

Memorandum

To: Interested Parties
From: Kelly Burton, National Democratic Redistricting Committee (NDRC)
Re: Final Congressional Redistricting Landscape
Date: Tuesday, May 31, 2022

Summary

With the redistricting process functionally complete for 2022, it is now possible to fully assess how redistricting adjusted the congressional battlefield for the decade. There are three major takeaways following this redistricting cycle:

- 1) Democrats are in a stronger position than Republicans
- 2) Democrats are in a stronger position than last decade
- 3) Fairer redistricting has led to fairer maps, which is good for democracy

As the following memo demonstrates, Democrats have more seats than Republicans, more seats than in 2020, and have an advantage in the remaining competitive seats on the battlefield. Most importantly, this nation is now on track to have the fairest congressional battlefield in decades, which is a win for our democracy.

Congressional Battlefield Toplines Post-Redistricting

1) Democrats are in a Stronger Position Than Republicans

Unequivocally, there are more Democratic seats than Republican seats, with 226 Biden seats compared to just 209 Trump seats. This is confirmed by our internal analysis, which provides a predictive assessment of the performance of a district in any given year and yields 228 Democratic seats to just 207 Republican seats. It is also confirmed by public analyses, with Politico giving Democrats 188 seats compared to 168 seats for Republicans, and The Washington Post with 201 Biden districts compared to just 172 Trump districts.

	Biden (Biden above 50%)	NDRC Internals (Generic Dem above 50%)	Politico ¹ (Strong Biden vs Strong Trump)	Washington Post ² (Biden vs Trump)
Democratic Seats	226	228	188	201
Republican Seats	209	207	168	172
Net Dem Advantage	+17	+21	+20	+29

¹ New Hampshire is omitted from this total.

² Florida and New Hampshire are omitted from this total.

Democrats maintain this advantage when the competitive seats are included, as well. Using a neutral range of 48% - 52% to define competitiveness, there are 215 seats where Biden received more than 52%, 196 seats under 48%, and 24 seats in the competitive range. Our internal analysis backs that up – with a generic Democrat receiving 52% or higher in 208 seats, compared to just 196 seats where the Democrat would receive 48% or less, and 31 seats in the competitive range. Within both metrics, the competitive districts are nearly perfectly divided between the two parties.

	Biden (Biden above 52%)	NDRC Internals (Generic Dem above 52%)
Democratic Seats	215	208
Republican Seats	196	196

2) Democrats are in a Stronger Position Now Than Last Decade

There are now 228 seats where a generic Democrat will receive more than 50% of the vote, which is 3 more than the 2020 map and 10 more than the House majority.

	Pre-Redistricting (2020)	Post-Redistricting	Net Change
NDRC Internals (Dem above 50%)	225	228	+3
Biden 2020 Performance (Biden above 50%)	225	226	+1

Additionally, there has been a drastic reduction in the popular vote margin likely needed to win the House. A decade ago, Democrats had to win the congressional popular vote by as much as 8% to have a shot at the majority. In 2022, that percentage is projected to be closer to 2% - 2.5%, a marked improvement over the last decade, and much closer to a fair outcome for the voters.

In 2012, Democrats won the congressional popular vote by 1.2% but fell 17 seats short of the majority because of Republican gerrymandering. In 2018, Democrats won the congressional popular vote by 8.8% yet only netted an 18-seat majority in the House. In 2020, a 3.2% win in the congressional popular vote resulted in a five-seat majority. For the next decade, Democrats are poised to be able to compete for the majority with a popular vote margin as low as 2.1%.

The previous decades' nearly insurmountable Republican advantage was only possible because in 2011 the Republicans controlled the redistricting process for 207 congressional seats and used that power to gerrymander their way to an artificial House majority for most of the decade. The 2022 redistricting process is an entirely different story, with Republican control over the process cut by more than 20 percent even before the first map was drawn, commissions and reforms governing a plurality of the congressional districts for the first time ever, and Democrats far better organized on a redistricting strategy.

3) Fairer Redistricting Has Led to Fairer Maps, which is Good for Democracy

Based on an analysis of the final congressional maps using the Efficiency Gap³ to measure fairness, 157 million people – 47% of Americans – live in a state with a fairer map than they had in 2020. This includes states like Michigan, North Carolina, Virginia, and Wisconsin, all of which were extreme gerrymanders last decade but enter this decade with fairer congressional maps. Another 9% of Americans live in a state with little to no change in their congressional map, which means **56% - more than half - of Americans saw either a neutral or net improvement on the fairness of their congressional map. Further, three-quarters of the country's states will now have fair maps this decade.** This is not only a win for Democrats, more importantly it is a win for democracy.

Summary

It is clear Democrats end the 2022 redistricting cycle both in a stronger position than Republicans and in a stronger position than last decade, with more Democratic seats than Republican seats and more Democratic seats overall than last decade. But most importantly, this redistricting cycle ends with more fair maps in more states than last decade, and that is a win for our democracy.

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³ A commonly employed fairness metric used to calculate the number of wasted votes created by a map in an election.