

Independent Redistricting in Georgia

What A4E Believes:

- Gerrymandering is anti-Democratic, allowing legislators to choose their voters instead of voters choosing their representatives. Gerrymandering frequently targets black voters and other voters of color for disenfranchisement.
- A4E SUPPORTS **HR 2, HR 3, SR 6, and SR 7: Resolutions for an Independent Redistricting Commission.**

What is Gerrymandering?

- Gerrymandering is an age-old political practice of drawing voting districts to advantage the party in power. Gerrymandering flips democracy on its head. Instead of voters choosing their representatives, legislators choose their voters.
- Two principal tactics are used in gerrymandering. "Cracking" dilutes the voting power of the opposing party over multiple districts. "Packing" concentrates the opposing party's voting power in one district, so reducing their voting power in other districts.

Racial Gerrymandering in Georgia:

- Black communities are particularly targeted for disenfranchisement through gerrymandering.
- A 2015 Georgia redistricting bill (HB 566) shuffled black voters out of competitive districts, diluting their voting power.
- The NAACP the National Redistricting Foundation have filed lawsuits in response to HB 566.

The Solution:

- We should give redistricting powers to an Independent Redistricting Commission.
- California and Arizona have passed ballot measures that took redistricting power away from legislators and gave it to non-partisan, citizen-led commissions.
- Georgia should create an independent nonpartisan commission that draws districts based on the following criteria:
 - Districts must comply with the U.S. Constitution and the Voting Rights Act.
 - Districts must be contiguous so that all parts of the district are connected to each other.
 - Districts must respect the boundaries of cities, counties, and neighborhoods.
 - Districts must promote political competition that does not favor or discriminate against any candidate (incumbent or challenger) or political party.

Legislation to Support:

- HR 3: A resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution so as to provide that legislative and congressional reapportionment be done by an independent bipartisan commission instead of the General Assembly. **This bill is sponsored by Rep Spencer Frye.**

Talking Points in Favor:

- The people of Georgia would be well served by an Independent Redistricting Commission directly involving the people in the process.
- Our districts must be drawn so that they serve the needs of Georgians, not drawn to further partisan advantage.

-Athens for Everyone, 2/3/2018