

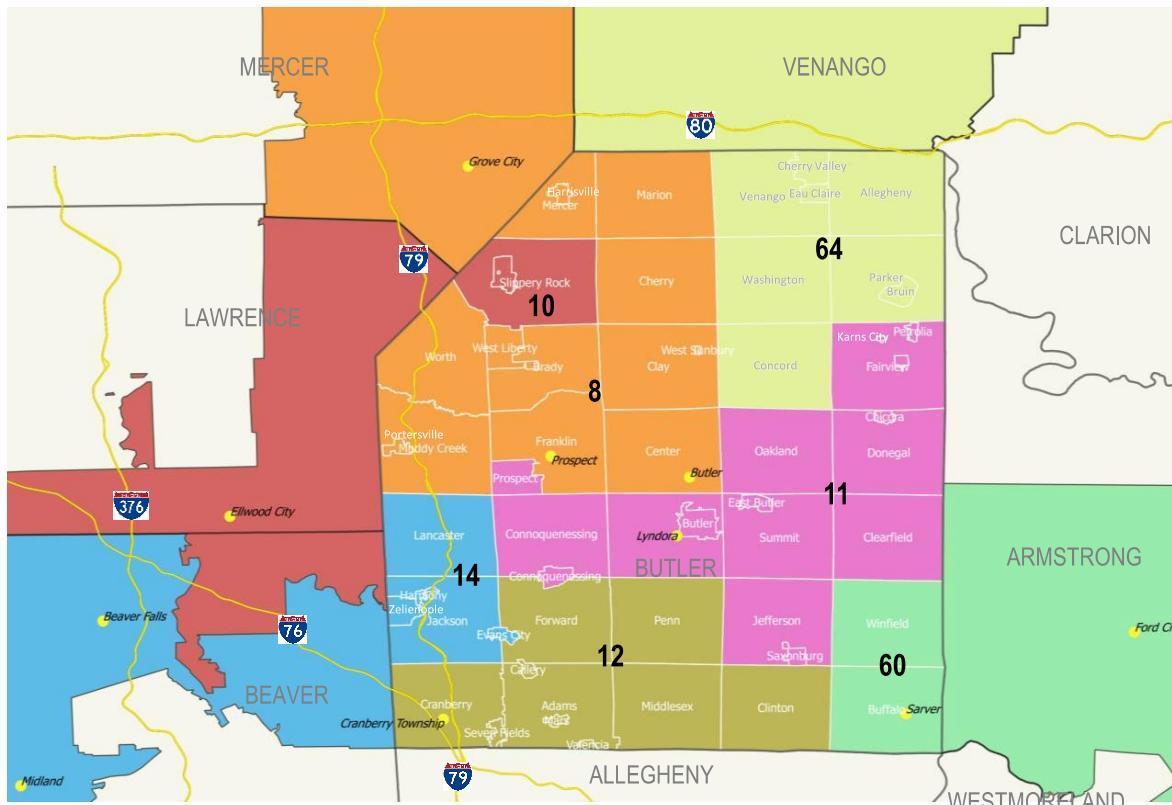


# PA Legislative Redistricting: The Problem is in the Process

Arguments in support of the five-member Legislative Reapportionment Commission ignore voters' concerns and misrepresent the status quo:

**Legislators were elected and therefore accountable to voters for the redistricting process.**

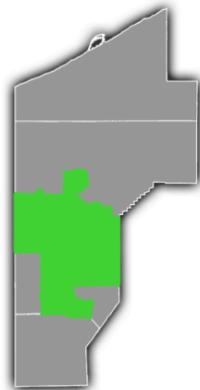
- **In fact, only 4 of our 253 legislators have a role in the process.** Five Harrisburg insiders, with the help of their partisan staff, draw district lines without transparency, accountability or any check on their power over colleagues, voters and elections.
  - Gerrymandered districts make it much more difficult for voters to choose their own representatives. In large part due to gerrymandered districts, the current incumbent reelection rate in PA is one of the highest in the country, above 95%.
  - The LRC uses whatever data it likes, ignores constitutional requirements of compactness and contiguity, and offers no explanation for distorted districts and divided communities.
  - The General Assembly does NOT get an approval vote on districts plans. The governor does NOT have veto power. The only recourse to distorted maps is litigation decided by the same court that chose the deciding vote on the commission. The only remedy provided by law is to have the same commission draw a remedial map, with the same unaccountable, secretive process.



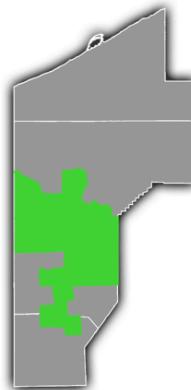
**Districts are drawn as they are because of numeric requirements.**

- The number of divisions in districts has grown exponentially in recent decades due to new mapping and data mining technologies.
  - In her 2011 lawsuit, Allentown piano teacher Amanda Holt documented the number of split municipalities and demonstrated maps could be drawn with far fewer splits.

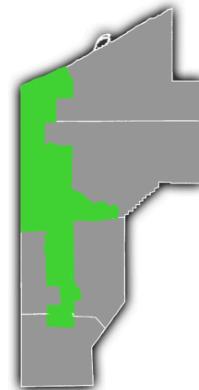
- A simple look at districts across time demonstrates the increase in extreme gerrymandering.



**PA House 17 / 1991**  
Crawford, Mercer



**PA House 17 / 2001**  
Crawford, Lawrence, Mercer



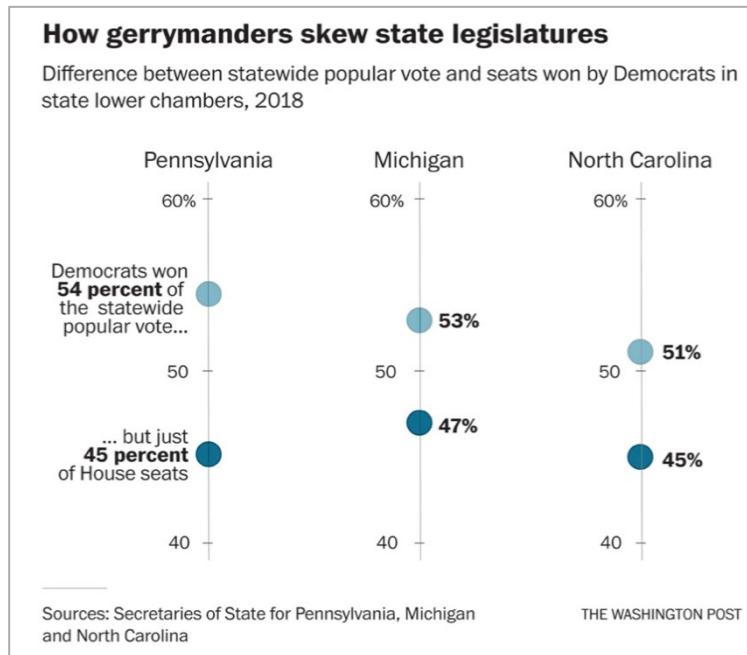
**PA House 17 / 2012**  
Crawford, Erie, Lawrence, Mercer

### There's no way to measure fairness.

- There is no perfect way to measure fairness, but it's easy to demonstrate that our state House and Senate maps trample the constitutional requirements of compactness, contiguity and "lack of division."
- Recent tests to measure fairness show that PA joins just a handful of other states in failing simple tests of compactness and responsiveness. (Princeton Gerrymandering Project: State Tests)

### Voters already have recourse through the courts if they don't like district maps.

- Lawsuits are divisive, disruptive, confusing and very expensive.
- After Amanda Holt's successful 2011 lawsuit, the same LRC redrew the maps with only slight improvements. The court dismissed a second suit. **The "remedial" maps in use since 2012 are still among the most distorted in the country.** In the 2018 election, PA's vote-to-seat skew (just one measure of fairness) was the most extreme in the nation.

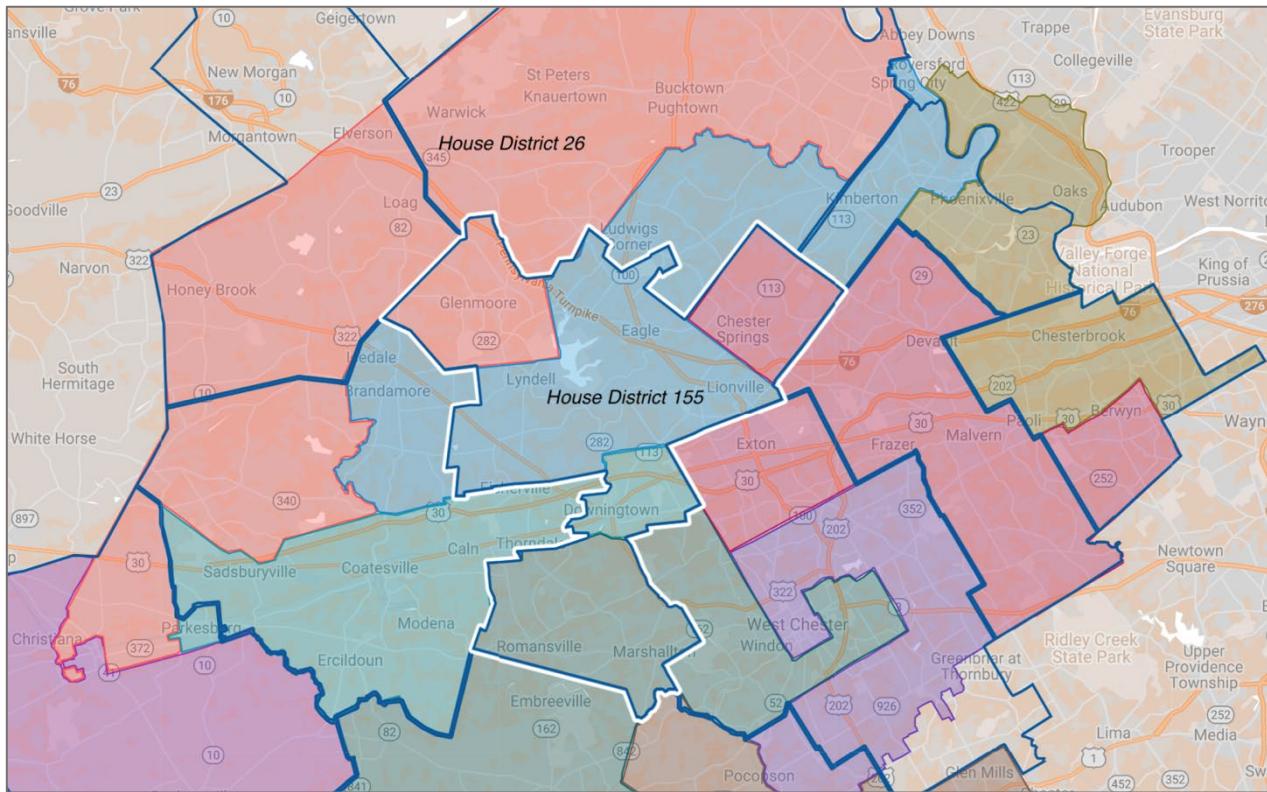


### By law, legislators are required to draw district maps.

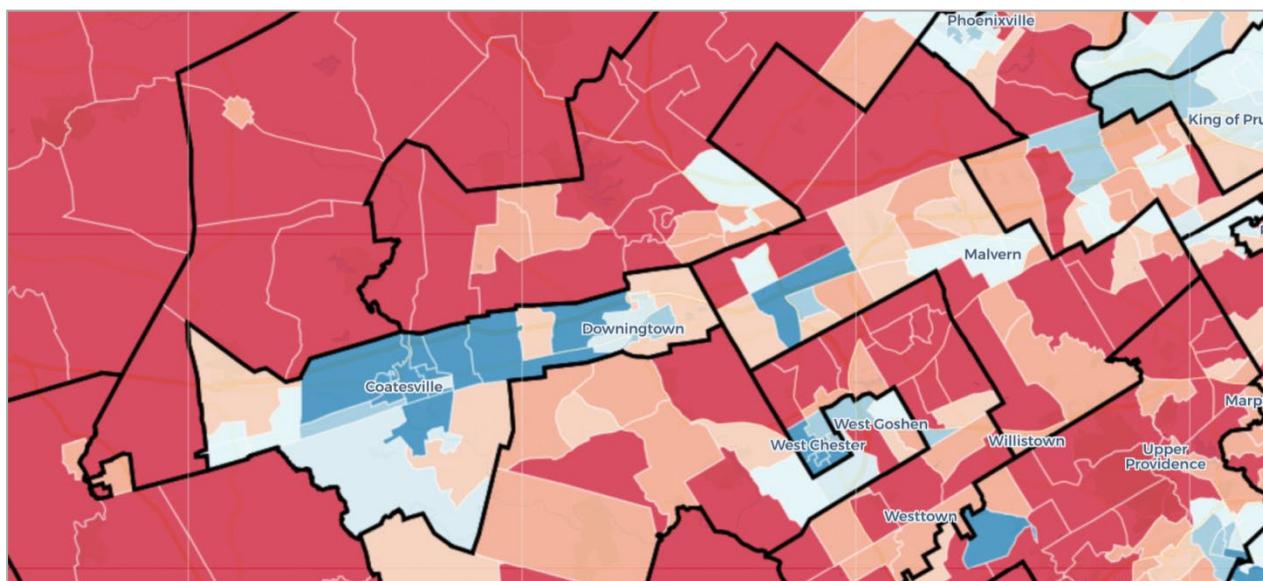
- If that's the case, the LRC should be eliminated and maps enacted as a bill, as is done in the congressional process. PA is one of just seven states that permit a commission of party insiders to draw district maps.
- In 2015, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that a state may enact a citizens commission (through legislative process OR citizens initiative) and that this does not offend the U.S. Constitution.

## The LRC knows the state better than ordinary citizens and can better protect communities of interest.

- The LRC does invite input from colleagues and citizens but ignores that input at will.
- Any citizen examining our district maps can see the lack of regard for counties, communities and citizens in our gerrymandered districts. Two PA school districts are unnecessarily divided among FIVE House districts (Downingtown, below, is one.); 21 are divided among four House districts; 51 among three.



- Under cover of “communities of interest,” the LRC uses partisan data to draw districts that control outcomes and undermine voter choice.



Turzai production data used in 2011/2012 redistricting and released in 2018 Agre v Wolf lawsuit.

**Voters no longer trust the process, the legislators who condone it or the outcomes of elections predetermined by distorted maps.**

**An overwhelming number of PA voters do not believe legislators should have a hand in drawing their own district lines.**

A call for change cuts across geographic regions and party lines including majorities of Democrats (66%), Independents (78%), and Republicans (63%).

#### **REDISTRICTING PREFERENCES, PA-REGISTERED VOTERS**

Do you think state legislative districts should be created by an independent commission or do you think these districts should continue to be drawn by state legislators?

PARTY	Independent Commission	State Legislative Leaders	Both	Neither	Do Not Know
Republican	<b>63%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>8%</b>
Democrat	<b>66%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>6%</b>
Independent or something else	<b>78%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>6%</b>
REGION					
Philadelphia	<b>69%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>4%</b>
Northeast	<b>65%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>11%</b>
Allegheny	<b>70%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>3%</b>
Southwest	<b>57%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>5%</b>
Northwest	<b>59%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>13%</b>
Central	<b>71%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>4%</b>
Southeast	<b>68%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>8%</b>

Survey of PA Voter Sentiment on Legislative Redistricting, Center for Opinion Research, Franklin & Marshall, 2019

**Voter believe the current process puts too much power in the hands of party leaders and diminishes the power of the vote.**

The current system of drawing legislative districts in Pennsylvania...



Survey of PA Voter Sentiment on Legislative Redistricting, Center for Opinion Research, Franklin & Marshall, 2019