2011-2012 REDISTRICTING AND ELECTIONS IN KENTUCKY

September 2012

Final Congressional Redistricting Plan



Signed into law by Gov. Steve Beshear on Feb. 10, 2012.

2012 Projections (4R, 2?)*

Republicans have an ongoing chance for a clean sweep of Kentucky's six House districts. They did not defeat the state's two Democratic incumbents in 2010, however, and both incumbents had their chances slightly improved in redistricting. Ben Chandler's District 6 remains strongly Republican, and he could be particularly vulnerable.

The four remaining House seats are extremely safe for Republicans, with partisanship at least 66% Republican. One of these seats will be open in 2012, but it is not likely to be competitive.

* See details and the fair voting alternative on the following pages.

Kentucky's Redistricting Map Compared to the Previous Lines

New Redistricting Plan Distorts Political Landscape



Partisan percentages and projections are based on an interpretation of the 2008 presidential election.

Competition and Voting Rights in Kentucky

	Current Plan	Previous Plan
District Competition	17% (1/6)	17% (1/6)
Racial Minority Voting Strength*	0%	0%

* Measures the percentage of eligible voters of a racial minority in districts where their racial group is a majority of eligible voters. Voters might not choose to vote for a candidate of their same race.

Redistricting Process in Kentucky

The state legislature controls Kentucky's redistricting process. Redistricting is a closed-door process, as it does not accept public input through hearings.

Power in the legislature is split, with Republicans controlling the state senate and Democrats controlling the house and the governor's mansion.

After much partisan jockeying and the threat of courts intervening to draw a plan, Democrats were able to keep districts that maintain or slightly improve the chances of their two Democratic incumbents. The plan was signed into law in February 2012.

State legislative redistricting has been far more contentious, with the state supreme court throwing out the legislature's initial plan.

U.S. House Elections in Kentucky

U.S. House elections in Kentucky are largely uncompetitive and the congressional delegation does not reflect the demographics of the state at large. In fact, 65% of congressional elections over the past decade were decided by landslide margins of at least 20 points.

One need not look further than Kentucky's most recent primary—held on May 22, 2012—as a testament to the lack of competition. Four out of five House members ran unopposed, and the one challenge to an incumbent was hardly a contest, as Rep. John Yarmuth ran away with nearly 90% of the vote.

Currently, there are no women serving in the state's congressional delegation, nor were any women nominated to compete in this year's primaries. The state has never sent a racial minority candidate to Congress.

Voting and Democracy 2012 House Elections in Kentucky

September 2012

Listed below are the partisanship changes and projections for Kentucky's new congressional districts. Incumbents are listed according to the districts in which they are running in 2012, with the 2010 district partisanship connected to that incumbent.

			Year First	Last Election	2010 District Partisanship	2012 District Partisanship	2012 District	2012 Election
District	Incumbent	Party	Elected	Winning %	(D% / R%)	(D% / R%)	Projection	Projection
1	Ed Whitfield	R	1994	71%	34 / 66	34 / 66	Strong R	Safe R
2	Brett Guthrie	R	2008	68%	35 / 65	34 / 66	Strong R	Safe R
3	John Yarmuth	D	2006	55%	53 / 47	53 / 47	Balanced	None
4	OPEN (Geoff Davis)	R			35 / 65	34 / 66	Strong R	Safe R
5	Harold Rogers	R	1980	77%	28 / 72	29 / 71	Strong R	Safe R
6	Ben Chandler	D	2004	50%	40 / 60	42 / 58	Strong R	None



KENTUCKY REDISTRICTING & THE FAIR VOTING ALTERNATIVE

September 2012

Kentucky's Fair Voting Plan



	Super-District (w/current Cong. Dist. #s)	# of Seats	Pop. Per Seat	% to Win*	Partisanship (D% / R%)	Partisan Projection: 4R, 2D
**	A (CDs - 1,2,3)	3	722,882	25%	41 / 59	2R, 1D
	B (CDs - 4,5,6)	3	723,573	25%	35 / 65	2R, 1D

* plus 1 vote

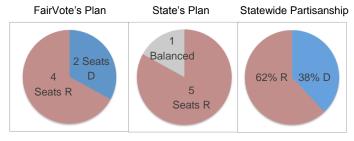
How Does Fair Voting Work?

Fair voting describes American forms of proportional representation that uphold electoral traditions and are based on voting for candidates. They ensure meaningfully contested elections and provide voters with more accurate representation.

Instead of six individual congressional districts, our fair voting plan combines these districts into two larger "super-districts" with three representatives each. Any candidate who is the first choice of more than a quarter of voters in a three-seat district will win a seat.

Comparing a Fair Voting Plan to Kentucky's Redistricting Plan

More Accurate Political Representation*



* Partisan percentages and projections are based on an interpretation of the 2008 presidential election similar to the Partisan Voting Index. They do not account for other candidate-based factors like incumbency.

Meaningful Elections and Representation

	FairVote's Plan	State's Plan
District Competition	100% (2/2)	17% (1/6)
Shared Representation*	100% (2/2)	0% (0/6)

^{*} Shared representation indicates districts represented by both Democrats and Republicans – which enables more accurate congressional representation for most voters.

Benefits of a Fair Voting Plan

Shared representation of different views: Supporters of both major parties elect candidates everywhere, with accurate balance of that district's left, right, and center.

More voter choice: Better chance for third parties, independents and major party innovators, as there is a lower threshold for candidates to win a seat.

More competition: With voters having a range of choices, candidates must compete to win voter support.

Better representation of racial minorities: Lower threshold for racial minority candidates to earn seats, even when not geographically concentrated. More voters of all races are in a position to elect candidates.

More women: More women likely to run and win. Single-member districts often stifle potential candidacies.