

# Redistricting 101

Stephen Kearny  
Fair Districts Louisiana



# Definition

**Redistricting is the process by which new congressional and state legislative district boundaries are drawn.** All United States Representatives and state legislators are elected from political divisions called districts. District lines are redrawn every 10 years following completion of the United States census. The federal government stipulates that districts must have nearly equal populations and must not discriminate on the basis of race or ethnicity.

-Ballotpedia



# Qualities of Fair Maps

- Partisan Proportionality:
  - partisan makeup of elected body accurately reflects the electorate
- Racial Proportionality
  - Racial makeup of elected body accurately reflect the electorate
- Competitiveness
  - A high proportion of seats could theoretically be won by multiple parties
- Compactness
  - As closely as possible resemble a circle
- Communities of interest
  - Respect underlying communities



# Gerrymandering

**Gerrymandering**, in U.S. politics, the practice of drawing the boundaries of electoral districts in a way that gives one political party an unfair advantage over its rivals (political or partisan gerrymandering) or that dilutes the voting power of members of ethnic or linguistic minority groups (racial gerrymandering).

- Encyclopedia Britannica



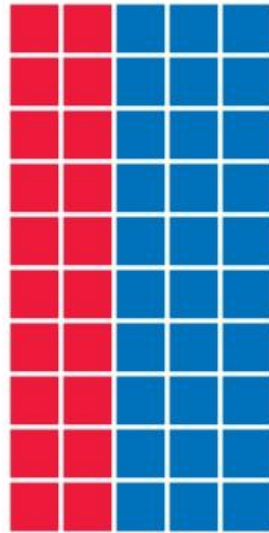
# ABCs of Gerrymandering

- **Cracking:** diluting the voting power of the opposing party's supporters across many districts
- **Packing:** concentrating the opposing party's voting power in one district to reduce their voting power in other districts
- Both of these have the effect of increasing the number of wasted votes for the victim candidate or party
- **Wasted votes:** votes which are for a losing candidate or party + votes for winning candidates in excess of the minimum needed to win.

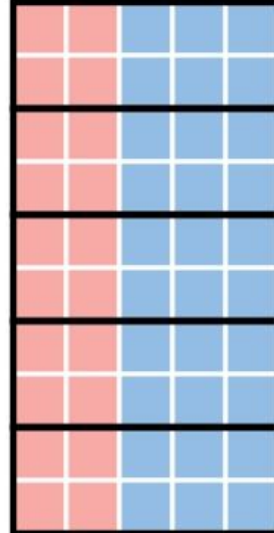


# Visual Example

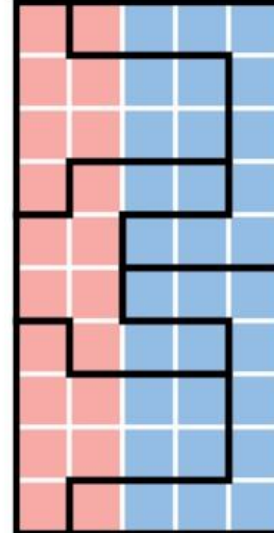
## HOW TO STEAL AN ELECTION



50 PRECINCTS  
60% **BLUE**  
40% **RED**



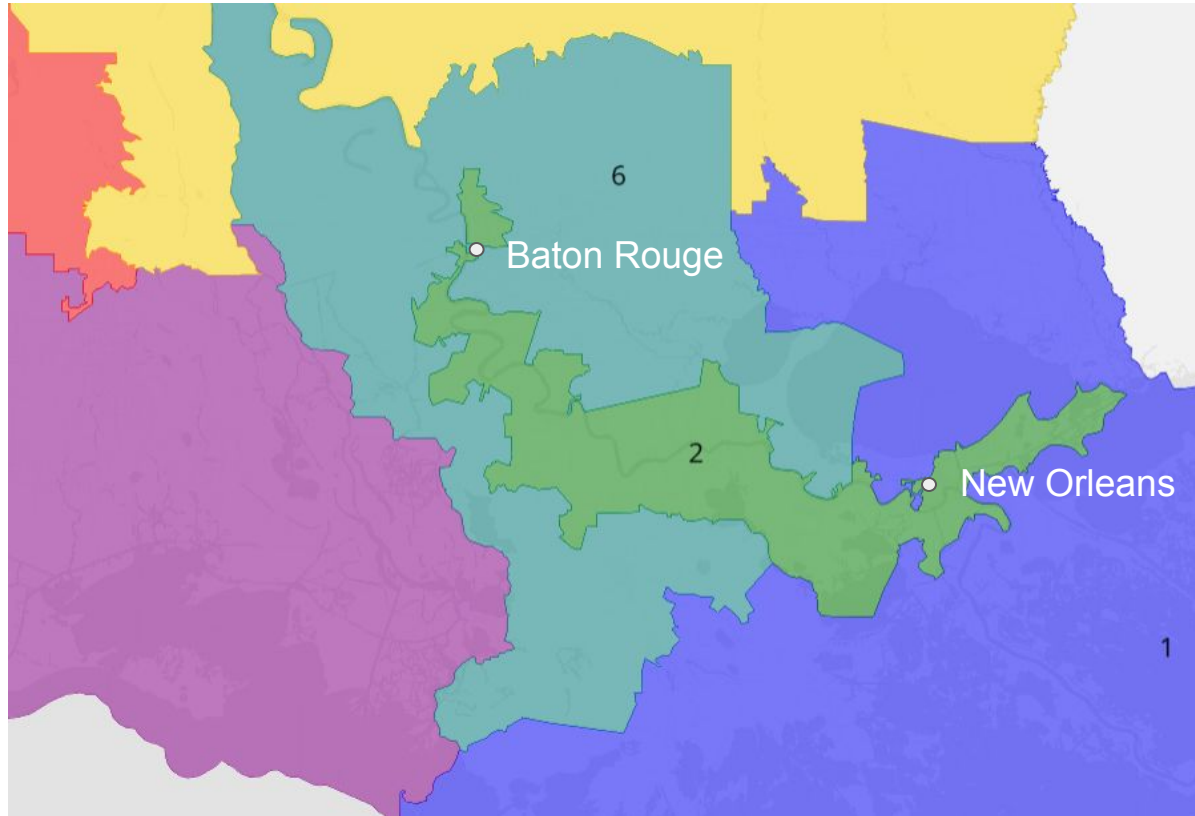
5 DISTRICTS  
5 **BLUE**  
0 **RED**  
**BLUE WINS**



5 DISTRICTS  
3 **RED**  
2 **BLUE**  
**RED WINS**



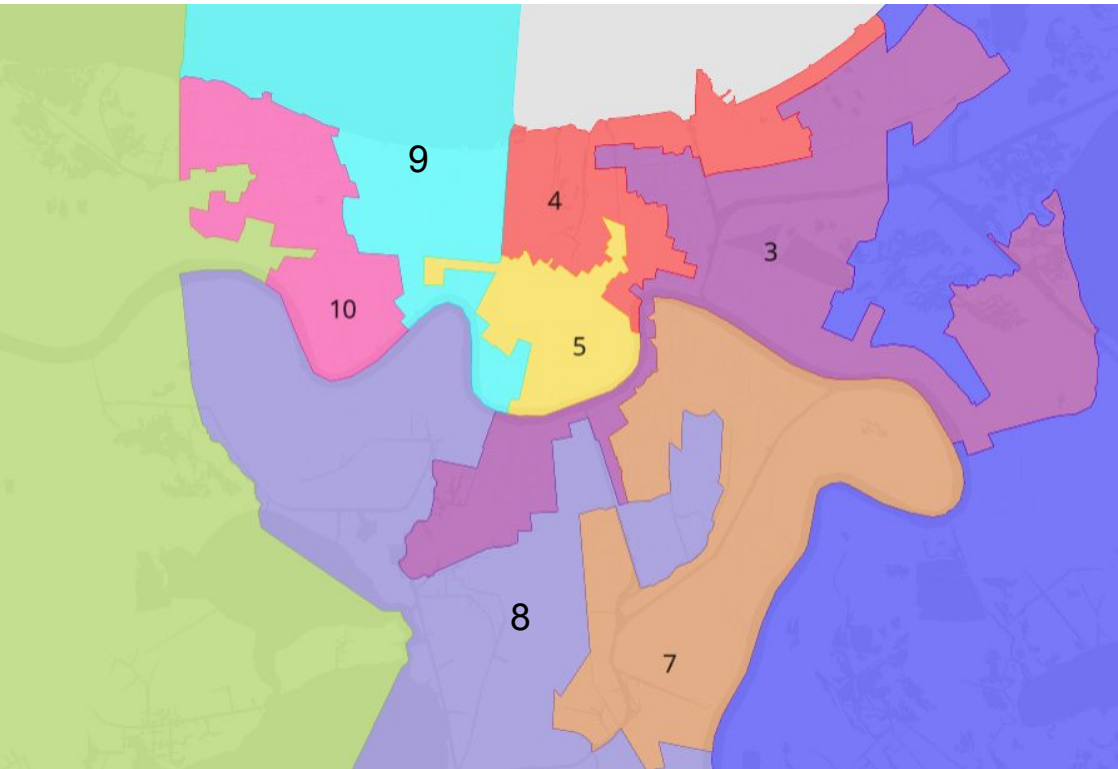
# Louisiana's 2nd Congressional



Sacrifices  
competitiveness,  
compactness, and  
communities of  
interest in favor of  
racial representation



# The state senate map in Greater New Orleans



These contorted shapes are the result of efforts to create safe districts for Republicans and Democrats. None of these districts are competitive.



# Process in Louisiana

## THE REDISTRICTING PROCESS IN LOUISIANA

**1**

**State legislature receives official census data.**

Official population results from the 2020 Census are delivered to the legislature as well as made available online (expected to occur in September 2021 or later).

**2**

**Committee sets rules, reviews data, and gathers input.**

The House and Governmental Affairs Committee establishes procedural rules for the process, reviews existing data, and hosts public input sessions across the state.

**3**

**Legislative session convenes to set new district lines.**

Legislators will hold a special session to work through the process of drawing new boundaries for Congressional, legislative, BESE, PSC, and Supreme Court districts.

**4**

**The Governor signs or vetoes the redistricting bills.**

In adopting new district maps, the legislature will pass a set of redistricting bills which will each go to the Governor's desk for approval or veto.



GET INVOLVED AT [FAIRDISTRICTSLA.ORG](https://FAIRDISTRICTSLA.ORG)



# Better ways to do it

## REFORM OPTIONS FOR LOUISIANA

1

### **Independent Commission**

Fair Districts Louisiana believes that the best result of Louisiana residents would be the creation of a fully independent commission comprised of a diverse cross-section of Louisianans.

2

### **Bipartisan Commission**

Fair Districts Louisiana supports the creation of a bipartisan commission made up for Democrats, Republicans, and Independents. Majority and minority members of the legislature would appoint members.

3

### **Rule Reform**

Fair Districts Louisiana believes that reforming the rules under which the legislature draws maps would achieve tangible results. Rule reform should codify a bar on favoring political parties, a commitment to pre-existing geographical boundaries, and a requirement of minority support.



**FAIR  
DISTRICTS  
LOUISIANA**

## **ABOUT**

Fair Districts Louisiana is a grass-roots, nonpartisan alliance of citizens advocating for redistricting reform. We are motivated by the belief that free and fair elections are the bedrock of American democracy. In an era of partisanship, we believe that bolstering our democracy should transcend party or ideology.

For more information, go to [fairdistrictsla.org](http://fairdistrictsla.org)



# Timeline for 2021-2022 Cycle

- Pandemic delayed census data: now expected in September 2021
- Louisiana redistricting special session likely in February 2022
- What this means:
  - We have plenty of time to build an unstoppable grassroots movement that legislators are forced to listen to!
  - We have time to organize for local redistricting!



# REDISTRICTING FAIRNESS PLEDGE

**1**

## **Community**

The new districts we adopt should keep communities intact, honor shared interests, and minimize geographic sprawl.

**2**

## **Transparency**

Our process for drawing new electoral boundaries should be open for all citizens to observe, engage in, and provide input.

**3**

## **Equality**

Our districts should reflect the "one person, one vote" principle by giving every person equal representative power.

**4**

## **Integrity**

Our process must remain focused on the best interests of all Louisianans, without prejudice.



READ THE DETAILS + TAKE THE PLEDGE  
[FAIRDISTRICTSLA.ORG](https://FAIRDISTRICTSLA.ORG)



# Action Items

- Write your legislators
  - ENVV will be posting sample letters for you to use and contact information for your legislators
- Write letters to the editor of your local paper
- Watch or attend the redistricting hearings (we'll be publicizing these when they're announced)
- Fairdistrictsla.org
  - Get on our email list
  - Sign the pledge
  - Get your elected officials to sign the pledge