

# Redistricting in Georgia - All Hands On Deck – Time for Action

Town Hall – July 26, 2021



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# Today's Program

- Quick refresh on redistricting and gerrymandering
- Redistricting challenges and answers
- All Hands On Deck – breakout sessions – get involved
- Open Q/A

# About Fair Districts GA

Fair Districts GA is a **nonpartisan** organization 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 ACLU of Georgia

The ACLU of Georgia envisions a state that guarantees all persons the civil liberties and rights contained in the United States and Georgia Constitutions and Bill of Rights.

The ACLU of Georgia enhances and defends the civil liberties and rights of all Georgians through legal action, legislative and community advocacy, and civic education and engagement. We are an inclusive, nonpartisan, and statewide organization powered by our members, donors and active volunteers.

**The ACLU of Georgia believes and acts upon five core values:**

Liberty and Justice, Democracy and Patriotism, Nonpartisanship, Equity and Inclusion, and Integrated Advocacy



# What are Reapportionment and Redistricting?

Required by GA & US Constitutions after 10-year census:

## **Reapportionment:**

Setting the number of US House Districts per state

## **Redistricting:**

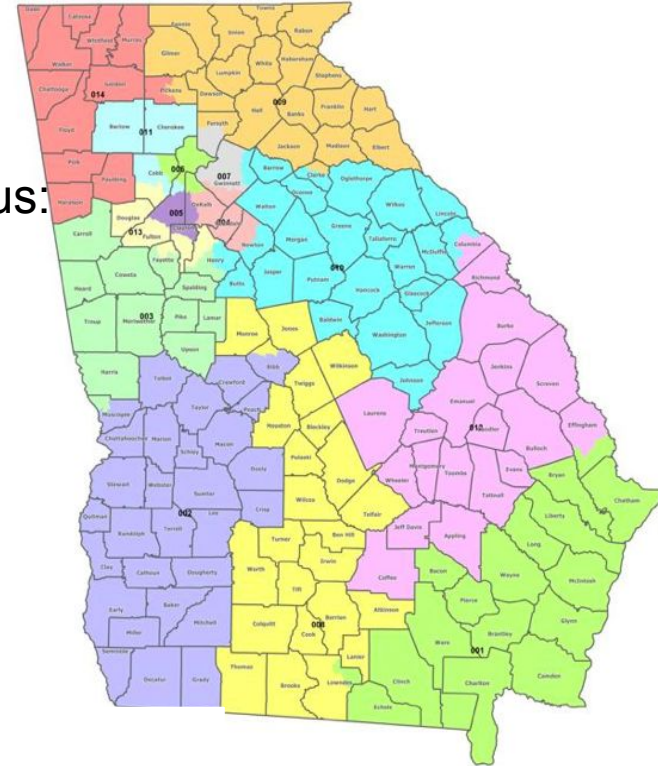
Drawing the boundaries for districts within a state

## **In Georgia:**

US House Districts (14)

Georgia General Assembly

- GA House Districts (180)
- GA Senate Districts (56)

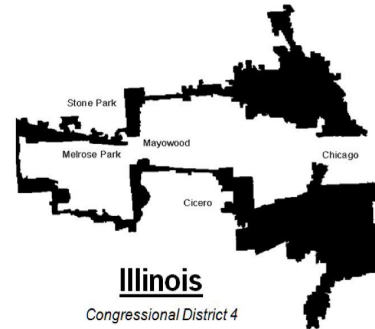


The State Legislature draws the lines  
The Majority party controls the process

# What is Gerrymandering?

The manipulation of district boundaries to create an advantage or disadvantage for a specific group.

- Partisan gerrymandering:
  - Legal in Georgia and under US law
- Racial gerrymandering:
  - Prohibited by Voting Rights Act



...graphics from [1990s Supreme Court Redistricting Decisions](http://www.senate.leg.state.mn.us/departments/scr/REDIST/red907.htm), Peter S. Watson

# Redistricting Timeline for 2021

**January 11 – March 31**

Regular legislative session

**April 26**

Census release: Georgia = 10.7 million, +10.6%  
Congressional reapportionment: Still 14 seats

**June 15 – July 30**

Local hearings throughout state by legislative redistricting committees

 **August 16 / September 30**

Census release: full PL 94-171 data  
Map drawing begins

**August □ October?**

Legislature drawing official plans

 **Late 2021**

Special legislative session to vote on redistricting plans

# Redistricting Challenges - 2021

## Compressed time frame

- August 16/September 30 census data release
- Rush to draw and approve maps – “When the frost is on the pumpkin”

## Secret process

- Public hearings, but...
- Process is not designed for public participation
- Bulk of work behind closed doors

## Partisan process

- Commitment to fairness, but...
- Majority party has all the power
- Almost no standards in Georgia law
- Wealth of data and powerful software □ hidden gerrymandering



# We Are Asking For Three Big Changes

## 1. Listen

- Draw maps using community input
- Communities provide clear definitions
- Legislature responds to each defined community

## 2. Show your work

- More public and transparent process
- April 19 letter to Duncan, Ralston, committees signed by 20 organizations: [bit.ly/FairMapsGA](https://bit.ly/FairMapsGA)
- Requests waiver of secrecy
- Fifteen specific changes for public access

## 3. Check your work

- Commit to meeting independent, non-partisan benchmarks for districts

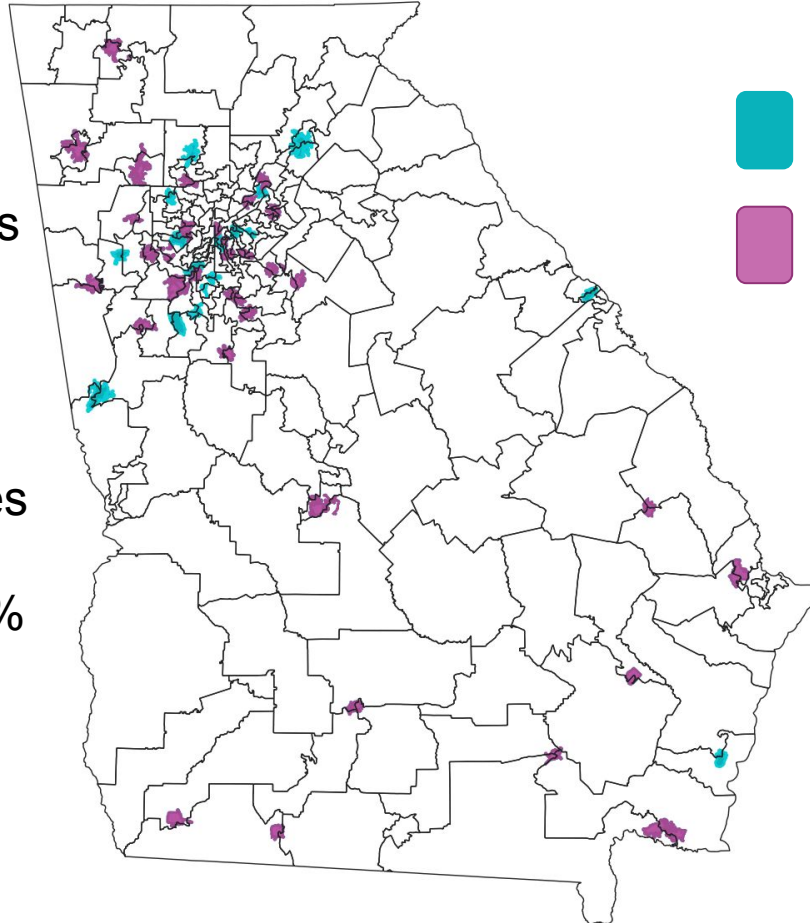




# The 2011/12 State House Map Cracked Small Cities



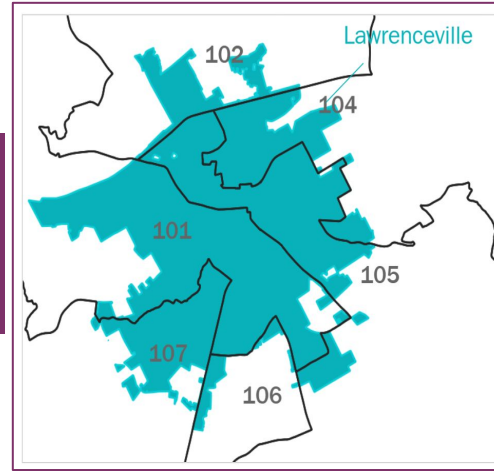
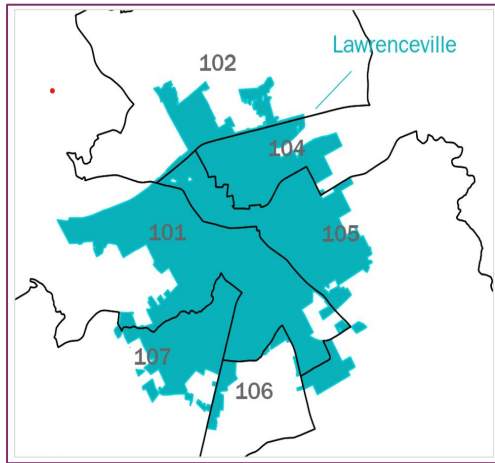
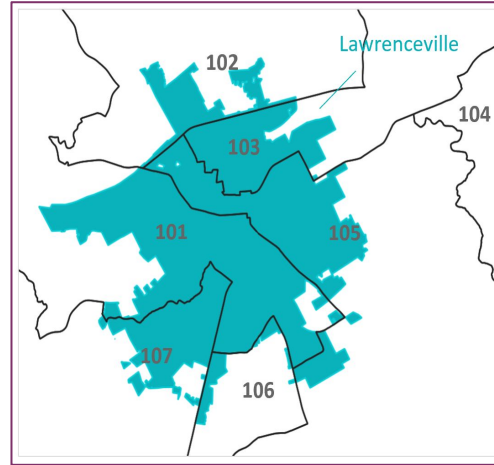
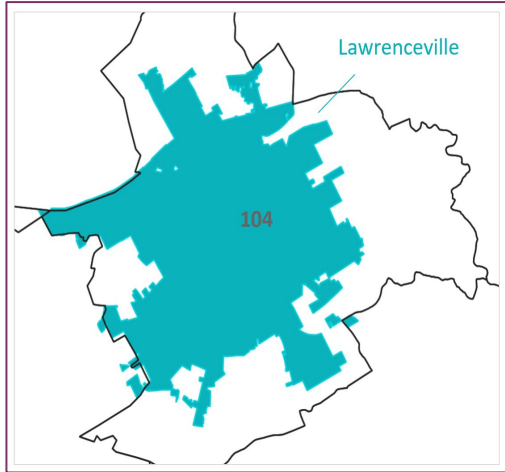
**Two-thirds** of small cities are cracked into multiple House districts

The number of small cities cracked into multiple districts increased by 44% in the 2011 decennial House redistricting



-  cities cracked before 2011
-  cities cracked in 2011 redistricting

# Lawrenceville Went From 1 House District to 6 in 2011



2010 -  
before  
redistricting  
(28,500)

2010  
House  
district avg:  
53,820

2011 - after  
redistricting

Lawrenceville pop.:  
~30,800 (2019 est.)

2012 -  
mid-decade  
redistricting

2015 -  
mid-decade  
redistricting  
again

2020 House district  
avg.: 59,511

# Fair Districts GA / Princeton Gerrymandering Project Partnership



Purpose: Provide independent, non-partisan benchmarks / fairness tests

Complete: Phase 1 – 20-year history

- Last 2 redistricting cycles
- Mid-cycle redistricting
- Full report:  
[bit.ly/FDGA-PGP20yrHistory](https://bit.ly/FDGA-PGP20yrHistory)

Aug/Sept: Phase 2 – Based on 2020 census

- Benchmarks / fairness tests (pre-map drawing)
- Evaluation of proposed maps

	Partisan balance	Minority representation
State House	?	?
State Senate	?	?
Congress	?	?

# Summary of Phase 1 Findings



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

# FDGA / PGP Producing Benchmarks for 2021 Maps



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

Benchmarks pending release of full 2020 census data

- Use August 16th release if possible
- Full redistricting data released Sept. 30

Evaluation of maps pending release by legislature

# All Hands On Deck - Break Out Sessions



Letters to the editor – Room 1 – Peggy Perkins



Testimony – Room 2 – Kimberly Fountain



Postcarding – Room 3 – Pam Woodley



Spread the word – Room 4 – Karen Davenport



Mapping & analysis – Room 5 – Karen McCown



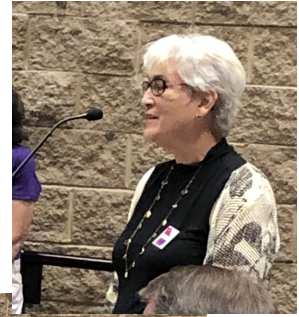
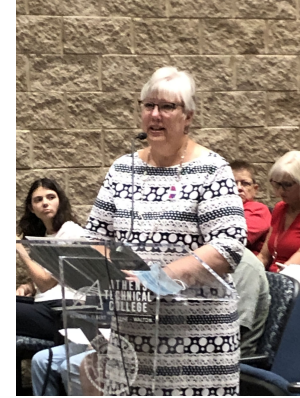
**ACLU**  
Georgia





# Remaining Public Hearings

- Albany July 27 5-7pm
- Columbus July 28  
5-7pm
- Macon July 29 5-7pm
- Virtual July 30 5-7pm
- Augusta TBD
  
- Written testimony:  
[bit.ly/WrittenTestimonyGA](https://bit.ly/WrittenTestimonyGA)



# Save the Date

- Fair Districts GA Town Hall
  - August 30, 7pm
- Fair Districts GA Legislative Advocacy Day
  - September 16, 1-3pm
  - Timely keynote speakers
  - Real time action advocacy



# Thank you

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