

From: Gardner Selby <wgsselby@statesman.com>
Subject: **Texas Redistricting in 2011**
Date: May 11, 2010 2:08:09 PM CDT
To: Gardner Selby <wgsselby@statesman.com>

From: "Matt Angle "
Date: April 29, 2010 1:23:19 PM CDT
Subject: **Texas Redistricting in 2011**
Reply-To: lonestar@lonestarproject.net



I want to make sure you see the Lone Star Project Report below providing a basic explanation of the redistricting process in Texas and making a few key points as the focus on redistricting intensifies. This is the first in a series of reports we will issue over the next several weeks on Texas redistricting in an effort to provide clear and accurate information to reporters, activists and others.

There is little debate that the overheated partisan climate in Texas overall and the harsh partisanship and ideology prevalent within the Texas Congressional Delegation specifically are largely the product of the current district lines. Focused on less intently is that the tactic used by Texas Republicans to achieve their partisan redistricting goal was to dramatically reduce and inhibit minority voting strength in Texas.

Texas will gain 3 to 4 new congressional districts next year. This increase in federal political clout is almost entirely due to the growth of the African American and Hispanic populations in Texas in virtually every region of the state. I am hopeful that as the media covers redistricting in Texas, it will look beyond the obvious partisan R vs D fights and look more carefully at how Republicans consolidated their congressional and legislative strength by systematically reducing the voting strength of minority Texans.

I hope the current and upcoming reports are informative and helpful. I welcome any comments or suggestions.

Thanks.



Matt Angle



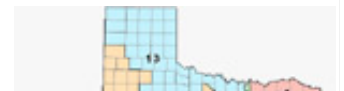
Follow us: [On the Web](#) | [Facebook](#) | or Text LONESTAR to 388873

April 29, 2010

2011 Redistricting Basics

A critical subplot to the 2010 elections in Texas and across the country is Congressional and legislative redistricting. The members of the State Legislature elected in 2010 will be charged with drawing new district boundaries when the Legislature meets early next year. The 2011 legislative session will set off a high-stakes process that will have an enormous impact on the political balance of power, and shape public policy that will alter entire communities and the daily lives of Texans for the remainder of the decade.

The Lone Star Project is recognized as one of the most knowledgeable, informative and trustworthy sources on [Texas redistricting](#). We played an active role in exposing the destructive partisanship of the infamous [Tom DeLay mid-decade congressional redistricting](#).



and have continued to provide unbiased legal and technical analysis.

To help those following Texas redistricting for the first time – and to refresh some who have not followed the issue for a while – the Lone Star Project is providing this basic explanation of the redistricting process in Texas. This is the first of a series of reports that will be issued throughout legislative and court consideration of the Texas district lines.

Who is responsible for redistricting in Texas?

The Texas House of Representatives and the Texas Senate are charged with redrawing Congressional, State House and State Senate district lines after the new Census population figures are released in early 2011 (Source: Texas Legislative Council, "[Redistricting Process: Legislature](#)"). The State House and Senate will form redistricting committees and hold hearings throughout the state. Upon approval by the House and Senate, the plans must then be signed by the Governor and then sent to the Department of Justice (DOJ) or a three-judge federal court in the District of Columbia for pre-clearance review under Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act (Source: Texas Legislative Council, "[Redistricting Process: Voting Rights Act Submission](#)"). The Governor can call the Legislature into special session to address congressional redistricting if it fails to enact a congressional plan during the regular legislative session.

What happens if a redistricting plan is not passed or signed into law during a regular or special session?

State House and State Senate Maps

If the Legislature fails to come to agreement among themselves and the Governor on **State House and/or State Senate district lines**, the responsibility to draw a map falls to the Legislative Redistricting Board (LRB) which is made up of:

- the House Speaker,
- the Lieutenant Governor,
- the State Attorney General,
- the Comptroller, and
- the Land Commissioner.

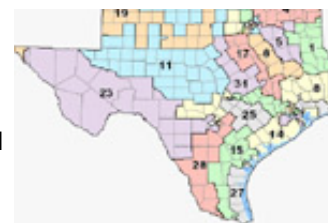
Plans approved by a majority vote of the LRB must also be submitted to DOJ (or DC Court) for approval (preclearance) under the Voting Rights Act (Source: Texas Legislative Council, "[Redistricting Process: Voting Rights Act Submission](#)").

Congressional Maps

If the Legislature fails to come to agreement or if the Governor vetoes a plan for **congressional district lines**, the responsibility **DOES NOT** go to the LRB, but goes directly to the courts. It is likely that the matter will be considered in both state and federal courts with the map ultimately determined by a Federal judicial panel composed of three judges.

What happens if the Department of Justice objects to a map approved by the Legislature?

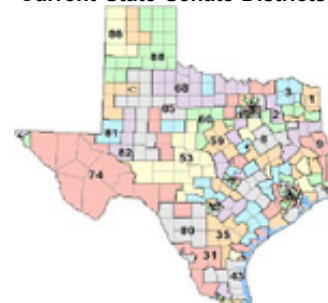
If the US Department of Justice files an objection to a redistricting plan, the Legislature is ordinarily given an opportunity to correct the aspect(s) of the map that drew an objection, provided there is time to do so. Should the Legislature fail to agree on a correction, or there is insufficient time to convene the Legislature and correct the map, the matter will move to the courts for a resolution.



Current Congressional Districts



Current State Senate Districts



Current State House Districts

Why are the 2010 Elections so important

The current State House, State Senate and Congressional maps in Texas were all drawn by partisan Republicans to overwhelmingly favor Republican candidates (Source: Lone Star Project, "[Congressional Dems Reply to Partisan Perry/Craddick/Dewhurst Redistricting Plan](#)"). To accomplish their goal, the Republicans systematically reduced the voting strength of African-American, Hispanic and rural voters. If Republicans retain complete control of all the levers of political power in Texas, they will certainly draw highly partisan, harmful and unfair maps. However, if Democrats can win back the Speaker's Chair and/or elect a Democratic Governor, we will have much more leverage than in 2003 when Tom DeLay was able to bully the Legislature into enacting his redistricting plan (Source: *Washington Post*, The Fix "[President Obama Still Sitting Pretty in advance of 2012](#)"). Here's why:

1. Congressional Redistricting – According to respected national organizations like the National Committee for an Effective Congress, Texas will gain at least three and possibly four new congressional districts. A Democratic Speaker can block (or a Democratic Governor can veto) a partisan Republican plan that would likely claim all four new seats for the Republicans and, in the process, eliminate senior Anglo Democrats like Chet Edwards and Lloyd Doggett. By blocking a bad plan, Democrats and progressive allies can go to court and work from a blank slate. In the past, particularly in 2001, the Federal Court has respected the integrity of senior members' districts while allowing for the creation of new minority districts. A **fair** Texas congressional map in 2011 should create at least two new Hispanic districts which would be claimed by Democrats, restore a politically competitive district in the Fort Worth area that could be claimed by a Democrat, and maintain the core of existing districts for current Democratic and Republican incumbents.

2. State House and State Senate – While a Democratic Speaker or a Democratic Governor cannot block enactment of a House or Senate map because of the Legislative Redistricting Board, they do hold a great deal of leverage. They will be in position to persuade their Republican colleagues to deal fairly on redistricting in order to get other business accomplished. Most importantly, they will be in a position to build a legal record – both during the Legislative Session and during LRB deliberations – that will make it more likely for the Department of Justice – or the DC court – to block an unfair and discriminatory plan. A DOJ objection would force the LRB to repair the flawed map, or if the LRB fails to act, force consideration by the courts. Remember that 2011 will be the first time that the Department of Justice will be reviewing redistricting plans with a Democratic President occupying the White House. In all previous redistricting years since the Voting Rights Act was passed in 1965, Republicans have controlled the White House and were in charge at the DOJ (1971, 1981, 1991, 2001).

Contact: Matt Angle

[About Us](#) | [Donate](#) | [Sign up for Emails](#) | [Visit our Website](#) | [Facebook](#)

The Lone Star Project is an activity of the Lone Star Fund.

Contributions or gifts to the Lone Star Fund are not tax deductible. All contributions are subject to the prohibitions and limitations of the Federal Election Campaign Act. Federal Law requires us to use best efforts to collect and report the name, mailing address, occupation and name of employer of individuals whose contributions exceed \$200 in a calendar year.

Paid for by The Lone Star Fund, 6 E St, SE, Washington, DC 20003.
Not authorized by any candidate or candidate's committee.

