

Achieving Fair Maps in Georgia

Joint Senate and House Redistricting Committees

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About Fair Districts GA

Fair Districts GA is a **nonpartisan** grass roots citizens' group that works to end electoral map rigging in Georgia.

Our focus is to fight gerrymandering, the practice of drawing legislative district lines to favor one **group** over another.

Our ultimate goal is to reform Georgia's **process** for drawing state and federal electoral maps.

Georgia is now a swing state. Our legislative and congressional districts should reflect this new reality.

Fair elections require fair voting rights **and** fair districts.



About Princeton Gerrymandering Project

- The Princeton Gerrymandering Project (PGP) does nonpartisan analysis to understand and eliminate partisan gerrymandering at a state-by-state level
- Use state-of-art ensemble methods to create a normative collection of maps to understand what a map would look like without bias
- Serve as experts in federal and state courts

“We bridge the gap between mathematics and the law to achieve fair representation through redistricting reform.”

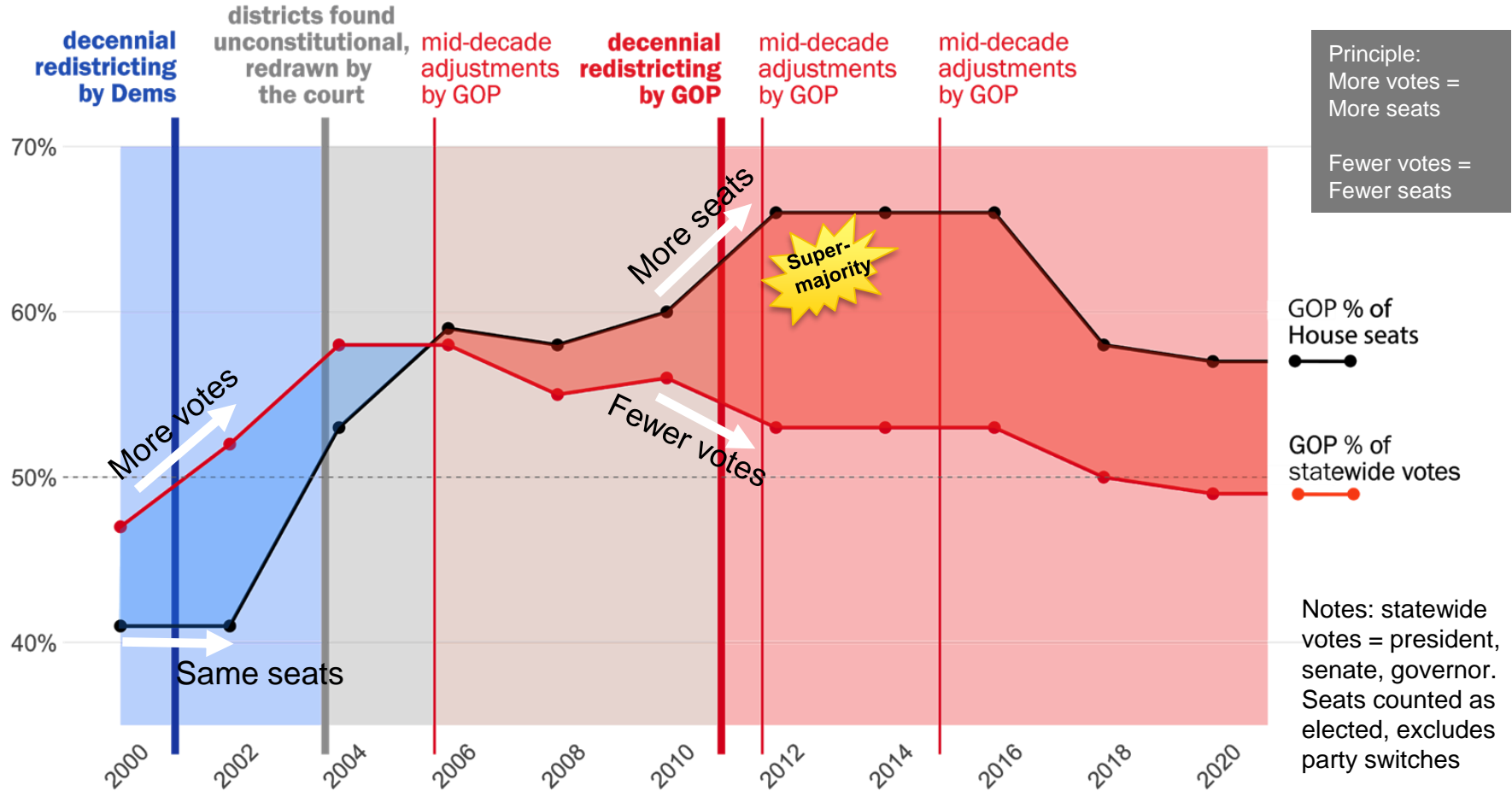


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What do we mean by fair maps?

- Respect voters' political preferences
 - Reflect the natural political preferences of voters distributed across the state
 - Sufficiently competitive
- Reflecting Georgia's diversity
 - Sufficient majority-minority districts per VRA
 - Preserve minority opportunity / influence districts
- Honor communities of interest

State House: Partisan Advantage



Source: FDGA analysis of GA Secy. of State election data

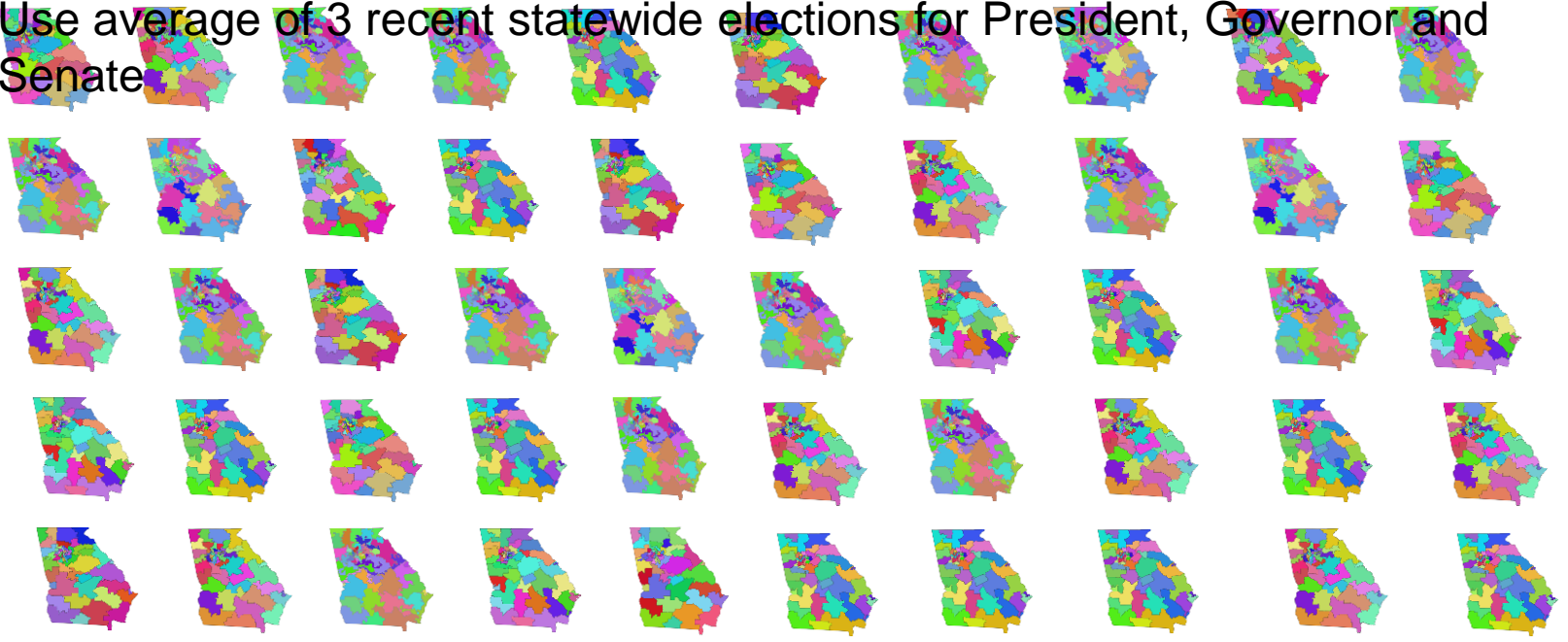
Creating Fairness Benchmarks Using Computer Simulated Maps

Princeton Gerrymandering Project simulation

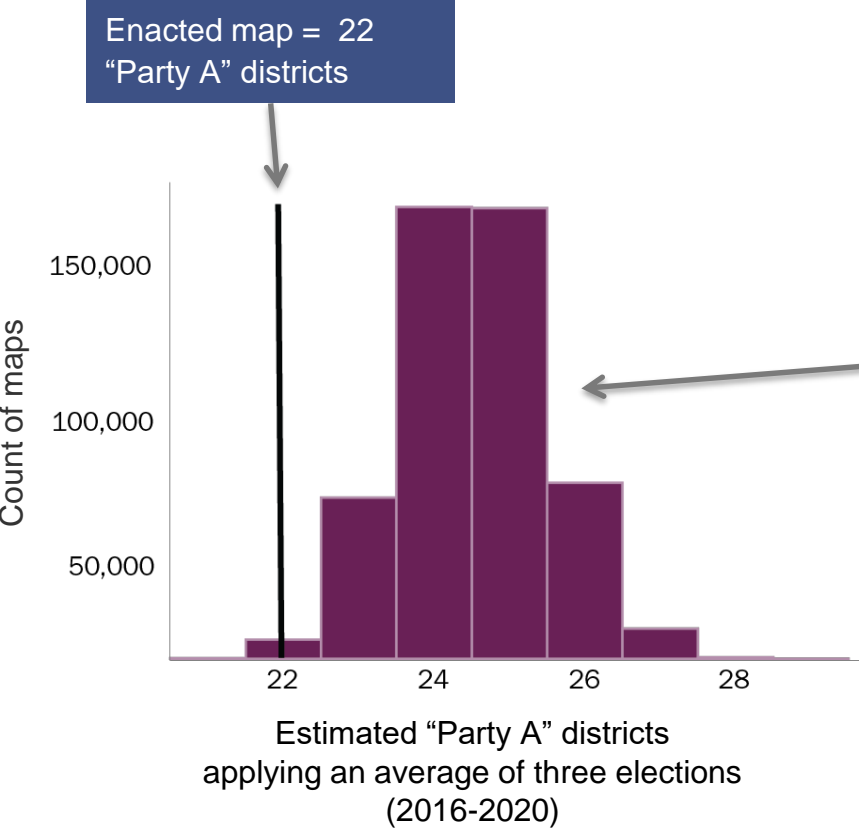
- Create ~500,000 maps for Congress, Senate and House based on 2020 census
- Comply with laws and traditional redistricting criteria
- Maintain current number of VRA-compliant districts
- Use average of 3 recent statewide elections for President, Governor and Senate



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Benchmark example: Partisan balance in a 52-district map



In 500,000 simulated maps:

- Natural partisan preference slightly favors Party B
 - Party A = 22-27 districts
 - Party B = 25-30 districts
- 98% of maps have 1-5 more "Party A" districts than enacted map (22)



Benchmarks and map evaluation

2010-2020 historical view of current maps

| | Benchmarks / Fairness tests (compared to unbiased maps) | | | Observations |
|---------------------|---|---|--|--|
| | Partisan balance | Competitive districts | Minority representation | |
| State House | <p>X</p> <p>1-7 fewer Dem districts than 83% of unbiased maps</p> | <p>✓</p> <p>23 competitive districts, more than 81% of unbiased maps</p> | <p>✓</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 47 Black majority districts (as expected) • 8 opportunity districts (more than expected) | <p>Decennial gerrymandering</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dems – 2001 • Reps – 2011 <p>Extensive mid-cycle redistricting</p> <p>2/3 of small cities split</p> <p>Black voter packing and cracking</p> |
| State Senate | <p>X</p> <p>1-6 fewer Dem districts than 98% of unbiased maps</p> | <p>X</p> <p>1-9 fewer competitive districts than 91% of unbiased maps</p> | <p>X</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 Black majority districts (as expected) • Missing 1-3 opportunity districts compared to 98% of unbiased maps | <p>Decennial gerrymandering</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dems – 2001 • Reps – 2011 <p>Extensive mid-cycle redistricting</p> <p>Black voter packing and cracking eliminates opportunity districts</p> |
| Congress | <p>✓</p> <p>Balanced as of 2016-2020</p> | <p>✓</p> <p>2 competitive districts, 78% have 1-2</p> | <p>✓</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 Black majority districts (as expected) • Slight chance to create 1 opportunity district | <p>Mid-cycle redistricting</p> <p>Demographic shift has increased competitiveness of 2011 map</p> |



FDGA / PGP benchmarks and map evaluation

| Benchmarks / Fairness tests (range of values based on final 2020 census data) | | | |
|--|--|---------------------------|--|
| | Partisan balance | Competitive districts | Minority representation |
| State House | Republicans: W-X districts Democrats: Y-Z districts | X-Y competitive districts | W-X Majority-minority districts Y-Z opportunity districts |
| State Senate | Republicans: W-X districts Democrats: Y-Z districts | X-Y competitive districts | W-X Majority-minority districts Y-Z opportunity districts |
| Congress | Republicans: W-X districts Democrats: Y-Z districts | X-Y competitive districts | W-X Majority-minority districts Y-Z opportunity districts |

- Benchmarks will use 2020 census data + 2018-2020/21 election data
- Evaluation of maps released by legislature



Why Should We Adopt Independent Benchmarks?

- Fairer districts – and provides the justification
- Transparency – check by independent experts
- Restores public trust and confidence in the process
- Demonstrates compliance with Voting Rights Act
- May help avoid costly litigation

Fair Districts GA and Princeton as Resources

- Available to consult and review draft maps using benchmarks
- Fair Districts legislator resource page: bit.ly/FDGAlegislatorresources

