



REDISTRICTING IN MICHIGAN

Should Politicians Choose Their Voters?

Redistricting is the process of drawing legislative districts – for U.S. Congress, MI Senate, and MI House of Representatives – to determine who will represent you. Legislators currently draw the lines and choose their voters. For the party in power – the objective is to put the opposing party’s voters into the fewest number of districts as possible. As the Detroit Free Press noted in its editorial on August 9, 2015, the legislature changes the maps based on which party is in control. **This is not democracy.**

When politicians draw voting maps that manipulate elections – maps that keep the politicians and their party in power, it defies representative democracy.

1991 - Drawing the maps was controlled by Democrats in Texas & resulted in:

	R	D
% Total Votes for Congress	49%	49%
Seats Won	9 (30%)	21 (70%)

2012 – Drawing the maps was controlled by Republicans in Michigan & resulted in:

	R	D
% Total Votes for Congress	46%	51%
Seats Won	9 (64%)	5 (36%)

It doesn’t have to be this way. Many states use a different system for drawing the maps.

The solution is to change the rules so that the process is fair, transparent and impartial.

In California and Arizona, independent citizens’ commissions draw the maps. In states like these, where someone other than the legislature draws the lines, there is higher voter turnout and less partisan bias.

Our goal is to ensure that every vote counts, that every eligible voter can have a say, that our elections represent the will of the people, and that our government is of, by and for the people.

What can you do?

- 1) Educate people on how the current voting maps are drawn, why this is a problem, and possible solutions.
- 2) Stay informed, sign up for updates – sign up tonight or visit www.lwvmi.org.
- 3) Write letters to your local newspaper expressing your concern about this partisan process and the need for change.
- 4) Learn more about the redistricting process. Go to sites such as: Brennan Center, www.brennancenter.org, and Citizen’s Research Council, <http://crcmich.org>.