 Should Politicians Choose Their Voters?
THE PROBLEM:

Politicians are drawing their own voting maps to manipulate elections and keep themselves and their party in power.
What Laws Govern How Voting Maps Are Drawn?
The U.S. Constitution requires that the seats for the U.S. House of Representatives be apportioned to states according to the population count in the federal Census, conducted every 10 years. (Article 1, Section 2)

In the 1964 case of Reynolds v. Sims, the United States Supreme Court determined that the general basis of apportionment should be "one person, one vote." This rule means that, generally, electoral districts must be equal in population according to the most recent census so that each person's vote is equally weighted.

Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act blocks district lines that deny minority voters an equal opportunity “to participate in the political process and to elect representatives of their choice.”
Public Act 463 of 1996 – an act to establish guidelines for the Michigan Legislature and Governor to draw the maps for the MI Senate and MI House of Representatives and to allow the MI Supreme Court to review the maps under certain circumstances.

Public Act 221 of 1999 – an act to stipulate that the Michigan Legislature and Governor draw the voting maps for Congress.
Governor can veto the plans for MI Congressional or Legislative districts.

State Supreme Court can review the maps.
WHAT ARE THE PROBLEMS WITH THE CURRENT SYSTEM?
Partisan politicians manipulate elections to keep themselves and their party in power.
Signed into law a map for Senate redistricting.

Because the district looked like a salamander, the name was coined “Gerrymandering”

Redrawing lines to get a particular result
Gerrymandering
(drawing the lines to suit special interest)

Graph by Stephen Nass, Posted by: WashingtonPost.com
### 1992 and 2012 Congressional Distribution in Texas and Michigan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1992</th>
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<th>2012</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>R</strong></td>
<td><strong>D</strong></td>
<td><strong>R</strong></td>
<td><strong>D</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>% Total Votes for Congress</strong></td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Seats Won</strong></td>
<td>9 (30%)</td>
<td>21 (70%)</td>
<td>9 (64%)</td>
<td>5 (36%)</td>
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When Maps Controlled by Democrats in Texas

When Maps Controlled by Republicans
2012 Michigan Votes for U.S. Congress:
51% for a Democratic candidate and
46% for a Republican candidate

Fair representation in Congress would look like this:

- Republican (6)
- Democrats (8)

Actual representation in Congress looks like this:

- Republican (9)
- Democrats (5)
Current 14th District

Michigan’s 14th Congressional District
2012-2022 District Boundaries

Oakland County
- Farmington Hills
- Keego Harbor
- Lathrup Village
- Oak Park
- City of Orchard Lake Village
- Pontiac
- Royal Oak Twp.
- Southfield
- Sylvan Lake
- West Bloomfield Twp. (part)

Wayne County
- Detroit (part)
- Grosse Pointe
- Grosse Pointe Farms
- Grosse Pointe Park
- Grosse Pointe Woods
- Hamtramck
- Harper Woods
- Village of Grosse Pointe Shores
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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>State Senate</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R</td>
<td>D</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Votes</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Seats Won</td>
<td>27 (71%)</td>
<td>11 (29%)</td>
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# Michigan House of Representatives

## 2012 – Election Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>State House</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Votes</strong></td>
<td>R 46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Seats Won</strong></td>
<td>59 (54%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Votes</strong></td>
<td>D 53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Seats Won</strong></td>
<td>51 (46%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Result:

- The vast majority of districts aren’t competitive.
- This impacts policies as well as elections.
- The party in power meets behind closed doors and draws voting maps that directly benefits itself.
That’s putting the fox in charge of the henhouse – it’s a conflict of interest!
For example, the priorities for Michigan’s budgets have changed during the 10 year period, 2003–2013:

Education

Transportation Funding
The general public has favored more funding for K-12 education.

However, during the last 10 years education funding has decreased.
According to the public opinion polling in May 2015, voters wanted more money spent on roads.

However, transportation funding has decreased when adjusted for inflation.

Source: House Fiscal Agency, September 2013
Calculations by Michigan League for Public Policy with BLS Inflation Calculator.
How The Lines Are Drawn Impacts Policy Issues

- Environment
- Human Services
- Voting Rights
- Civil Rights
THE SOLUTION:

Change the rules so that the process is fair, transparent and impartial.
Legislature: A legislative committee creates a redistricting plan and submits it, in the form of a bill, to the full legislature. Upon final legislative approval, the redistricting plan is subject to gubernatorial veto.

Advisory Commission: Advisory commission drafts a plan, but it is subject to legislative approval.

Independent Commission: Citizens draw maps with no approval from legislature required.
Most states, 27, put the power solely in the hands of the state legislature

Alabama
Delaware
Florida
Georgia
Indiana
Kansas
Kentucky
Louisiana
Maryland
Massachusetts
Michigan
Minnesota
Nebraska
New Hampshire
New Mexico
Nevada
North Carolina
North Dakota
Oregon
South Carolina
South Dakota
Tennessee
Utah
Virginia
West Virginia
Wisconsin
Wyoming
### 17 States Have Advisory Commissions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arkansas</th>
<th>New Jersey</th>
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<tr>
<td>Colorado</td>
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<td>Mississippi</td>
<td>Vermont</td>
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<td>Missouri</td>
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</table>
6 States Have An Independent Commission

Alaska
Arizona
California
Idaho
Montana
Washington
Results of the California Independent Process

- Increased voter confidence
- Higher voter turnout
- Less partisan bias
- Greater accountability
The Arizona legislature contended that the amendment to the state constitution violated a provision of the U.S. Constitution that requires state legislatures to set congressional district boundaries.

On June 29, 2015, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled 5–4 that a voter-approved independent redistricting commission in Arizona is constitutional.

The Arizona commission has 2 Republicans, 2 Democrats and the chair who cannot be a member of either party.
THE GOAL:

- 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.
To change the way maps are drawn the Michigan Constitution would have to be amended:

1. Legislators can introduce legislation to amend the MI Constitution. It has to be passed by the legislature, signed by the Governor and then voted on by the people.
   OR

2. MI citizens can initiate an initiative petition to allow a vote on the issue if enough signatures (over 400,000) are gathered to place it on the statewide ballot.
The League of Women Voters of Michigan supports:

- An open redistricting process that provides meaningful opportunities for public involvement.

- The formation of an independent redistricting commission in lieu of the legislature as the primary redistricting body.
When we vote, we want our elections to be fair, our votes to count and our voices to be heard.

The process of drawing election maps should be transparent, impartial and fair.

Partisan politicians manipulate elections to keep themselves and their party in power. That’s putting the fox in charge of the henhouse – it’s a conflict of interest.
We need to make sure elections reflect the will of the people, not the politicians. Then we’ll have government of, by and for the people.
What Can You Do?

- Sign up to help educate voters on the problem: politicians are drawing the lines.
  - Write Letters to the Editor
  - Post on Facebook
  - Make Phone Calls
  - Knock on Doors

- Learn more about redistricting from the Citizen’s Research Council, [http://crcmich.org](http://crcmich.org).