

Introductions.

We are representatives from the Indivisible Group: Necessary Trouble:

- Pat Byrd
- Mary Lou McCloskey
- Karen McKown

This image shows the 4 most gerrymandered districts in the US.

## Resource



### Redistrict-GA

- This presentation and notes
- Reading List
- Group communication

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Before we start, we want you to know that our slides and notes will be available on the Facebook Page Redistrict-GA

## Goals for Indivisible Georgia

- Understand redistricting & gerrymandering
- Blaze a trail forward to make elections fair

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Our goals for today:

Help you with understanding redistricting as..

Process of creating and recreating voting districts (state and federal) based on census data.

Because redistricting involves political power, it has evolved from early US history into Gerrymandering: politicians choosing voters rather than voters choosing politicians.

Enlisting your involvement in developing and working our Path forward:

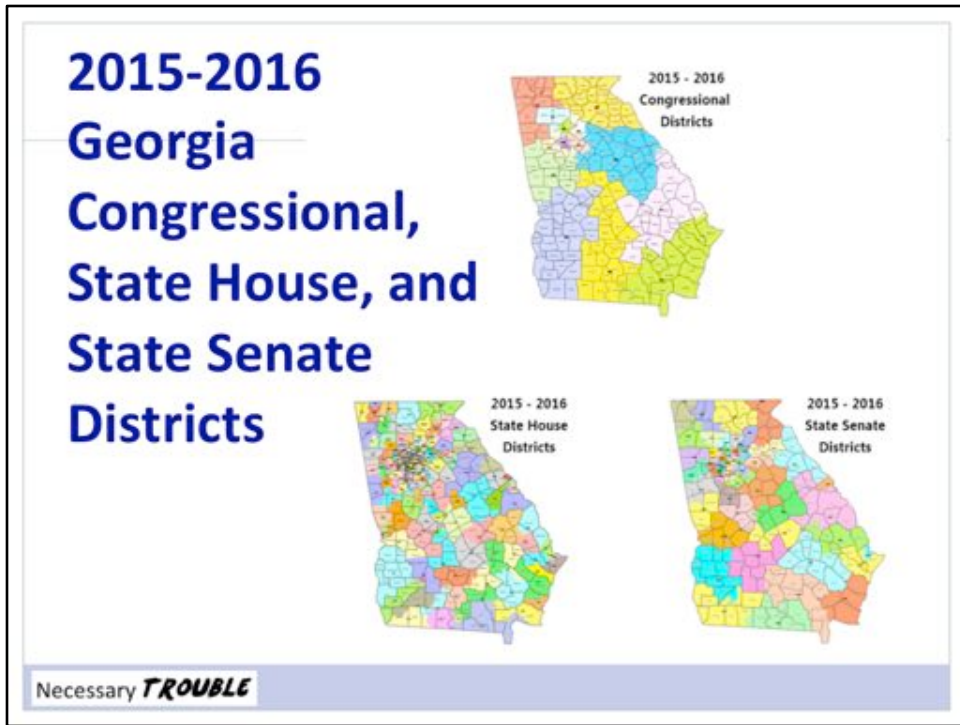
We hope to work with Reps from indivisible groups throughout the state via our Redistrict-GA Facebook page and in person to study, plan and act to promote fair and representative districts and elections.

We are working with State Sen. Elena Parent and others to reform redistricting process.

## What is Redistricting?

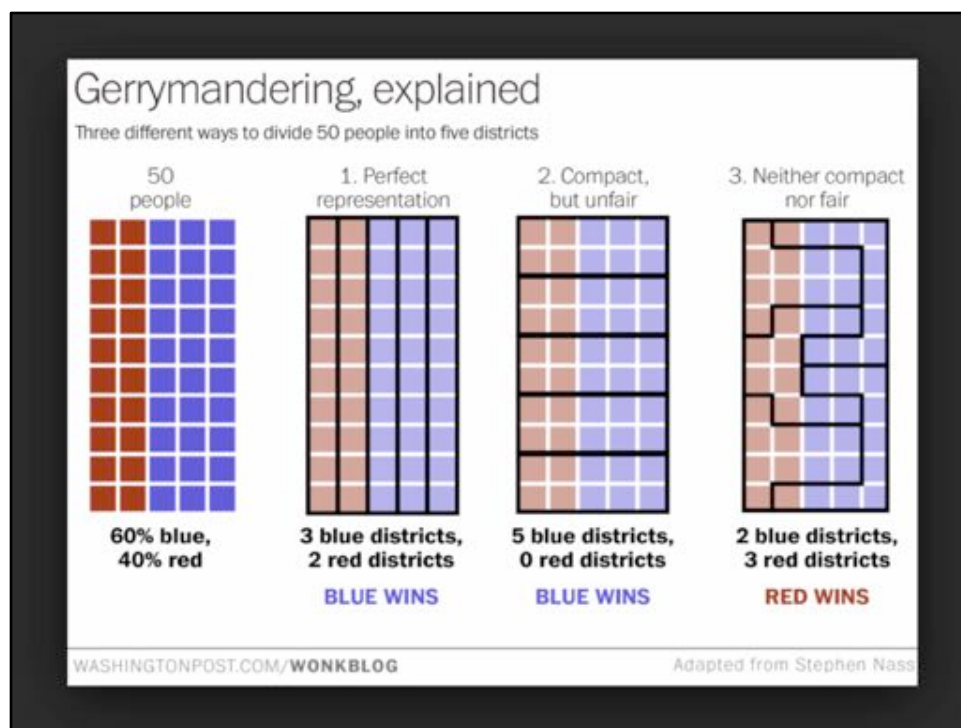
- Designating geographical voting districts
- Legally required after U.S. Census every 10 years to balance districts by population
- In most US states, controlled by the party in charge

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Here are 3 maps of Georgia's US Congressional, State House, and State Senate Districts.





Here's what gerrymandering looks like:

1. Here is a hypothetical group of 50 voters. Conveniently, they all live in lines by political affiliation.
2. This image shows perfect representation: 5 districts, with 3 blues and 2 reds. But this is not compact – residents of district do not live close to each other.
3. Here's a way to design districts that are compact, but not fair: Blue wins all the districts. The minorities have been “cracked” so as not to have any representatives.
4. Finally, here's a district in which Reds have won 3 representatives although they have fewer voters by “packing” blue voters into two districts and distributing the rest as

## Why does gerrymandering matter?

- *Karl Rove*: “When you draw the lines, you make the rules”
- *Inside Georgia*: control of the Georgia General Assembly ***where the lines are drawn***
- *Outside Georgia*: control of the US House of Representatives ***where the rules are made***

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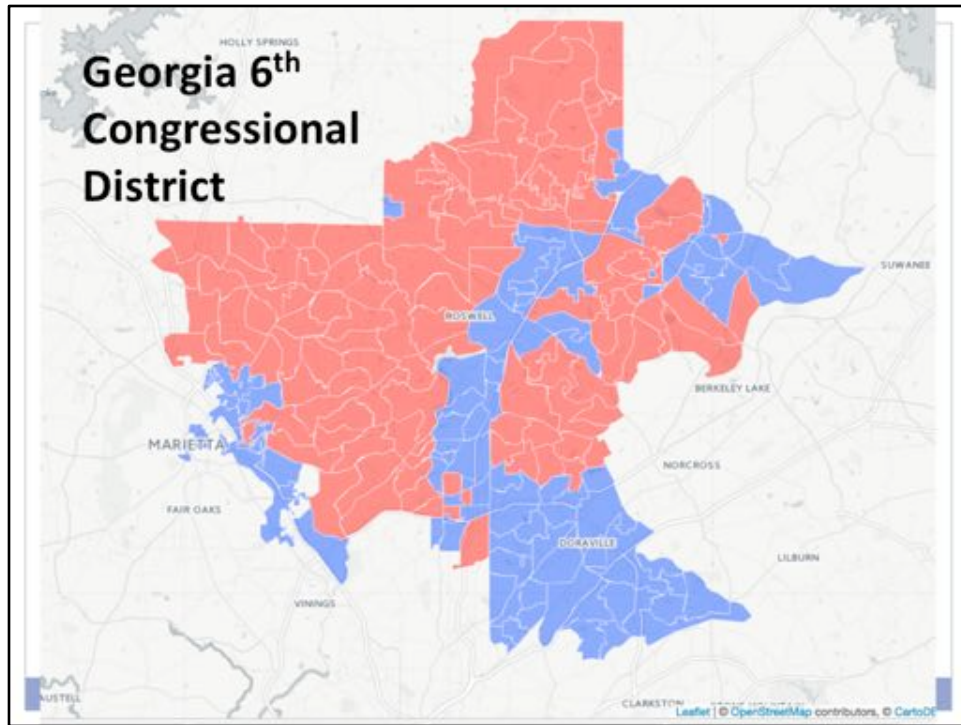
SR 6 and 7 proposed by Senator Elena Parent would change the GA constitution to provide for independent commissions to be in charge of redistricting. Since this was a 2-year legislative session and this was not acted on, it has been **Tabled until next year.**

To create more fair elections, Parent’s redistricting resolution must pass by 2019 for 2020 census / 2021 maps

HB515: Proposed Gerrymandered redistricting in Georgia to shore up republican strength in risky districts. **Due to strong public advocacy (including by many Indivisible Groups) showing up for hearings and contacting representatives, this bill was dropped.**

**Note:** Surprise of legislators that citizens were very concerned in the issue and paying attention.





Can you see evidence of Gerrymandering in Georgia's 6<sup>th</sup> Congressional district?

North DeKalb was Gerrymandered out of Hank Johnson's district into this one after the Census of 2010, as part of a successful cracking effort to reduce the number of democratic districts in GA.

GEORGIA STATE SENATOR  
FRAN MILLAR, AT A GOP  
BREAKFAST, APRIL, 2017

**“I’ll be very blunt: These lines  
were not drawn to get Hank  
Johnson’s protégé to be my  
representative. And you  
didn’t hear that...”**

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Note: Fran Millar is up for election in 2018, and Sally Harrell has filed to oppose him.

## 2017 Attempt at Gerrymandering

- US Supreme Court struck down prior approval requirement of the Voting Rights Act
- Georgia General Assembly can now do small redistricting every year AND THEY DO
- 2017: HB 515 was written and rushed through toward the end of the session

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1. Georgia Constitution requires the districts to be contiguous
2. Generally, another requirement is that the districts be as compact as possible
3. Districts are also of even population size, currently about 710,000.

## Indivisible to the Rescue!



- Working with representatives of several other organizations (Common Cause, NAACP, and others), citizens from Indivisible groups participated in a direct action to
  - **Communicate** with members of the Senate Reapportionment Committee & with the chair of the House redistricting committee
  - **Attend** the senate hearing on HB515 (over 200 citizens packed the hearing room)

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## Solution #1

- Better System for Drawing the lines
  - *Georgia Senate Resolutions 6 and 7 for an independent redistricting commission* proposed by Senator Elena Parent.
  - Laws that prevent both racial & partisan gerrymandering

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## Solution #2

- More citizen involvement to prevent political misuse of the system
  - *Citizen protests* against House Bill 515: which proposed annual (Gerrymandered) redistricting in Georgia

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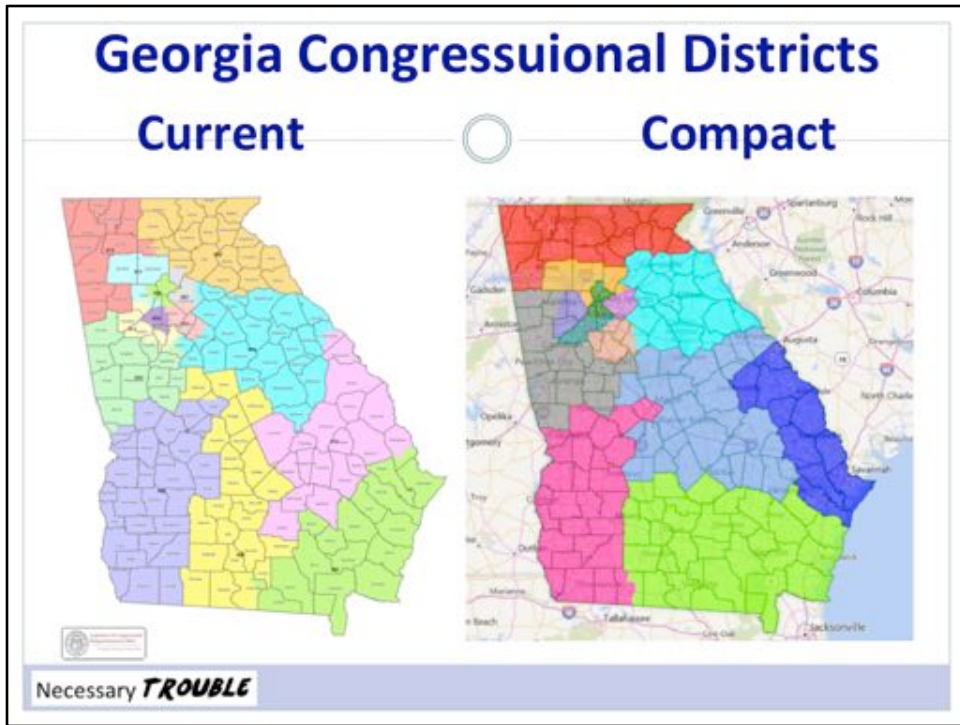
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## Ideal Congressional Districts

- Contiguous (required by Georgia Constitution)
- Compact
- Competitive

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1. Georgia Constitution requires the districts to be contiguous
2. Generally, another requirement is that the districts be as compact as possible?
3. Efficiency Gap.



A comparison of the actual Georgia US House Districts and a hypothetical map that has used a mathematical standard to create more compact districts.



*This term:*  
**Supreme Court to Rule on  
Partisan Gerrymandering**

- Wisconsin case to test partisan gerrymandering
- Introduction of Efficiency Gap Standard



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- Voting Rights Act of 1965 worked to prevent racial gerrymandering.
- Georgia is no longer under “pre-clearance supervision” as of 2013.
- Georgia is one of the few states with laws that enable them to redistrict annually.
- Although the supreme Court has said that racial gerrymandering is unconstitutional, there is no clear ruling re partisan gerrymandering.
- Supreme Court will consider partisan gerrymandering case from Wisconsin this term.
- In the past, the Supreme court has refused to rule about partisan gerrymandering because they did not have an acceptable standard, but political scientists, computer scientists, lawyers, and mathematicians have been working on the issue and it may be different this time.
- The Efficiency Gap Standard, developed by Stephanopoulos and McGhee, has been proposed for Wisconsin that measures wasted votes (votes cast for losing candidates). 7% looks like it might be an acceptable standard. In the 6<sup>th</sup>, it is 11%.
- Developed by Nicholas Stephanopoulos, Professor at the University of Chicago Law School, and Eric McGhee, Research Fellow at the Public Policy Institute of California, the efficiency gap counts the number of votes each party wastes in an election to determine whether either party enjoyed a systematic advantage in turning votes into seats.<sup>2</sup> Any vote cast for a losing candidate is considered

## Gloria Steinem



THE ELECTORAL SYSTEM IS  
NOT WHERE CHANGE STARTS  
- IT USUALLY STARTS IN  
COMMUNITIES AND FROM  
THE BOTTOM UP - BUT IT IS  
WHERE CHANGE CAN BE  
STOPPED.

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Read more at: [https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/g/gloriastei690623.html?src=t\\_electoral](https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/g/gloriastei690623.html?src=t_electoral)

## Abraham Lincoln



“ELECTIONS BELONG TO THE PEOPLE. IT'S THEIR DECISION. IF THEY DECIDE TO TURN THEIR BACK ON THE FIRE AND BURN THEIR BEHINDS, THEN THEY WILL JUST HAVE TO SIT ON THEIR BLISTERS.”

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## Our Ask:

**REPRESENTATIVES  
FROM YOUR GROUPS  
TO WORK WITH US  
AND  
COMMUNICATE WITH YOU**

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## ***Upcoming actions:***

- **Coming up this summer:** Responding to a call for communication with the Senate Reapportionment and Redistricting Committee re SR6 and 7
- **Coming up next legislative session:** Encouraging passage of SRs 6 and 7 (which change constitution to provide independent commission for redistricting). We need to remind the reapportionment committee to have a real hearing this time!

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For example, these are actions coming up in Georgia that we plan to be organizing around.

## Questions and Discussion

### Resource:



**Indivisible\_GA**

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