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# MID-DECADE REDISTRICTING

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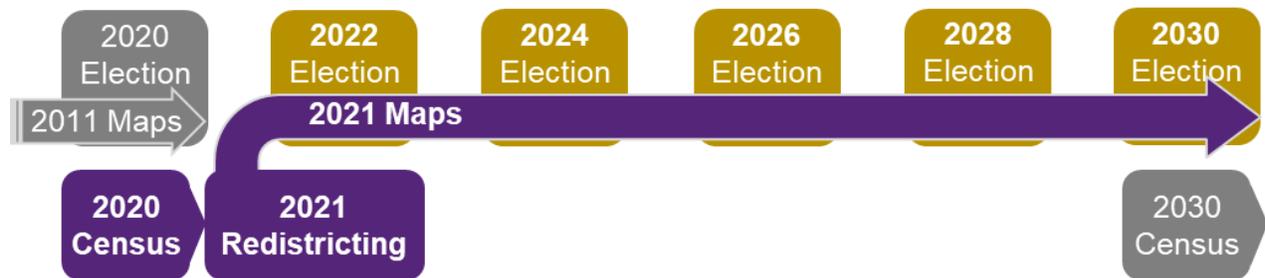
## Why mid-decade redistricting is a problem

- Confuses voters about what district they are in and who represents them
- Disrupts elected leaders' relationships with the communities they represent
- Requires legislators to adjust campaigns to changing districts
- Enables repeated gerrymandering to keep incumbents in power and stifle competition

## Why it exists

- Although GA law requires State Legislative redistricting to follow the census, it does not specify a timeline for completion.
- GA law does not specify timing or use of census for Congressional redistricting.
- GA law has no explicit requirement to *use* completed redistricting plans in elections.
- GA case law<sup>1</sup> allows any number of redistricting plans per decade. Since 2006, 71 districts have been altered in 4 major waves of mid-decade redistricting, all for partisan gain.

## How redistricting should work



## Constitutional amendment needed

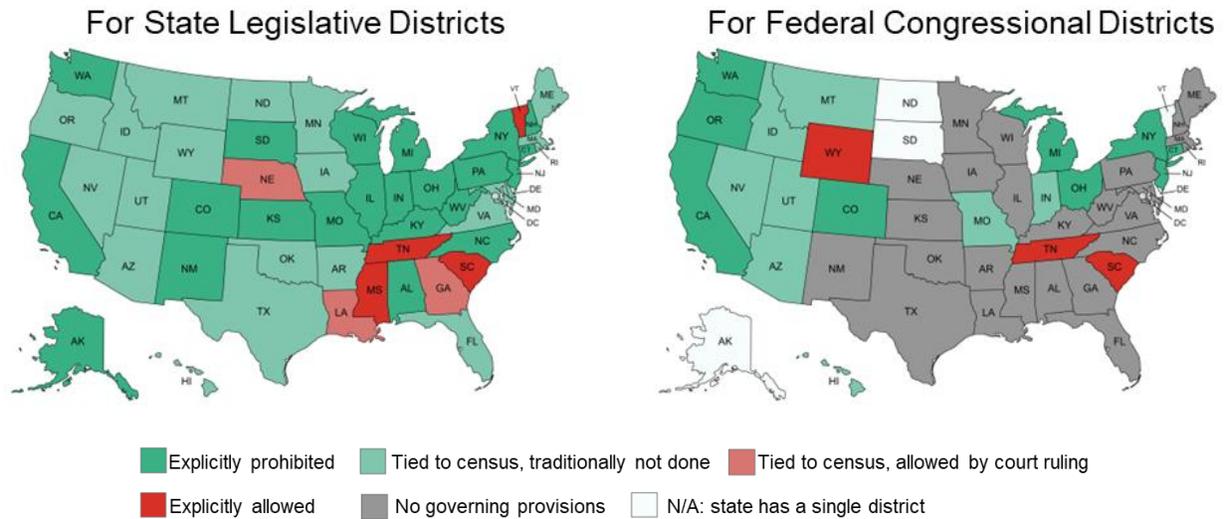
- Require that redistricting take place in—and only in—the odd-numbered year after each U.S. decennial census.
- Require that the new redistricting plan be used in the next even-numbered year election and all those following until the next redistricting plan is adopted.
- In the event of a court-ordered mid-decade redistricting, require that changes be the minimum needed to comply with the order, defined as the fewest voters and districts affected.

<sup>1</sup>Blum v. Schrader, 2006 (GA Supreme Court)

<sup>2</sup>Sources: Loyola Law School website: All About Redistricting (redistricting.lls.edu); "Taking the Re out of Redistricting", Georgetown Law Journal, 2007



## State laws governing mid-decade redistricting<sup>2</sup>



## SR 558, HR 1033

### SECTION 1.

Article III, Section II of the Constitution is amended by revising Paragraph II as follows:

"Paragraph II. *Apportionment of General Assembly.* (a) The General Assembly shall apportion the Senate and House districts and shall provide for Congressional districts pursuant to federal law. Such districts shall be composed of contiguous territory.

(b) The apportionment and districts of the Senate, ~~and of the House of Representatives,~~ and of Congress provided for in subparagraph (a) of this paragraph shall only be changed by the General Assembly as necessary in the first odd-numbered year subsequent to after each United States decennial census.

(c) Following the apportionment and redistricting provided for in subparagraph (b) of this paragraph, any additional changes shall only be made when necessary to comply with an order of a court of competent jurisdiction and shall be limited to those changes necessary to correct the specific deficiencies established in such court order."

### SECTION 2.

The above proposed amendment to the Constitution shall be published and submitted as provided in Article X, Section I, Paragraph II of the Constitution. The ballot submitting the above proposed amendment shall have written or printed thereon the following:

- YES    Shall the Constitution of Georgia be amended so as to provide that the apportionment and districts of the Senate, House of Representatives, and of Congress be changed by the General Assembly only in the first odd-numbered year subsequent to each United States decennial census unless otherwise specifically required by a court order?"
- NO

All persons desiring to vote in favor of ratifying the proposed amendment shall vote "Yes." All persons desiring to vote against ratifying the proposed amendment shall vote "No." If such amendment shall be ratified as provided in said Paragraph of the Constitution, it shall become a part of the Constitution of this state.