

Fair Districts GA Introduction and 2021 Plan

Statewide Town Hall- March 1, 2021



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.

Redistricting Timeline for 2021

January 11 – March 31	Regular legislative session
April 30	Census release: state population totals Congressional reapportionment
Spring - Summer	Local hearings throughout state by legislative committees (assumed – awaiting plan from committees)
 September 30	Census release: full PL 94-171 data
October → ?	Legislature drawing official plans
 Late 2021 or early 2022	Special legislative session to vote on redistricting plans

2021 FDGA Strategy

1. Convince Georgia General Assembly to produce fair maps during decennial redistricting, avoiding another gerrymander
 - Balanced between political parties
 - Reflecting racial makeup of population
 - Responsive to shifts in voting patterns
 - Aligned with communities of interest
2. Improve transparency of redistricting process
3. Build support in and out of the legislature for reform legislation in future cycles



2021 Tactics – Public Pressure

- Cultivate and mobilize a state-wide network of citizen activists
- Cultivate and leverage a state-wide network of media contacts
- Educate legislators, citizens, business community, and the media on prior gerrymandering and its impact
- Provide independent, non-partisan benchmarks for fair maps based on 2020 census
- Advocate for fair maps and future legislation directly with key legislators
- Multiply our effort through a network of strategic partners

Our partner network



**PRINCETON
GERRYMANDERING
PROJECT**

Fixing bugs in democracy



Princeton / FDGA partnership

- Report: “20-year history of gerrymandering” – case for change
- Provide independent benchmarks prior to legislative map drawing for
 - Partisan balance
 - Racial balance
 - Degree of incumbency protection
- Measure maps drawn by the legislature against the benchmarks – rapid response
- Assist in defining communities of interest in Georgia
- Educate legislators and the public on what constitutes a fair redistricting plan

	Partisan balance	Racial balance	Incumbency protection
Congress	?	?	?
House	?	?	?
Senate	?	?	?



How can I connect with Fair Districts GA?

Outreach

Heather
Hallett

- Statewide network of citizen activists
- Citizen engagement & events

Education

Nancy
Watkins

- Content production
 - Multi-purpose
 - Multi-format
- Education events

Legislative advocacy

Janet Grant

- Legislative relationships
- Advocate for fair maps
- Advocate for transparency
- Shape & support legislation

Mapping & analysis

Karen McCown
& Raenell Soller

- Historical research
- 2021 fairness benchmarks
- Legislative map assessment
- Mapping

Communi- cation

(open)

- Media relations
- Publicity
- Communication platforms & guidelines
- Social media oversight

Email: info@FairDistrictsGA.org

Web: www.FairDistrictsGA.org

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

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

Outreach = Joining & Getting Involved

- Step 1: Sign up
 - FairDistrictsGA.org/getinvolved
 - Email alerts & volunteering
 - Form includes name, address, phone, email to enable district-specific outreach
 - Also sign up for committee work through this form
- Step 2: Activities available now
 - Contact legislators
 - Request a speaker
 - Write letters to the editor
 - Postcards

Outreach Committee

- Volunteer with Outreach!
 - Plan events like this one
 - Manage membership intake and contact
 - Help organize the citizen activist network
- Contact me if interested or with any questions about how to get involved
heather.hallett@hallettcapital.com

2021 Redistricting

- Citizens must be involved in the process
 - Engaged citizens are crucial to preventing gerrymandering
 - You best understand your districts and communities
- Understand your current district lines
 - Mapping committee at FDGA can help
- Attend local hearings
 - Attend and speak at local hearings
 - FDGA will keep you informed, district-specific when possible
- Hold legislators accountable
 - Respond to proposed maps, join Rapid Response team
- Involve local media
 - Communication team at FDGA can help



FDGA Education Committee

Mission: To empower Georgians through education.

To provide education events and materials to inform Georgians about gerrymandering, need for redistricting reform, and what Georgians can do to make a difference.

- Provide virtual presentations around the state via ZOOM
 - **Gerrymandering in Georgia**
 - What is redistricting and its impact on elections
 - History of gerrymandering in GA, proof of gerrymandering through the years
 - Gerrymandering attempts in recent years, and
 - What you can do to help bring about redistricting reform

Help FDGA find groups in your committee/district who would like a presentation.

www.fairdistrictsga.org / Get Involved / Request a Speaker

FDGA Education Committee

Future presentations:

Topics such as:

- 20-Year History of Gerrymandering in Georgia
- The Process and Need for Transparency and Accountability
- Drawing Fairer Maps

Online trainings, information

- Short videos on website, YouTube
- Train the Trainer – provide materials and online training/assistance for people who want to present within their community/district.

FDGA Education Committee

Print Materials:

- Develop print materials, handouts, fliers, Qs and As, Myth Busters, postcards
- Add to FDGA website – being updated and expanded
 - In English and Spanish
 - Information, list of legislative committee members
 - How To's to assist community groups on
 - Writing effective letters to legislators,
 - Postcarding safely in time of COVID-19,
 - Packet on writing Letters to the Editor or Op Eds.
 - Need some different information, let us know.

Contact Nancy Watkins: nbwatkins1@gmail.com

Legislative Advocacy Committee



- Committee
 - Develop ongoing legislator relationships with target legislators
 - Advocate for FDGA supported reform legislation and fair redistricting practices
 - Coordinate advocacy strategies such as lobby days, action alerts, partnerships, local resolutions
 - Experience or passion with legislative advocacy preferred, contact Janet Grant at janet473@gmail.com
- Citizen Advocate
 - Support the goals of Fair Districts through legislator outreach
 - Email, phone calls, postcards, social media posts
 - Attend hearings, public meetings
 - Participate in “lobby days”
 - Sign up on the FDGA web site for action alerts

advocacy
to change “what is”
into “what should be”

FDGA Legislation



Democracy Act

- SR 20/HR 55 in 21/22 session
- A resolution for constitutional amendment includes transparency, standards, independent commission
- Requires passage of "joint" resolution both houses by 2/3 majority
- Requires ratification by majority of voters on ballot of even year general election
- Effective the first of January following passage by voters

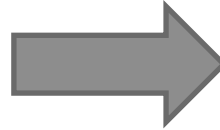
Transparency Act

- SB 186/HB 189 in 21/22 session
- Bill focused on transparency of redistricting process
- Requires passage by majority in both houses
- Requires Governor to sign or do nothing (not veto)
- Typically becomes effective first of July after passage



Democracy Act: GA Constitutional Amendment

Article III, Section II, Paragraph II.
Apportionment of General
Assembly. The General Assembly
shall apportion the Senate and
House districts. Such districts shall
be composed of contiguous
territory. The apportionment of the
Senate and of the House of
Representatives shall be changed
by the General Assembly *as
necessary after each United States
decennial census.**



Article III, Section II of the
Constitution is amended by revising
Paragraph II as follows: "Paragraph II.
Apportionment of General Assembly.
~~The General Assembly shall
apportion the Senate and House
districts. Such districts shall be
composed of contiguous territory.~~
The apportionment of the Senate
and of the House of Representatives
shall be changed ~~by the General
Assembly~~ as necessary after each
United States decennial census."

*A 2006 court ruling held that "[t]he frequency of reapportionment between censuses is solely a matter of unfettered legislative discretion, unrestricted by any state constitutional prohibition." *Blum v. Schrader*, 281 Ga. 238, 241 (2006)

2021 Legislative Advocacy

- Advocate for Fair Maps
 - Build legislative relationships
 - Provide case for change
 - Publish fair benchmarks
 - Hold accountable to fair benchmarks
- Advocate for transparency
 - Committee guidelines
 - Public input
 - Transparency Act
- Advocate for reform legislation
 - Democracy Act
- Leverage strategic partnerships



Fair Districts GA Legislative Advocacy Day

Join us on March 9th

- Legislative Panel
- Virginia Success Story
- How to be a Citizen Advocate
- Virtual “Rope Line”



3/1/21

Legislative Advocacy Day

"Under the Dome"
with Fair Districts GA
March 9th 1:30-3:30

Join our virtual lobby day to advocate for fair maps in the 2021 redistricting process.
"Under the GA Dome in 2021"

Register online at
<https://bit.ly/FDGAadvocacy>



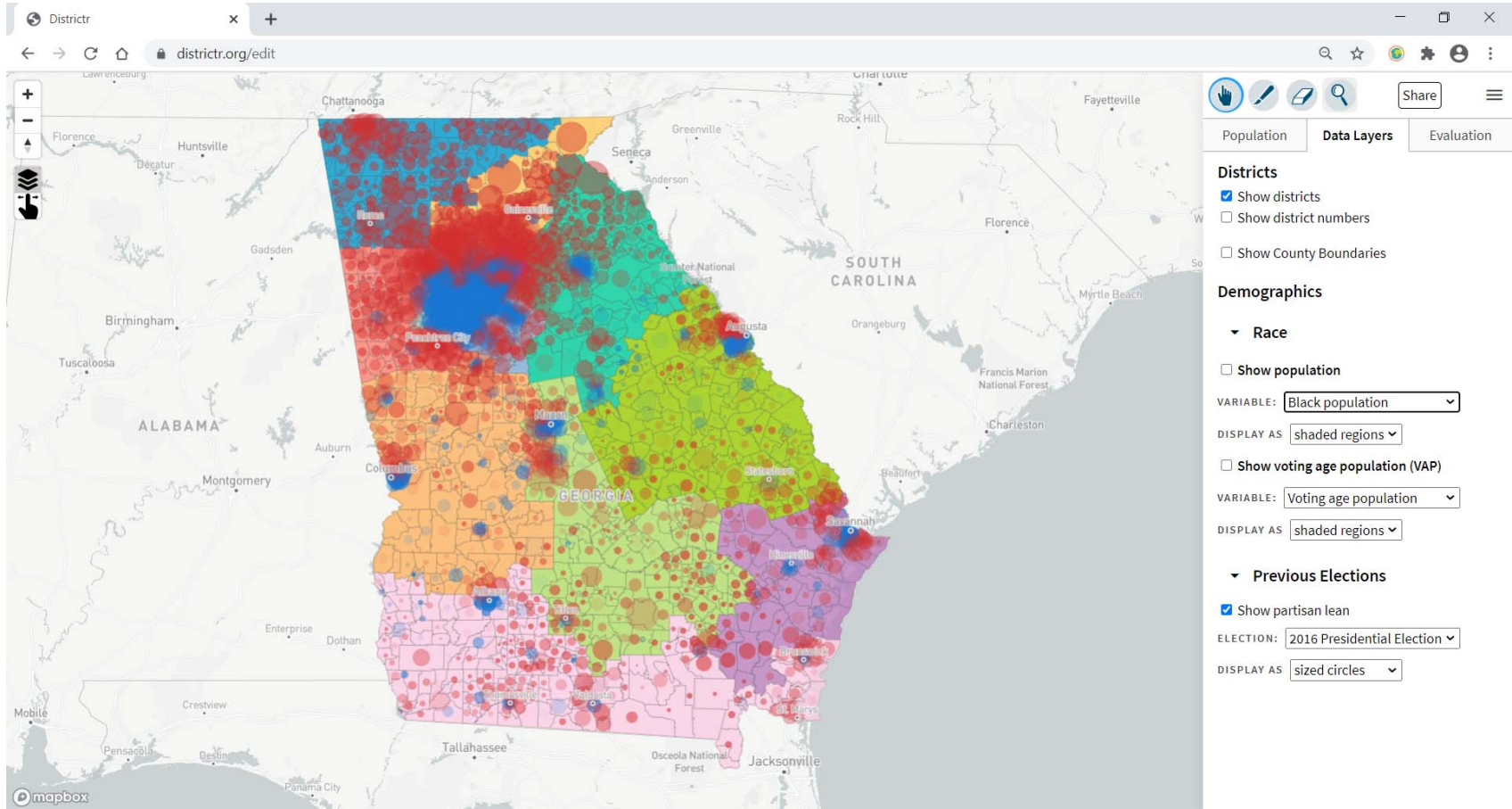
FDGA Mapping & Analysis Committee

We analyze data and maps to uncover factual evidence of gerrymandering in Georgia and present findings in FDGA materials.

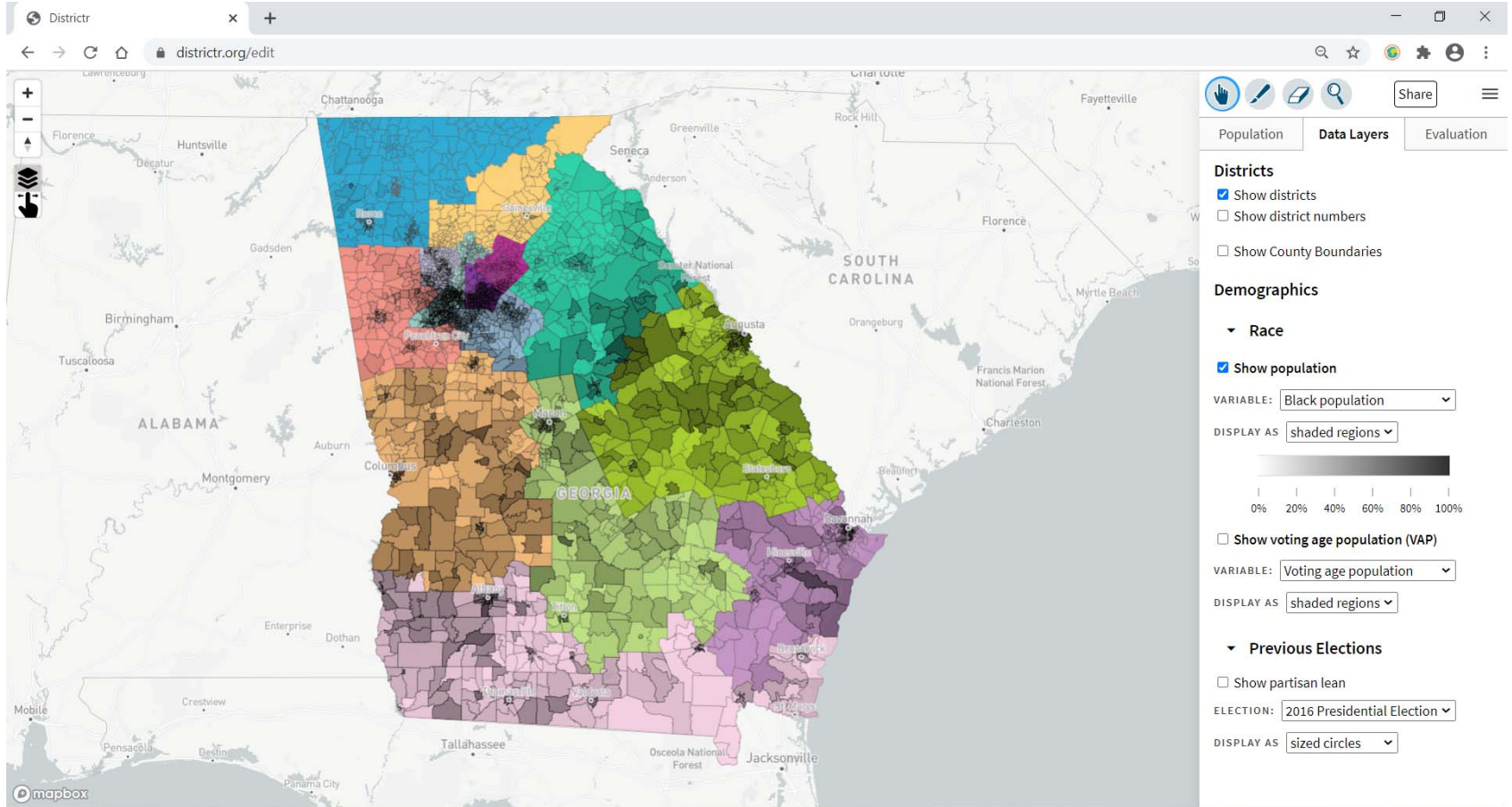
- Project types
 - Mapping
 - Data analysis
 - General research



M&A Projects – Mapping



M&A Projects – Mapping



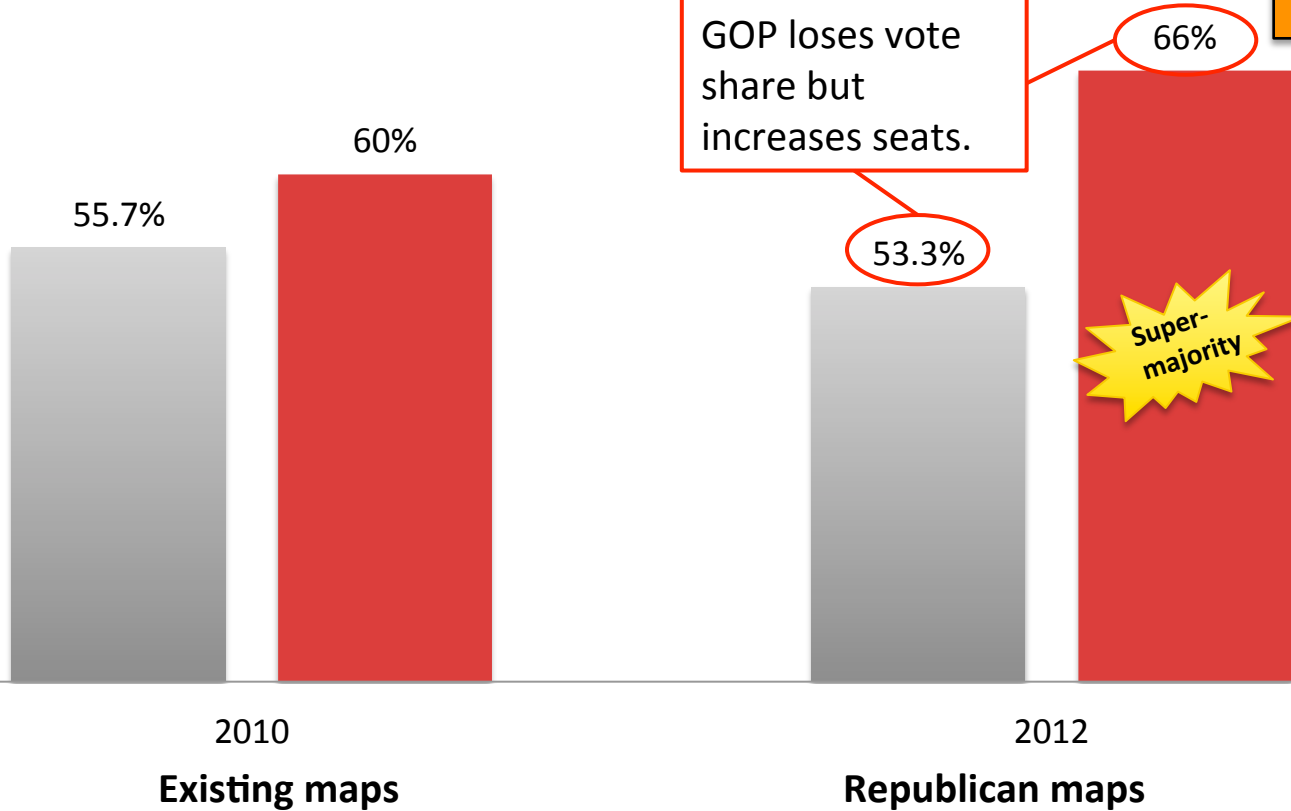
M&A Projects – Data Analysis

Republican state-wide vote share vs. state House seat share

■ GOP State-wide vote ■ % GOP Seats

GOP state-wide vote share = average of president, governor, U.S. Senate races

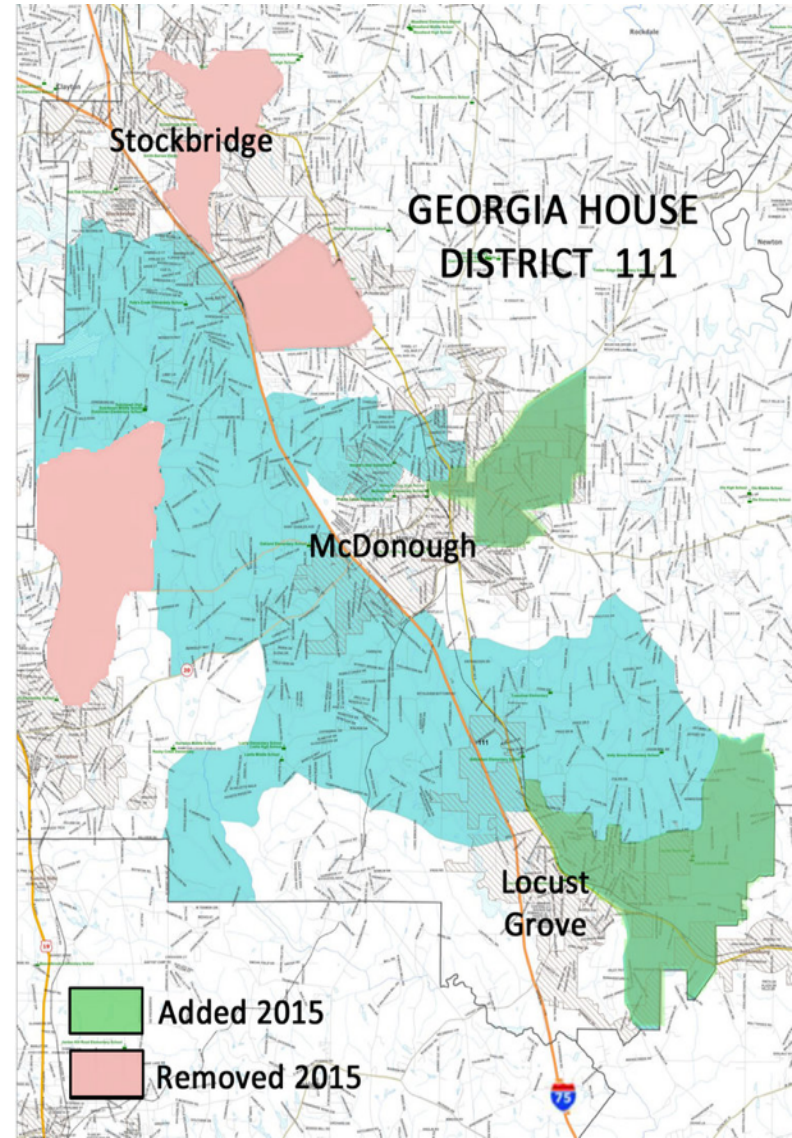
GOP loses vote share but increases seats.



M&A Projects – Research

Republicans adjusted HD111 to protect an incumbent

- 2014: (R) Incumbent won by 1124 votes (53%)
- 2016: (R) Incumbent won by 946 votes (52%)
- 2018 (Jan. special): New (R) won by 742 votes (51%)
- 2018 (Nov.): (D) won by 3758 votes (57%)




M&A – Current Projects

Projects	Progress
Existing congressional, state Senate, and state House maps overlaid onto Google street maps	Available on website
“Example” maps showing packed and cracked districts—including how cities have been divided	Draft version underway
“Conjectural” maps—fair and gerrymandered; what might competitive maps look like? What districts might be targets for gerrymandering and where?	Underway
20-year Georgia General Assembly analysis spreadsheet and History of Gerrymandering presentation	Available
Princeton Gerrymandering Project / FDGA collaboration— benchmarking Congressional, state senate, and state house districts PowerPoint presentation and future white paper	Draft version underway

- Want to know more? Want to get involved?
- Email karen@karenmccown.com or post your name and email in the chat!



Communications Committee

- Media Relations
 - Publicity
 - Social Media
 - Messaging
 - Graphic Design
 - Communication Platforms/
Guidelines
- 

Media relations

- Cultivating list of media reporters and outlets across the state
- Jan 25 press release: Announced the Princeton – FDGA partnership
- Recent interviews
 - Feb 11: Rebecca Rolfes – Savannah Morning News
 - Feb 12: Atlanta Journal-Constitution – backgrounder w. Mark Niese
 - Feb 15: Georgia Recorder – Impact of Census Delay (FDGA quoted)
- Letters to the editor
 - Your voice amplifies our message
 - Check the LTE box on web signup form

Connect with us on social media

- Facebook – FairDistrictsGA (public group)
 - FairDistrictsGA Private Group
 - Fair Districts GA Public Events
- On-topic posts, comments, shares welcome
- Please no partisanship!
- Twitter - @FairDistrictsGA
 - Politics takes place on Twitter
 - Follow, retweet, tag us
 - Spread the word
 - Useful hashtags: #gapol, #fairmapsGA, #ShowyourworkGA, #redistricting



Upcoming events

March	PGP/FDGA report: “Twenty-year history of gerrymandering”
April / May	Town halls: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Twenty-year history• Transparency in redistricting• Redistricting in your community
Spring - Summer	Community events
Late 2021 or early 2022	Special legislative session to vote on redistricting plans

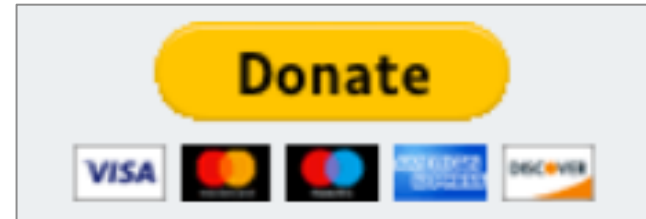


Keep in touch

Email: info@FairDistrictsGA.org
Web: www.FairDistrictsGA.org
Twitter: [@FairDistrictsGA](https://twitter.com/FairDistrictsGA)
FB: [FairDistrictsGA / @FairDistrictsGA](https://www.facebook.com/FairDistrictsGA/)

kdlawler@bellsouth.net

www.FairDistrictsGA.org/Donate



How do we get fair maps?

Strengths	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Passion for the cause• Facts are on our side• Georgia is on the national radar• Princeton partnership• Lots of people & partners interested• Legislators are aware of us	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Raise our voices• Grow community involvement• Timeframe will be compressed• Legislators don't want to give up power



Activism works!

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Thank you!

