



# Gerrymandering...an incumbent protection program

- What is it
- How does it impact you
- What can you do about it

## The Redistricting Process

- US Census → reveals population shifts → legislators re-draw the voting district lines → results in new voting districts
- **Racial** Gerrymandering **is not** legal (VRA 1965)
- **Partisan** Gerrymandering **is** legal

# Gerrymandering is *Extreme* Redistricting

- a process of redrawing voter district lines by the majority party legislators
- in closed secret meetings without voter's input or knowledge
- to favor their party
- so that their party remains in office for years if not for decades

Phil King to Ross Ramsey  
Executive Editor of Texas Tribune

“... Our party, the Republicans, voted us into office,  
so of course we will draw maps to favor our party

# The Upshot

- Self-serving politicians use partisan Gerrymandering to further manipulate our already broken system
- Big money gets them into office...partisan Gerrymandering insures their job security

*...\$15B + was spent on 2020 federal elections*

## **Impact on How We are Governed**

- Legislators have job security
- Legislators are unresponsive to voters' needs
- People don't register or turn out to vote
- Legislators focus more on staying in power than on serving us
- Legislators argue so loudly with each other that they don't even hear us
- No potential opposing candidate wants to run for office
- It attracts candidates with questionable intent

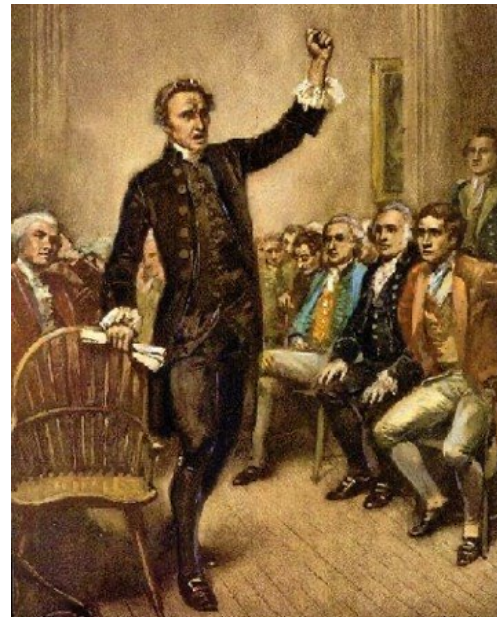
# What's Your Issue???

- Gun control
- Health care/ Drug costs / Women's reproductive rights
- Public education
- Climate change
- Opioids
- Gerrymandering/Voter suppression
- Criminal justice/Social justice
- Impact of state laws on municipalities and small business

***... it's all about big money & partisan Gerrymandering***



# It's Nothing New...How It All Got Started Should We Call It *Henrymandering*??



It's Un-American: Why? It Sets Up an Unfair Fight

*... and election results and laws don't reflect the will of the people*



# Why Every American Should Care

- It's a non-partisan issue that affects every American
- It's one reason our democracy is in jeopardy

## Why is Gerrymandering an Issue Today

### **Technology ---of course!**

- Demographics
- Map-drawing software
  - L2 Voter Mapping
  - NationBuilder
  - Maptitude
  - Red Apple
- Social media

## Gerrymandering: The Devious Strategies

- **Cracking:** scattering like people into different districts
- **Packing:** moving like people into a few number of districts
- **Hijacking:** placing two same party opposition incumbents in the same district-only one can win
- **Kidnapping:** moving the lines so other-party legislators' homes are no longer in the districts that elected them. Their current and former constituents are flung far and wide

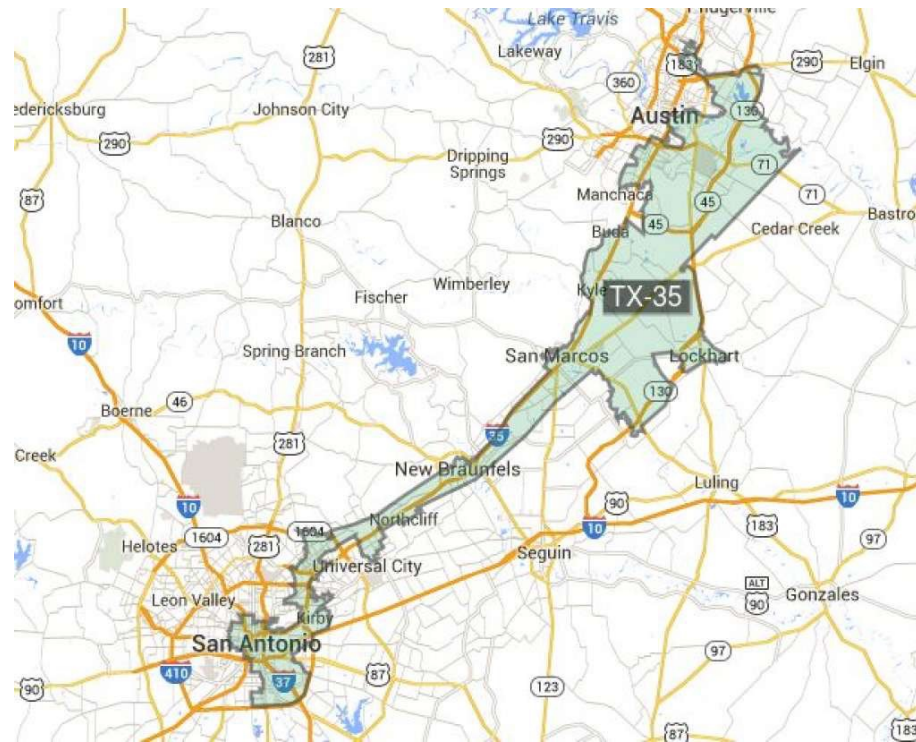
## What Voting Districts Should Look Like

- **Tx House, TX Senate and Congressional** districts must have equal or nearly equal populations
- **TX House** must also follow county boundaries whenever possible
- **TX House and Senate** district lines must be contiguous – a circle is a perfect compact district

... compliance with VRA 1965, but with no pre-clearance

# US House Rep Texas 35

## Austin to San Antonio



# The Result: 2016 US Congressional Election

	Republicans	Democrats
Popular Vote	50.40%	49.50%
Seats Won	241 ( <b>55%</b> )	194 ( <b>44%</b> )



# SCOTUS Decision

## *Rucho vs. Common Cause*

- SCOTUS will not get involved
- Each state must decide

Visit [www.lwvd.org](http://www.lwvd.org)

# Who Draws the Maps in Texas

- TX Maps - Legislators if drawn in regular session • LRB if drawn not in regular session except in the 87<sup>th</sup> Session
- 3/5 of decennial maps drawn by LRB
- Congressional maps – Legislators in regular or special session
- Paid consultants and staffers do the heavy lifting

# How the Sausage is *Really* Made

- **Texas Senate : Anna and Shaun**
- **Texas House: Legislators armed with Red Map**
- **A Friendly get together**
- **Governor signs...or vetoes...or doesn't sign**
- **No census during Regular Session → Special Session**

## Redistricting Filed Bills in 87th Legislative Session as of 3/23/21

- House - 33
- Senate - 9
- Several include establishing a RC (Gonzalez, Menendez, Howard, Zaffirini)

# How to Stay on Top of Bills:

- Sign up for Alerts
- <https://senate.texas.gov/redistrictingcomment/>
- <https://house.texas.gov/about-us/>

# How Many Voting Districts are in Dallas County??

- Texas House: 14
- Texas Senate: 5
- US House: 6
- US Senate: 2
- 4 County Commissioners plus a judge:

## **Plus**

- School Boards
- City Councils
- Water Districts
- Judges

# Dallas County Members of the Texas House and Senate Redistricting Committees

## **Senate:**

Kelly Hancock  
Nathan Johnson  
Angela Paxton  
Royce West

## **House:**

Raphael Anchia  
Toni Rose, Vice-Chair

# Let Your Legislators Know What You Think

<https://my.lwv.org/texas/advocacy-issues/take-action#/bills>

(keep scrolling down)

- . SJR 43
- . SJR 34
- . SJR 28



# Redistricting in Dallas

*... and they call this an Independent Commission*

- Independent Commission
- Role of City Council

## **A Solution:** ICRC - Voter Turn-Out Soars in California with an Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission

- 2012 primary voter turn-out = 25%
- 2016 primary voter turn-out = 37%

### ***Compared to....***

- 2018 primary voter turn-out in **Dallas County** = 10% up from 4%

# The Fight for Independent Redistricting in Texas: A Tall Climb

- 66% in Texas House
- 66% in Texas Senate
- 50%+ of voters in Texas election



# Help Us End Partisan Gerrymandering

- Support candidates who commit to ending Gerrymandering
- Write letters to the editor
- Call, email, meet with your legislators
- Request & support bills that promote ICRC
- Testify before the Texas House
- Listen to public hearings
- Do whatever you can to educate the public

***Support establishment of an ICRC***

# Resources

- LWVD: [www.lwvdallas.org/](http://www.lwvdallas.org/)
- LWVT: [my.lwv.org](http://my.lwv.org)
- Justin Levitt's website: <https://redistricting.lls.edu/>
- Brennan Center for Justice: [www.brennancenter.org](http://www.brennancenter.org)
- Common Cause: [www.commoncause.org](http://www.commoncause.org)
- Gerrymandering in Texas by Steve Bickerstaff
- Democracy in Chains by Nancy MacLean