

WORKING TOWARD FAIR MAPS: REDISTRICTING 101

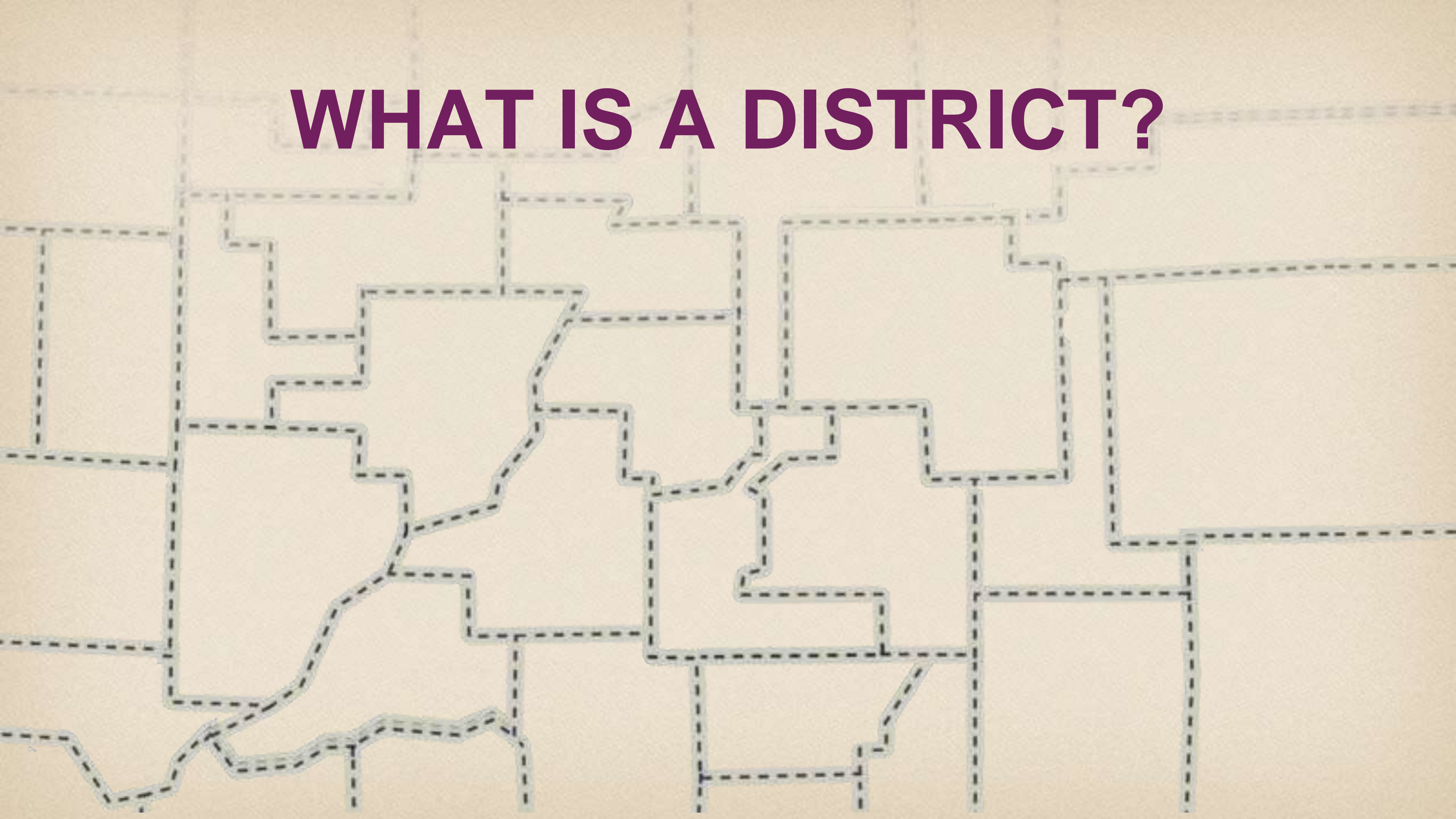




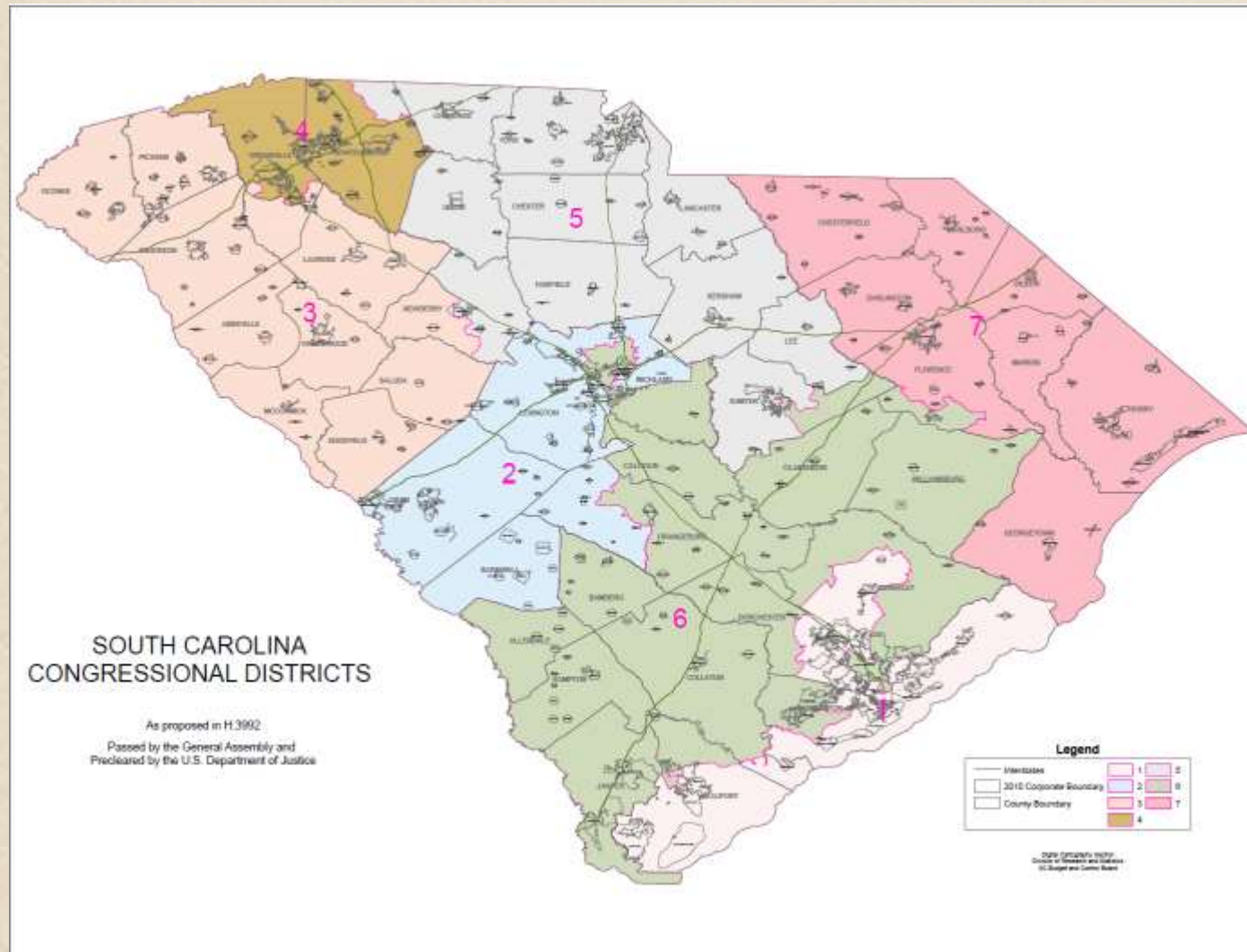
KEY TAKE-AWAYS:

- Understand what **redistricting** and **gerrymandering** are
- See what the **problem** is
- Know what **you can do about it**

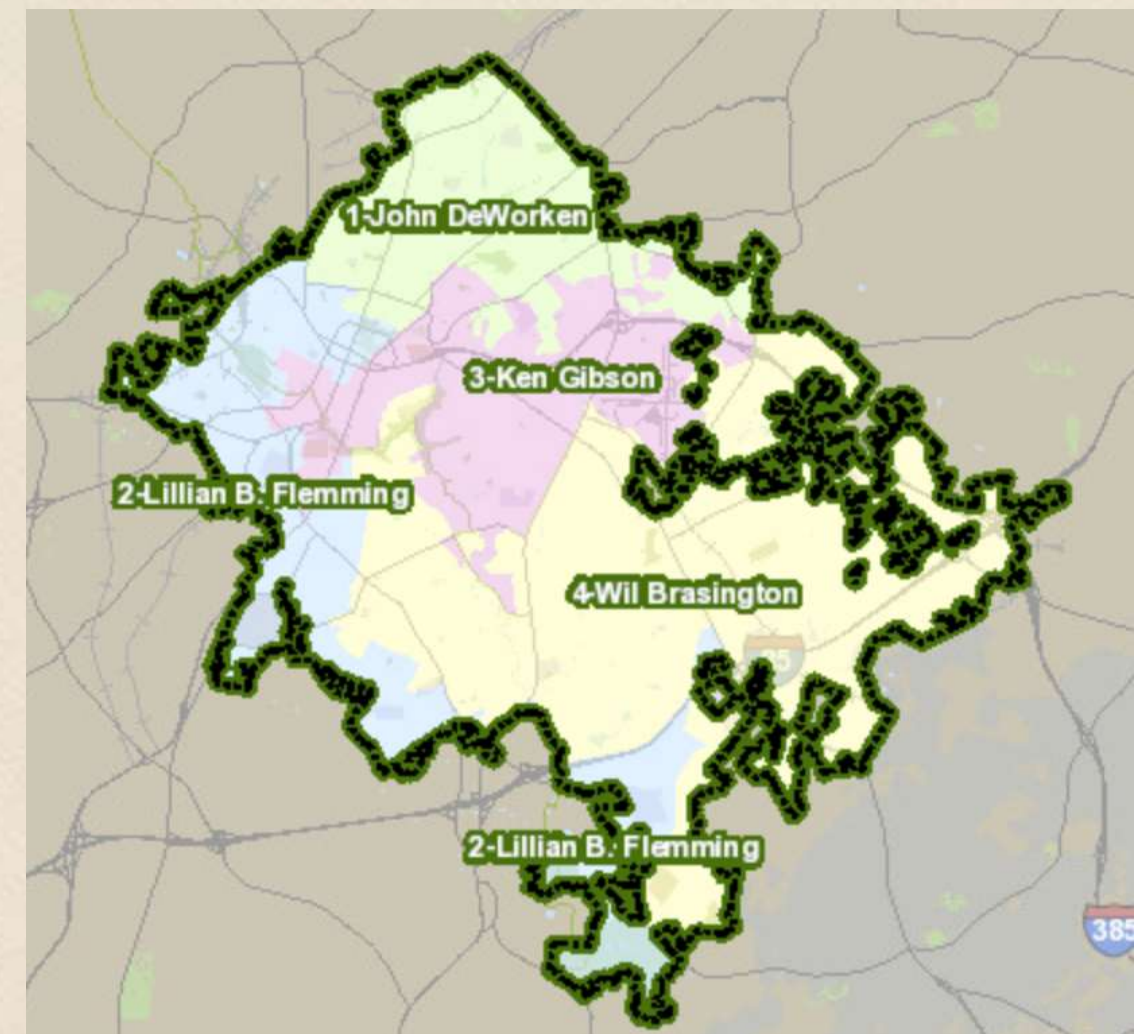
WHAT IS A DISTRICT?



A **district** is an area where **voters** are grouped together to **elect** their **political representatives**.

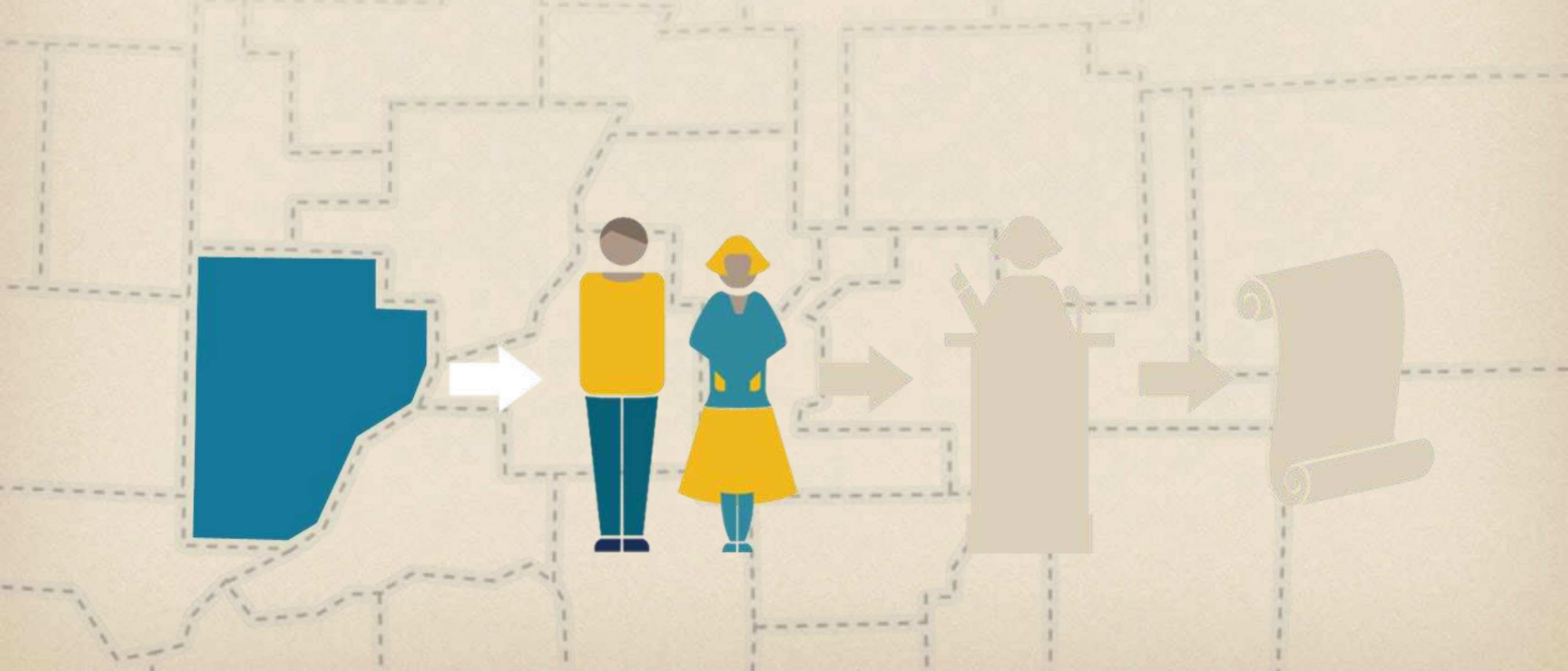


US Congressional Districts

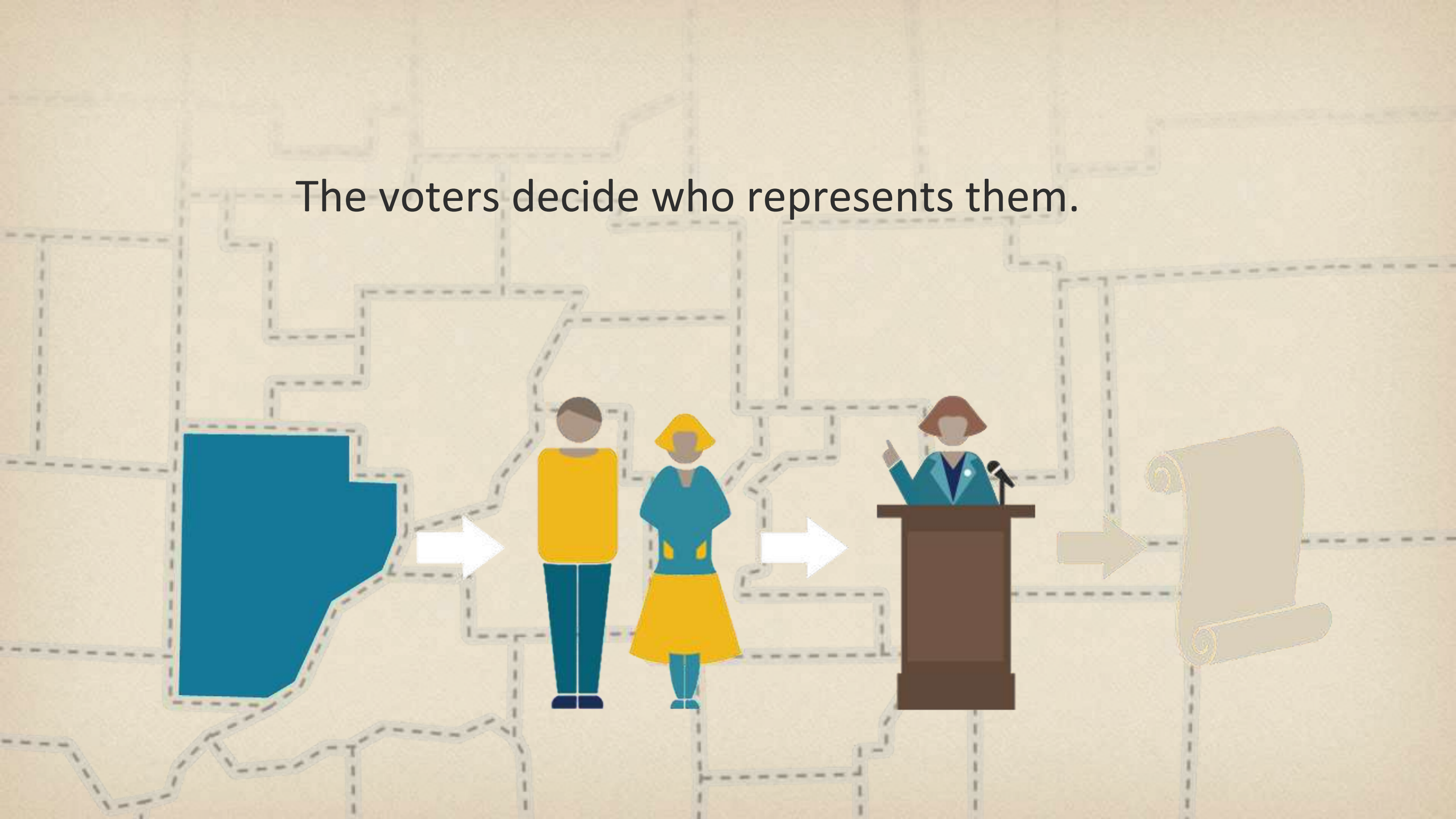


Greenville City Council Districts

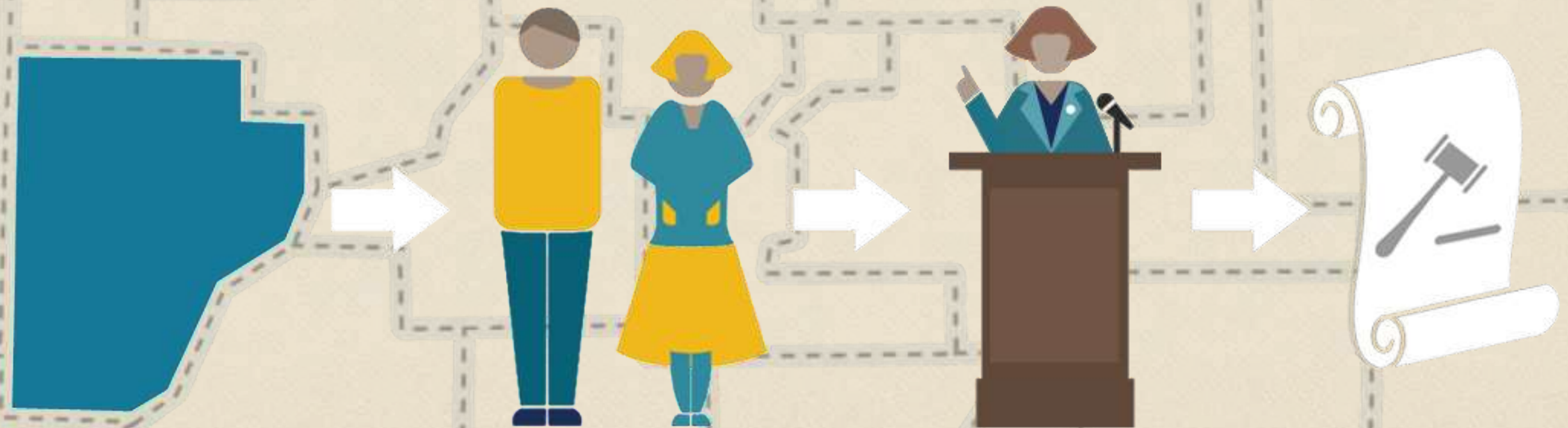
The lines determine who votes where.



The voters decide who represents them.



And the representatives make the laws that govern our states and our country, affecting the air we breathe, the food we eat, and the taxes we pay.





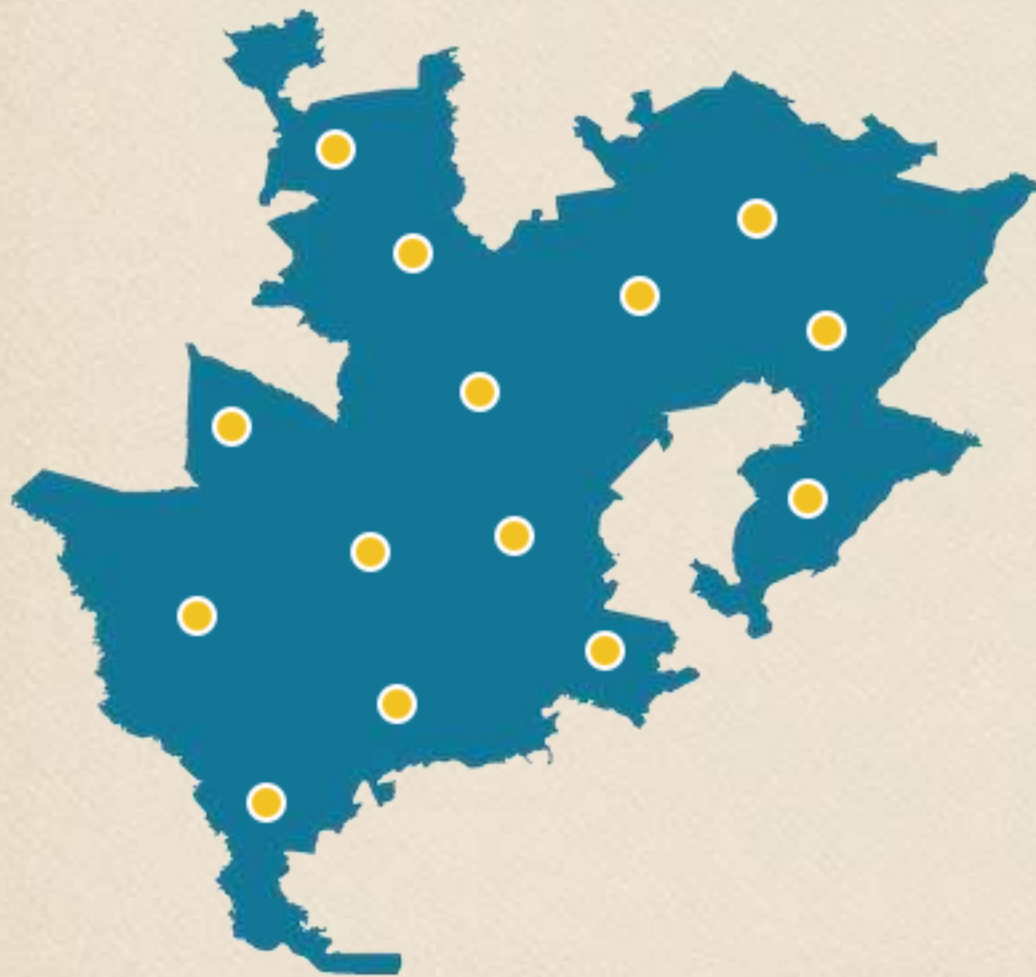
**WHY DO WE HAVE
LEGISLATIVE
DISTRICTS?**

We're required to.

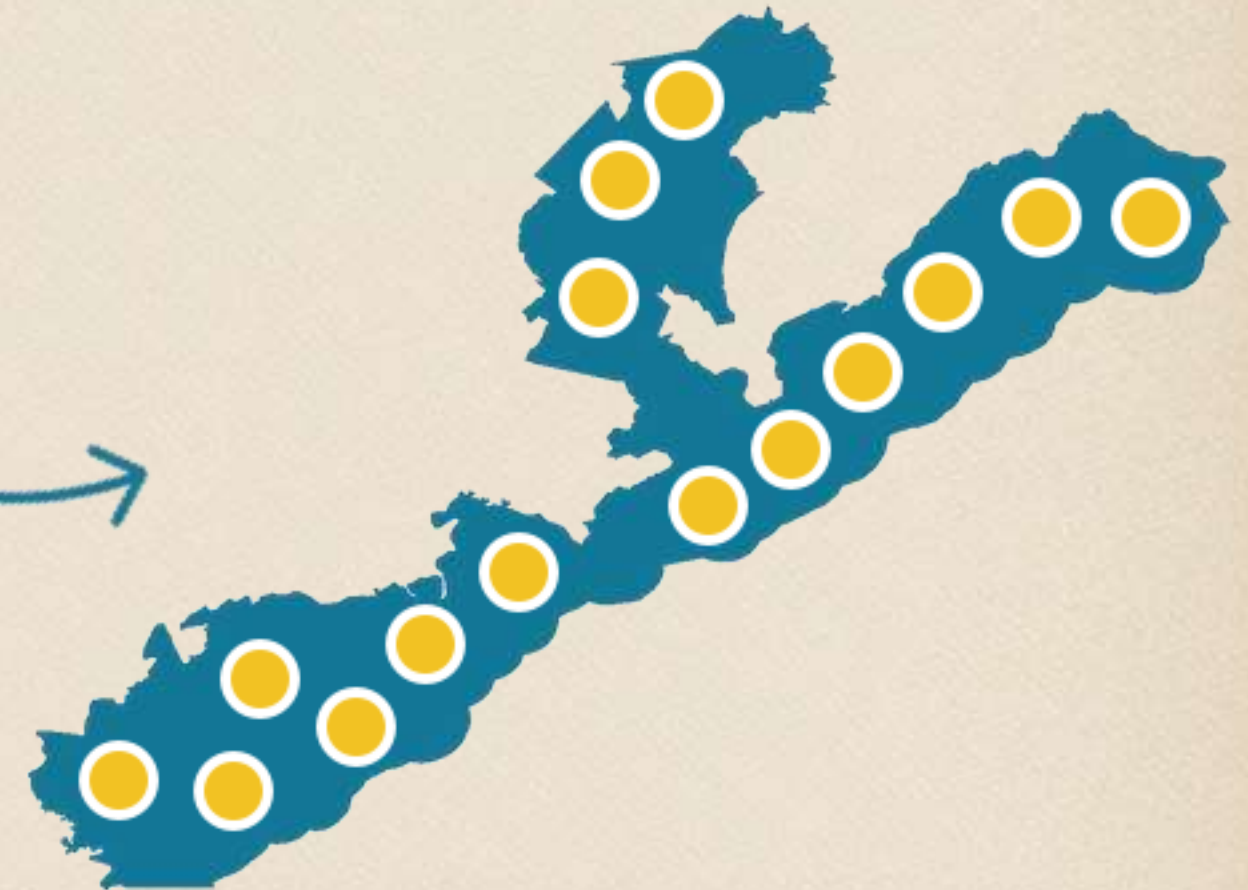
When the Founding Fathers created the House of Representatives, they designed it so that each member would represent and be responsible to roughly the same number of Americans.




Today, that number comes to about 700,000 people per congressional district. The number of representatives in the house has been capped by law since 1929 so as the population has increased, each one has come to represent more people.



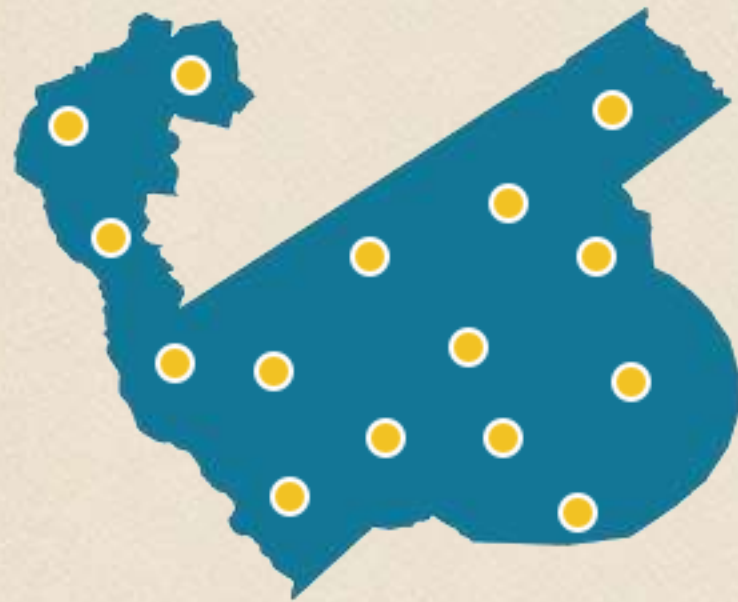
SOUTH CAROLINA 6TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT



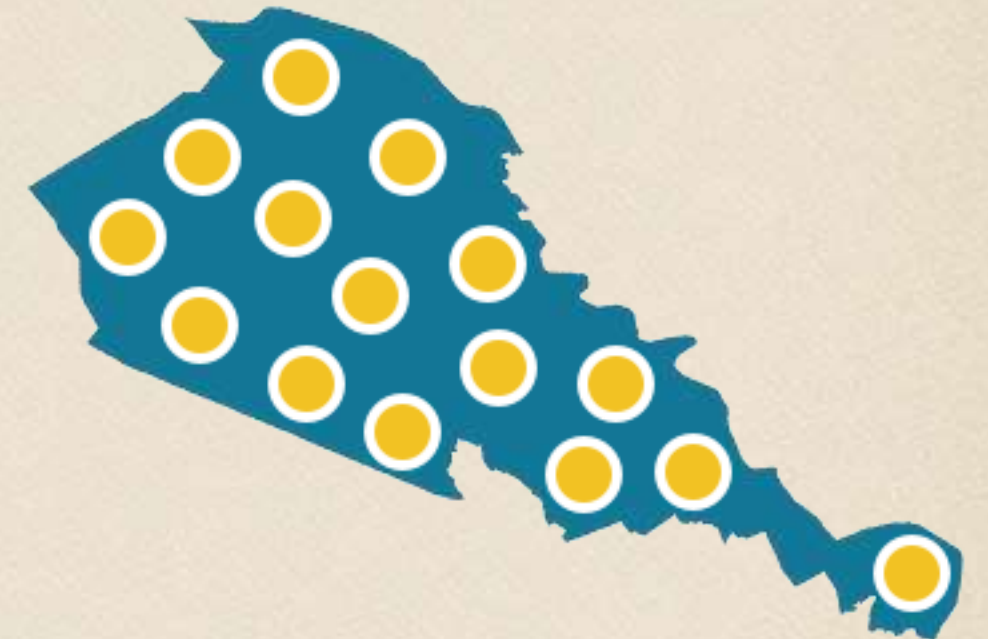
SOUTH CAROLINA 1ST CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

 = 50,000 residents

State legislatures work the same way. For instance, each of the 124 members of the South Carolina House represents about 37,000 residents.



SOUTH CAROLINA 11TH HOUSE DISTRICT



SOUTH CAROLINA 114TH HOUSE DISTRICT

● = 2,500 residents



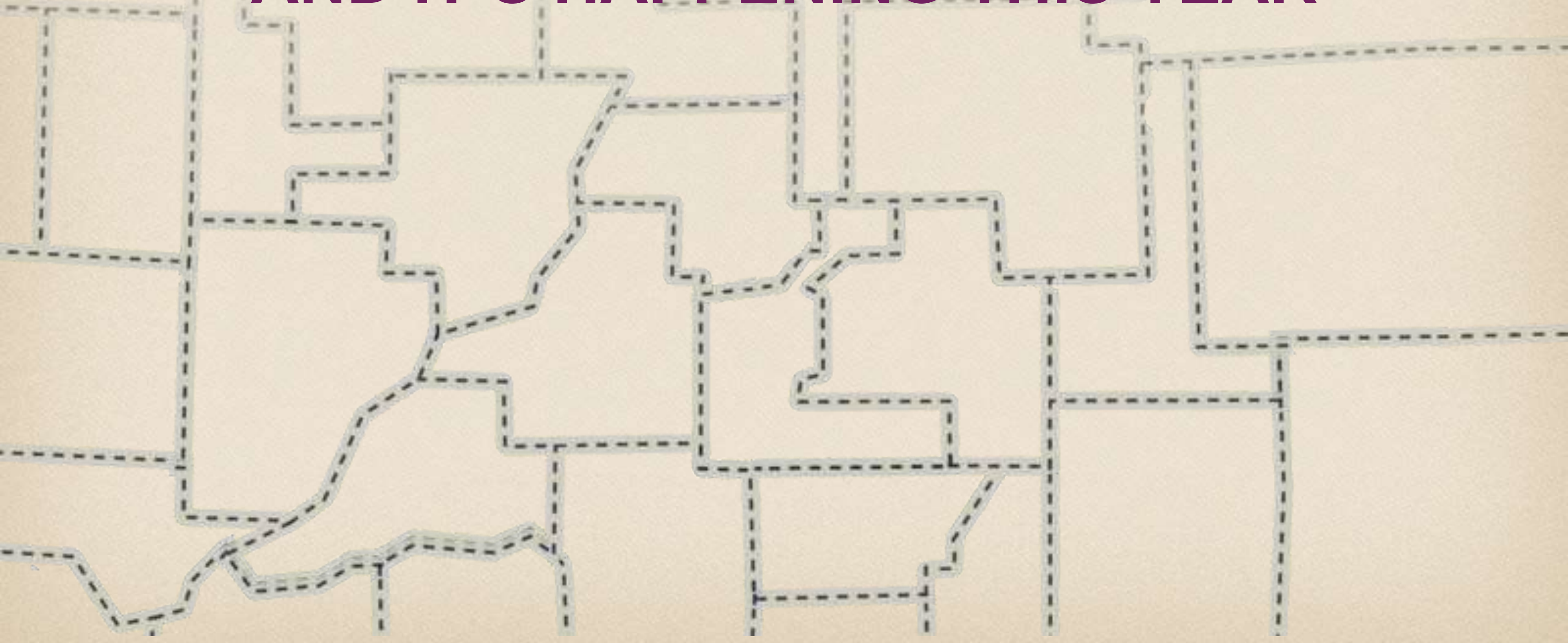
**WHY DO WE REDRAW
THE LINES OF THESE
DISTRICTS EVERY
10 YEARS?**

Here too, it's because we're required to.



And again, it also makes practical sense.

**REDISTRICTING = REDRAWING THE LINES
AND IT'S HAPPENING THIS YEAR**



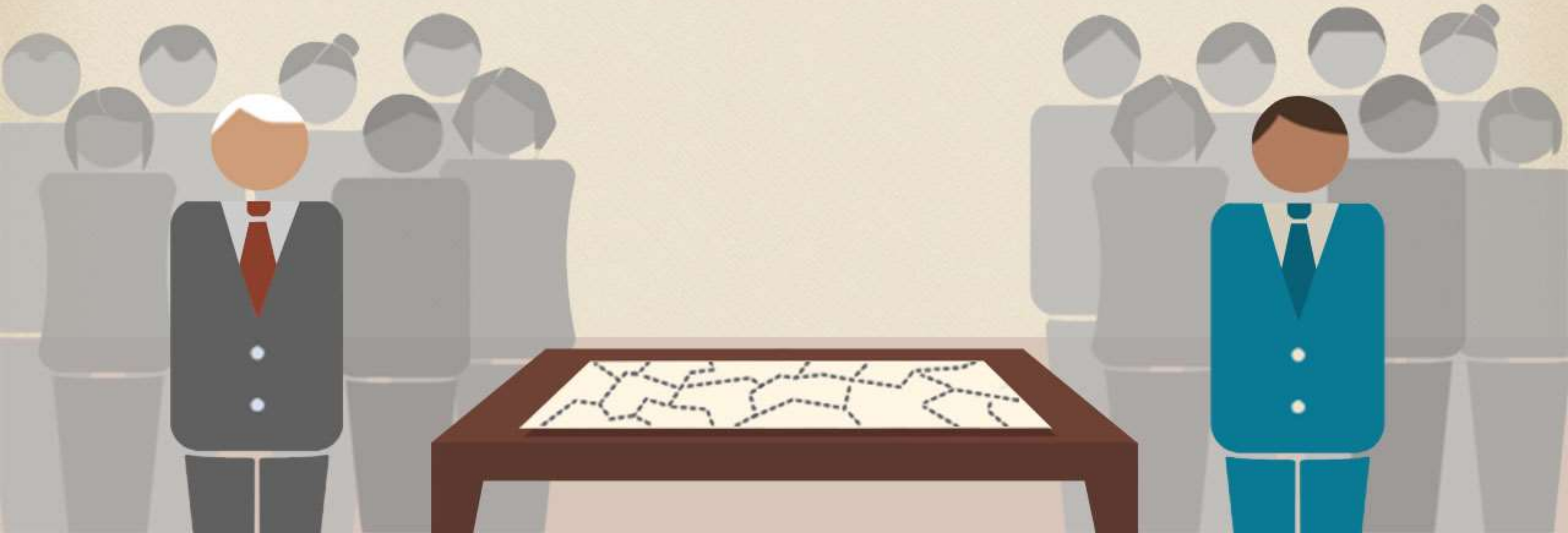


**WHO REDRAWS
THE LINES?**

In South Carolina, like most of the other states, congressional and state legislative district boundaries are drawn by the state legislature.

STATE SENATE

STATE HOUSE



Politics is high stakes, and elected officials – both Democrats and Republicans – are constantly looking to get an edge in their next election.

So it's no surprise that when you give them control over the boundaries of their districts they often manipulate the lines to gain electoral advantage. This is known as gerrymandering.

ger·ry·man·der

/ˈjerē,mændər/

v. To manipulate the boundaries of (an electoral constituency) so as to favor one party or class.

South Carolina
voters



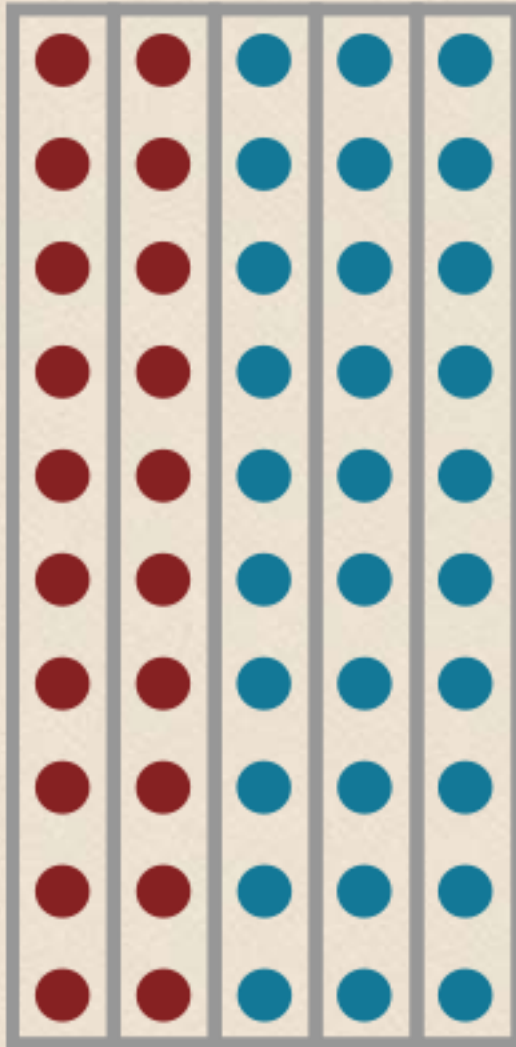
South Carolina
Congressional delegation



Currently, Republicans control the South Carolina legislature. While the breakdown of SC voters hovers around 55% Republican and 45% Democrat, Republicans have 6 of the 7 House Congressional seats.

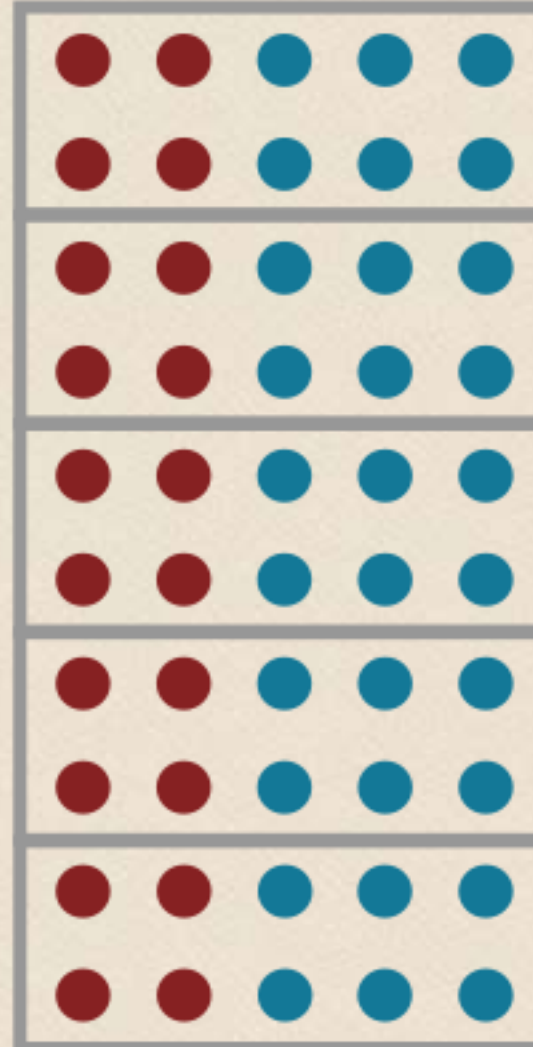
Perfect representation

2 red, 3 blue



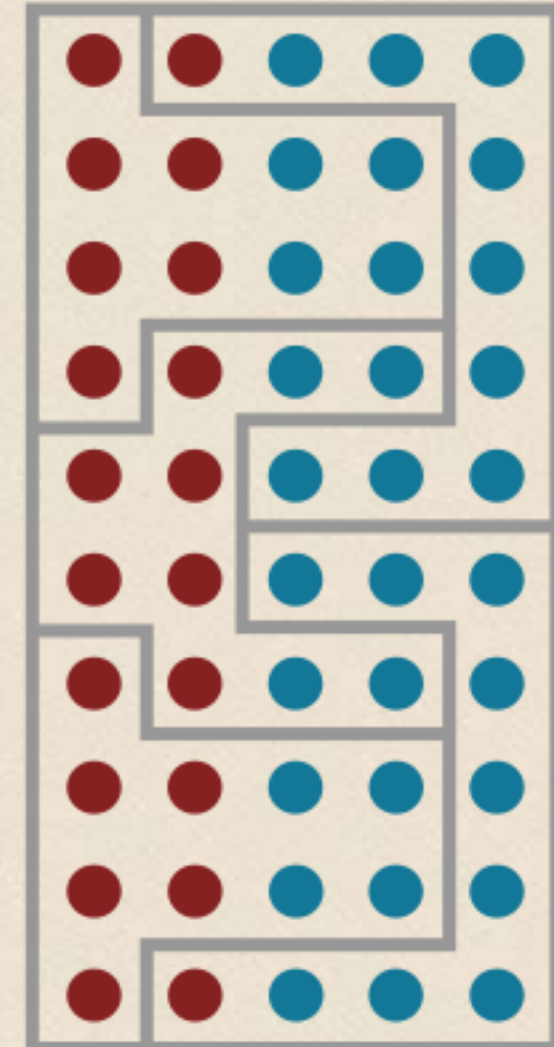
Compact, but unfair

0 red, 5 blue



Neither compact, nor fair

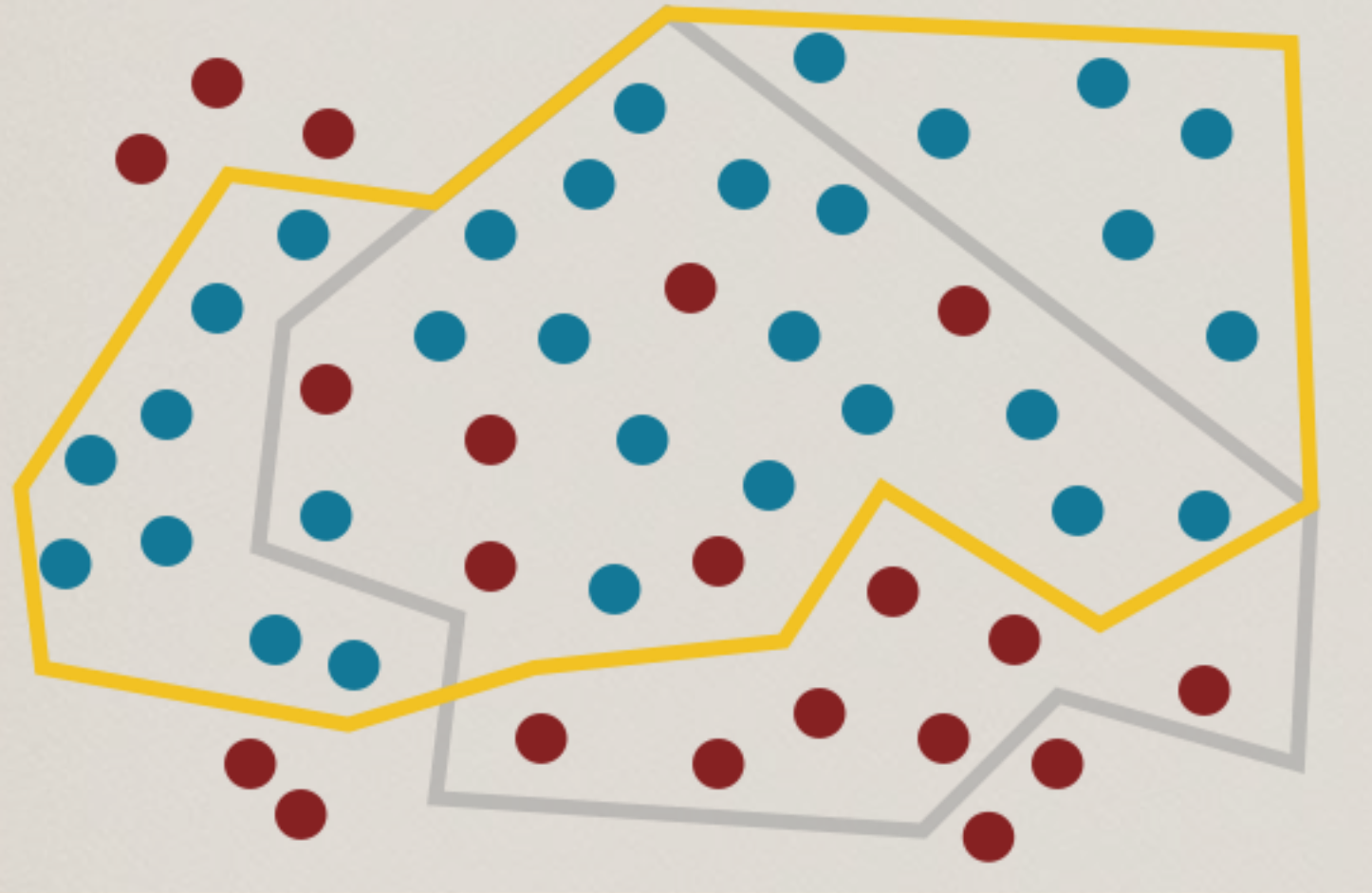
3 red, 2 blue



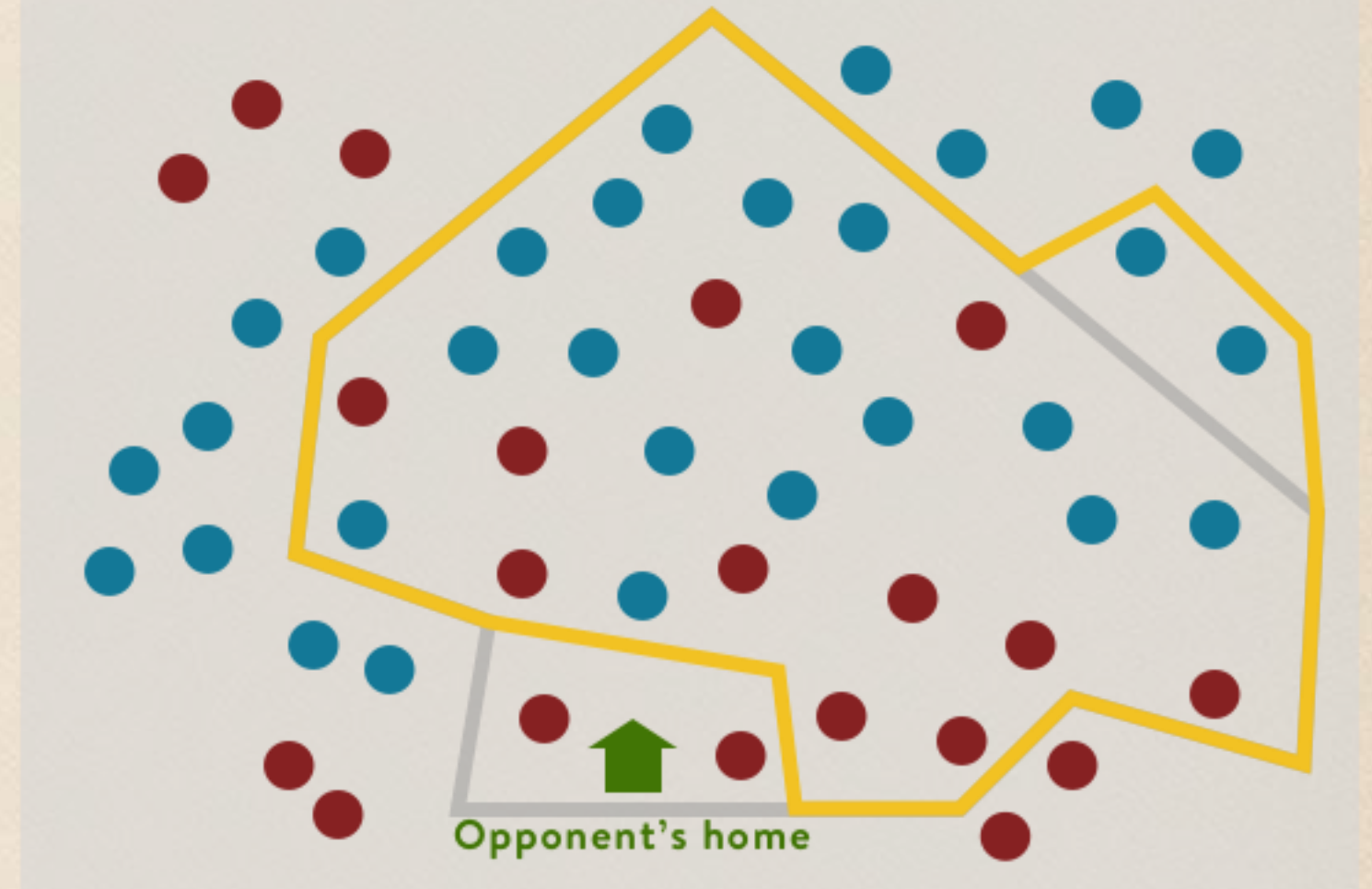
Maps can be manipulated through tactics known as "cracking" and "packing."

Two ways to protect an incumbent

Increase number of
voters from his party



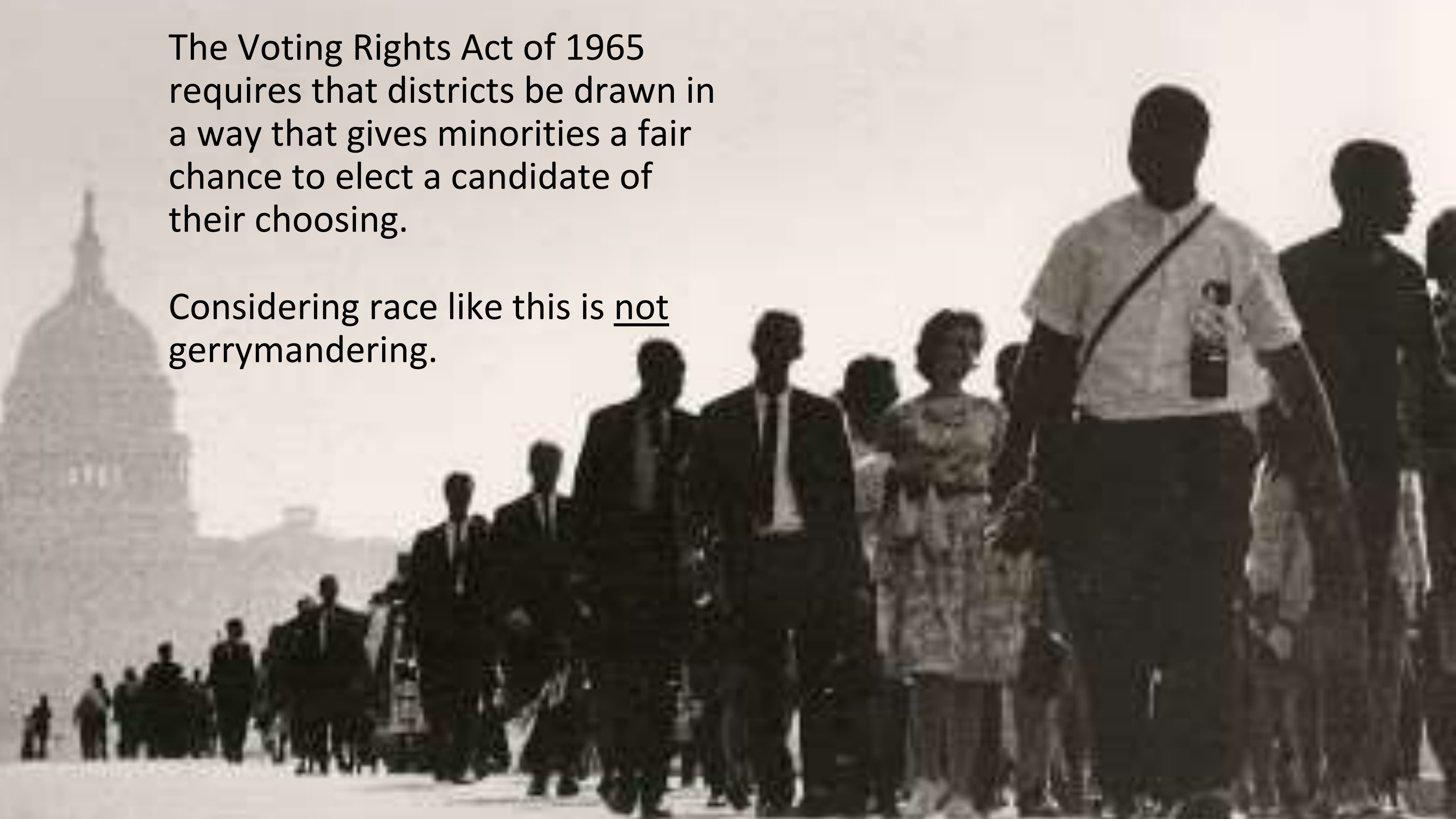
Draw his opponent
out of the district



Districts can also be redrawn to give the incumbent a greater chance of winning reelection.


The Voting Rights Act of 1965 requires that districts be drawn in a way that gives minorities a fair chance to elect a candidate of their choosing.

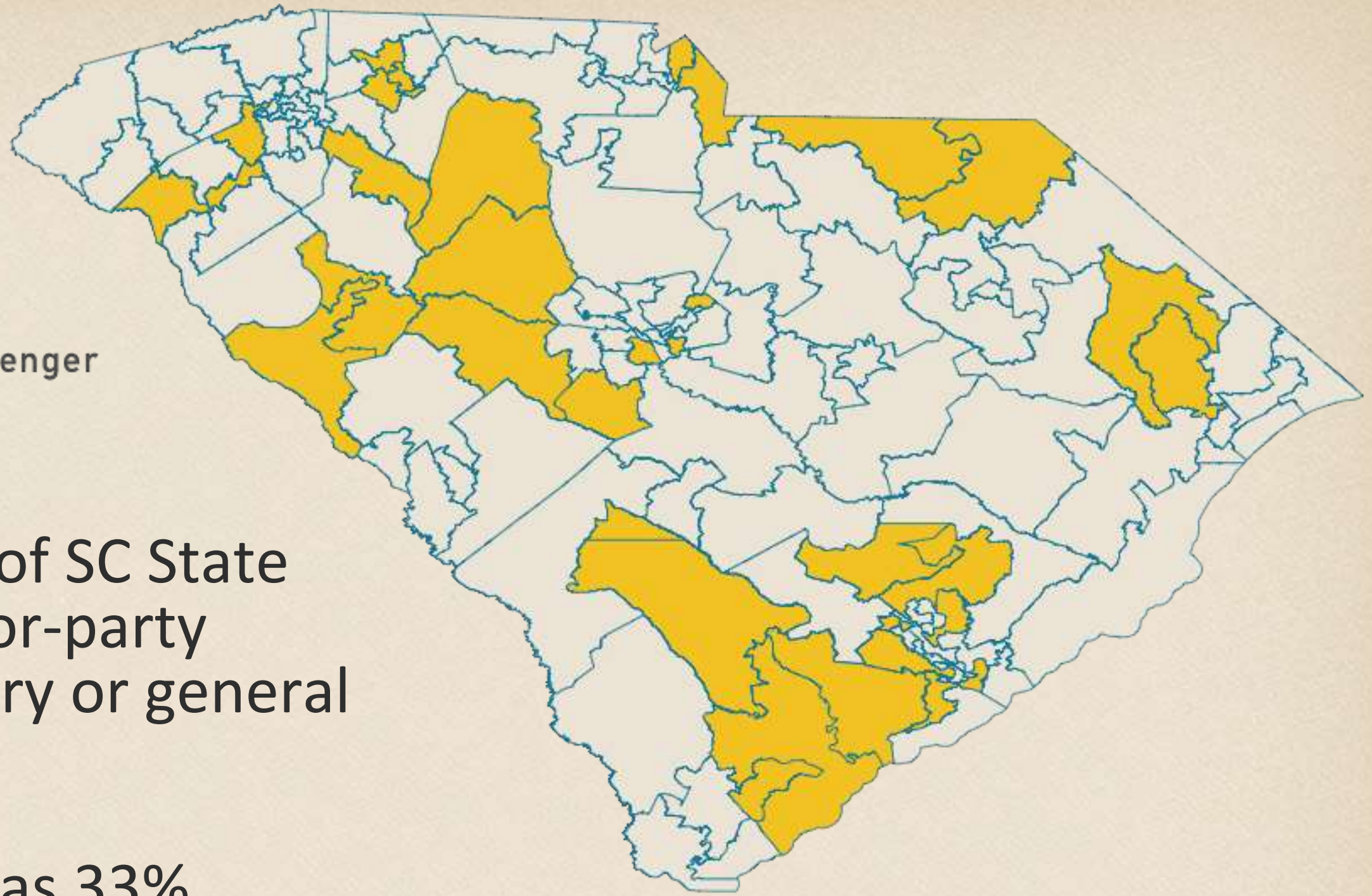
Considering race like this is not gerrymandering.



You can see how systems like this one - in which partisan players control the rules of the game - threaten our democratic process. If the outcome of a lawmaker's next election is largely predetermined by the district's line, she is less likely to have a challenger from another party.

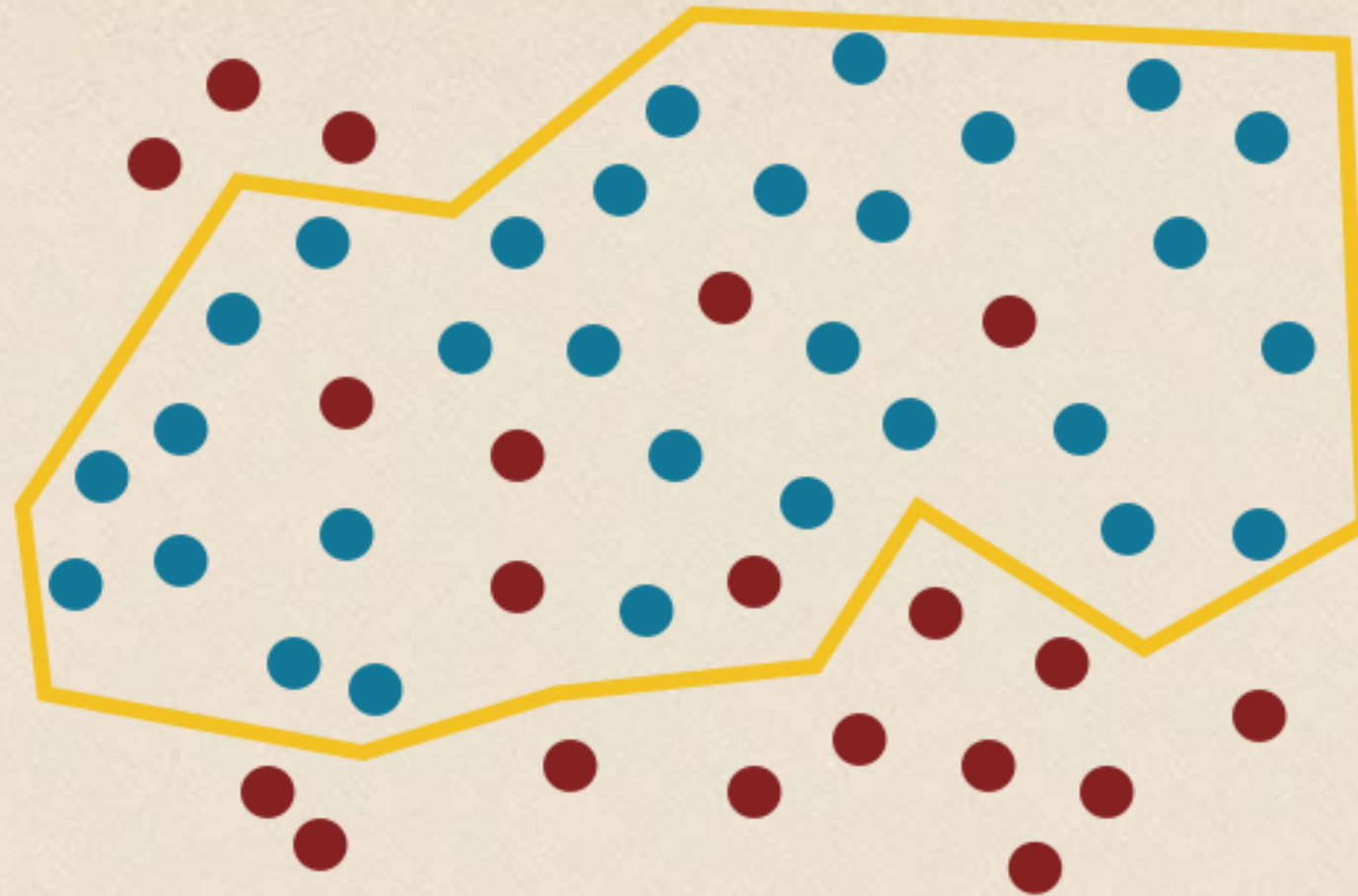


 SC House districts with a
Republican/Democrat challenger
(2016 general election)



In 2016, less than 30% of SC State House races had a major-party challenger in the primary or general election.

In 2020, this number was 33%.
And only 8 races (out of 124 total)
were won by less than 10%.



In this hypothetical district, a **Democratic** candidate has little incentive to listen to ideas from **Republican** voters.

Many fault gerrymandering for contributing to increased hyper-partisanship, since lawmakers in districts drawn to protect them rarely have to appeal to centrists or those from another party.

VICTORY MARGINS 2020

House Members

2020 Victory Margin

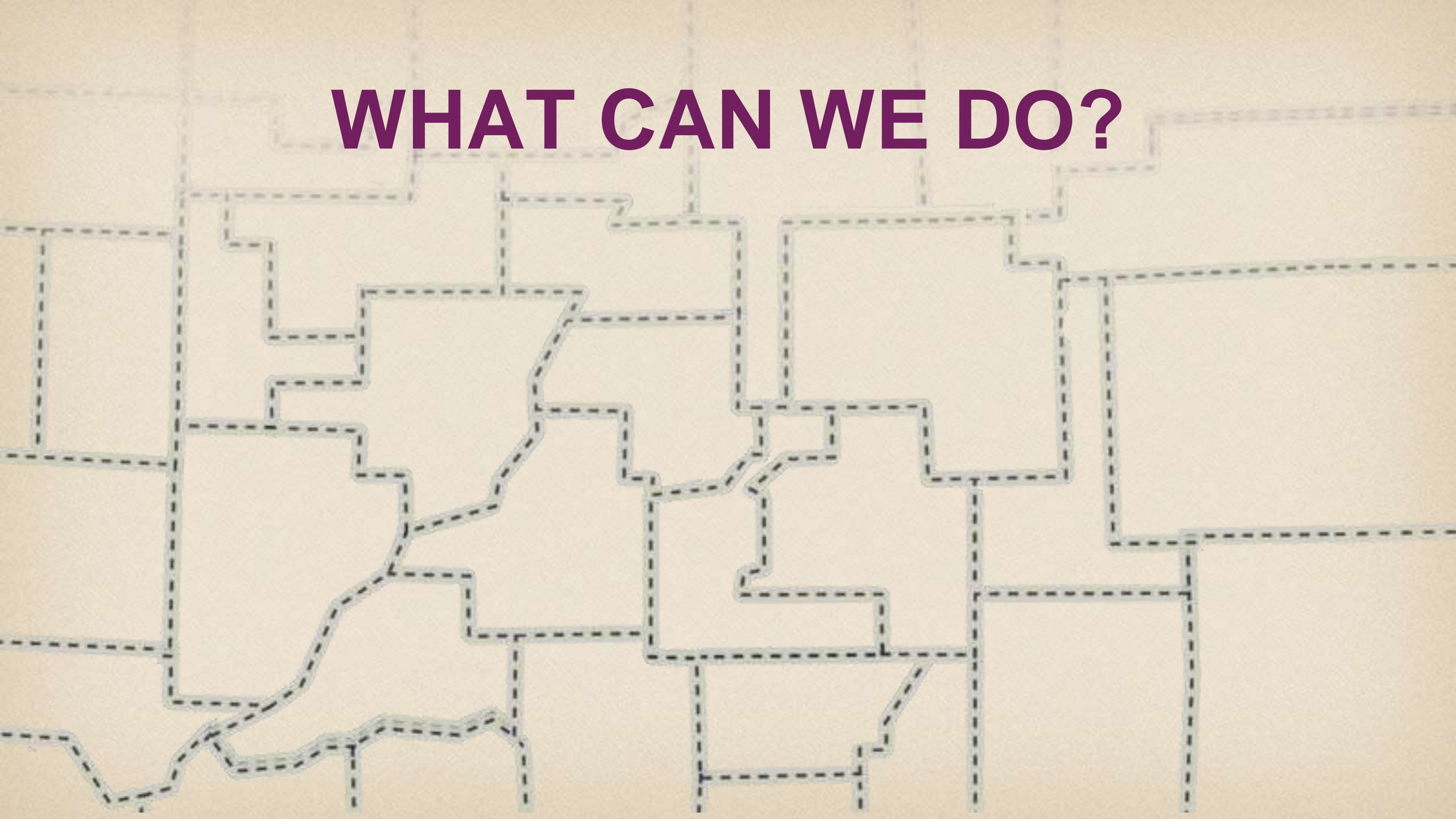
District 1	Nancy Mace	+ 1.3%
District 2	Joe Wilson	+ 13.1%
District 3	Jeff Duncan	+ 42.5%
District 4	William Timmons	+ 24.7%
District 5	Ralph Norman	+ 20.2%
District 6	Jim Clyburn	+ 37.4%
District 7	Tom Rice	+ 23.7%



THE PROBLEM WITH GERRYMANDERING IS:


- Our elected officials draw the lines for their own districts
- They have an incentive to advantage themselves and their party
- The result takes away power from voters and makes polarization worse

WHAT CAN WE DO?



In South Carolina, most of our roads
to reform lead to the State House.



The image shows the United States Capitol building in Washington, D.C. The central focus is the large, white, ribbed dome, which is topped with a lantern. Below the dome is a circular gallery with a series of columns and arched windows. The building's facade is neoclassical, featuring a portico with tall, white columns and a triangular pediment decorated with sculptures. An American flag flies on a tall pole to the right of the dome. The sky is a clear, bright blue.

But as of January 2021,
there's another path
with promise –
to the US Congress.



WHAT DO WE NEED LONG-TERM?

Changing the law to require:

1. District lines that are not drawn to try to help or hurt any political party or incumbent, and
2. An independent commission to draw district boundaries.



WHAT DO WE NEED IN 2021?

A map-drawing process that is **open** and **transparent**,
with avenues for **public input**.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Right now:

- Contact your state legislators and ask them to support 2021 redistricting that does not advantage incumbents or parties.
- Contact your federal legislators and ask them to pass gerrymandering limitations (like the “For the People Act”)
- Connect with the League – sign up for our redistricting update blog and follow the LWV of South Carolina Facebook page. (See the resource sheet for links.)

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Later this year:

Help shine the light on the redistricting process by paying attention and speaking up.



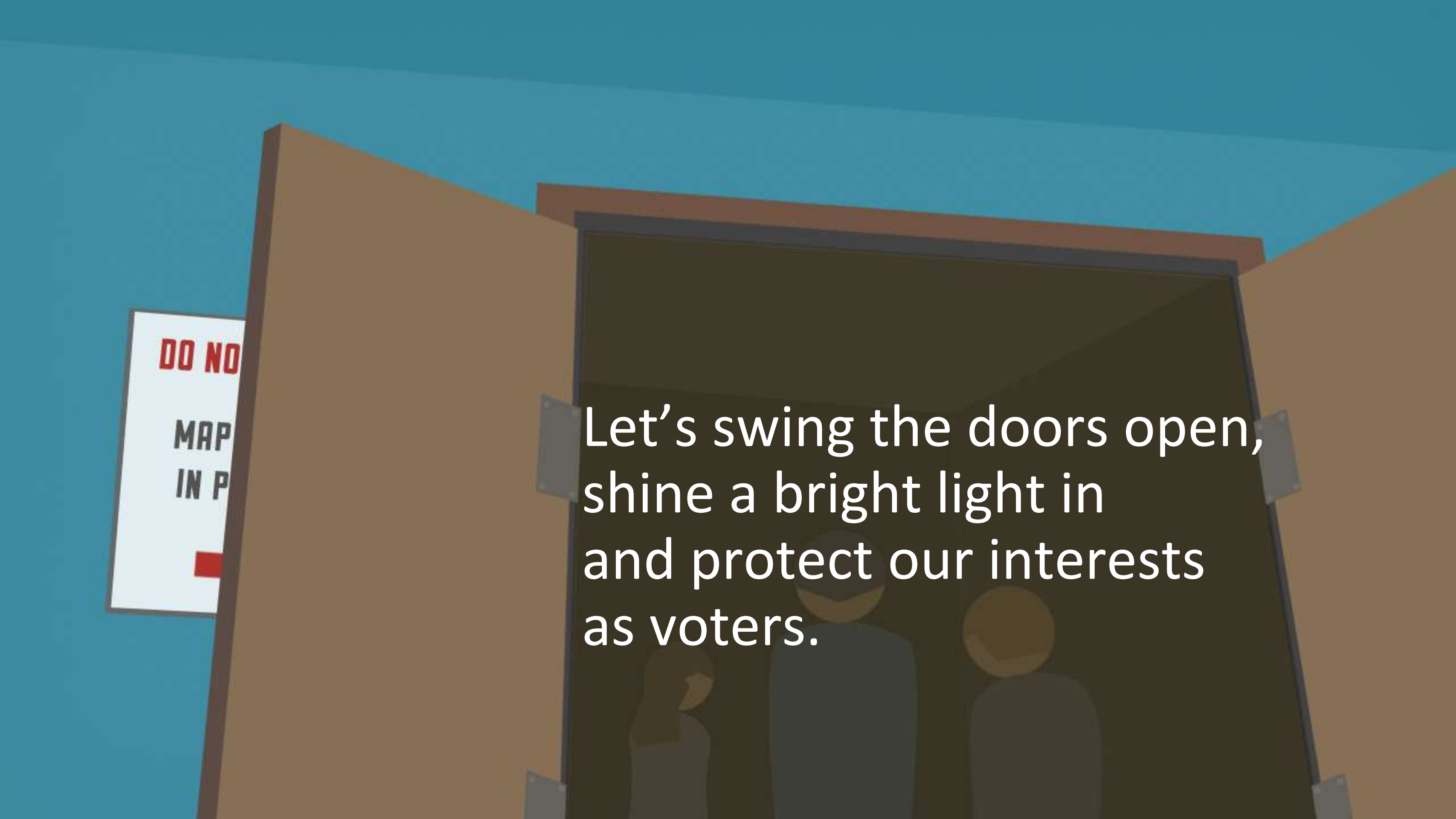
Weighing in on
Maps



Map Drawing
with Community
Members

Redistricting is happening in 2021 in South Carolina.



An illustration of an open brown door set against a blue sky. Inside the dark doorway, the silhouettes of three people are visible. To the left of the door, on a tan wall, is a white rectangular sign with red and black text. The text on the sign reads "DO NO" in red, "MAP" in black, and "IN P" in black, with a small red square at the bottom.

Let's swing the doors open,
shine a bright light in
and protect our interests
as voters.

DO NO

MAP
IN P

THANK YOU!

