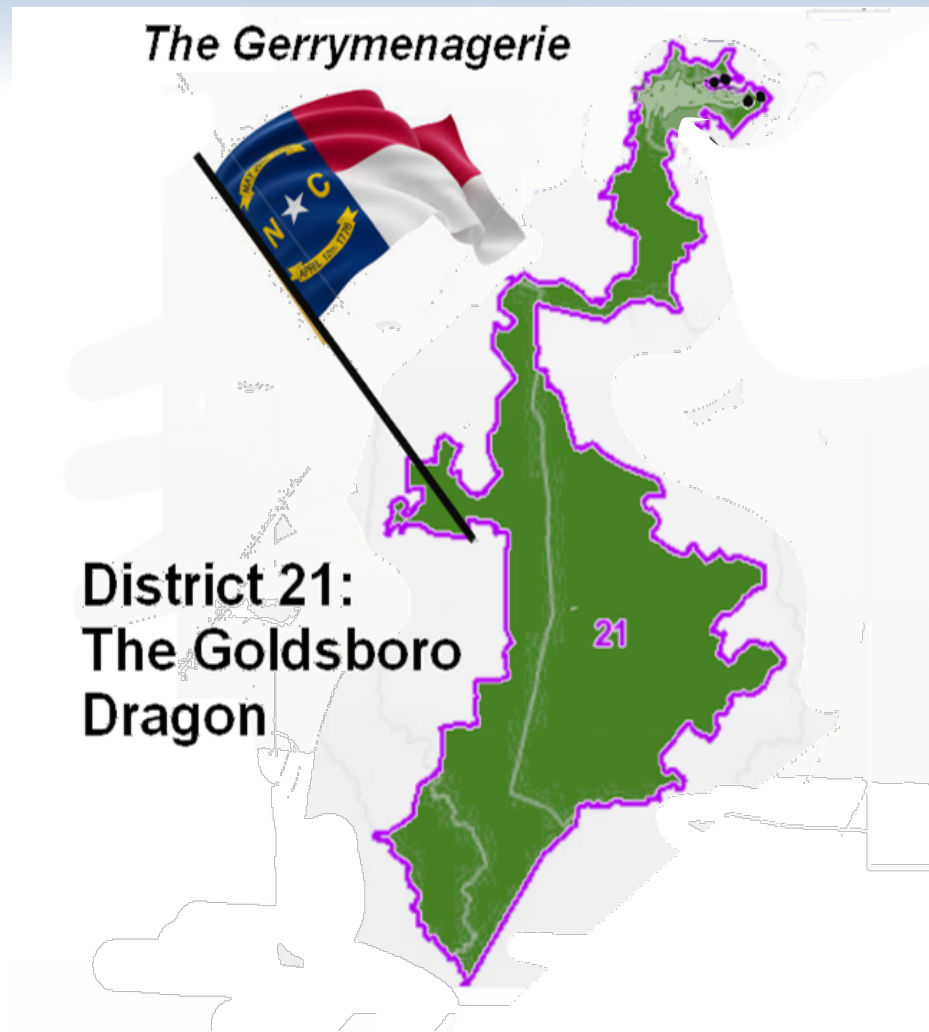


# Ending gerrymandering in North Carolina

***Securing fair elections  
through nonpartisan  
redistricting***

# Roadmap

- What is redistricting?
- What is gerrymandering?
- NCGA history
- Why it matters
- NCGA scorecard
- What's being done?
- League position
- What you can do!



# What is redistricting?

- Two types of districts in US federal, state, and local government:
  - **At-large:** voters select one or more people to serve the whole area

*US Senate seats are at-large: Senators Tillis and Burr both represent the whole state*
  - **Single-member** districts: area is divided into districts; voters elect one person/district
    - *NC Senate and House are single-member: 50 Senate and 120 House districts*

2011

# How and when is redistricting done?

2021

- Every 10 years, after each national census
- Voting Rights Act: districts cannot purposely or unintentionally disadvantage minorities as a group
- Courts may order some or all districts be redrawn at any time if citizens' rights infringed
- North Carolina legislature carries out redistricting
- Governor cannot veto redistricting bills
- NC law/constitution provides little further guidance

# What is Gerrymandering?

- Drawing electoral districts to gain partisan advantage
- Aim: gain one party a higher share of seats than its share of the votes
- Strategy: create electoral majorities in as many districts as possible
- How it's done: pack the other party's voters (or voters of one race) into as few districts as possible and/or crack them into small groups spread across many districts to dilute their votes

# Gerrymandering: *5-minute video explains it all!*



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mky11UJb9AY>

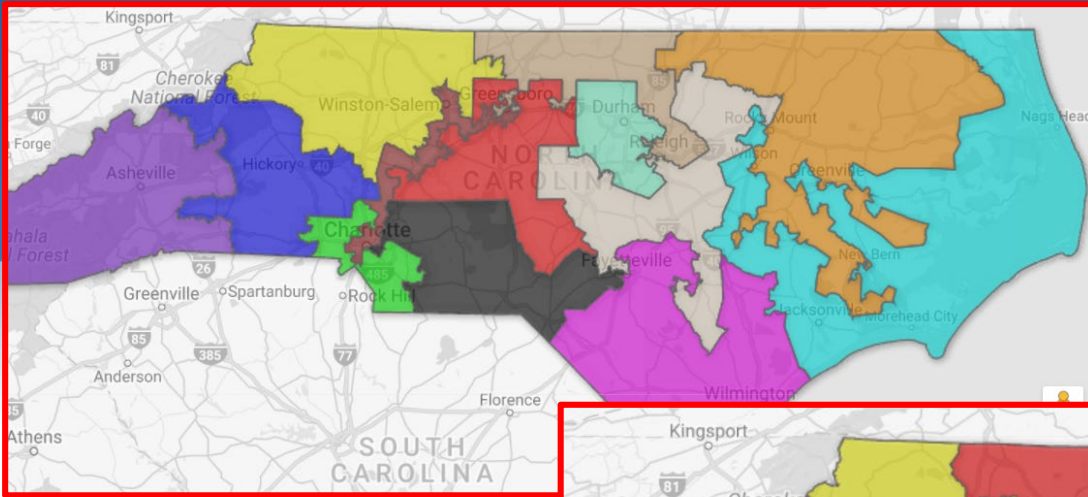
# Gerrymandering in North Carolina

- A long and ignoble history!
- Gerrymandering helped the Democratic Party to control the NCGA for 100+ years
- Enabled the GOP to gain a supermajority in both NCGA houses in 2012, after 2010 Tea Party electoral upset
- Implemented by national “Red Map” project run by GOP operatives with private donor support

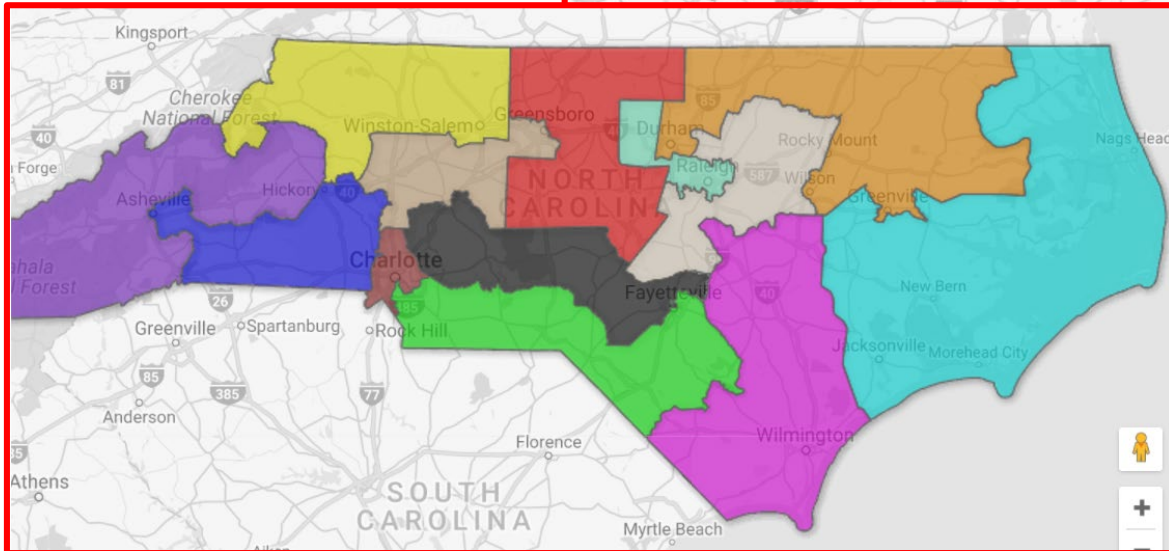
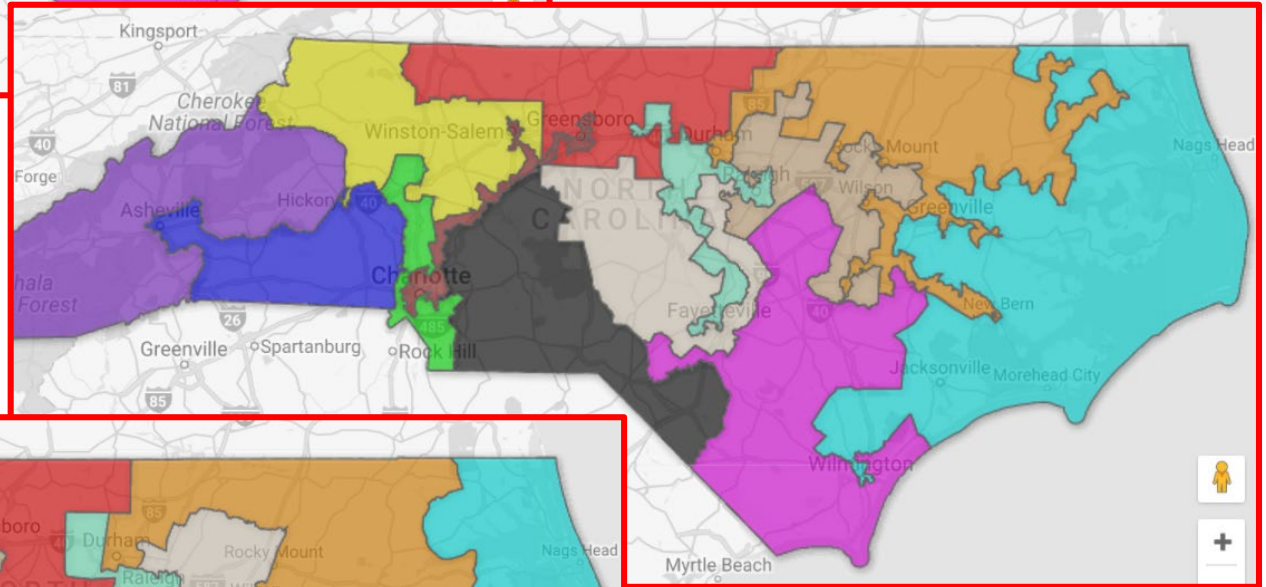


# Congressional maps

## 2001 – DEMS



## 2011 – GOP



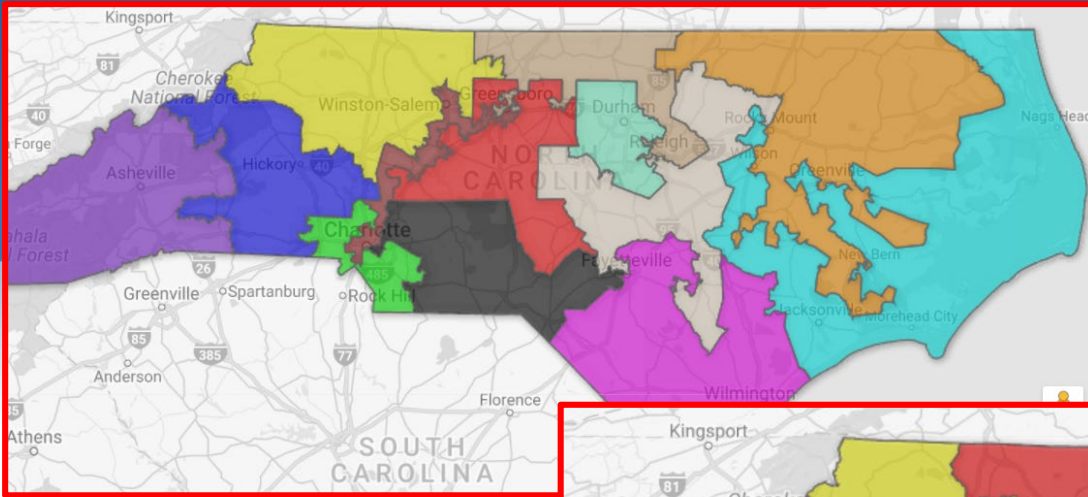
## 2016 – Court-ordered



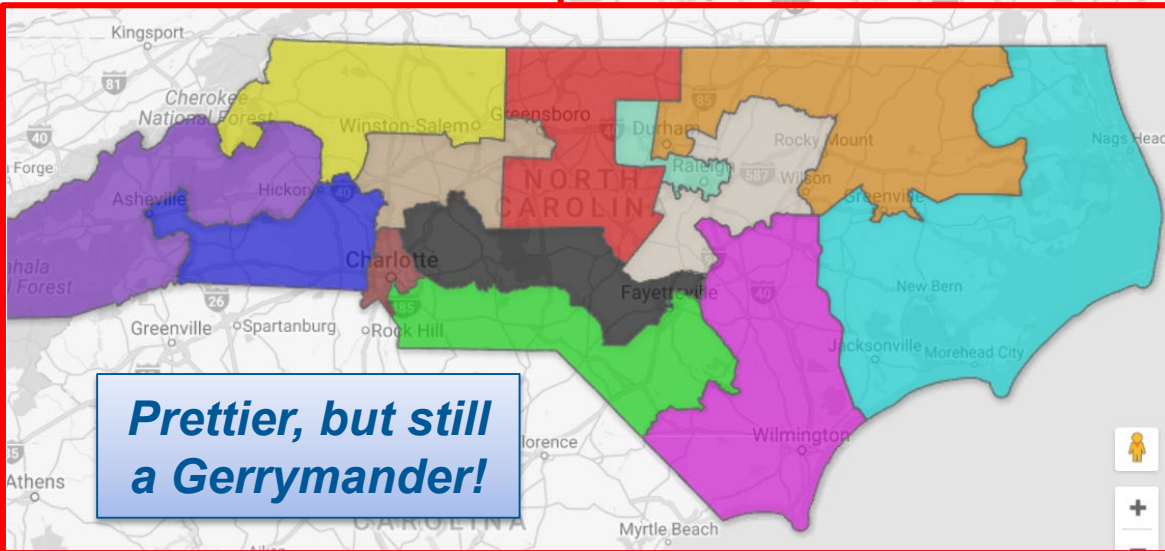
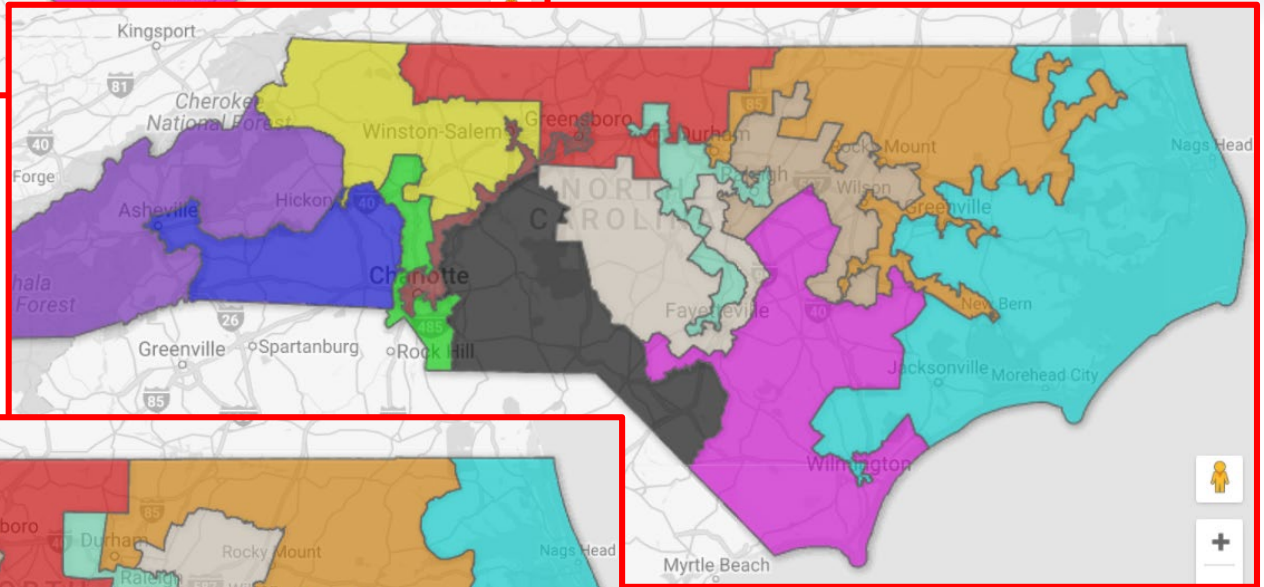


# Congressional maps

## 2001 – DEMS



**2011 – GOP**



***Prettier, but still  
a Gerrymander!***

**2016 – Court-ordered**

# Gerrymandering + racial divisions = double trouble

- Gerrymandering in the South tied to race & class, complicates complex political and urban/rural issues
- Post-Civil War: coalition of blacks, poor whites gave GOP power (“Reconstruction”)
- Late 1800s: better-off Democrats retook power, used gerrymandering/race appeals to keep it (“Redemption”)
- Early/mid-2000’s: most blacks shifted from Republican to Democratic party after New Deal programs, Civil Rights movement

# Why should we care?

- Gerrymandering creates '**safe seats**'  
→ legislators face little competition
- Denies voters **choice**:
  - Since 1992, nearly half of all NC legislative races had only **ONE** candidate
- Incumbents **don't have to listen to their voters**: in 2016 NCGA election:
  - 79% of incumbents had no primary opponent
  - 42% had no general election opponent

***Competition is vital to our democracy!***

# Gerrymandering means your vote *doesn't count*

- In an election:
  - with only one candidate OR
  - where the majority vote-winner is pre-determined, **YOUR VOTE DOESN'T COUNT**
- Legislators who win their seats without competition **DON'T HAVE TO LISTEN** to constituents
- Candidates facing only primary opposition tend to move toward the extremes, away from the middle, **FOSTERING PARTISAN GRIDLOCK & RANCOR**

# Gerrymandering undermines our democracy

- Large, safe legislative majorities immune to election challenges can override gubernatorial vetoes, gutting checks and balances
- Lawmakers become more accountable to party leaders who control their fate, not to constituents
- Progress toward better policies and more responsive government is stymied

Is this the  
democracy North  
Carolinians want  
and deserve?



# What can we do?

## Three ways out of this mess!

- **Court challenges**
- **Legislative action**
- **Constitutional change**



***Or mix and match!!***

# COURTS



- In 2006 all 9 US Supreme Court justices agreed that
  - excessive partisan gerrymanders violate the US Constitution **in principle**
  - but found no standard to measure what is “excessive”
- In 2017, agreed to hear Wisconsin case (Gill v Whitford) to consider a possible standard – the “efficiency gap”
- NC involved in 16 redistricting lawsuits since 2000
  - State lost 10 of 12, 1 split decision, 4 pending

# COURTS: NC cases



- **NC v Covington**: argues 28 *NCGA districts* are racial gerrymanders; affirmed by Supreme Court; NCGA/other new maps now before the court
- **LWVNC v Rucho\***: argues partisan gerrymanders illegal; combined with similar Common Cause suit; federal district court trial proceeding (*Congressional*)
- **Dickson v Rucho\***: argues against racial gerrymanders, county splitting; Supreme Court sent back to NC Supreme Court, to be retried soon (*Legislative & Congressional*)

***\*League of Women Voters court actions for reform***

# LEGISLATION:

## Reform efforts in NC



- Redistricting **reform bills** repeatedly introduced by GOP when in the minority, but all quashed by Democrats
- One bill passed House in 2011, but died in Senate
- Prior to 2010, **Phil Berger sponsored five bills** for redistricting reform, all unsuccessful

# LEGISLATION

## 2017-18 bills



<a href="#"><u>H735</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Redistricting by computer</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>H714</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Fair redistricting study committee</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>H674</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Independent redistricting commission</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>S554</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Fair redistricting/postmark &amp; absentee ballots (study bill)</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>H200</u></a> (= <a href="#"><u>S209</u></a> )	<a href="#"><u>Nonpartisan redistricting commission</u></a>
<a href="#"><u>S209</u></a> (= <a href="#"><u>H200</u></a> )	<a href="#"><u>Nonpartisan redistricting commission</u></a>

*None of these bills made it out of Rules  
Committees (where bills are sent to die)*



# Bills for amendment to state constitution



- House Bill 674 (Rep. Joe John, D-Wake)
- House Bill 735 (Rep. Blust, R-Guilford)
- Need 60% to pass in NCGA + voter approval of ballot item
- NC does not have citizen-initiated referendum process used in other states

*Bills could be revived in special session  
but probably not – maybe in 2018!*



# 2017 redistricting: started in the courts, will finish in the courts

- NC v Covington requires redrawing 28 NCGA districts this year due to racial gerrymandering
  - 19 House districts
  - 9 Senate districts
  - Plus 2-3 times as many adjacent districts
  - 300+ citizens signed up to give public comment
  - New maps adopted in NCGA, sent to court

*We must observe this process closely,  
educate citizens, promote openness*

# League of Women Voters has led redistricting reform efforts since 1966

- League has been a **reform leader** in those states that have **adopted reforms**:
  - **Florida**: Constitutional amendment and court fights to implement it
  - **California**: Promoted passage of proposition to create independent citizens redistricting commission
- Currently working in coalitions to support redistricting reforms in **Colorado, Georgia, Michigan Pennsylvania, Ohio, New York, Texas, Virginia**, other states

# League of Women Voters of the United States ( LWVUS) Redistricting Position

“The League of Women Voters of the United States (LWVUS) supports **redistricting processes and enforceable standards** that promote **fair and effective representation** at all levels of government with **maximum opportunity for public participation.**”

# LWVUS Redistricting Principles

1. Full public transparency and citizen participation
2. Not intentionally favor or disfavor any individual or political party
3. Districts reflect “one person, one vote,” avoid splitting cities, counties, communities of interest
4. Districts compact and contiguous and comply with all federal laws
5. Impartial commission (not elected officials) with membership that reflects diversity draw the maps

# League of Women Voters NC

## Nonpartisan Activities to End Gerrymandering

- **Voter education and strict nonpartisan position—****LWVNC's** unique role in reform dialogue with citizens and legislators
- **LWVNC Strengths:**
  - 1800 members in 17 chapters across the state
  - Nearly 100 years of work in voting rights, voter education, and advocacy

# LWVNC Opportunities

- Educate voters on how to end gerrymandering and why it matters
- Fight proposed gerrymandering of the courts and city/county governments
- Non-partisan advocacy to achieve reform before 2021 redistricting:
  - **In the NCGA: GA Team**
  - **In member districts: At-home Team**



# What can you and your local League do to help?

- The LWV has 50 years of experience in promoting nonpartisan redistricting: Major wins & ongoing battles
- Citizen pressure is essential to get NCGA action!
  - Write, meet, call, email, tweet, text your legislators
  - Help educate your friends and neighbors
  - Support local citizen engagement in the process
- Join the LWVNC's grassroots movement to end gerrymandering – ***today!***

***It all comes down to you!***



***It all comes down to you!***



**THANKS for  
your attention!**

**Q & A**

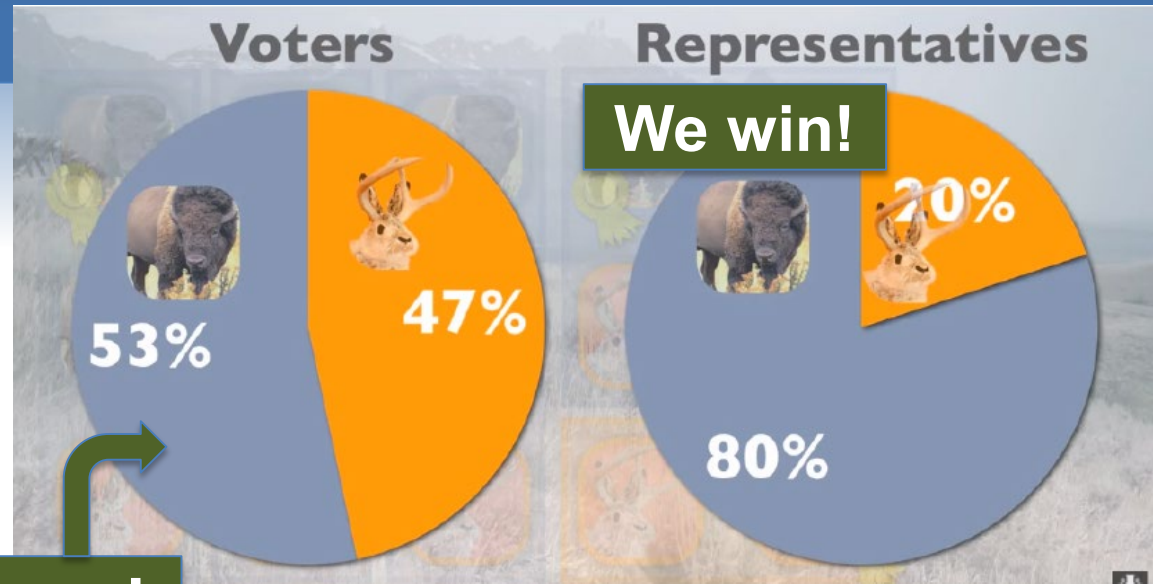
# >>Substitute slides if you can't show the Youtube video

- Can also be used if you need to show how gerrymandering works during Q&A
- **NEW:** Also includes a **module on the efficiency gap** if people want to see that explained (during Q&A)

# How gerrymandering works

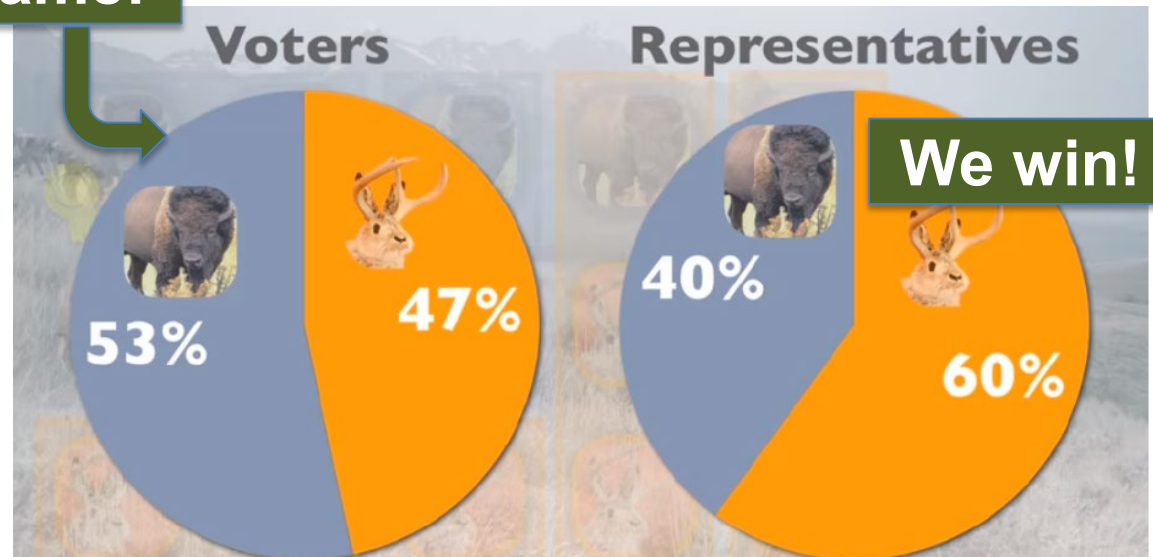
Credit: CGP Grey

**BUFFALO PARTY  
DRAWS THE  
LINES**



**Just the same!**

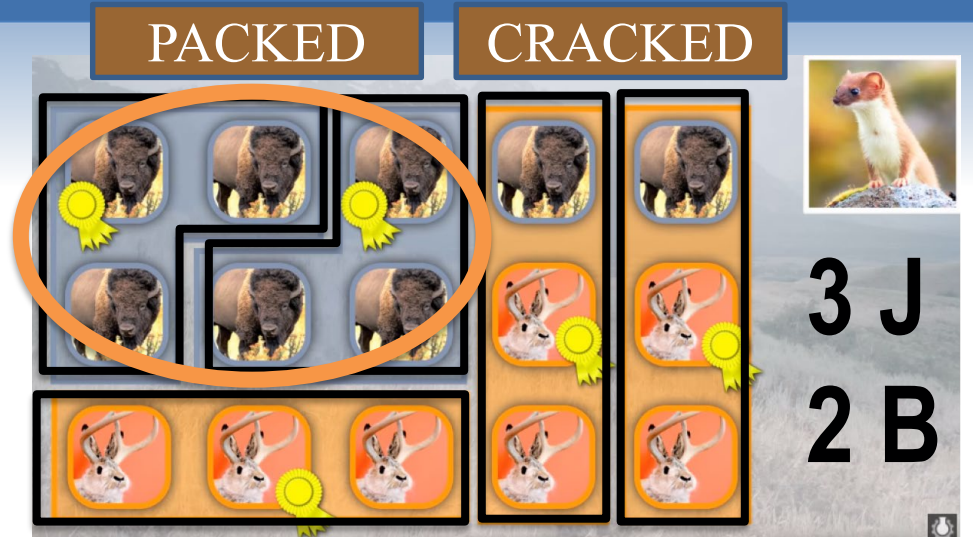
**JACKALOPE  
PARTY DRAWS  
THE LINES**



# How do they do it?

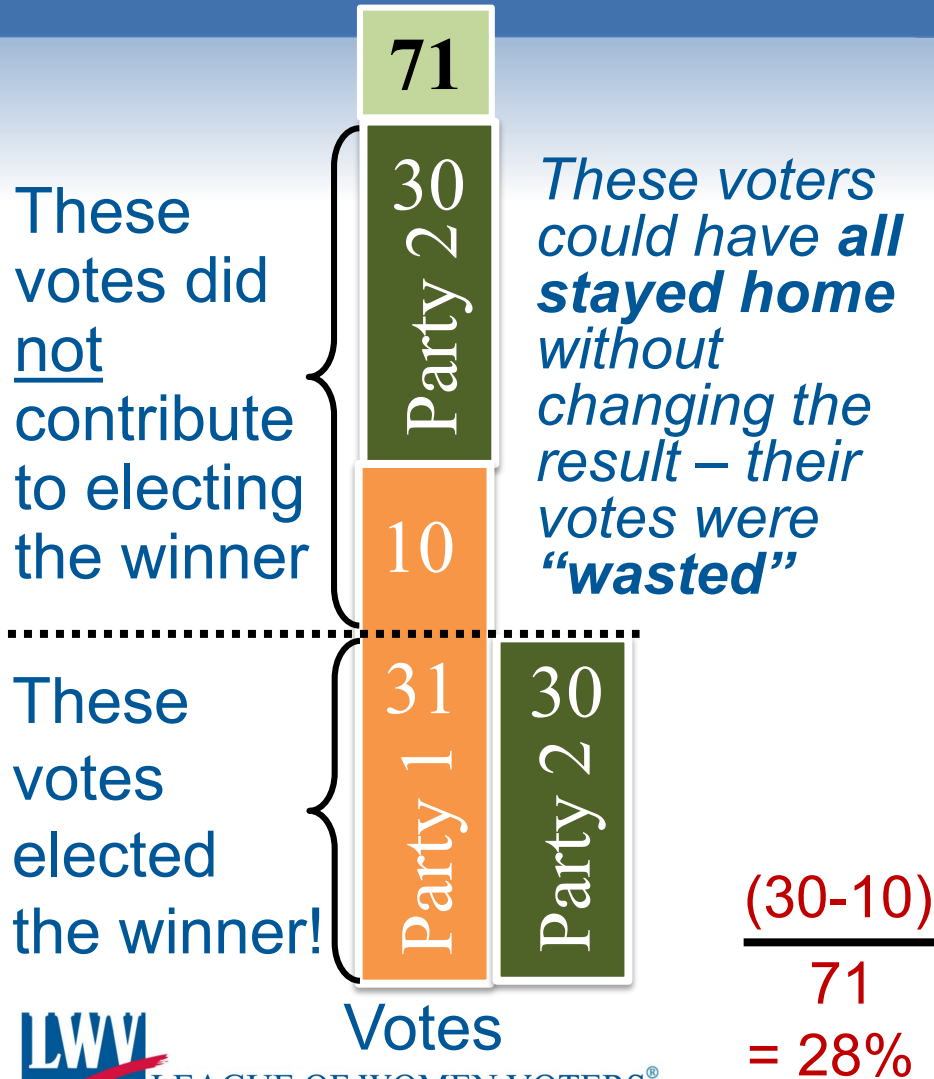
## Packing & cracking

- PACK as many of your opponents into as few districts as possible, so THEY “win big” but in **just a few districts**
- CRACK (spread) the remaining opponents into small clumps in as many districts as possible, so that YOU “win small” in **lots and lots of districts**.





# The efficiency gap: how “efficiently” does each party translate votes into wins?



- If races are close, the efficiency gap is small.
- If each party wins some & loses some, the efficiency gap is small.
- If one party usually “wins small and loses big” (a sign of gerrymandering), the efficiency gap is large.

$$\frac{(\text{Wasted votes of Party 2} - \text{wasted votes of Party 1})}{\text{Total votes}}$$

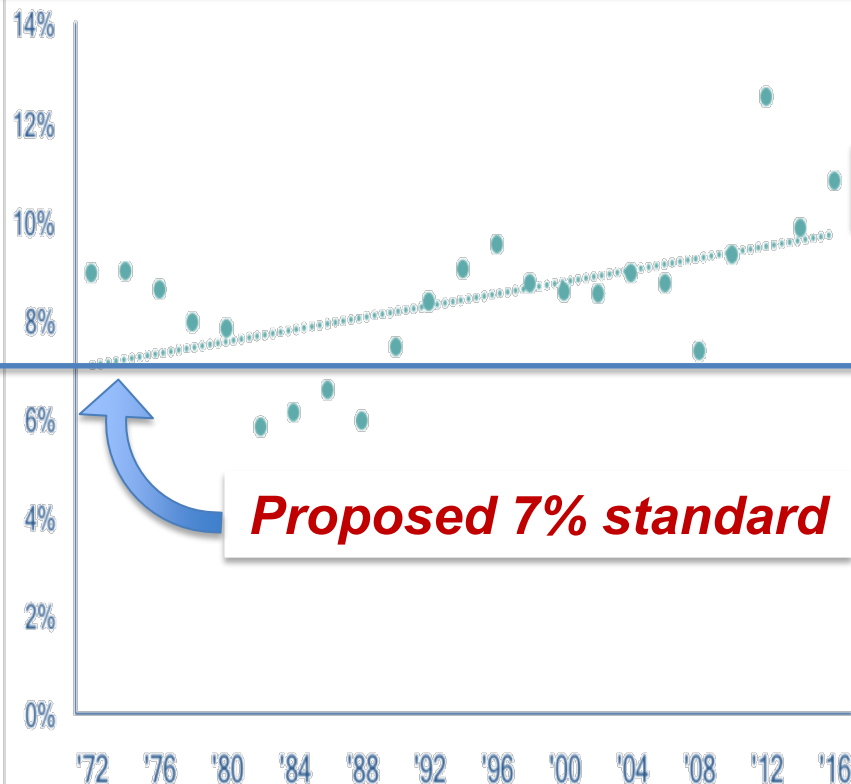
# Efficiency gaps in state legislatures (800 elections since 1972)

- A BIG advantage of the efficiency gap is that it measures **how many more seats one party has won** than would be expected if districts were fair, given their share of registered voters!
- E.g., an efficiency gap of 40% translates to one party getting 40% more seats than it would have under fair districts



# Efficiency gap analysis shows *gerrymandering has gotten worse*

## CONGRESSIONAL, 1976-2016



## Especially Congressional

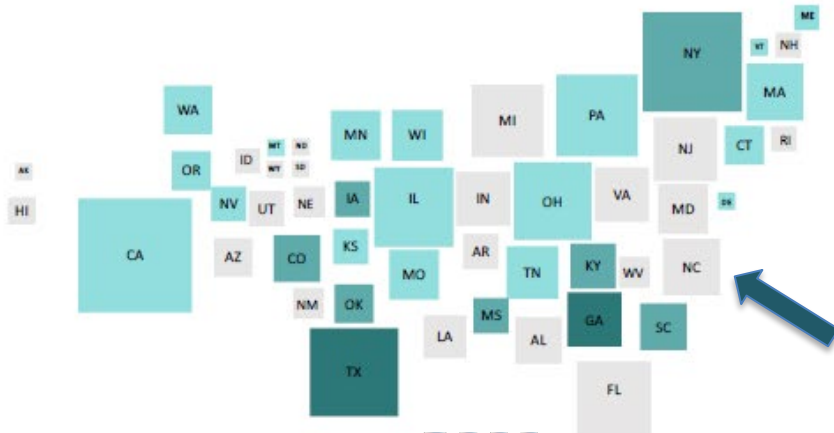
*(both graphs are same scale)*

## LEGISLATIVE, 1972-2016



# Legislative races by state

1980s



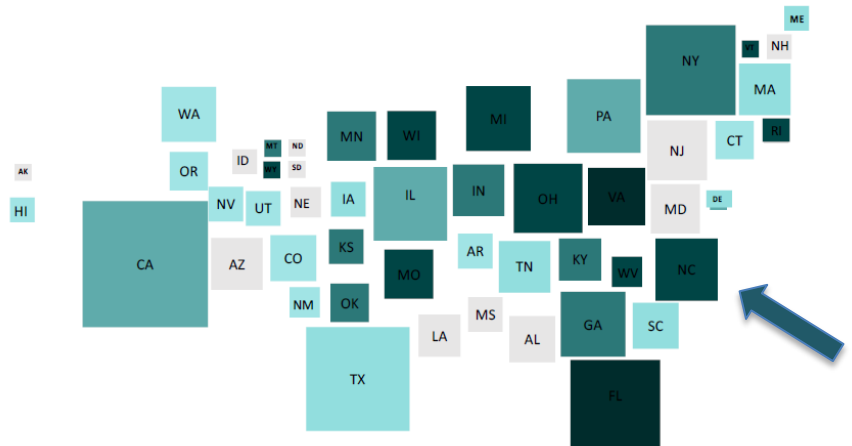
1990s



2000s

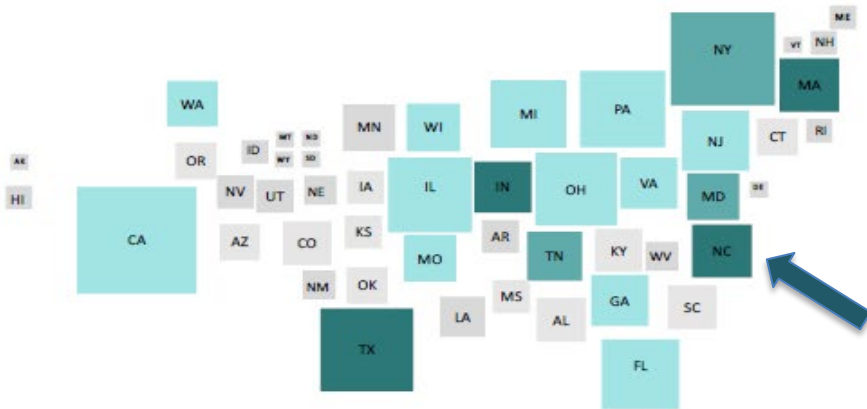


2012-16

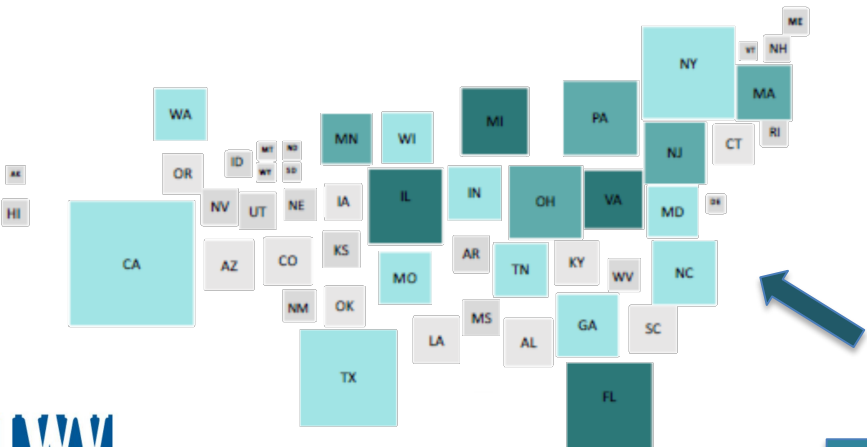


# Congressional races by state

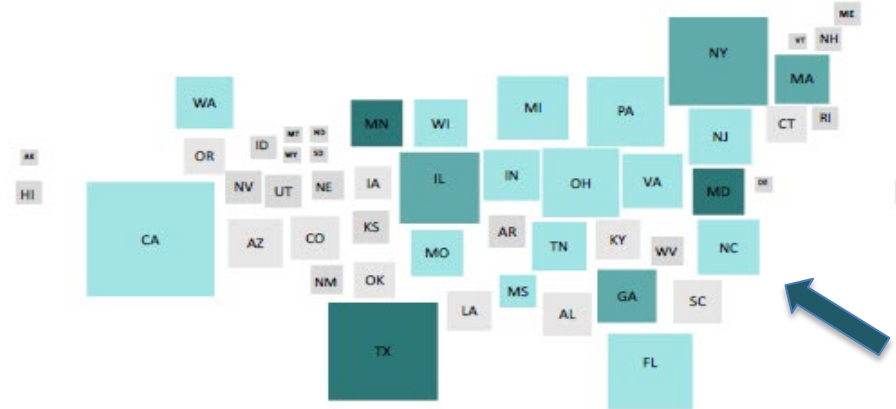
1980s



2000s



1990s



2012-16

