

# Connecting the Dots:

## From Gerrymandering to Extreme Legislation

Why have recent legislative sessions in Georgia produced such extreme legislation?

Learn why - and how to encourage politicians to stop it - at the next Town Hall.



**FDGA Town Hall**  
**Monday, August 8, 7 p.m.**

# Agenda

- Does gerrymandering lead to extreme legislation?
- How we can stop it – Announcing our Candidate Pledge Campaign

# Harms of Gerrymandering

- Non-competitive districts → lack of voter choice
- Real competition is in party primaries → farther left/right representatives
- One-party control of legislature
- No fear of losing next election
- Legislation driven by partisan ideology, not voter preferences

*Has this really happened in GA?*



# Georgia has a 150-year history of one-party control of state government

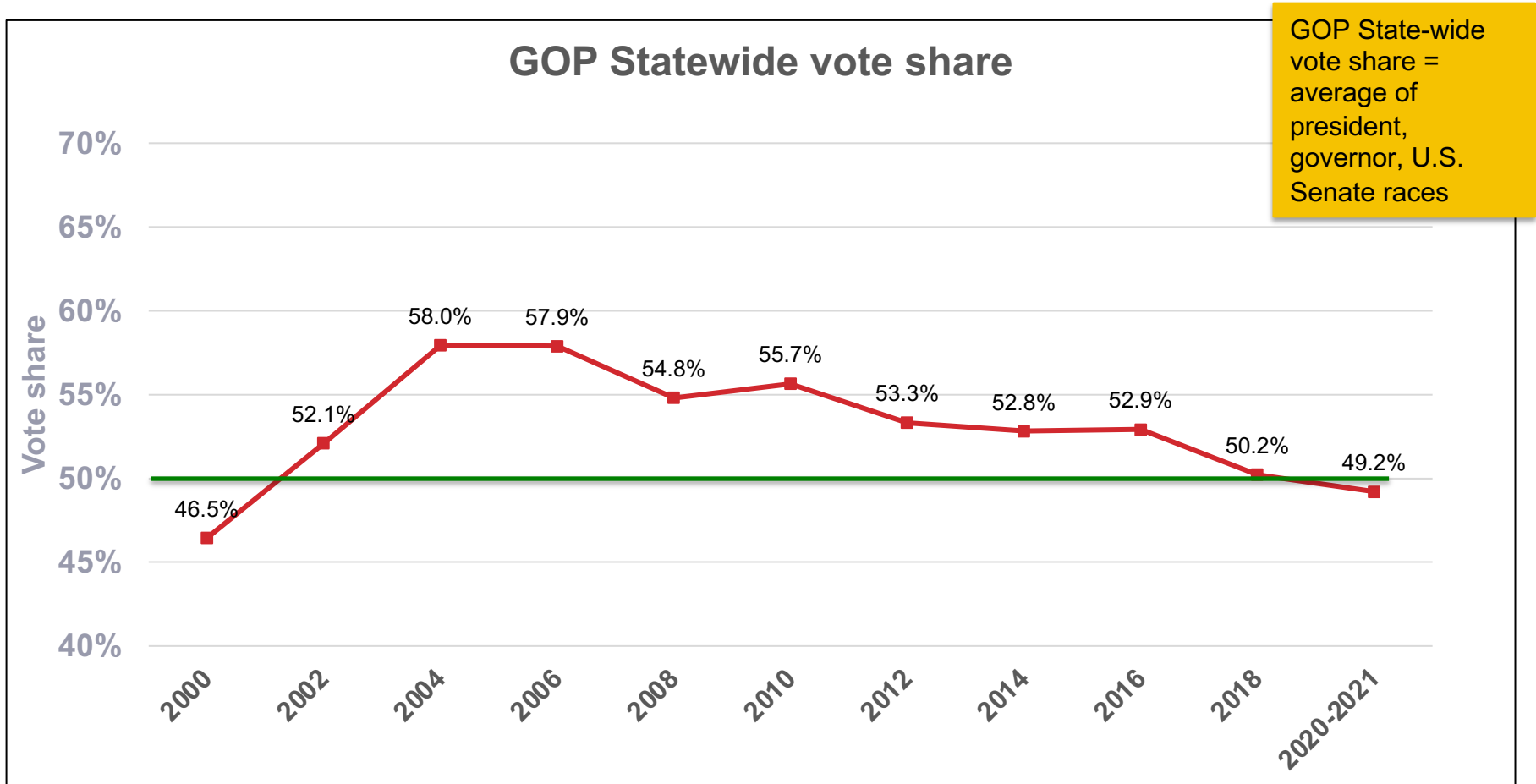
- 1872 – 2002: Democratic dominance - governor and general assembly
- 2003-4: Divided government
  - First Republican governor since Reconstruction
  - State Senate was elected as 30D-26R, but 4 Ds switched parties.
  - State House stayed Democratic (106D – 73R)
- 2005 – present: Republican trifecta
  - 12 state legislators switched to Republican party between 2005 and 2011



*2003-4 is the only period of divided government in 150 years.*

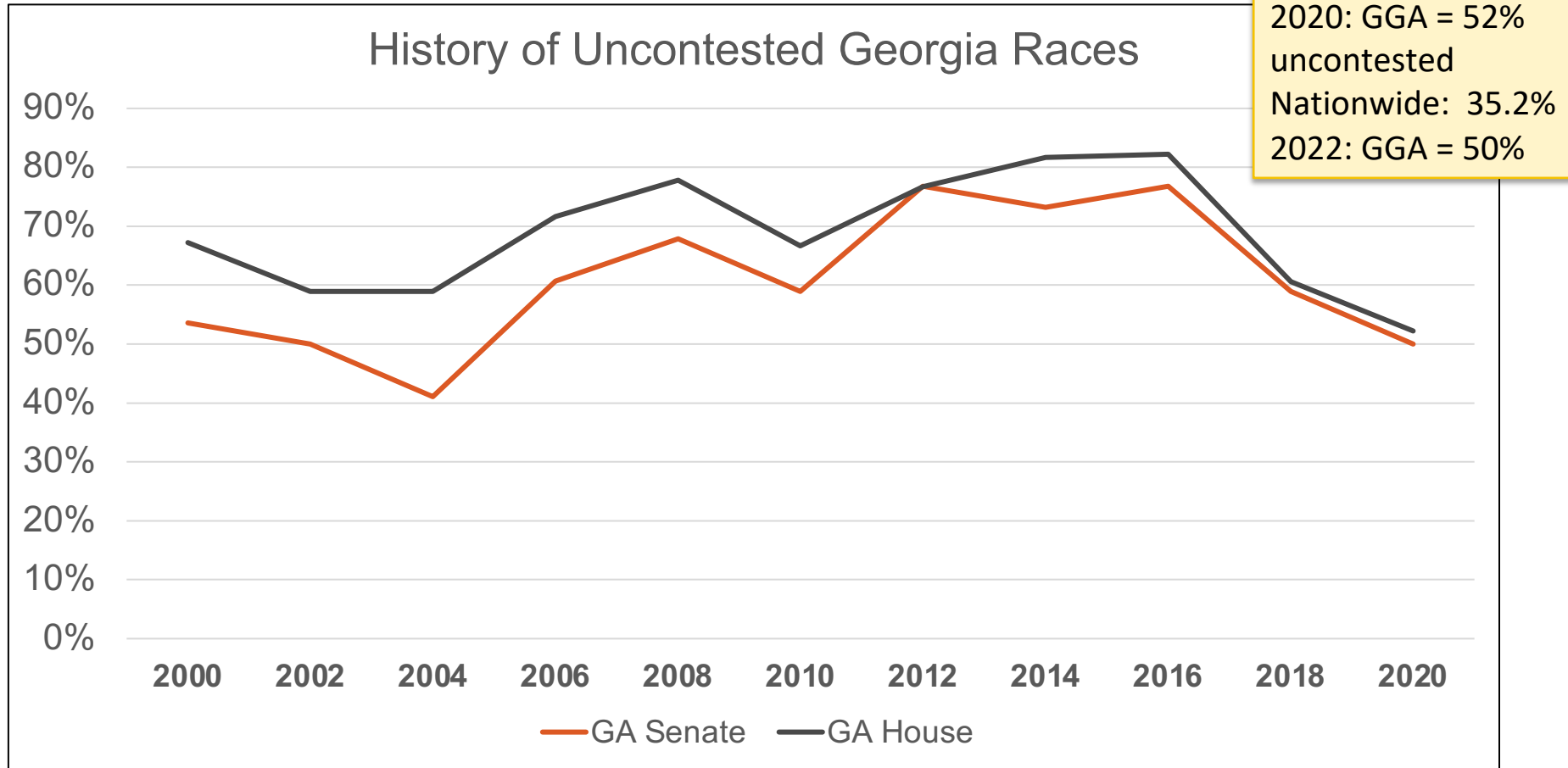


# Georgia has become a swing state after 20+ years of partisan dominance



Source: Fair Districts GA analysis of GA Secy. of State voting data

# Georgia has a long history of uncontested races, especially for General Assembly Seats

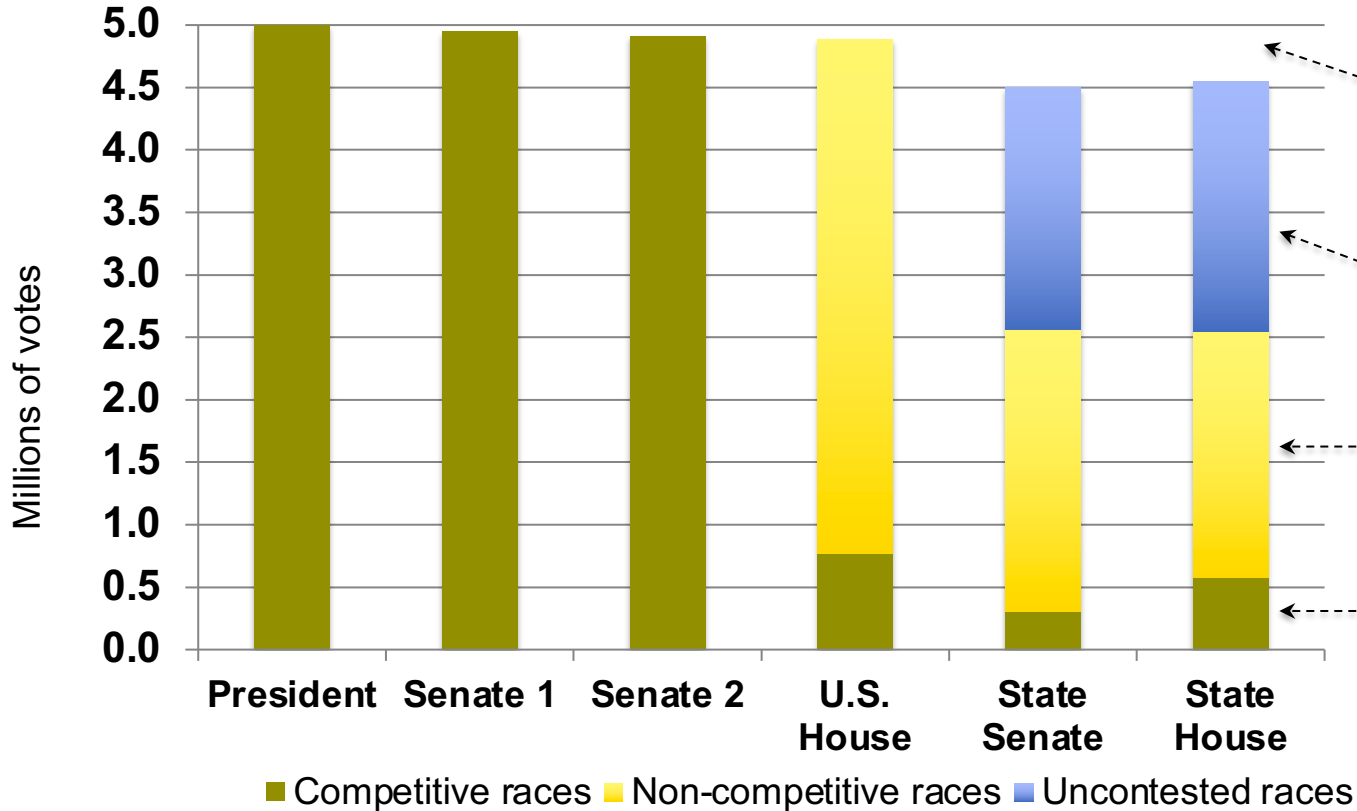


Sources: Fair Districts GA analysis of GA Secy. of State voting data; CNAlysis; Ballotpedia

# Uncontested races dramatically restricted voters' choices in 2020

Uncontested races  
 GA Senate: 28 = 50%  
 GA House: 94 = 52%

## 2020 Election Votes Cast



No vote cast in state house race: 449,000 fewer than President's race (9%)

40% of votes cast in uncontested races

39% of votes cast in non-competitive races

12% of votes cast in competitive (<55%) races

Source: Fair Districts GA analysis of GA Secy. of State voting data

# Are legislators listening to voters? Does gerrymandering affect the outcome?

- Redistricting
- Gun rights
- Medicaid expansion
- Reproductive rights

*Disclaimer: Except for redistricting, FDGA expresses no opinion on the merits of these policies.*



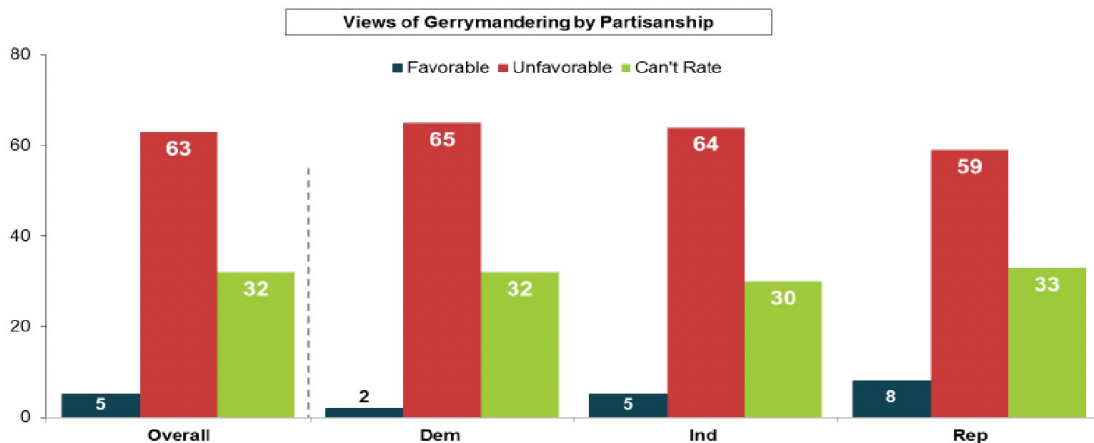


# What voters want for redistricting

- Fair maps
  - Reflecting political preferences
  - Not disfavoring one party
  - Reflecting racial and ethnic diversity
  - Compliance with Voting Rights Act
- Fair process
  - Transparency - "show your work"
  - Citizen involvement
  - Eliminate conflicts of interest
  - Preferred model: independent commission

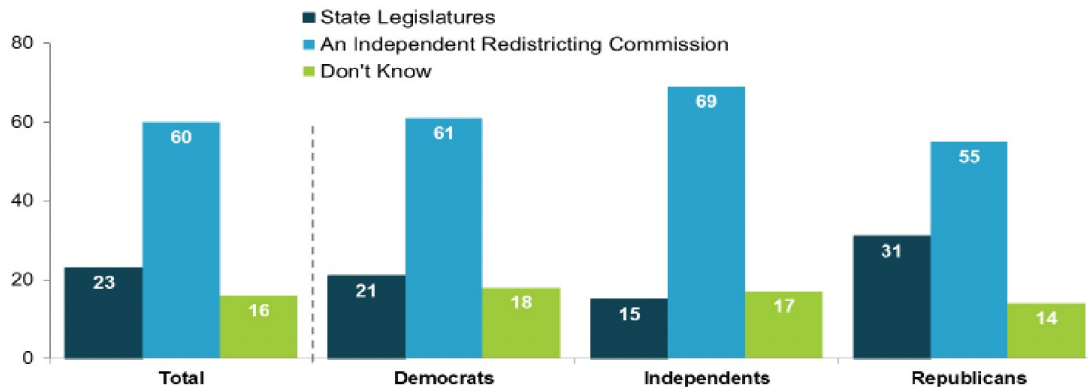


# Nationwide, bi-partisan support to end gerrymandering with independent commissions



**Prefer to Draw Boundary Lines: State Legislatures vs. An Independent Redistricting Commission**

*Which of the following would you prefer to set the guidelines for drawing boundaries for legislative and congressional districts in states?*



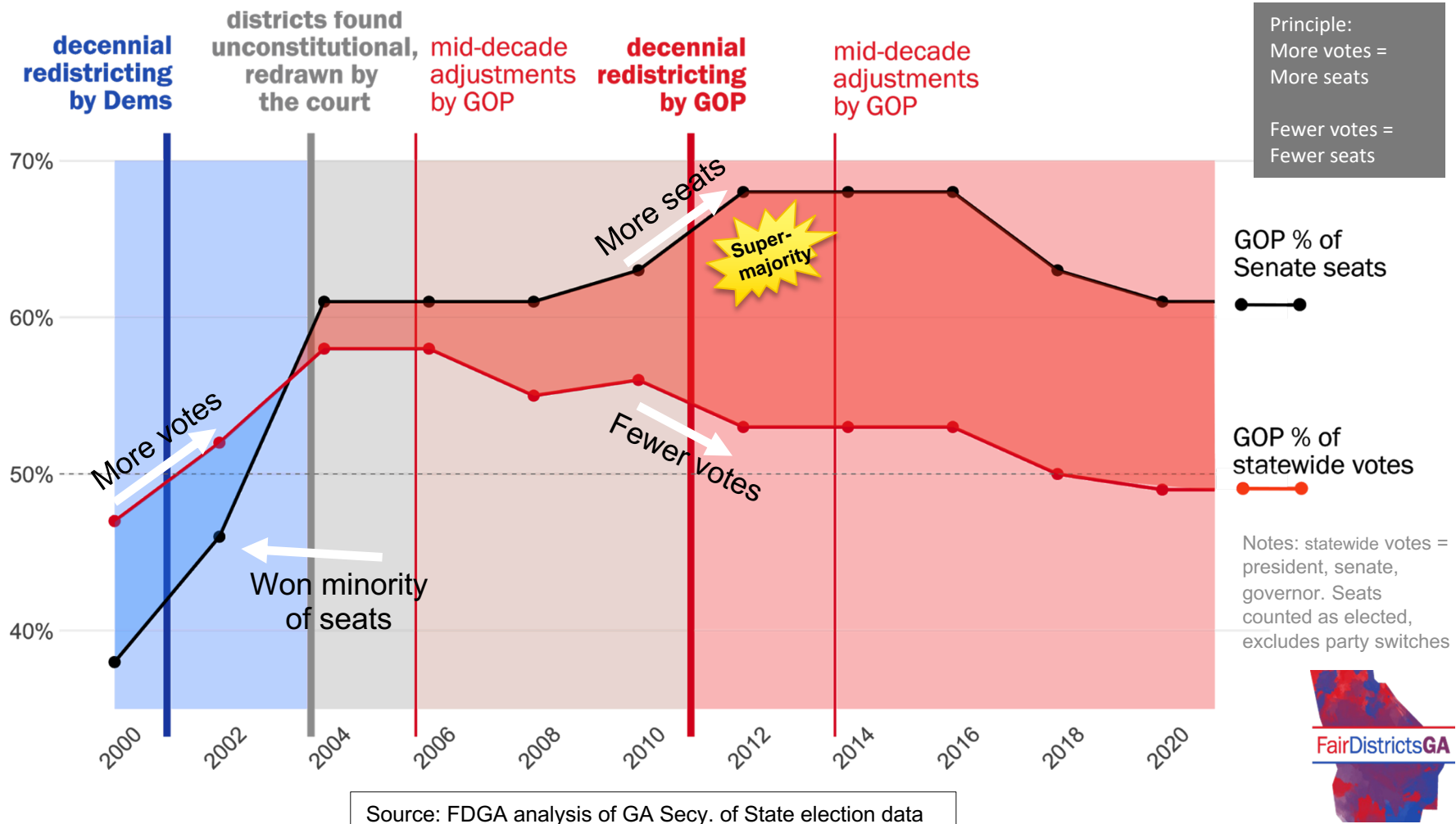
Source: Campaign Legal Center/ALG research/GS strategy poll, Jan. 25, 2019



# Georgia has been constantly gerrymandered since at least 2000

- 2001 – Democrats
  - Enacted by party line vote
  - Packed Republican districts, maximized Democratic districts
  - Overturned by Supreme Court in 2004
- 2005 – 2021 – Republicans
  - 2011/12
    - Achieved super-majority in Senate, near-super in House despite declining vote share
  - 2021
    - Locked in Republican majorities in all 3 maps despite <50% vote share
    - Disadvantaged minority voters; 5 Federal lawsuits pending
  - Mid-cycle redistricting – 64 districts changed

# State Senate - Gerrymandering Sustains Partisan Advantage



# Gun rights: What voters want vs. GA laws

Provision	Voter preference *	Georgia gun laws:
Prevent mentally ill from buying guns	87% (85%R – 90%D)	No such restriction
Universal background checks	81% (70%R – 92%D)	No such requirement
Ban Human Assault Weapons and high-capacity magazines	63-64%	No such restrictions
Expand permission to carry guns in more places	70% oppose (AJC Jan 2014)	Safe Carry Protection Act (2014)
	54% (32%R – 76% D) oppose campus carry (AJC Jan 2017)	Campus carry (2017)
Allow concealed carry without permit	70% (54%R – 86%D) oppose (AJC Jan 2022)	“Constitutional carry” (2022)

\* Sources: Pew Research national view April 2021 unless noted as AJC – GA view

# Gun rights votes in general assembly

Campus carry (2017)	State House (91 votes to pass)	State Senate (29 votes to pass)
2016 election result	118R – 62D	38R – 18D
Votes FOR	96 (95R – 1D)	33 (33R – 0D)
Votes AGAINST	70 (12R - 58D)	21 (4R – 17D)
Not voting / excused	14 (11R – 3D)	1D
Win margin	6	5
Estimated map bias	+1-7 R	+1-6 R

Safe Carry Protection Act (2014)	State House (91 votes to pass)	State Senate (29 votes to pass)
2012 election result	119R – 60D – 1I	38R – 18D
Votes FOR	112 (108R – 3D – 1I)	37 (36R – 1D)
Votes AGAINST	58 (2R - 56D)	18 (2R - 16D)
Not voting / excused	10 (9R – 1D)	1D
Win margin	22	9
Estimated map bias	+1-8 R	+1-4 R



# Gun rights votes in general assembly

“Constitutional carry” (2022)	State House (91 votes to pass)	State Senate (29 votes to pass)
2020 election result	103R – 77D	34R – 22D
Votes FOR	100 (100R – 0D)	34 (34R – 0D)
Votes AGAINST	67 (0R - 67D)	22 (0R - 22D)
Not voting / excused	12 (2R - 10D)	0
Win margin	10	4
Estimated map bias	+1-8 R	+1-4 R

***“I’ll tell you what my wife always tells me. They haven’t called me yet to ask my opinion.”*** – prominent GA politician responding to reporter’s question about polls not supporting this bill.

# Medicaid expansion - Background

- 2010 Affordable Care Act covers 90-100% of cost to states to expand Medicaid up to 138% federal poverty level
- Georgia is 1 of 12 states that have not expanded
- Pros:
  - 470,000 Georgians gain health insurance
  - \$3B / year federal taxes returned to Georgia
  - 56,000 health care jobs created
- Cons:
  - \$140M / year net cost to Georgia
  - Federal government debt risks federal share

Source: Georgia Budget and Policy Institute





# Medicaid Expansion: What voters want vs. GA actions

Time frame	Voter preference for full expansion *	GA Actions
2014	57% in favor (90%D – 25%R)	HB 990 – prohibits governor from expanding w.out legislative approval HB 943 – Prohibits state agencies from advocating or supporting expansion or setting up insurance marketplace or navigator (closes UGA navigator website)
2017	75% in favor (92%D – 57%R – 74%I)	
2019	71% in favor (96%D – 40%R – 72%I)	SB 106 – Partial expansion proposal w. work requirements, requests 90% federal funds

\* Source: AJC polls conducted prior to legislative session

# Medicaid votes in general assembly

<b>HB990 Restrict governor authority (2014)</b>	<b>State House (91 votes to pass)</b>	<b>State Senate (29 votes to pass)</b>
2012 election result	119R – 60D – 1I	38R – 18D
Votes FOR	118 (117R – 0D – 1I)	35 (35R – 0D)
Votes AGAINST	57 (0R - 57D)	19 (1R - 18D)
Not voting / excused	5 (2R – 3D)	2R
Win margin	28	7
Estimated map bias	+1-8 R	+1-4 R

<b>HB943 Prohibit state advocacy / marketplaces (2014)</b>	<b>State House (91 votes to pass)</b>	<b>State Senate (29 votes to pass)</b>
2012 election result	119R – 60D – 1I	38R – 18D
Votes FOR	106 (106R – 0D)	37 (37R – 0D)
Votes AGAINST	48 (2R - 46D)	17 (1R – 16D)
Not voting / excused	26 (11R – 14D – 1I)	2 (0R - 2D)
Win margin	16	9
Estimated map bias	+1-8 R	+1-4 R



# Medicaid votes in general assembly

SB106 Partial Medicaid expansion w. work requirements (2019)	State House (91 votes to pass)	State Senate (29 votes to pass)
2018 election result	105R – 75D	35R – 21D
Votes FOR	104 (98R – 6D)	32 (32R – 0D)
Votes AGAINST	67 (3R - 64D)	20 (0R - 20D)
Not voting / excused	9 (4R – 5D)	4 (3R – 1D)
Win margin	14	4
Estimated map bias	+1-8 R	+1-4 R

## Recent events

- Fall 2019: Proposal released for public comment - 90% oppose, 4% favor
- October 2020: Federal HHS approves (Trump admin)
- December 2021: Federal HHS cancels approval (Biden admin)
- January 2022: Kemp admin sues Federal HHS

# Notable bipartisan healthcare achievements

- 2020: Medicaid post-partum care extended from 60 days to 6 months:
  - House: 144-0 (36 NV)
  - Senate: 44-0 (8 NV)
- 2022: Medicaid post-partum care extended to 1 year
  - House: 142-18 (20 NV)
  - Senate: 56-0
- 2022: Mental Health Parity Act
  - House: 166-0 (14 NV)
  - Senate: 56-0

# Reproductive rights – what voters wanted in 2019

Time frame	Question	Voter preference *
April 2019	Should abortion be:	Legal in all cases 22% Legal in most cases 35% Illegal in most cases 26% Illegal in all cases 10%
	Overturn Roe v. Wade?	Support 24% (9%D, 43%R, 11%I) Oppose 70% (87%D, 49%R, 82%I)
	GA ban after 6 weeks w. exceptions?	Support 43% (22%D, 70%R, 27%I) Oppose 48% (69%D, 21%R, 67%I)

\* Source: AJC poll March 24 - April 8, 2019

# Georgia's Living Infants Fairness and Equity (LIFE) Act aka "Heartbeat bill"

- Passed in 2019
- Bans abortion after fetal heartbeat activity (~6 weeks)
- Exceptions
  - Rape or incest if reported to police
  - Woman's life in danger
  - Medical futility – fetus not viable
- Establishes personhood rights for unborn at ~6 weeks
- Struck down in court 2020
- Reinstated July 2022 after Dobbs decision

# Georgia's Living Infants Fairness and Equity (LIFE) Act aka "Heartbeat bill"

HB481 LIFE Act (2019)	State House (91 votes to pass)	State Senate (29 votes to pass)
2018 election result	105R – 75D	35R – 21D
Votes FOR	92 (91R – 1D)	34 (34R – 0D)
Votes AGAINST	78 (5R - 73D)	18 (0R - 22D)
Not voting / excused	10 (9R – 1D)	4 (1R – 3D)
Win margin	2	6
Estimated map bias	+1-8 R	+1-4 R

# Reproductive rights – How do voters feel now?

Time frame	Question	Voter preference – July 2022 AJC poll
July 2022	Overtun Roe v. Wade?	Support 39% (7.6%D, 71.3%R, 29.5%I) Oppose 54% (89.8%D, 21.4%R, 60.3%I)
	Support GA LIFE Act?	Support 36% (9.1%D, 64%R, 26.6%I) Oppose 54% (84.9%D, 25.9%R, 62.1%I)

Meanwhile, back in Kansas....

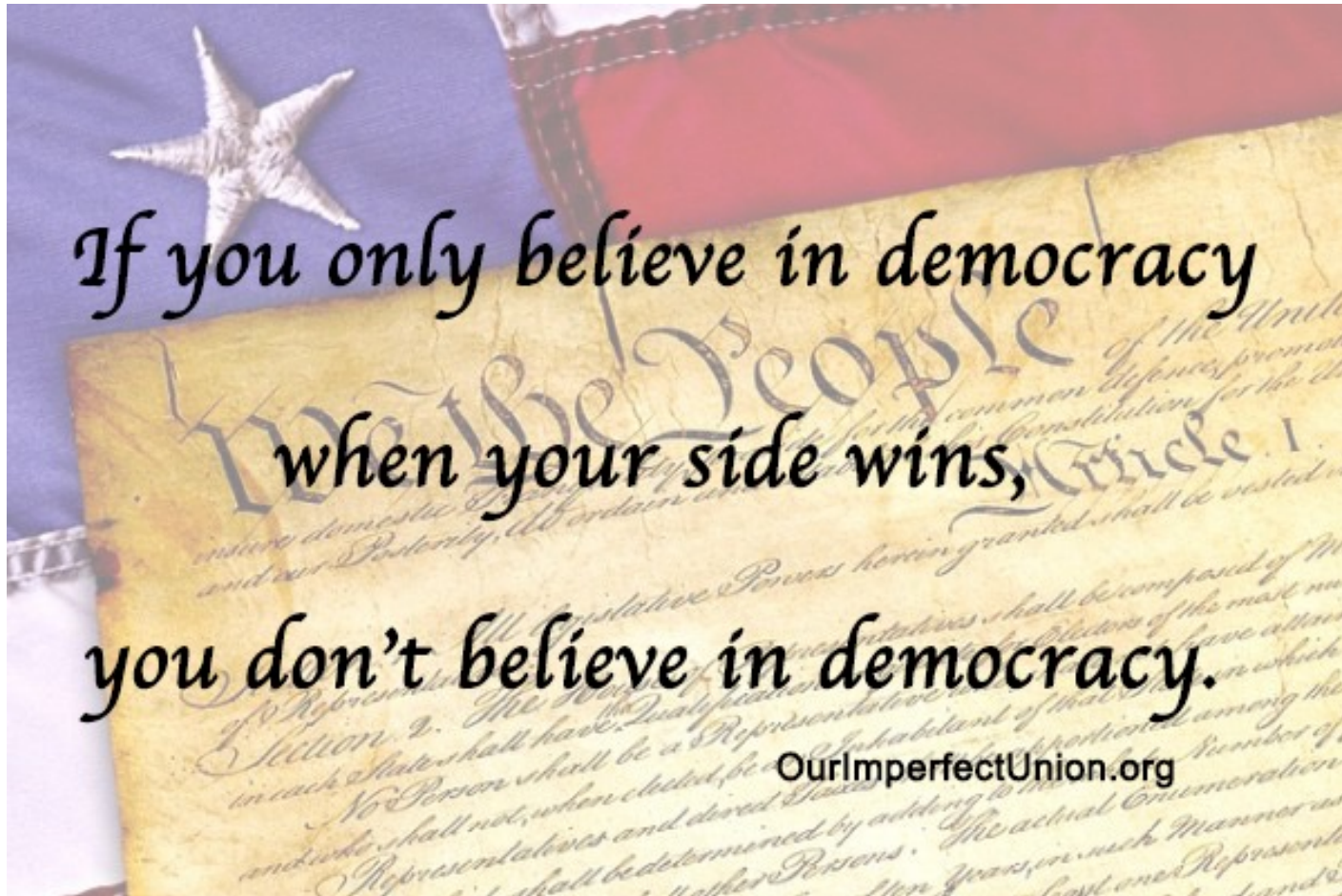
- Voters reject change to constitution removing protection for abortion rights 59%-41%
- Stops gerrymandered legislature from enacting limitations
- Huge turnout, bipartisan vote across red and blue counties



*“And you weren’t there, and you weren’t there, and you weren’t there, and . . .”*



# How can we break the partisan mentality?



# Announcing our Candidate Pledge Campaign!

- Get candidates to take a position on redistricting
- Get voters to prioritize the issue
- Make candidates aware that voters want action



## Take The Pledge



# Candidate pledge project objectives

- Get as many Georgia candidates from all parties to commit to redistricting reform as possible
  - State legislators
  - Governor
  - Lt. Governor
  - Secretary of State
- Get as many Georgia voters as possible to engage with candidates and gain commitments
- Publicize within FDGA non-partisan guidelines

} 370 commitments

# 2022 Georgia Candidate Pledge

I pledge to support fair redistricting and redistricting reform across Georgia to include:

- A fully transparent redistricting process with robust citizen engagement
- Fair district maps, validated by independent experts, that reflect the diversity and communities of interest of Georgia and do not unnaturally favor any political party
- Competitive districts that give voters meaningful candidate choices
- An end to mid-cycle redistricting and prison gerrymandering

Signature: *Jane Doe Smith*

Candidate for: *House District 200*



# How the campaign will work

- FDGA letter / email to all target candidates
- Local volunteer follow-ups with candidates
  - Town Hall participants
  - Email followers
  - Social media followers
  - LTE / postcard writers
  - Partners: LWV, Fair Count, Fair Fight, GA Redistricting Alliance, ACLU
- Voter questions for candidates in public forums, fundraisers, etc.
- Publicity – Social media, media organizations



# How can you get involved? It's easy!

- Sign up to help – email to [pledge@fairdistrictsga.org](mailto:pledge@fairdistrictsga.org)
- Find candidates to approach
- Let us know which candidates you will be working on
- Ask them about redistricting in meetings, fundraisers, etc.
- Ask them to sign and return the pledge to [pledge@fairdistrictsga.org](mailto:pledge@fairdistrictsga.org)
- Resources and scorecard: <https://www.fairdistrictsga.org/candpledge>

Nancy Nethery, Pledge Campaign Organizer



# Find My State House and State Senate candidates

## Step 1: Navigate to the My Voter Page at <https://mvp.sos.ga.gov/s/>



Georgia  
Online Voter Registration  
Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger



SOS Office



Business



Charities



Elections



Securities



Licensing



Search

Welcome to  
My Voter Page

### Use the MVP Log In to check your

1. Voter registration status
2. Mail-in application and ballot status
3. Poll location
4. Early voting locations
5. Elected Officials
6. Registration information on file with the county office
7. Sample ballot for the upcoming election
8. Provisional Ballot status
9. Access to UOCAVA ballots

**i** Note: My Voter Page provides a web-based search of data extracted from Georgia's statewide voter registration database. It is NOT the official record of your registration, which is retained by the voter registration office in the county of your residence.

\* First Initial

\* Last Name

\* County  
Select an Option ▼

\* Date of Birth  
MM/DD/YYYY

**LOGIN**

Not Registered to Vote?

**REGISTER**



Georgia Voter Id

More about Georgia voter identification Requirement



Stop Voter Fraud

Do your part to ensure secure and fair Georgia Elections



Election Division

Georgia Secretary of State's Elections Division



Election Advisory Council

Share your ideas to help strengthen Georgia Elections



Georgia VoteSafe

More about Georgia VoteSafe Program





# Find State House and State Senate candidates

## Step 2: If you are a registered voter, fill out the form

### Welcome to My Voter Page

#### Use the MVP Log In to check your

1. Voter registration status
2. Mail-in application and ballot status
3. Poll location
4. Early voting locations
5. Elected Officials
6. Registration information on file with the county office
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\* Date of Birth  
MM/DD/YYYY

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Georgia Voter ID

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Share your ideas to help strengthen Georgia Elections



Georgia VoteSafe

More about Georgia VoteSafe Program

FairDistrictsGA



# Find State House and State Senate candidates

## Step 3: On “My Information” page, select “View/Print Precinct Card”

Georgia  
Online Voter Registration  
Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger

My Registration Information My Voting Location Voter Participation History Absentee Ballot Portal My Districts & Elected Officials NANCY NETHERY

### My Information

Your Personal Information as shown in our system [What's new?](#)

1 Information on Georgia's My Voter Page will reflect your local Elections & Registration Office's database within 24 hours of an update by a county official.

#### Personal Information

First Name NANCY	Middle Name	Last Name NETHERY
Gender	Registration Date	Race

Status  
Active

#### Address

##### Residence Address

Street #	Street Name	Apt#/Lot#/Unit#
Postal City	County	STATE GEORGIA

##### Mailing Address

Street #	Street Name	Apt#/Lot#/Unit#
Postal City	Country United States of America	STATE

[VIEW SAMPLE BALLOT](#)

Note: Polling places are subject to change. Always check your designated polling place located via this website prior to voting. Newly Registered voters: Please review your registration date, which is located under your name and address above, to confirm the first election in which you will be eligible to vote.

EMAIL MY PRECINCT CARD [VIEW / PRINT PRECINCT CARD](#)

Georgia Voter Id  
More about Georgia voter identification Requirement

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More about Georgia VoteSafe Program



# Find State House and State Senate candidates

## Step 4: Take note of your district numbers

VOTER REGISTRATION OFFICE  
4380 MEMORIAL DRIVE Suite 300  
DECATUR GEORGIA 30032 1239  
PHONE : (404) 298-4020

### DEKALB COUNTY PRECINCT CARD

REG. DATE :  
ISSUE DATE :  
REG. No. :

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

### VOTING DISTRICTS :

005  
CONG

3  
COMMI

STMT  
JUDIC

1-ATLANTA  
MUNIB

02-ATLANTA  
WARD

090  
HOUSE

042  
SENAT

6  
SUPCM

030-ATLANTA  
MUNI



NANCY LYNN NETHERY



# Find State House and State Senate candidates

Step 5: Use search box at <https://www.fairdistrictsga.org/candpledge>



SUBSCRIBE TO OUR NEWSLETTER

JOIN THE ACTION TEAM

DONATE (OR VENMO @ FDGAVEN)



## Candidate Pledge Status

To see a single type of office enter one of the following into the search box: **Attorney General**, **GA House District**, **GA Senate**, **Governor**, **Lt. Governor**, or **Secretary of State**. The column sort feature will work with the search returns.

Last name	↕ First name	↕ Office and district	↕ Pledge response	↕
Abrams	Stacey	Governor	None	
Adams	Malcolm	GA House District 114	None	

# Find State House and State Senate candidates

Success! Here's an example Senate candidate



## Take the Pledge

ARE YOU A CANDIDATE FOR OFFICE IN GEORGIA?

LET YOUR CURRENT OR FUTURE CONSTITUENTS KNOW YOU FEEL ABOUT SUPPORTING FAIR REDISTRICTING AND

## Candidate Pledge Status

To see a single type of office enter one of the following into the search box: **Attorney General, GA House District , GA Senate, Governor, Lt. Governor, or Secretary of State.** The column sort feature will work with the search returns.

Search box containing "#2" (highlighted with an orange border).

Last name	First name	Office and district	Pledge response
Parent	Elena	GA Senate District 42	None

Made with Sheet2Site

# What to expect as a volunteer

- You'll receive these slides and confirmation of who you've signed up to contact with email address.
- As a team, we will touch base as needed to support your efforts.
- We expect to need multiple contacts per candidate to sign the pledge.
- Postcard writing, phone follow-ups, social media are all a part of this.
- Please bring your ideas!



# If you'd like to help with more candidates besides your own

- Use our Georgia Explorer map:  
<https://www.fairdistrictsga.org/georgia-explorer>
- Select “State House Enacted” or “State Senate Enacted” from map list on left
- Select “Streets background layer” in next box
- Enter city, county, or specific address in search box
- Tap/rollover districts to find numbers
- Proceed to <https://www.fairdistrictsga.org/georgia-explorer> to get candidates’ names

# What may candidates do?

(per our non-partisan guidelines)

## Candidates may:

- Publicize their commitment to reform
- Mention FDGA in the context of their commitment

## Candidates may not:

- Impute any endorsement by FDGA
- Use FDGA logo on website, social media, or in any campaign materials

Q and A



# Thank you

Email: [info@fairdistrictsga.org](mailto:info@fairdistrictsga.org)

Twitter: [@FairDistrictsGA](https://twitter.com/FairDistrictsGA)

Web: [fairdistrictsga.org](http://fairdistrictsga.org)

Facebook: [@FairDistrictsGA](https://www.facebook.com/FairDistrictsGA)

Instagram: [@FairDistrictsGA](https://www.instagram.com/FairDistrictsGA)

Next Town Hall



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