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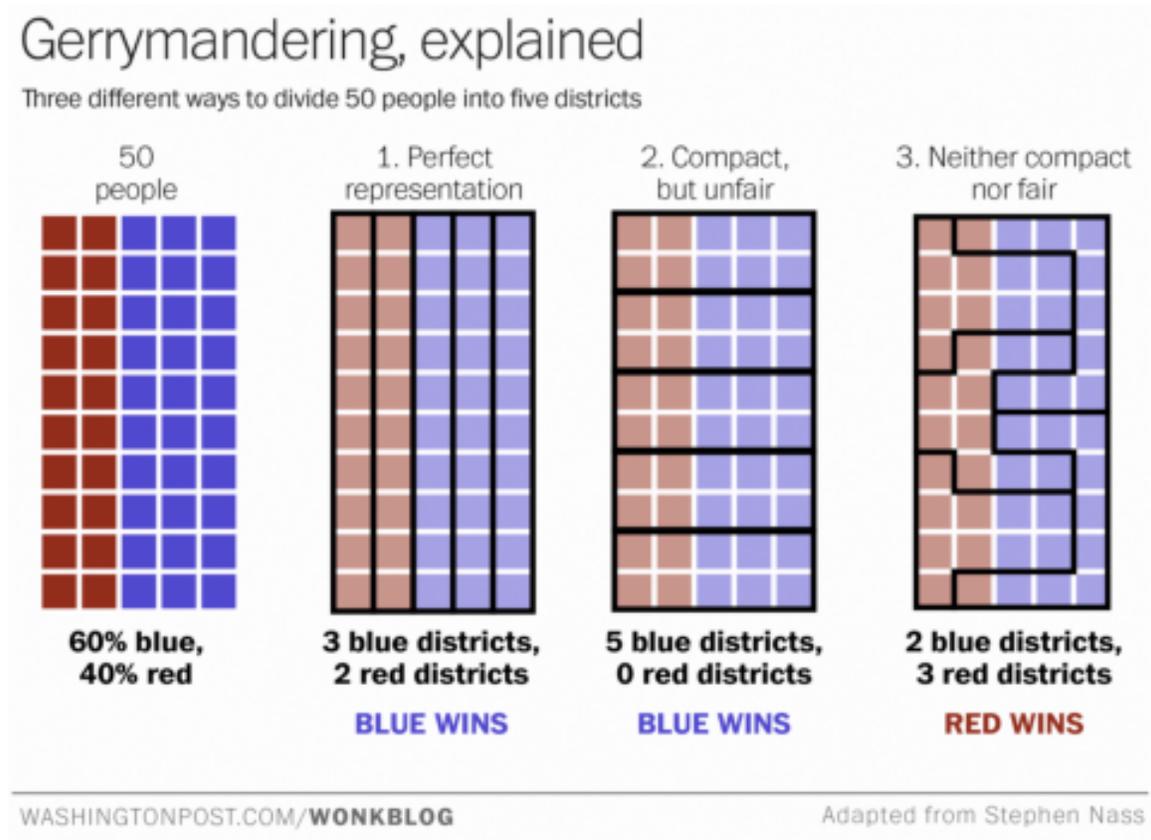
What is redistricting?

Redistricting is the process of drawing districts that determine who represents us in the state legislature and Congress. The state performs this function every ten years after a Census is done. As the state population changes, some areas gain residents while others lose them. The lines are redrawn to balance the population in each district.

What is gerrymandering?

Gerrymandering is the manipulation of these political district boundaries as to favor one party, race, or group over another. It is a deliberate attempt to increase the likelihood of a particular result.

Below is a graphic from the Washington Post that illustrates how gerrymandering works.



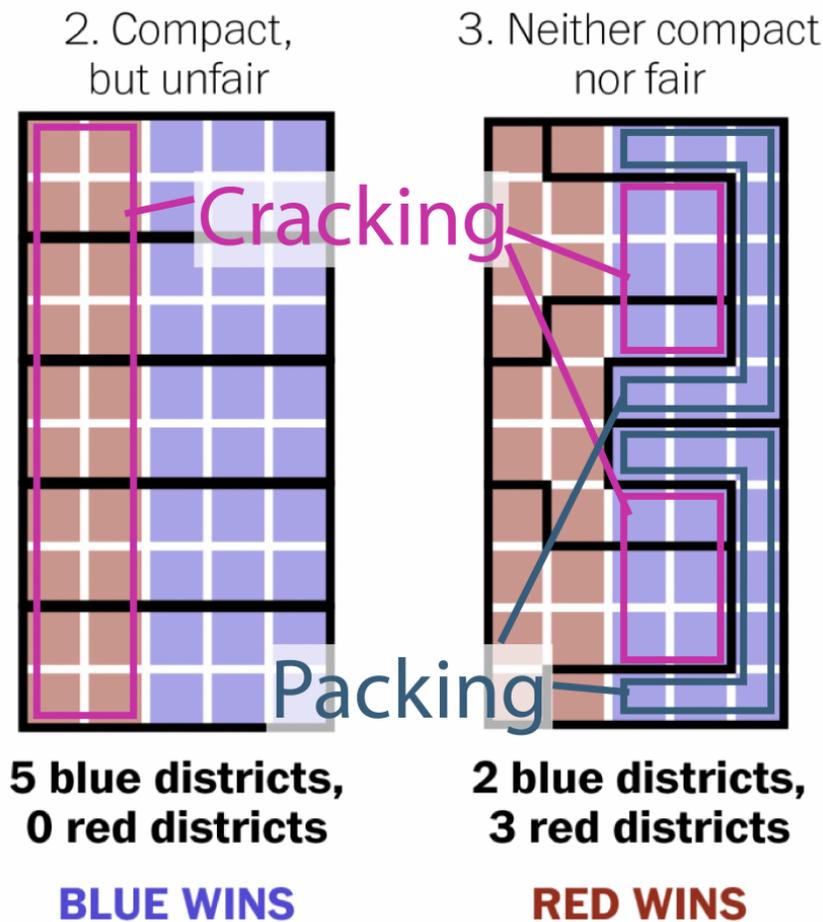


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How does gerrymandering work?

Two gerrymandering tactics that are most commonly used are referred to as packing and cracking. Packing is when a legislature chooses to concentrate another group's members into one district, allowing the legislature's majority party to more easily win all the others.

Cracking, on the other hand, is breaking up that opposing party's voters in order to make them the minority in many districts and unable to win elections. Both are strategic ways to give one party a better chance of holding more seats than they should win based on vote proportion. See below for examples of both packing and cracking.



Adapted from Stephen Nass



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How does Indiana handle redistricting?

Currently, Indiana's redistricting process gives the Indiana State legislature's majority party the power to draw the district lines. The only requirements for each district are that all parts be contiguous (connected) and that it be nearly equal in population to every other district of its type.

This means that the very politicians that represent us in state government are deciding what each district looks like and who lives in them, with only minimal enforceable guidelines. They are actually picking which voters live in their districts and which don't – and they are using increasingly sophisticated data and computer software to do so.

Is Indiana gerrymandered?

Using the most recent court-approved measure of gerrymandering, referred to as the "efficiency gap," we contend that yes, Indiana's state legislative districts are gerrymandered.

On the state legislative level, Republicans received ~58% of the votes in Indiana in the 2016 elections. Yet, they hold 82% of the State Senate seats and 70% of the State House seats. Interestingly enough, Republicans also controlled the process that drew these district lines in 2010.

Why is this a problem?

Gerrymandering is a problem because it robs the citizens of the full power of their vote. It also leads to safer districts for politicians, leading to less reliance on keeping voters happy. At this point, much of Indiana's legislative competitiveness occurs in the primaries, where voter turnout is drastically lower than in General Elections and the more partisan or extreme candidate often wins over the more moderate choices. This leads to extreme and damaging policy outcomes for Indiana.

How can this be fixed?

CFE believes the answer to that question lies with independent redistricting. In short, independent redistricting is when somebody other than the legislature draws the legislative districts. Some states have already established independent redistricting commissions to ensure that elections remain competitive and to ensure that voters are choosing their politicians rather than politicians choosing their voters. We think it's time Indiana does the same.