



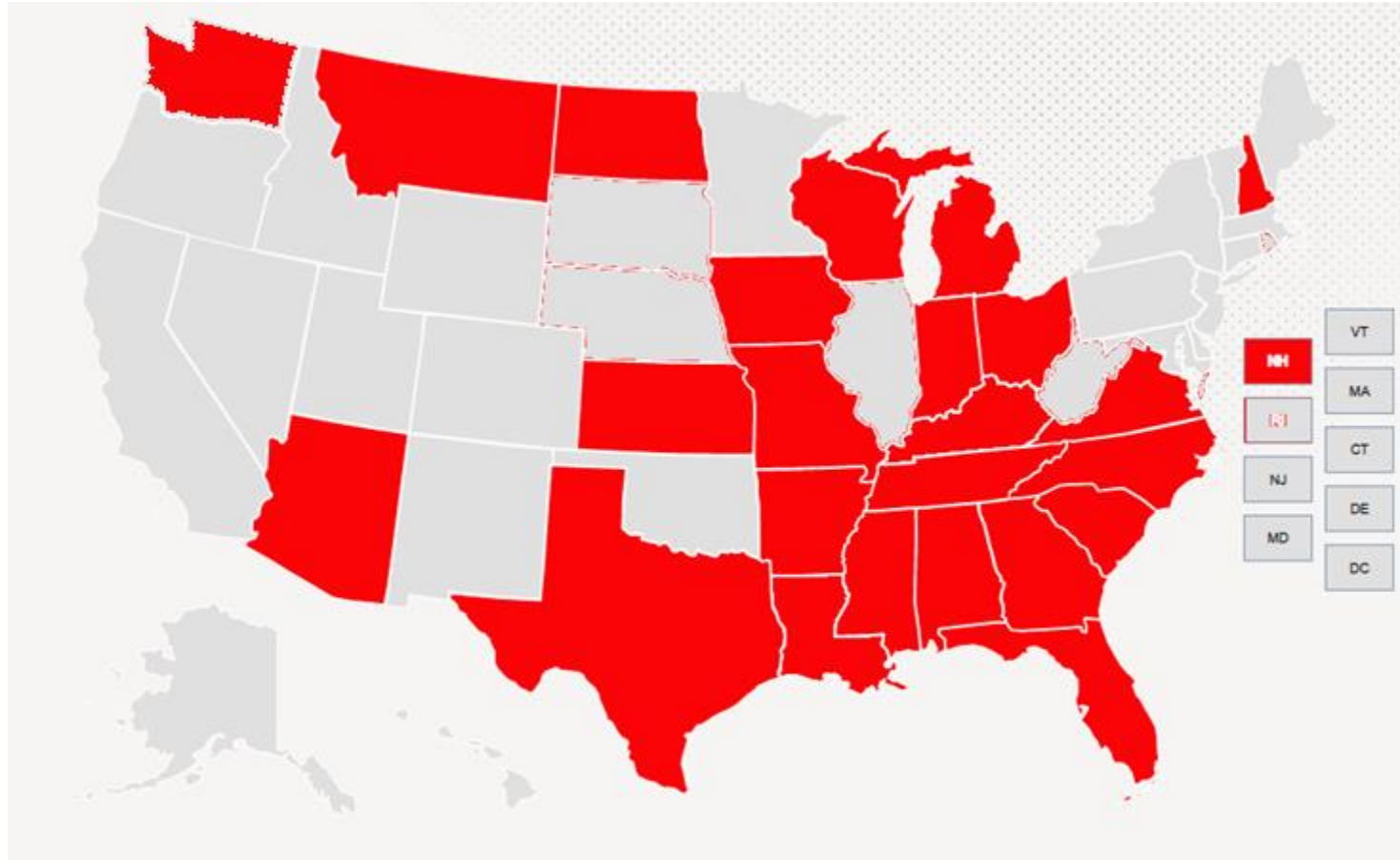
Vote Suppression

At least we beat Slovenia – the US ranks near the bottom in voting



- Many countries make it easier to vote and greatly increase voter participation by making:
 - election day a holiday.
 - citizens automatically registered to vote when they reach voting age.
 - registering to vote and voting happen at the same time (“same day registration”).
- Compare the United States -- one of the lowest percentages of citizens voting in the developed world. **Not because people don't care.**

New and significant voting restrictions - is your state listed in RED?



Source:
Brennan Center



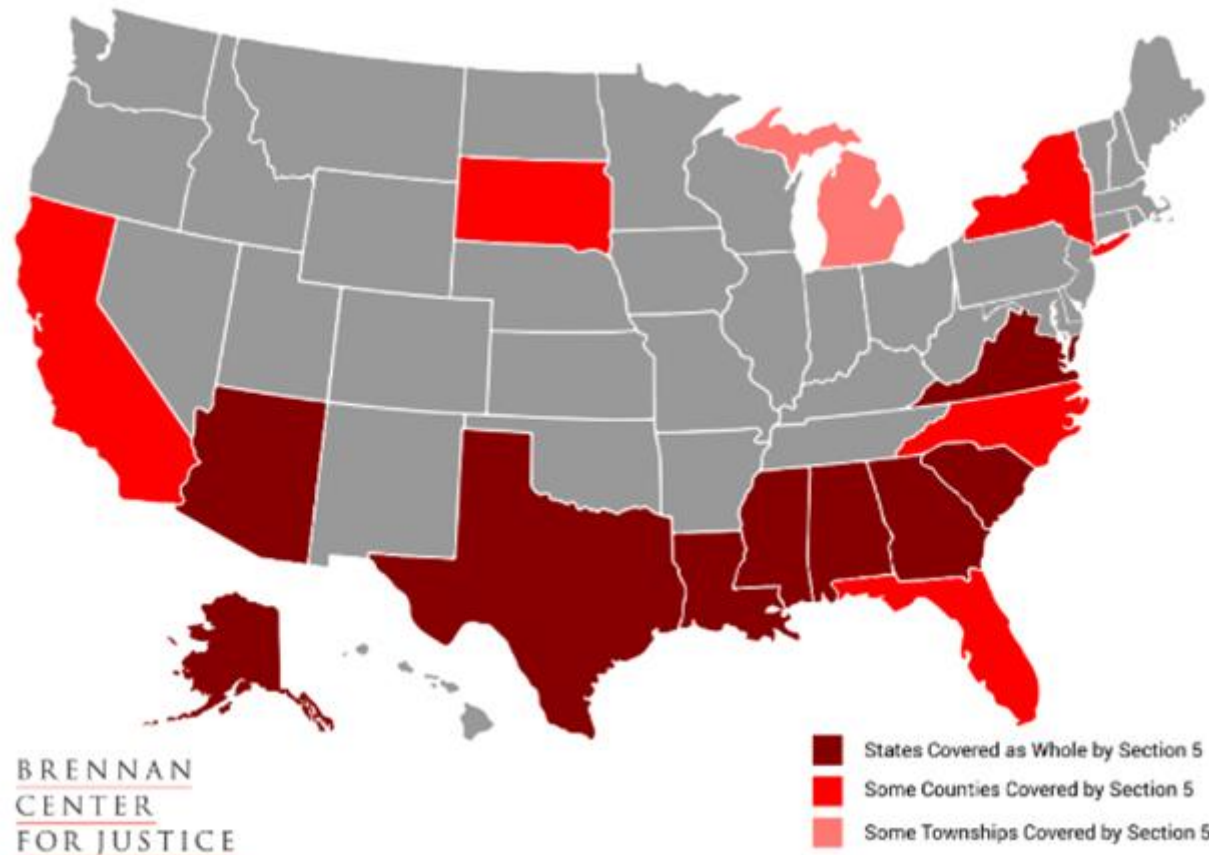
Republicans vs. Democrats – the REDMAP Project

- In 2008, seeing the increase in the numbers of people likely to vote for Democrats, Republican operatives created Project REDMAP
- The goal was to take control of state legislatures.
- Elections are controlled by state governments, and by taking over State Legislatures, Republicans began a series of policies intended to suppress Democratic voters.
- Democrats had used similar tactics in the 19th century, but REDMAP resulted making it harder for people to register and to vote.

Starting in 1965, the Voting Rights Act required many states and counties to obtain *pre-clearance* from the Department of Justice or Federal Court before changing voting procedures due to their past voting right abuses.



Where voters needed the special protections of the Voting Rights Act of 1965





In 2013 the Supreme Court ruled the pre-clearance protections of Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act were no longer needed.

(Shelby County Alabama vs. Holder)



Impact on voting rights after the ruling in **Shelby County vs. Holder**

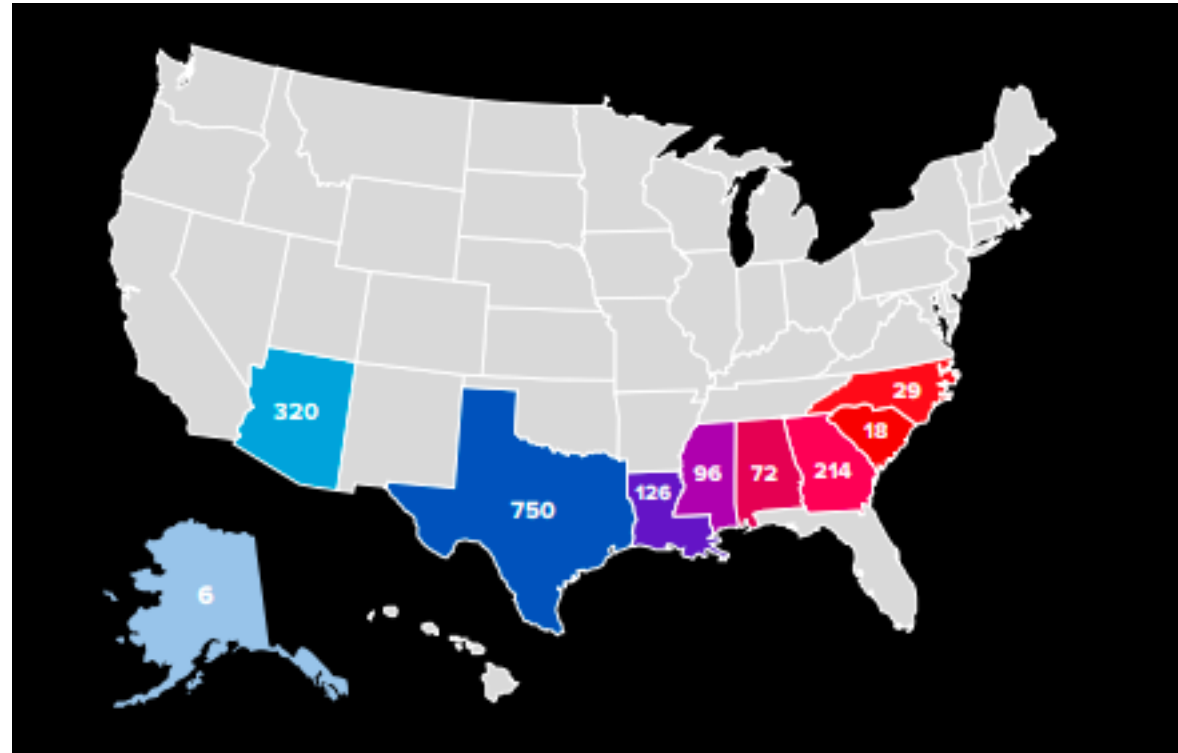
- By 2019 **1688 polling places closed in previously protected counties**, many in predominantly African-American counties
- Polling places were closed or reduced at colleges and universities
- Early voting days, hours and the number of early voting locations cut
- 17,000,000 names purged from voter registration rolls
- 'Strict' and other Voter ID laws passed in 35 states, including all of the states that were previously protected by the Voting Rights Act of 1965



Long lines to wait to vote are by design - polling places eliminated since 2013

Under Voting Rights Act, these states would have needed approval before eliminating these voting locations.

Simply moving polling places can also make it harder to vote – off college campuses (FL) or away from bus routes (GA).

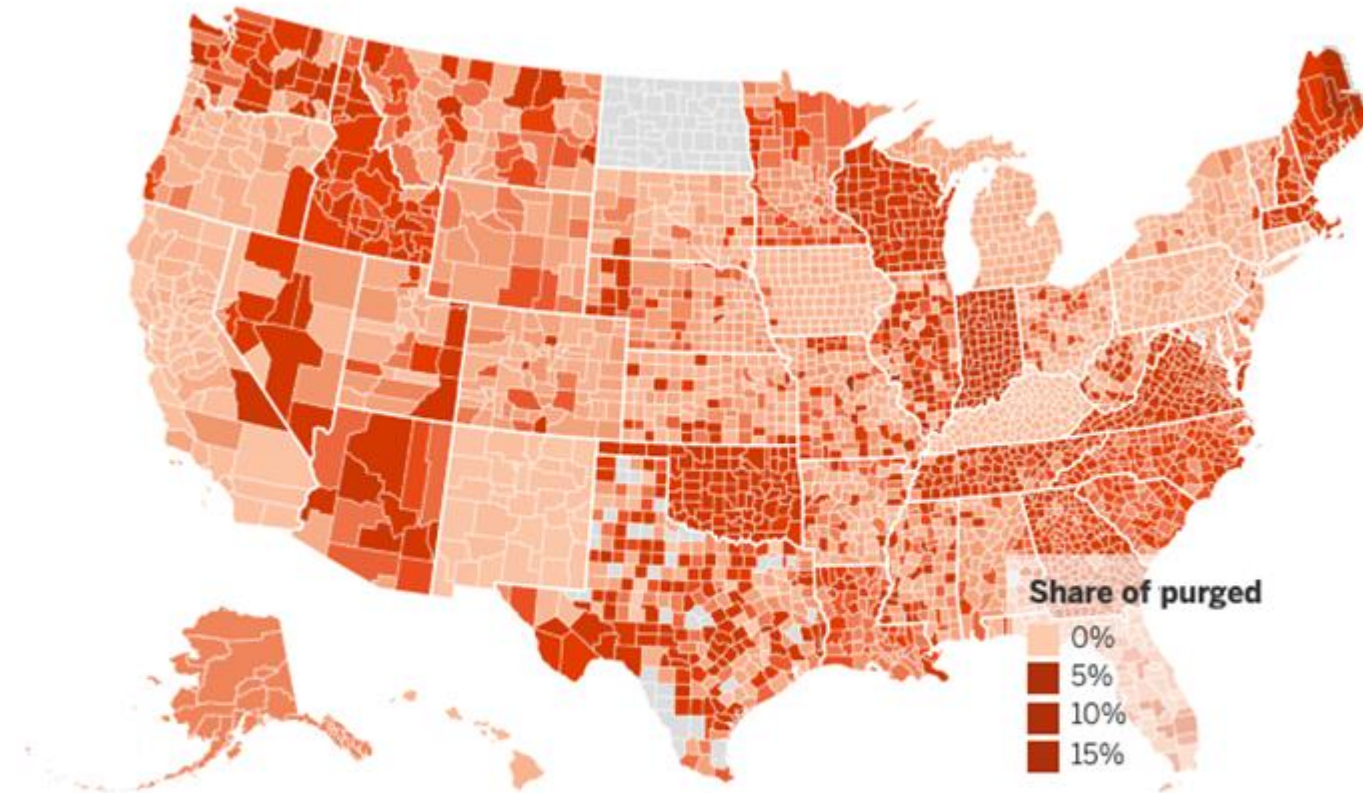


<http://civilrightsdocs.info/pdf/reports/Democracy-Diverted.pdf>



**30 million
names
purged
from
registration
since 2016**

Purge Rate, 2016-2018



*Notes:
Data in the following states are aggregated here
to the county-level but are reported at the
sub-county level: CT, MA, ME, NH, RI, VT, and WI
North Dakota does not have voter registration.*

Purging registered voters – the Crosscheck Program



- This program claimed to identify duplicate registrations in different states. It compared first name, last name, and date of birth.
- Championed by Republicans who claim falsely that there is widespread voting by illegal immigrants
- As many as 75% of names removed were valid voters (e.g. Ada County ID removed 765 names, all valid voters)
- Removals were heavily grouped among voters thought likely to vote for Democrats (names like James Brown or Luis Gonzales)
- The Crosscheck Program did not find evidence of even one person who voted illegally.



2016 Crosscheck purges – states that have not withdrawn from the program

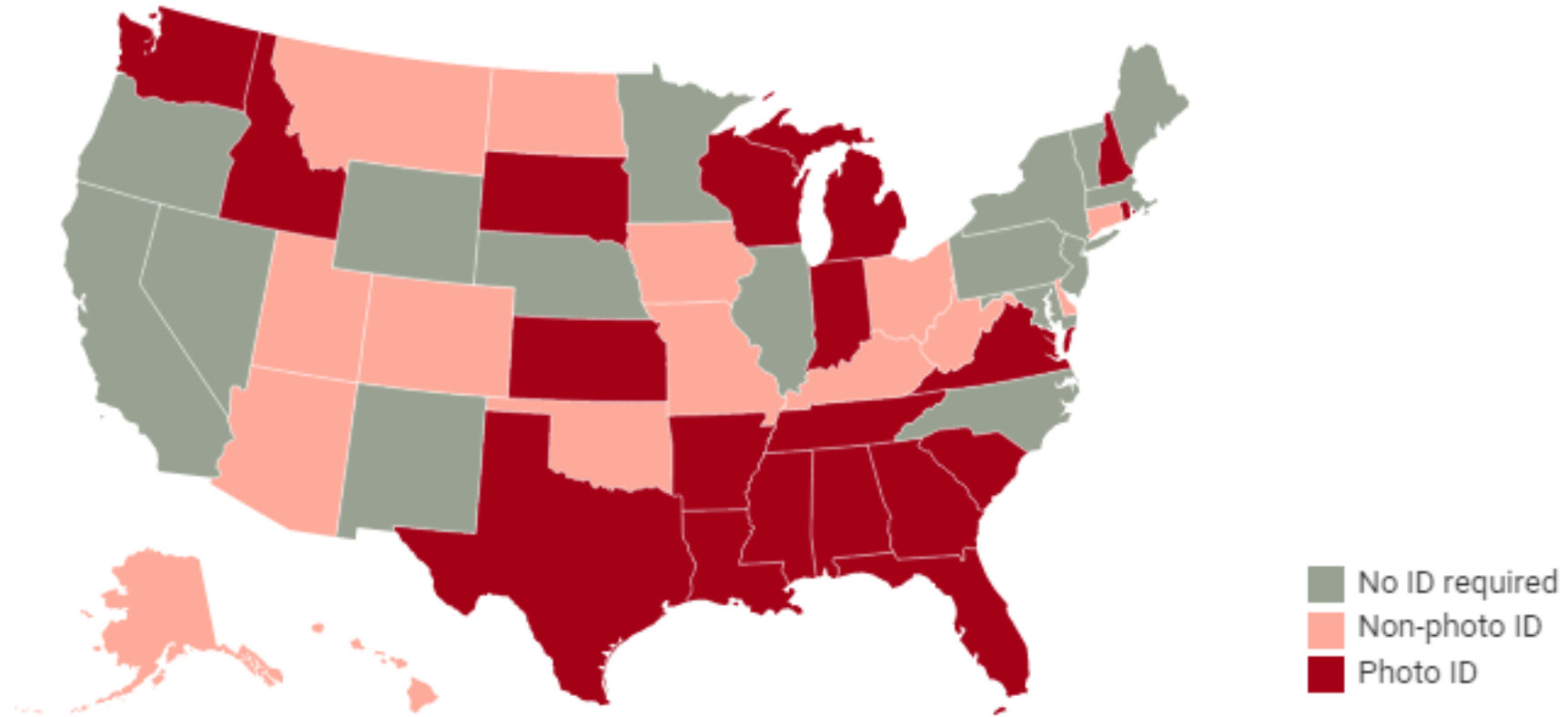


Sources: [Wikipedia](https://www.wikipedia.org/) and Brennan Center

2020 Voter Identification Requirements



35 States require a Voter ID, 19 require photo IDs



https://ballotpedia.org/Voter_identification_laws_by_state

BALLOTPEDIA

Examples of Strict Voter ID laws that discriminate in voting



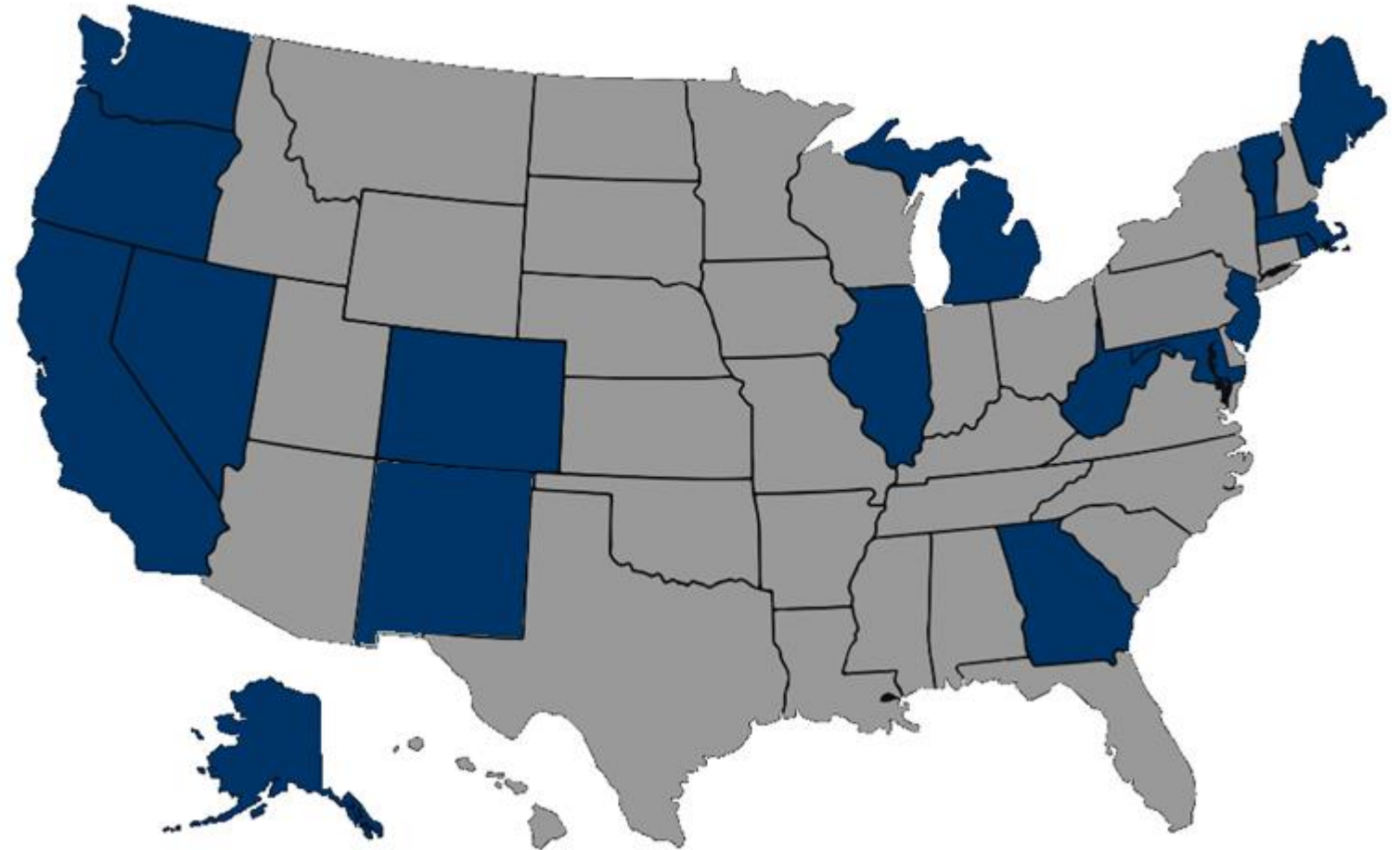
- North Dakota requires **street addresses** on Voter IDs. Many Native Americans (who live on reservations and tend to vote for Democrats) did not have street addresses.
- Some states do not permit student IDs even from their own state colleges (but they allow hunting licenses as Voter ID, for example). This obviously discriminates against young voters and favors those more likely to vote for Republicans.
- Registered voters have been turned away even when the voting officials knew the voter and knew the voter because of lack of State required Voter ID.

Automatic Voter Registration



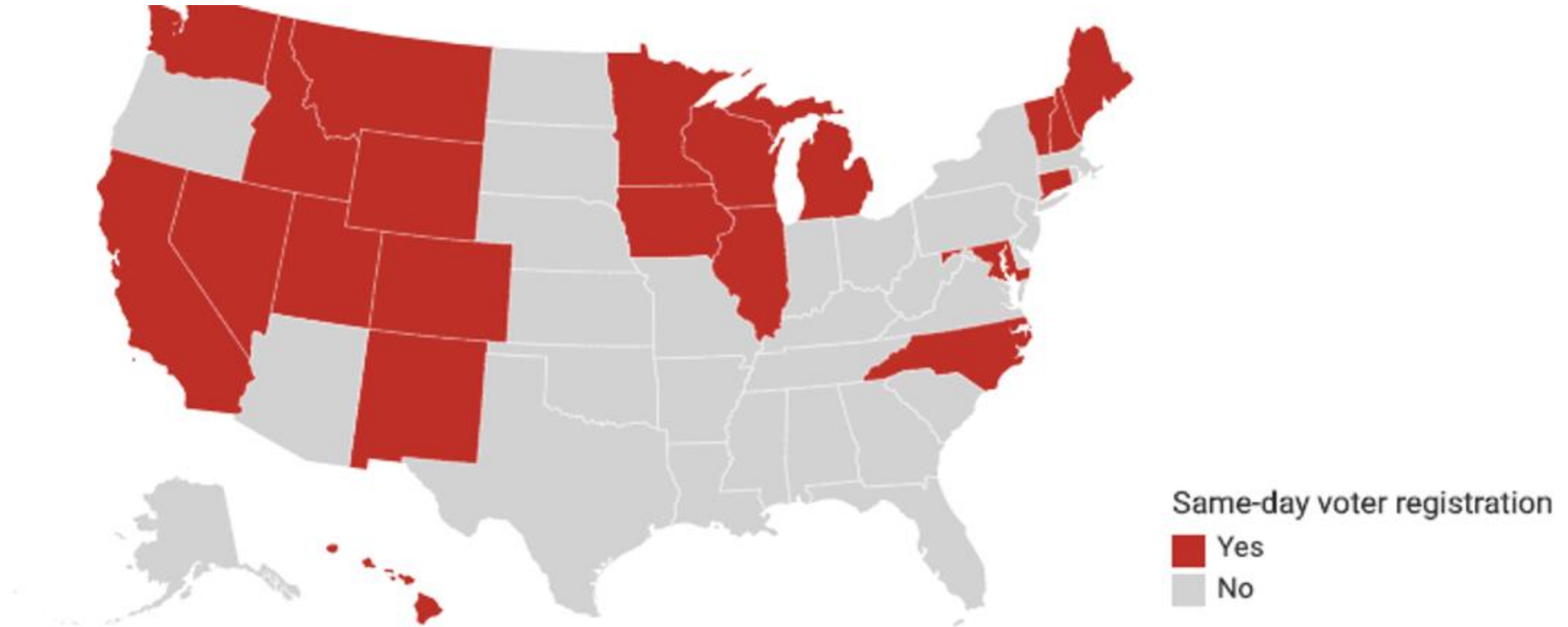
States That Have Approved Automatic Voter Registration

- Greatly increases voter turnout
- Makes voter rolls more accurate
- Reduces voter errors
- Reduces costs to states



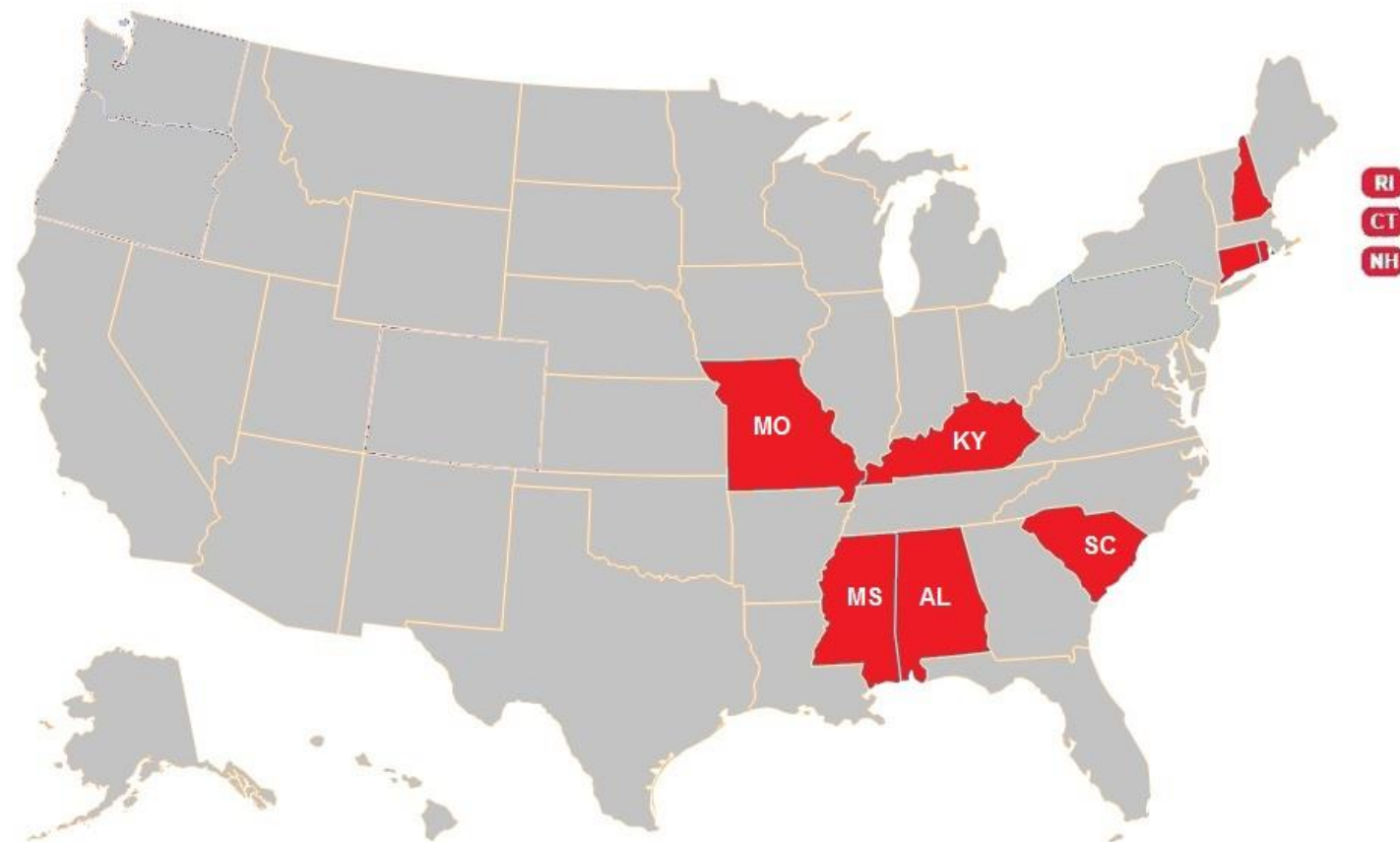
BRENNAN
CENTER
FOR JUSTICE

21 States and DC have Same Day Registration – none in States that were previously under federal pre-clearance protection



These States make it harder to vote:

- no early voting
- restricted absentee ballots



Source:
[Ballotopia](http://Ballotopia.com)



Bad actions disguised as good

- There are valid reasons to close polling places (e.g. an increase in vote-by-mail), for removing names from voter registration rolls (some voters die or move away) and so on.
- But recently, such procedures are intentionally directed against brown and black, low-income voters.
- Republican politicians have bragged about this
 - PA state rep David Lewis “Voter ID (is) going to allow Governor Romney to win the state of Pennsylvania.”
 - Sen Jim DeMint (SC) “voter ID laws ... (favor) conservative candidates.”
- Both Democrats and Republicans have cheated in the past, but the scope of disenfranchisement now is enormous.



How Voting Districts are drawn – discrimination based on where you live

- Every 10 years, states redraw the boundaries for voting districts (precincts) using new census data
- When State Legislatures control redistricting, the party in power often resorts to '**gerrymandering**' in order to stay in power:
 - Partisan Gerrymandering
 - Racial Gerrymandering

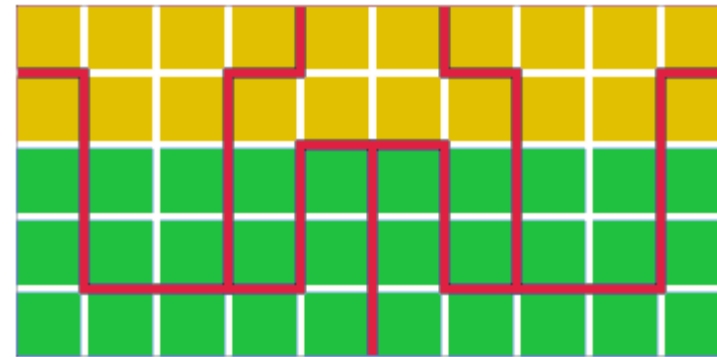


How to Gerrymander – 'Packing' and 'Cracking'

- Packing – draw boundaries so that as many voters as possible live in the fewest districts
- Cracking – draw boundaries in most of districts in the state so that the party in charge has a numerical advantage in each one



- Fair districts, green party wins 3 seats, gold wins 2



- Gerrymandered districts, gold wins 3 seats, green 2

Does your vote count? Maybe not ...



- **Packed District:**

When a voter resides in a packed district, her preferred candidate will win no matter what.

- **Cracked District:**

If a voter lives in a cracked district, her preferred candidate stands no chance of winning.

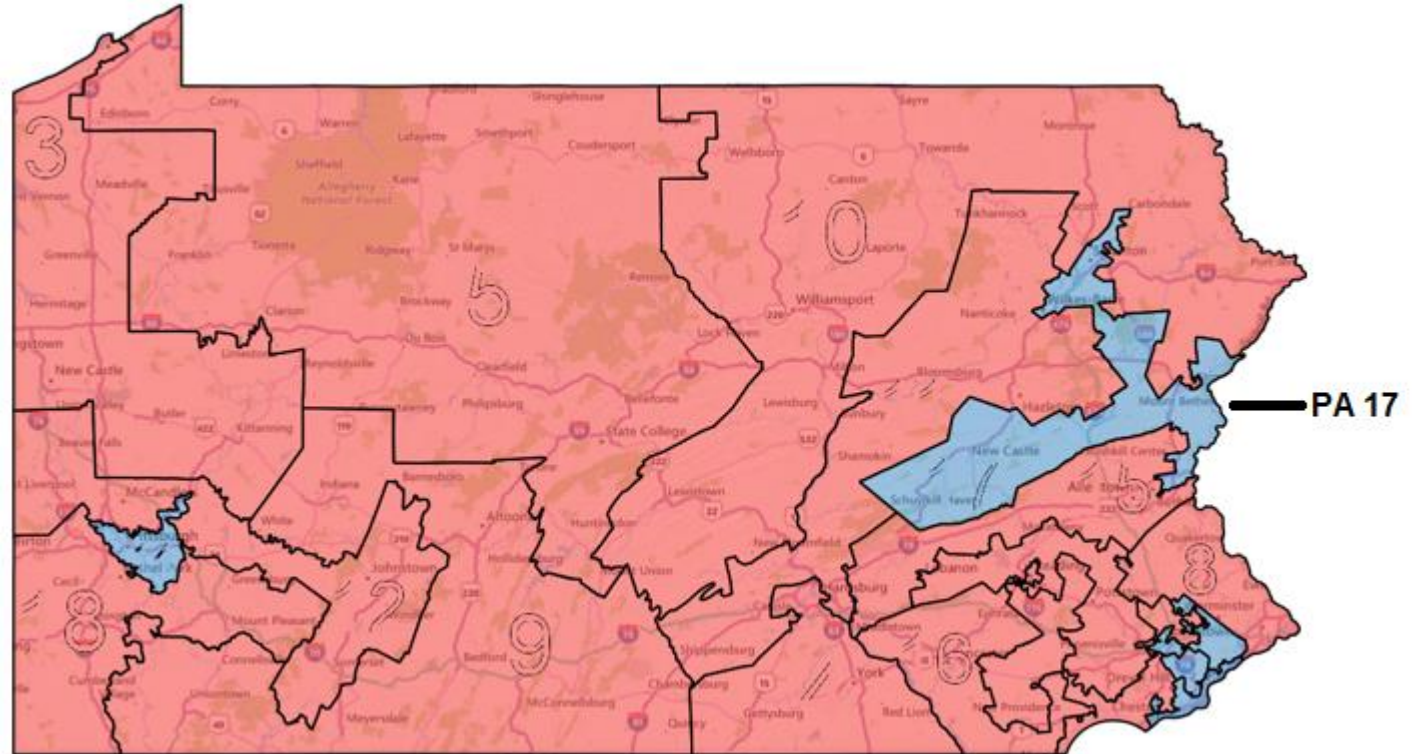
- **Either way, the vote of this citizen will not matter in these elections. The outcome is the same as if she had never voted.**

And it works – Pennsylvania's Example



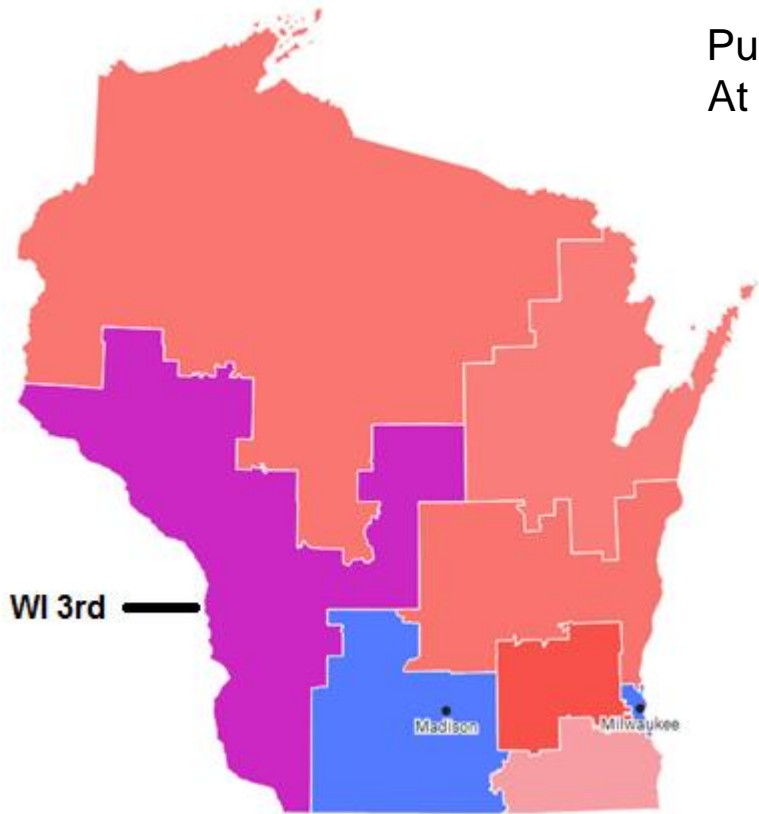
In the last several elections, the vote total in PA for Congress has been about 51% for Democrats, 49% for Republicans.

But Republicans won 13 out of 18 seats.

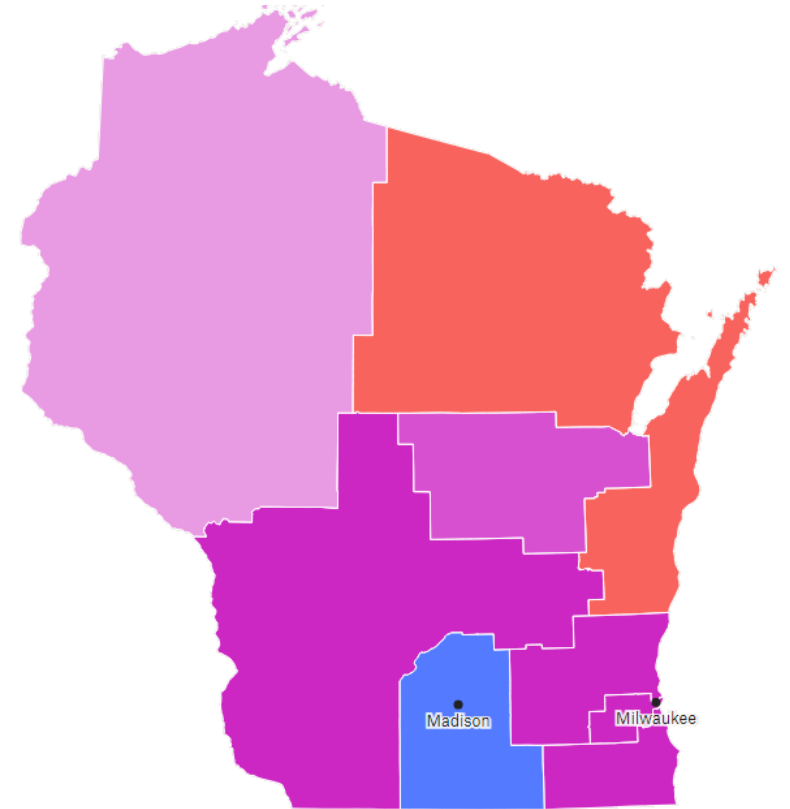


This gerrymandered map will not be used in the 2020 election by order of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court.

Another Example - Wisconsin



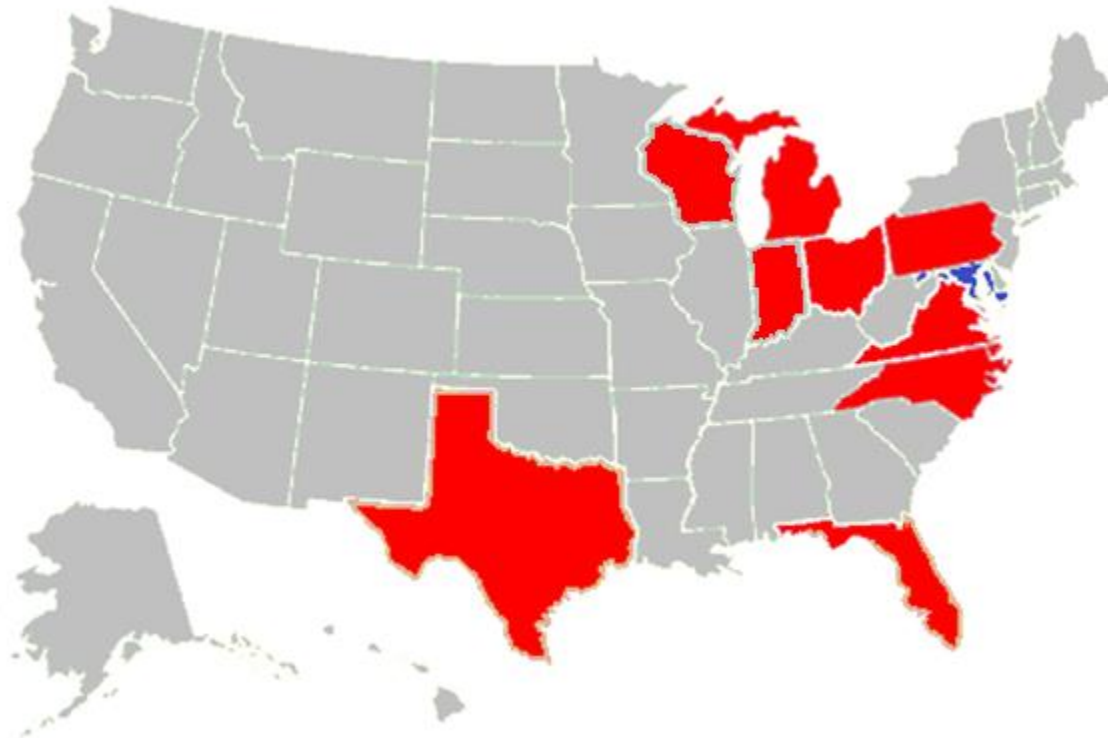
Purple indicates competitive districts.
At present only the 3rd is competitive.
It is held by a Democrat.



Democrats won 53% of the total vote,
but only 3 Democrats won while 5
Republicans were elected.

If the Wisconsin map were redrawn
so that the districts are actually
competitive ...

Gerrymandered Congressional Seats



Adapted from the
Brennan Center for
Justice

Map based on data
from 2012, 2014, 2016

Florida districts were
redrawn for the 2016
election by order of
the FL Supreme Court

- Republican gerrymander
- Democratic gerrymander



The US Supreme Court did not prevent partisan gerrymandering

Rucho v. Common Cause 6/27/2019, Chief Justice John Roberts:

"Excessive partisanship in districting leads to results that reasonably seem unjust ... (and) .. 'incompatible with democratic principles' ..."

but even so ...

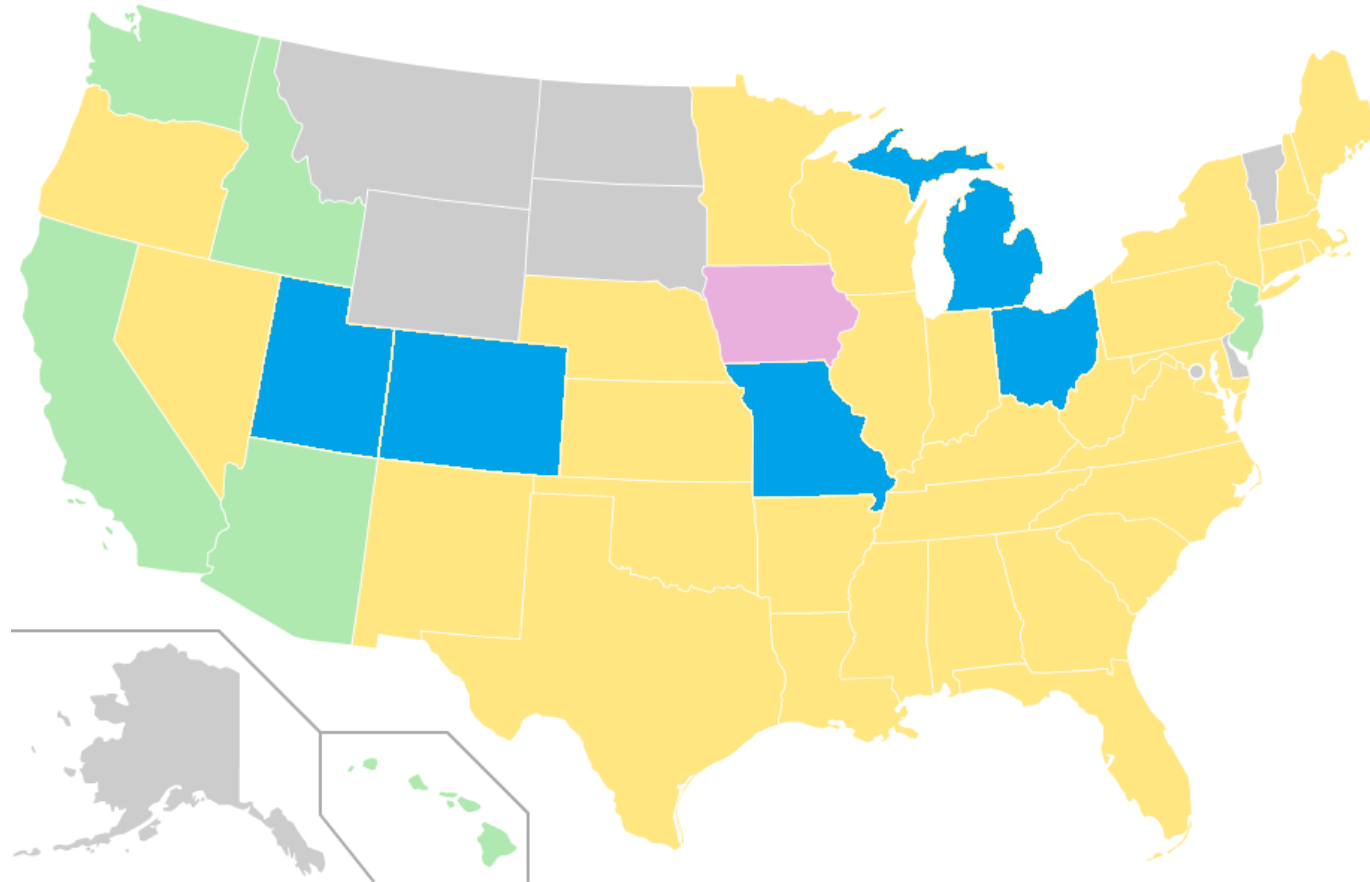
This cannot be remedied in federal courts. "A jurisdiction may engage in constitutional political gerrymandering."

Some State Courts used State Constitutions to protect against Gerrymandering –



- Pennsylvania Supreme Court ruled that redistricting by the Republican controlled legislature violated PA's state's constitution.
(Republicans threatened to impeach the state's Supreme Court justices.)
 - US Supreme Court refused to review the PA ruling because it is based on state laws, not federal laws.
 - Pennsylvania case becomes a model for other states to fight gerrymandering.
- North Carolina Supreme Court ruled NC Congressional districts were unconstitutional and mandated changes. (US Supreme Court had found North Carolina's redistricting was political and not something they would rule on (Rucho).

States with Independent Redistricting Commissions



- Single Congressional District (7 states)
- Redistricting by majority party
- Redistricting by commission
- Redistricting commission begins in 2021
- Non-partisan staff prepares redistricting

Suppressed Georgia Voters Speak Out



To understand what voter suppression feels like from the viewpoint of the victims, please watch:

[SUPPRESSED: the Right to Vote](#)*

a 2019 film by Brave New Films

* <https://www.bravenewfilms.org/suppressed>



This is a edited version of a presentation by Alice Smith, founder of National Voter Corps

- NVC is a non-partisan non-profit group formed in 2016 in Palo Alto California. Our mission is to Let Every Citizen Vote.
- Our website is <https://nationalvotercorps.org/> Please explore our 50 State Map which shows how to find and help non-partisan voting rights campaigns throughout America.
- Follow us on Twitter <https://twitter.com/NVC2020>
- Please consider a small contribution to help us continue to spread the word about voting rights in America.

Action Suggestions for Get Out the Vote and Voting Protection action



- Common Cause : **Election Protection**
 - https://protectthevote.net/?source=cc&link_id=0&can_id=27766a00e4eede6e08575cb9e21dcfc2&email_referrer=email_915515&email_subject=take-action-protect-the-vote-in-california
- Reclaim our Vote: **Texting and Telephoning to Rural Voters of Color** in NC, SC, TX, GA
 - https://www.votinginformation.org/rovphonebankcentral?link_id=0&can_id=01bd83120f69d6050440eaf9ab31350d&source=email-reclaim-our-vote-postcarders-join-phone-banks&email_referrer=email_914033&email_subject=reclaim-our-vote-needs-you-to-make-calls
- Vote Forward: **Letter-writing to specific states to urge people to vote.**
 - <https://votefwd.org/>