



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF BERKS COUNTY

Resources

United States Census Bureau
www.census.gov

- Information about the Census, how to participate, economic indicators, and latest news.

American Fact Finder
factfinder.census.gov

- A tool to search census data on national, state, and local levels for the US, Puerto Rico, and the Islands.

League of Women Voters of PA
<https://www.palwv.org>

- Nonpartisan civic organization dedicated to defending voting rights, advocacy, and public education.
- Information on apportionment and redistricting at <https://www.palwv.org/apportionment-redistricting/>

**The League of Women Voters
of Berks County**
www.lwvberks.org
info@lwvberks.org

THE REDISTRICTING PROCESS

After the 2010 Census, Congressional district lines in Pennsylvania were redrawn with partisan aims in mind, rather than the needs of the communities contained within. The result was gerrymandered districts that did not represent the political geography of Pennsylvania and did not accurately reflect the will of the voters. Berks County was split into 4 districts with none of the representatives being based within the county.

Groups like the League of Women Voters of PA, Fair Districts PA, Common Cause PA, and others fought for fairer districts that more appropriately represented the voter of Pennsylvania. Several legislative proposals were advanced in the state house and senate, but none passed legislative gridlock.

The League of Women Voters believes that redistricting should:

- Protect the voting rights of minorities.
- Promote competitiveness and partisan fairness.
- Respect political subdivisions and communities of interest.
- Encourage geographical compactness and respect for natural geographic features and barriers.

Brochure produced by League of Women Voters of Berks County
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Redistricting and the Census

LWV

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2020 CENSUS

In accordance with Article I, Section 2 of the US Constitution, the US conducts a count of every resident of the United States every 10 years. Data collected in the Census determine if states gain or lose seats in the House of Representatives, a process called apportionment. If states gain or lose seats, that triggers redistricting of congressional districts. Census data is also used for other purposes, including distribution of federal funds to local communities.

How does the Census affect local communities?

Businesses use census data to make determinations about where to do business or open new locations and facilities. Developers use this information to determine where housing should be constructed, where factories could be built, and where infrastructure improvements need to happen. Local governments use census data to develop emergency preparedness plans. It is critical to accurately count each resident, to ensure that they are counted only once, and counted in the place where they reside. Inaccurate counts can harm communities by limiting funding opportunities, limiting economic activity, and reducing representation in Congress.

Take Action

- Educate yourself and others about the redistricting process in Pennsylvania.
- For more information visit www.fairdistrictspa.com
- Learn about the Census process and teach others about the importance of accurate census counts.
- For more information visit www.census.gov
- Contact your state legislators to tell them that you want redistricting reform.
- To find your legislators, visit www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/legis/home/findyourlegislator/index.cfm
- Write letters to the editor stating your position on redistricting reform and encouraging others to contact their state legislators.
- For letter writing tips, visit www.lwvberks.org/ite



Working to Ensure **FAIR DISTRICTS & FAIR ELECTIONS**

Two Bills, One Commission

Redistricting in Pennsylvania by district type:

- **Congressional districts** are determined by a bill passed through the normal legislative process (neither PA nor U.S. constitutions have any significant language about this), so the congressional redistricting process may be changed through the normal legislative process as well.
- **Legislative districts** are determined according to a process defined in the PA Constitution (i.e., a five-person politically appointed commission), so any change to this process requires an amendment to the PA Constitution.

2017-18 REDISTRICTING PROPOSAL

DISTRICT TYPE	BILL	INTENT	OUTCOME
Congressional (federal)	SB 22 and HB 722	Create an independent redistricting commission to draw BOTH TYPES of districts	• SB 22 Amended & passed in PA Senate
Legislative (state)	(virtually identical)		• HB 722/ SB 22 Never brought to the floor in PA House

2019-20 REDISTRICTING PROPOSAL

Two Bills, One Commission

DISTRICT TYPE	BILL	INTENT	TIMELINE
Congressional (federal)	HB 23 (Rep. Samuelson)	Address election code to: • Create an independent redistricting commission (normal legislative process) • Include language protecting redistricting for both congressional and legislative districts	• Pass in 2019-20 session
Legislative (state)	HB 22 (Rep. Murt)	Amend the PA Constitution to extend the independent redistricting commission established in HB 23 to BOTH TYPES of districts	• Pass in both the 2019-20 and 2021-22 sessions • Voter referendum in May Primary Election of 2021 • Commission will already be in place with prior passage of HB 23

Let's End Gerrymandering in Pennsylvania

Voters should choose their politicians, not the other way around

Gerrymandering generally happens in one of four ways:

1. Cracking

Dividing a community to reduce its influence.



2. Packing

Lumping a community together to concentrate and isolate its influence.



3. Hijacking

Drawing a new district that pits two incumbents against each other.



4. Kidnapping

Drawing new district lines that exclude where the incumbent lives.



Cartoon by Andy Warner, produced by KQED

Who Does It & Why

- Party in power controls redistricting every 10 years
- Both major parties manipulate voting districts to give themselves unfair advantages

Its Negative Impacts

- Shifts focus to winning and control rather than effective governance
- Increases gridlock and conflict instead of problem-solving
- Enables extreme viewpoints
- Deepens voter frustration because politicians become less accountable
- Leads to fewer choices at the ballot

What it Looks Like in Pennsylvania

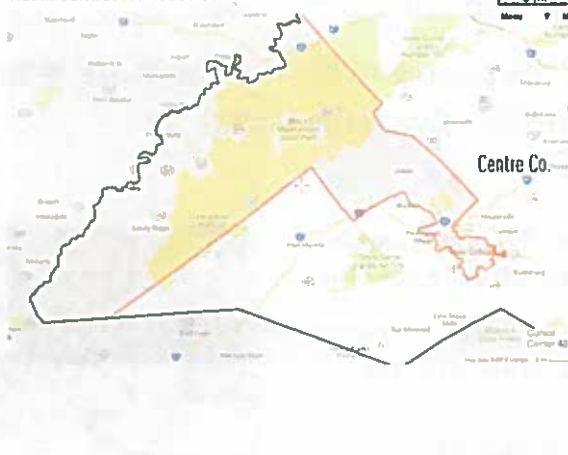
Ours is one of the most gerrymandered states in the entire country. Lawsuits may have provided a temporary fix for our congressional districts, but they do nothing for our state districts. Just look at these examples:



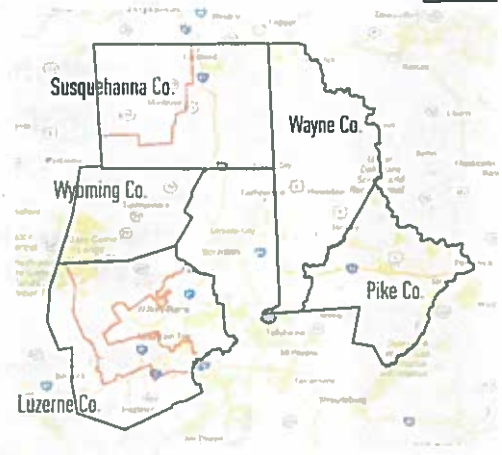
Northwest PA House District 17



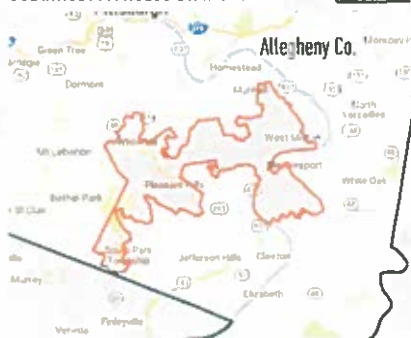
North Central PA House District 77



Northeast PA Senate District 20



Southwest PA House District 58



South Central PA Senate District 48



Southeast PA House District 172



What We Can Do About It

Join thousands of Pennsylvanians from across the political spectrum in supporting a permanent nonpartisan solution to gerrymandering. We want an independent citizens redistricting commission, with strict rules for fairness and transparency. Other states have done it. It works. www.FairDistrictsPA.com



Draw the Lines PA

Join the effort to put voters back at the center of democracy.

Attend our events and Learn how to **Slay the Gerrymander**. (Food and fun activities).

Draw your own election maps, using our free mapping tool. (Your map could win a prize.)

Voice how you want to be counted and represented in Harrisburg and Washington, D.C.

Prove that the people of Pennsylvania are ready, willing and able to **Draw the Lines**.

Draw the Lines PA is for people of all ages from all over our state:

- 2 mapping competitions a year in 3 divisions: school, college and adult.
- Enter as an individual or team.
- Win up to \$5,000 with your map.

Teachers and students:

Draw the Lines PA is especially for you. Check out our school curriculum.

