



LWV

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND/BLUFFTON AREA



Redistricting defined

- The Process of reapportioning U.S Congressional seats, South Carolina General Assembly seats and representation in local levels of government such as County Council seats and school board seats.
 - The next redrawing of voting districts in South Carolina will occur in 2021, following the 2020 census.
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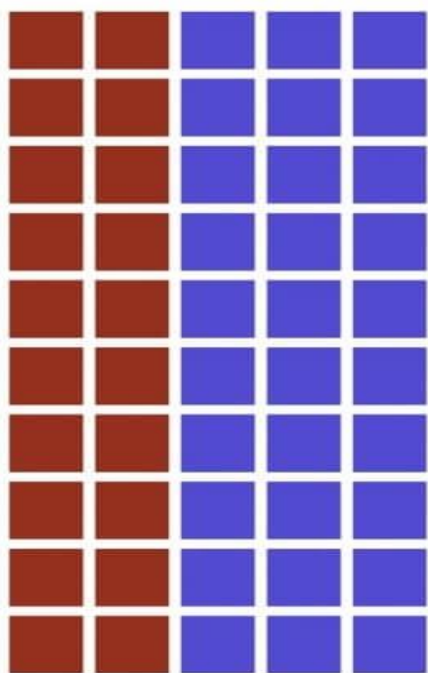
Gerrymandering

- The practice of drawing the lines for voting districts in a way that influences the outcome of elections.
- Redistricting software can be used to gerrymander districts but it can also be used to develop alternative redistricting options.

Gerrymandering, explained

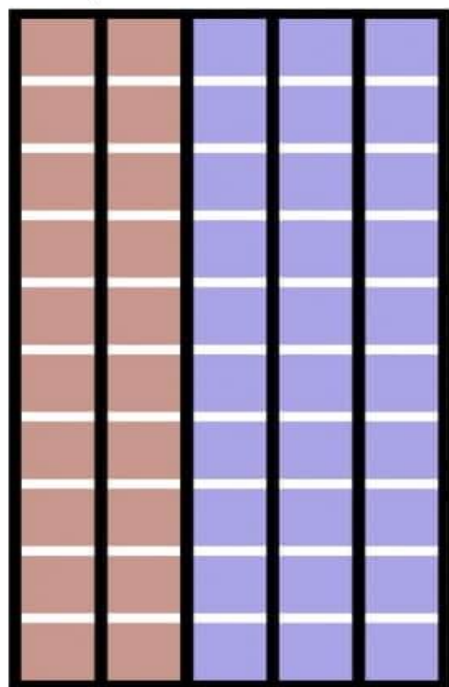
Three different ways to divide 50 people into five districts

50
people



**60% blue,
40% red**

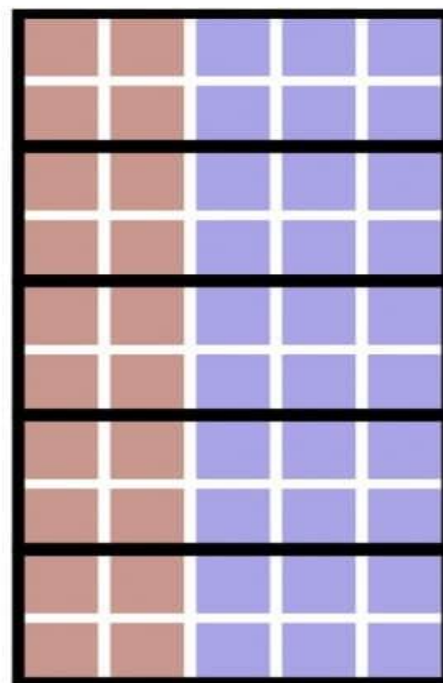
1. Perfect
representation



**3 blue districts,
2 red districts**

BLUE WINS

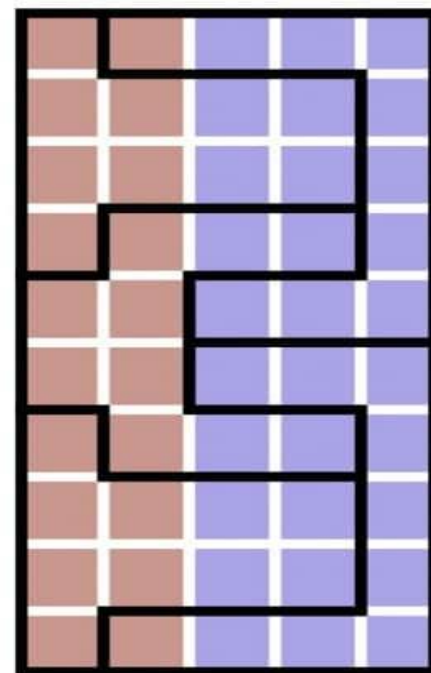
2. Compact,
but unfair



**5 blue districts,
0 red districts**

BLUE WINS

3. Neither compact
nor fair



**2 blue districts,
3 red districts**

RED WINS

Current process of redistricting in South Carolina

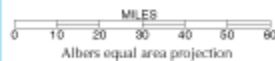
- Redistricting maps are drawn by the state legislature with the assistance of the SC Mapping section using redistricting computer software
- The process is not transparent – public sees after a done deal
- The governor can veto any plan developed by the state legislator



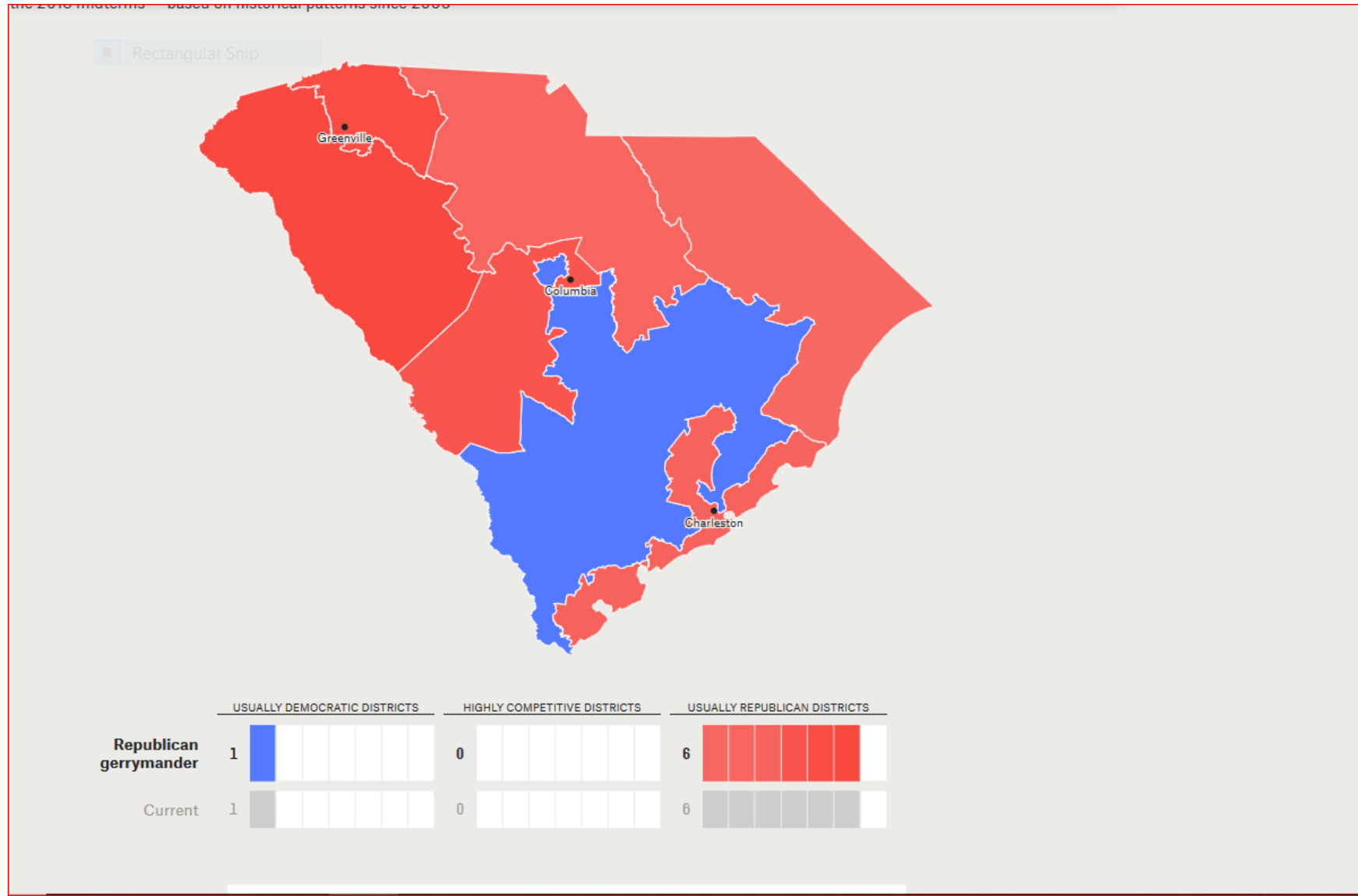
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS
113th Congress (January 2013-January 2015)

The Constitution prescribes Congressional apportionment based on decennial census population data. Each state has at least one Representative, no matter how small its population. Since 1941, distribution of Representatives has been based on total U.S. population, so that the average population per Representative has the least possible variation between one state and any other. Congress fixes the number of voting Representatives at each apportionment. States delineate the district boundaries. The first House of Representatives in 1789 had 65 members; currently there are 435. There are non-voting delegates from American Samoa, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands.

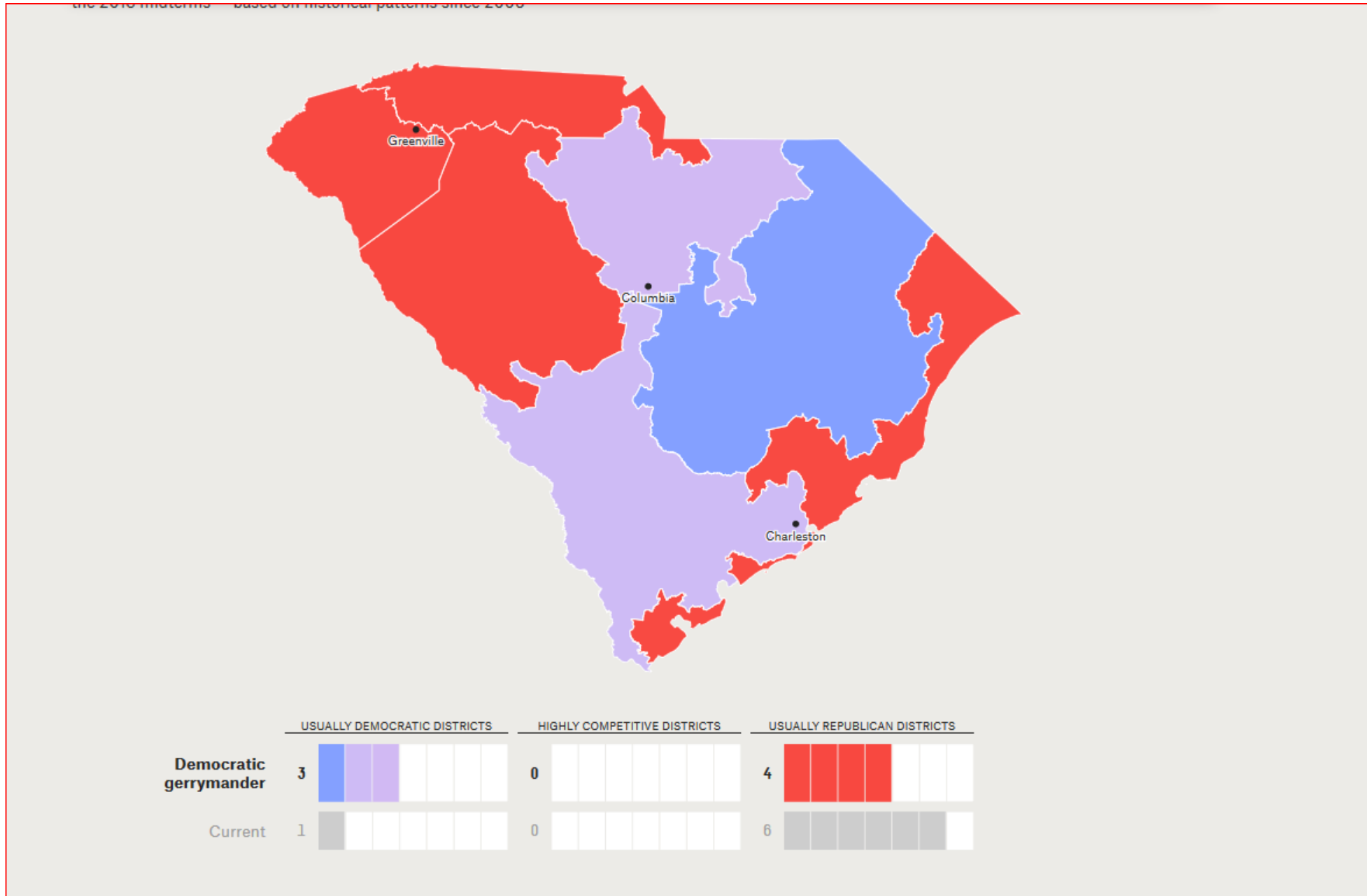
- 1
- 2
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Republican Gerrymandering (similar to current)

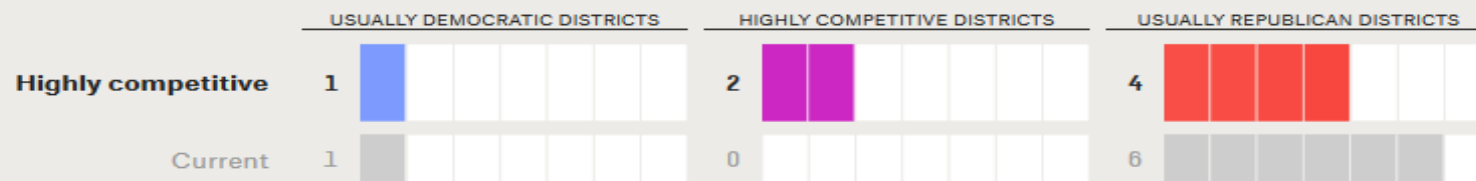
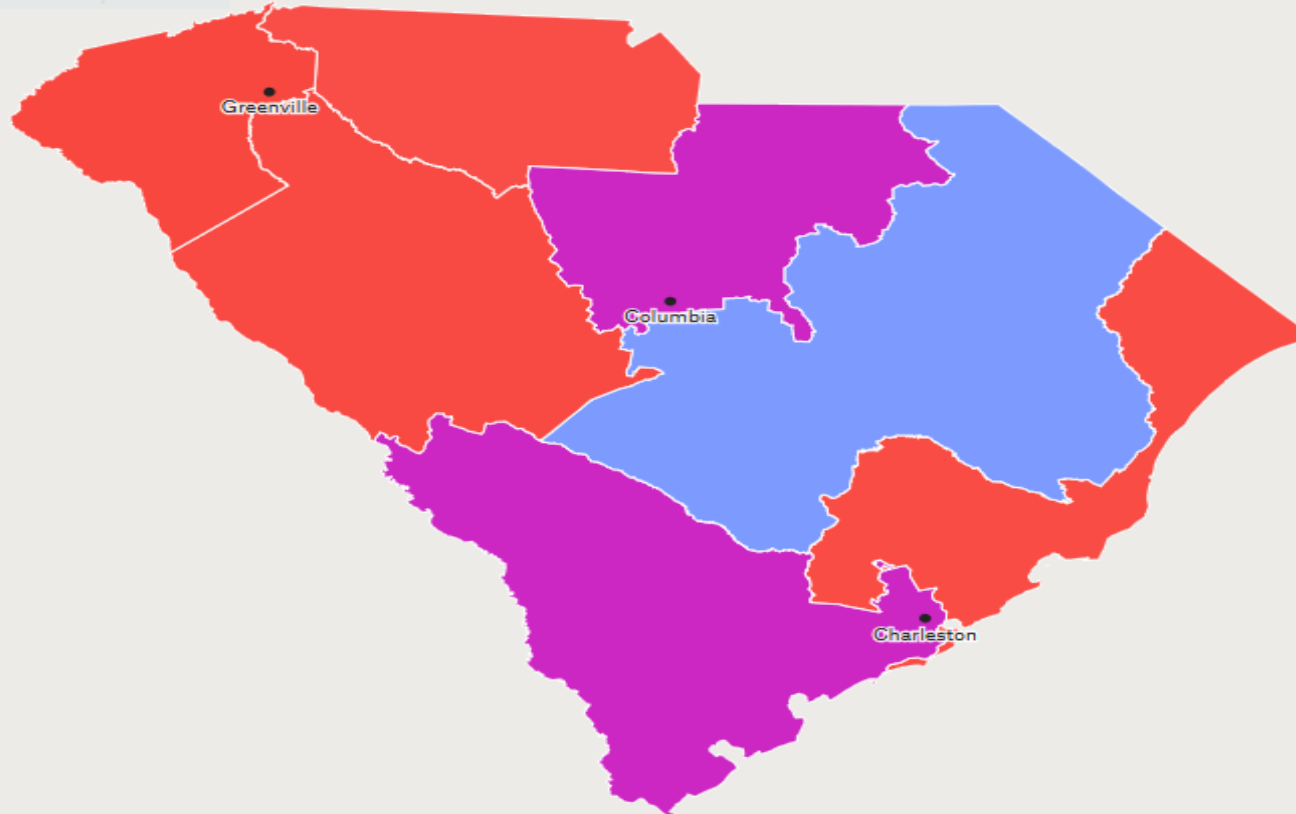


Democratic Gerrymandering



Highly Competitive Voting District Selection (similar to proportionally partisan map)

Rectangular Snip



Partisan gerrymandering in South Carolina?

➤ U.S. House of Representatives:

S.C. members

- ❖ 6 Republican seats (86%)
- ❖ 1 Democratic seat (14%)

Presidential election: Republican candidate won 55% of vote; Democratic candidate won 40% of the vote (5% was for third-party candidate)

[https://ballotpedia.org/South Carolina State Legislature](https://ballotpedia.org/South_Carolina_State_Legislature)

Extreme Partisan Gerrymandering

- ❖ **Why do we need more competitive elections?**
 - ✓ When districts are competitive, our representatives are forced to pay more attention to all of their constituents, not just “the base” They can’t afford to close their mind to the other positions on issues (responsiveness).

Who benefits most from the practice of gerrymandering ?

- ❖ Party incumbents – they draw the lines
- ❖ Members of the majority party (all levels)
- ❖ Extremist positions (far right or far left base)
 - ✓ NRA, big business, Citizen's United (i.e. dark money)
- ✓ **Positions represented by minority party lose** (e.g. Gun violence issues, women's issues, consumer protection issues, environmental issues, etc)

Other consequences of partisan gerrymandering

- ❑ Voter apathy – why bother if candidate a shoo-in
- ❑ Increased polarization in our Congress, General Assembly, Local elected officials
- ❑ Difficult to pass legislation even when majority of voters are in favor of it
- ❑ Less willingness to compromise – majority party doesn't have to when partisan gerrymandering is extreme
- ❑ Reduced accountability – no system of checks & balances

Who do we want drawing the District Lines?

- Should the party who wins “control” of both houses of the state legislature draw the voting district lines or boundaries for Congressional and General Assembly races as happens now in S.C.?
- If not, What are the alternatives?

Alternative to Partisan Gerrymandering – Legislation to Establish an Independent Redistricting Commission

➤ Independent Commission with public participation (public hearings)

✓ ***Clear criteria for the selection of district boundaries***

- Population equality
- Racial & linguistic minority representation
- Geographically contiguous & compact to the greatest extent possible
- Geographic Integrity – Respecting cities, towns, counties, neighborhoods to the extent possible
- Eliminating incumbent and partisan protection as criteria for redistricting

Get to know our representatives

- **U. S. House** - Mark Sanford (Congressional Dist. 1)
- **State Senate**: **Senator Tom Davis**— (except small area of Bluffton near Palmetto Bluffs – Dist. 45, **Senator Margie Bright Matthews**)
- **State House of Representatives**: Bill Herbkersman(Dist. 118) ; Weston Newton (Dist. 120); Jeff Bradley (Dist. 123).

✓ <https://sanford.house.gov/>

✓ <http://www.scstatehouse.gov/index.php>

What we can do right now

- Call, email, text or write your state representative and ask him or her to support an Independent Redistricting Commission that would include clear criteria for the drawing of voting district lines.
- Go to events for General Assembly incumbents and candidates and ask if they are in favor of reining in gerrymandering by establishing an Independent Redistricting Commission in S.C.
- Give them information. Have copies of LWVHHI/BA Fact Sheet available (rev. 4/16/18)

Other Local Voting Districts

- **Beaufort County Council** - 6 out of the 11 County Council members represent some part of the Hilton Head/Bluffton Area.
- **Beaufort School Board** – Uses the same Voting District Lines as County Council.
- **Hilton Head Town Council** - 6 Ward Districts plus the Mayor.
- <http://www.bcgov.net/elected-officials/index.php>
- <http://hiltonheadislandsc.gov/council/tcmembers.cfm>

For more Information and to get involved in our area

- MaryAnn Bromley, League of Women Voters of Hilton Head/Bluffton Area, Board Member & Chair, State Issues & Advocacy with primary focus on Redistricting
 - Mary.ann.bromley@gmail.com
 - 843-298-2320
- Updates of Information about Redistricting & Gerrymandering are contained on our Facebook page
https://www.facebook.com/Leagueofwomenvotersshiba1/?ref=aymt_homepage_panel

Other Resources

- <https://www.facebook.com/League-of-Women-Voters-of-South-Carolina-251544131543145/?fref=mentions>
- <http://www.scstatehouse.gov/index.php>
- www.SCVotes.org
- ❖ <https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/redistricting-maps>
- Daley, David (2017) Rat F**ked: Why your vote Doesn't Count. NY: W.W. Norton & Co.

Questions?



Slay the gerrymander