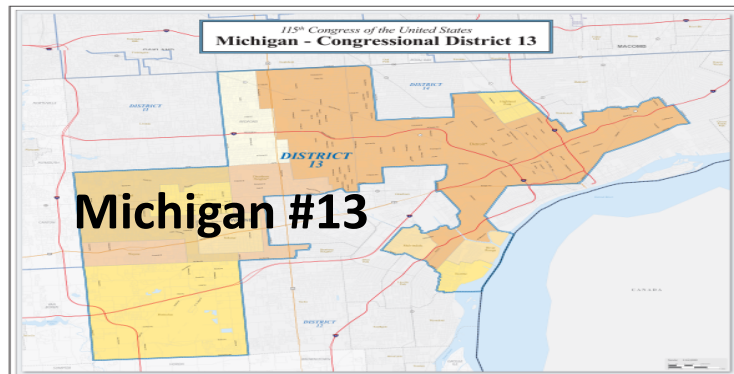
Find the Minorities in Michigan

In 2016, Republicans and Democrats received approximately the same number of votes for Congress in Michigan, but Republicans won 9 seats. Democrats won 5. In 2018, Democrats won the popular vote 52.3% to 44.6%, yet both parties won 7 seats.

The secret for the Republicans is that they packed Democrats into districts #13 and #14.

- In these two districts, Democrats defeated Republicans 375,689 to 45,899.

Cramming Democrats into a small number of Gerrymandered districts allowed Republicans to win extra seats.



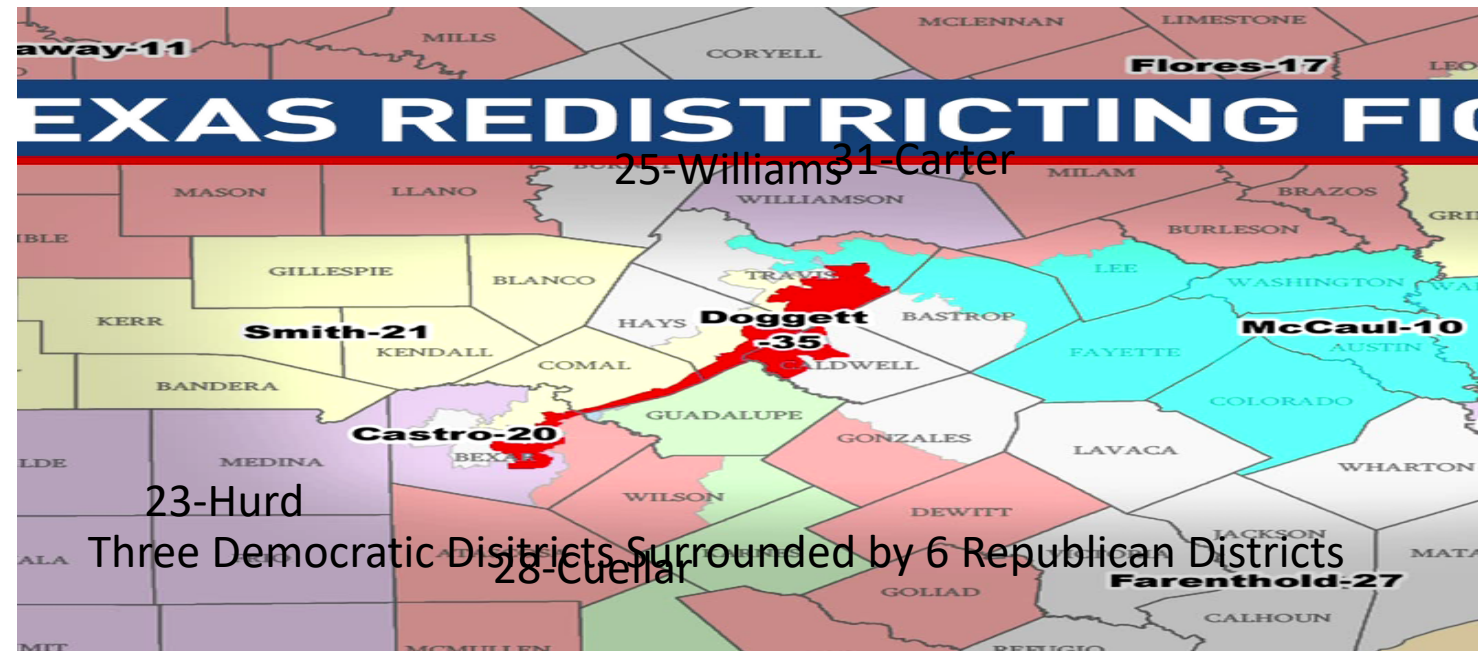
Lone Star Gerrymandering

Republicans found every Democrat from Austin to San Antonio to the Mexican Border and crammed them into three districts.

- District #35 found all the Democrats from Austin to San Antonio. (61% Hispanic & 10% Black)
 - Look how narrow this district is.
- District #20 (San Antonio) 70% Hispanic.
- District #28 (San Antonio south) 79% Hispanic.

With this Gerrymandering, Republicans were able to win 7 seats to 3 for Democrats even though Democrats won more votes.

2018 Congressional Elections			
	Austin to San Antonio		
	Dem.	Rep,	
#31	136,362	144,680	R
#23	102,359	103,285	R
#27	11,595	19,856	R
#21	167,020	176,913	R
#17	98,070	134,841	R
#10	144,034	157,166	R
#25	136,385	163,023	R
#28	122,086	57,740	D
#20	139,038	0	D
#35	138,278	50,553	D
Votes	1,195,227	1,008,057	

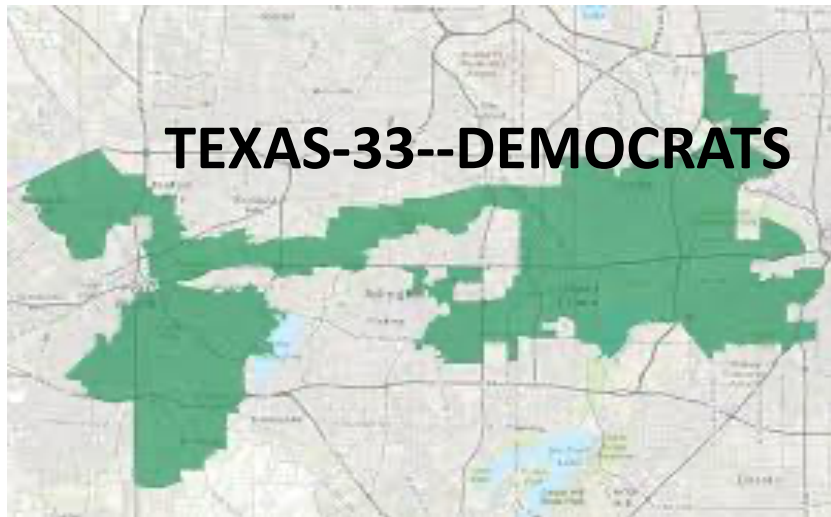


Three Democratic Disitriets Surrounded by 6 Republican Districts

Gerrymandering in Dallas & Houston

Republicans also figured out how to gerrymander in Dallas and Houston

- In Dallas & Houston, Democrats won a majority of the votes, but Republicans won 12 seats compared to 7 for Democrats.
- Texas politicians are artists in separating Democrats and Republicans.



Gerrymandering is not only Ugly---It is bad for our Democracy

Gerrymandering

- **Separates people geographically**
- **Isolates people by race**
 - Minorities tend to be crammed into their own election districts, creating isolation.
- **Creates landslide elections and imbalances between the popular vote and the electoral results**
 - Elections in Gerrymandered districts are usually noncompetitive.
 - With landslides in these districts, neighboring districts shift to the other party.
 - This creates a condition where the winner of the popular vote can lose the electoral vote, invalidating the concept of one-person-one-vote.
- **Polarizes our population**
- **Destroys bipartisanship**

Gerrymandering is Caused by Geography, Race, and Politics

- **Geographical Gerrymandering**
 - is created by people out of personal choice. Farmers live in rural areas. Minorities often live in cities. Geographical gerrymandering is a fact of life. There is nothing that can be done about it.
- **Racial Gerrymandering**
 - Was created by the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which required the creation of “majority minority” districts to give minorities representation.
 - This has led to a sharp increase in minority representation. However, now the cramming of minorities may be limiting their representation.
- **Political Gerrymandering**
 - is the process by which the party in control draws districts in a manner that crams members of the other party into a small number of districts, so the party in control can win more seats with fewer votes.
 - Political gerrymandering is a major cause of polarization and a reason why our system of one-person-one-vote is threatened.

We can't change where people live or undo the Voting Rights Act, but we can stop politicians from making the problem worse.

Geographic Gerrymandering

The geographic choices made by Americans are a major cause of social and political divides.

- **Democrats often live tightly packed in cities.**
 - **According to the Brookings Institute, Democrats won the “urban core” by 40% margins.**
 - In NYC Congressional elections, excluding Staten Island, the average Democrat received 91.3% of the votes.
 - This issue is difficult to solve because Brooklyn can’t be districted with Elmira.
- **Minorities are concentrated in major cities.**
 - Of the 19 largest cities in 2014, only three had a majority white population.
 - The top 10 cities had an average white population of 32.2%.
- **Minorities overwhelming voted Democratic.**
 - According to the Pew Research Center, 90% of Blacks, 69% of Hispanics, and 77% of Asian Americans supported Democratic candidates in 2018.
 - With minorities dominating urban centers and voting Democratic, landslide elections will be standard.
- **Republicans are equally dominant in rural areas.**
 - Offering the mirror image of urban geographic gerrymandering.

There little that can be done about the social and political divide between people who live in big cities and those who live in rural areas.

Racial Gerrymandering-Separating People By Race

The most intense gerrymandering is racial.

- The average minority candidate from a "majority minority" district received over 80% of the vote, compared to 60% for the average non-minority.
- In Congressional elections, 36 of 57 landslides and 18 of 23 uncontested elections were won by minorities.

• Some of racial gerrymandering is geographic

- Minorities tend to live together, especially in cities.

• The Voting Rights Act of 1965 which created "majority minority" districts also contributes.

- The Voting Rights Act has led to a large increase in minority representation.
- However by separating minorities into their own districts, there is less incentive for officials in districts with few minority to focus on issues of concern to minorities.

• Partisan Politics also contributes to racial gerrymandering.

- Republicans cram even more minorities into "majority minority" districts.

Political Gerrymandering-Separating People by Party

Political gerrymandering is the drawing of election districts the party in control to limit the representation of the other party.

- In political gerrymandering, the party in control crams election members of the other party into a smaller number of districts.
- The objective is to have the other party win a few elections by landslide margins, while the party in control wins more elections by smaller margins.
- This often results in a situation where the party in control loses the popular vote but wins a majority of the seats.
- With a majority of the seats, the party in control can restrict polling places, purge voter rolls, and establish voting restrictions, allowing it to maintain control with a minority of the vote.



One-Person-One-Vote often no longer applies.

Geographic, Racial, and Political Gerrymandering may end one-person-one vote.

- **Democrats win elections by larger margins.**
 - In 2018 Congressional elections, the average Democratic winner received 70% of the vote, while the average Republican winner received 61.2% of the vote.
- **Democrats often win more votes but fewer seats**
 - In 1996 and 2012, Democrats won the popular vote for Congress, but Republicans won a majority of the seats.
- **When one party wins the popular vote and the other party wins control of the legislature, the concept of one-person-one-vote is destroyed.**

This is not a partisan issue. Republicans are more effective at gerrymandering, but Democrats gerrymander whenever they can. This is an issue of the functioning of our Democracy. When the winner of the popular vote has a minority of the electoral seats, our democracy is threatened.

Winning Popular Vote-Losing Electoral Vote

In legislative elections in states like Michigan, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, and North Carolina, **Democrats won the popular vote, but Republicans won a majority of the seats.**

	Votes		Seats	
	Rep.	Dem.	Rep.	Dem.
• Michigan	1,935,174	2,128,281	58	52
• Wisconsin	1,103,505	1,306,878	63	36
• Pennsylvania	2,075,093	2,568,968	93	110
• North Carolina	1,779,584	1,866,432	65	55

Gerrymandering enabled Republicans to control legislatures with a minority of the vote.

Wisconsin- Democracy Run Amok

In 2018 in Wisconsin,

- Democrats won the popular vote for the State Assembly by more than 200,000 votes and a margin of 8.5%
- Republicans won 63 seats, while Democrats won 36
- A party that loses by popular vote by 8.5% should not end up with almost 2/3 of the seats.

Republicans won this majority by gerrymandering Democrats into a small number of districts.

- Democrats had no Republican opposition in 31 of the 36 districts they won.
- Republicans had no Democratic opposition in only 6 districts.
- Democrats won only two closely contested elections. Republicans won 31.

With control of the legislative, Republicans were able to appoint Justices favorable to their positions.

- Changes in gerrymandering have to go through the court, so maintaining control is critical for Republicans.
- Control of the court also enabled Republicans to purge 230,000 voters, most of whom were Democrats, off the rolls.

Wisconsin Gerrymandering- Could actually kill people.

On April 7, 2020, gerrymandered based partisanship reached a new extreme. When the Democratic Governor wanted to postpone the April 7 elections in the middle of the COVID-19 epidemic, Republican legislators and Justices all voted to conduct the election.

- **Wisconsin is the only state to NOT postpone its elections.**
- **The issue was a final election for a critical seat on the State Supreme Court. In terms of protecting gerrymandering in the state, this election was very important.**
- **Republicans correctly figured that Democrats in cities like Milwaukee would face the greatest difficulty in voting, because all but 12 of the 180 polling places were closed.**
 - They calculated some Democrats would not stand on long lines for the purpose of voting.
- **In doing so, Republicans put the lives of millions of voters and tens of thousands of poll workers at risk, so they could maintain their majority on the Supreme Court.**
 - **Americans should not have to die in order to protect political gerrymandering.**

Pennsylvania- Democracy Run AMOK

In the 2018 State Assembly Elections in Pennsylvania

- **Democrats won the popular vote 55% to 44%, but Republicans won 110 seats compared to 93 for Democrats.**
- **Democrats won landslide elections in gerrymandered districts. Republicans won competitive elections.**
 - In races with no opposition, Democrats won 58, Republicans won 17.
 - When the winner received 55% or less, Republicans won 21- Democrats 12.
 - When the winner received 60% or less, Republicans won 46- Democrats-23.
- **By gerrymandering Democrats into landslide districts, Republicans maintained control of Pennsylvania.**

Incumbent Gerrymandering

Politicians not only gerrymander against the other party, they often gerrymander against individuals they do not like.

- **In the Snake By The Lake, the Republicans gerrymandered so that Dennis Kucinich, a Democrat they did not like, would lose to Marcie Kaptur, who was more palatable.**
- Hakeem Jeffries is Chairman of the House Democratic Caucus and the 4th leading Democrat in the House. However, earlier in his career, the Democratic power brokers did not like him.
 - In 2000, Jeffries ran against long-time incumbent, Roger Green for the State Assembly in New York. Green won. Jeffries made a strong showing. Green did not want to run against Jeffries again.
 - To accommodate Green, the Democratic leadership modified the boundaries of the district by moving the block on which Jeffries lived to another district.
 - In June 2004, Green pleaded guilty to petty larceny. Jeffries was unable to run, because he no longer lived in the district. In November 2004, Green won re-election.

Power brokers of both parties will play games with maps to protect people they like.



Incumbents Pay to Get Districts Drawn The Way They Want.

In 2001, 30 Democratic members of Congress, paid Michael Berman, a redistricting consultant and brother of a Congressman, more than \$1.3 million to custom-design their districts so that all of them would win (which they did).

- As Rep. Loretta Sanchez explained: ***“\$20,000 is nothing to keep your seat. I spend \$2 million (campaigning) every year. If my colleagues are smart, they'll pay their \$20,000, and Michael will draw the district they can win in. Those who have refused to pay? God help them.”***
- Politicians get away with drawing their own districts because redistricting is complicated, boring, and occurs only once every ten years. By the time a challenger realizes that the fix was in, the election is over, and in the words of John Mecklin, “redistricting is come and gone, not to show its greasy, leering face for a decade.”

Texas Republican State Sen. Jeffrey Wentworth summed it up best, **“Allowing ...legislators to draw their own district boundary lines is a lot like letting children fill in their own report cards.”**

Prison Gerrymandering-Strange But Effective

Prison gerrymandering is a strange form of gerrymandering that few ever consider, but with 2.3 million prisoners, it is a real issue.

In many States, the party in control has gerrymandered districts by having the census count prisoners in the location of their prison instead of in their home location.

- The prison population is as large as that of 15 states.
- Prisoners count in the census, but they cannot vote (except in Maine & Vermont).
- By counting prisoners by where they are incarcerated, rural areas gain and urban areas lose representation.
- In some areas, the incarcerated population is higher than the non-incarcerated population.
 - According to NPR, In 2010, Florence, Az. had a population of 25,536, of which 17,700 were incarcerated.
 - In Anamosa Iowa, a City Council member was elected with 2 votes (his and his wife's) because almost everyone else in his district was in prison and was not eligible to vote.
- In states like Pennsylvania, the counting of prisoners by the location of their prisons deprives urban areas of at least two seats in the Pennsylvania Assembly. .

Gerrymandering people who can't vote from urban to rural areas has a real impact on representation.



Gerrymandering is a threat to our Democracy that must be fixed now.

We may not be able to do much to fix geographic or racial gerrymandering, but we can change political gerrymandering.

- **Politicians Should Not Draw Political Boundaries.**
 - Voters should choose their elected officials instead of the other way around.
 - Politicians shouldn't draw maps that look like ducks, snakes, dragons, kangaroos, and earmuffs to win elections.
 - Republicans in North Carolina shouldn't be able to decide how many of their candidates they want to elect. It should be up to the voters.
 - Republicans in Ohio shouldn't be able to decide which Democrat to eliminate.
 - Democrats in Maryland shouldn't be able to get rid of Republicans they did not like and then gerrymander so one of their Congressmen would have enough money to run for the Senate.
 - The party with a minority of the popular vote should not win a majority of the electoral seats.
- **Having politicians draw election districts threatens our Democracy!**

Nonpartisan Independent Commissions Work Much Better

Instead politicians, nonpartisan independent commissions should draw election districts.

- Nonpartisan independent commissions, with members of both parties and independents, can draw districts without focusing on the interests of individual politicians or parties.
- According to Scholars Strategy Network
 - *“Independent commissions can help avoid partisan conflicts or favoritism in district plans.... Such commissions are completely divorced from the state legislature and therefore able to produce maps without the pressure to further or hinder the electoral fortunes of particular representatives or parties. ...research shows that commission-drawn plans set the stage for fairer and more competitive elections and tend to avoid legal challenges.”*
- **Nonpartisan commissions will not change geographic and racial gerrymandering.**
 - People will choose to live in their own communities, many of which will be geographically gerrymandered.
 - There will still be many landslide elections.
 - In many states, there will still be a difference between the popular vote and the number of seats won.
- **But Nonpartisan Commissions can eliminate most of the problems caused by political gerrymandering.**

Some States Already Have Commissions to Draw Districts

- Legislatures draw redistricting plans in 37 states.
- 11 states have or are implementing independent commissions that work with the legislature.
- 2 States- Arizona and California, have completely independent commissions with no legislative control.
 - **ARIZONA** — Congressional and state legislative districts are drawn by a five-member commission established under a ballot measure approved by voters in 2000.
 - **CALIFORNIA** — Voters approved a pair of ballot measures, in 2008 and 2010, creating a 14-person commission, including Democrats, Republicans, and Independents, to draw congressional and state legislative districts. Approving a map requires nine votes, including three from each political category of members.
- Keeping politicians from having a say in drawing their own electoral districts is fairest for all voters and better for our Democracy.



Other States have Independent Commissions with Legislative Approval

- **HAWAII** — Congressional and state legislative districts are drawn by a nine-person commission.
- **IDAHO** — A six-member commission draws districts. Two-thirds of the commissioners must vote to approve a map.
- **IOWA** — The nonpartisan Legislative Services Agency draws maps which are submitted to the Legislature for approval.
- **MONTANA** — A five-person commission draws state legislative districts.
- **NEW JERSEY** — Districts are drawn by a 13-member commission, which requires a majority vote to approve a map.
- **NEW YORK** - Under a constitutional amendment approved by voters in 2014, a 10-member commission will draft districts for both Congress and the state Legislature. The Commission is bipartisan but political.
- **PENNSYLVANIA** — State districts are drawn by a five-member commission. Based on the results in Pennsylvania's elections, this political commission has not been effective.
- **VERMONT** — A commission submits plans for districts to the Legislature, which can approve or change them.
- **WASHINGTON** — Districts are drawn by a five-person commission. Legislators can amend the maps with a two-thirds vote, but their changes can shift no more than 2 percent of the population among districts.

While these commissions are a good step, we believe legislatures should not have the final say in districting.



The Supreme Court Won't Fix Gerrymandering- But States Will

The U.S. Supreme Court has said that it won't touch Gerrymandering.

- It is a State's Rights Issue.
 - Changes are going to have to come on a state by state basis.
-
- **The good news is that State Courts in states like Pennsylvania and North Carolina have already ruled against gerrymandering.**
 - In 2018, the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania overturned the state's gerrymandered districts.
 - In 2019, a State Court in North Carolina, found that North Carolina's congressional districts violated the state constitution because they were drawn with gerrymanders and ruled that districts had to be redrawn.

Voters Are Making States Create Independent Commissions.

In 2018, 4 States passed constitutional amendments, with strong bipartisan support, establishing independent commissions to draw election districts, while Ohio passed 2 ballot initiatives that require support from both parties for redistricting.

- **COLORADO** — Congressional and state legislative districts will be drawn by a 12-person commission, consisting of 4 Republicans, 4 Democrats, and 4 independents.
- **MICHIGAN** — Congressional and state legislative districts will be drawn by a 13-member citizens' commission, consisting of 4 Democrats, 4 Republicans and 5 independents.
- **MISSOURI** — A nonpartisan state demographer will draft maps for state House and Senate districts to achieve “partisan fairness” and “competitiveness” as determined by statistical measurements.
- **UTAH** — Congressional and state legislative districts will be drawn by a seven-member commission, composed of one gubernatorial appointee, two appointees by each party, and two independents.
- **Ohio**- passed an anti-gerrymandering ballot initiative, with 75% support, establishing a redistricting commission and requiring support of both parties to enact redistricting.

Creating these bipartisan commissions is an important step.



More States May Be Taking Action-

- **Virginia**-In 2020, Virginia will have a constitutional amendment to establish an independent redistricting commission on its ballot. The general assembly will be able to vote on the drawing of the maps, but will not be able to change them,
- **Arkansas, Nevada, and Oklahoma** also have ballot proposals to establish independent redistricting commissions. These proposals may or may not appear on the ballot. While there are legal challenges, the biggest problem is that the COVID-19 epidemic is making it difficult for the groups supporting these initiatives to obtain the required number of signatures.

Reform Elections Now urges voters in other states to support grass roots initiatives to create independent redistricting commissions.

- **Nonpartisan experts, not politicians, should be drawing our districts.**

Nonpartisan Commissions-a Major Step Forward.

- **Reform Elections Now believes Nonpartisan Commissions can eliminate most of the problems caused by political gerrymandering. With impartially drawn districts:**
 - More elections will be competitive.
 - Incumbents will not automatically be reelected or be able to gerrymander to get rid of competition.
 - Moderate candidates will have more opportunities.
 - Turnout will be increased.
 - Polarization and racial isolation will be lessened.
 - Bipartisanship will be increased.
 - The number of candidates elected by each party will more closely reflect the popular vote—one-person-one-vote.

The simple step of taking the drawing of election districts out of the hands of politicians and putting it in the hands of nonpartisan commissions can have a major impact on the functioning of our political system.