



The Center for
Voting and
Democracy

2014 ELECTIONS IN WEST VIRGINIA

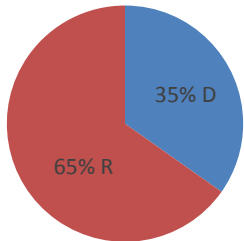
July 2014

Current Congressional District Map

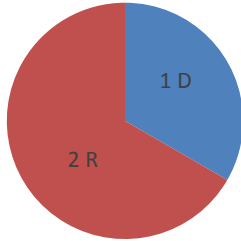


Representation

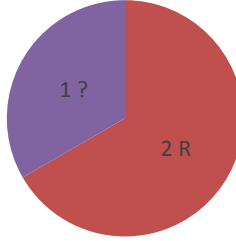
Statewide Partisanship



Current Delegation



2014 Projections



Partisanship is a measure of voters' underlying preference for Democrats or Republicans. See our Methodology section to learn how Partisanship is determined.

District Competitiveness

Majority Partisanship	Swing (50-<53%)	Lean (53-<58%)	Safe (58%+)
Districts	0	0	3

Redistricting

The West Virginia state legislature has the power to draw new congressional districts following a census. Democrats controlled the state legislature and the governor's office during the most recent redistricting process.

The West Virginia Senate Redistricting Committee submitted a map that moved one county from the 2nd district to the 3rd district to account for the shifts in population, and the plan was approved by the state legislature in August 2011 with little opposition.

Based on unequal population issues, the plan was challenged in federal court. Litigations have now concluded and the map will continue to be used in future congressional elections.

2014 Projections: 2 R, 0 D, 1 ?

Over the past 20 years, West Virginia has experienced one of the most pronounced partisan shifts in presidential elections of any state in the country, transitioning from a Democratic-leaning state to a safely Republican state.

That shift is finally catching up to congressional districts. After taking District 1 from Democrats in a 2010 open seat election, Republicans are likely to control two of West Virginia's three districts for the foreseeable future.

Date 2014 Projections Announced: April 2013.

2012 Projections: 1 R, 0 D, 2 ? All projections accurate

Races to watch: Rahall (WV-3, D) Of the three Democratic incumbents who survived in heavily Republican districts in 2012, Rahall had the easiest election, winning by 8 points. If ticket-splitting declines any further in West Virginia, however, he could be at risk in 2014.

Strongest candidate: Rahall (WV-3, D): +15.7% POAC*

Weakest candidate: McKinley (WV-1, R): -9.9% POAC

*POAC (Performance Over Average Candidate) is a measure of the quality of a winning candidate's campaign. It compares how well a winner did relative to what would be projected for a generic candidate of the same party and incumbency status. See our Methodology section to learn how POAC is determined.

Race and Gender in the U.S. House

All of West Virginia's districts are over 90% majority white, and the state has never elected a racial minority candidate to the U.S. House.

One woman, Republican Shelley Moore Capito, currently represents West Virginia in the U.S. House. Capito may not run for re-election in 2014, however, as she has announced her candidacy for the state's open Senate seat.

Dubious Democracy

West Virginia's Democracy Index Ranking: 35th (of 50)

West Virginia's poor ranking is largely attributable to one of the lowest levels of voter turnout in the country (44.3%), and the state's last place finish in the 'representation' metric, which measures the percentage of eligible voters who voted for a winning candidate in 2012 (27.7%).

Two out of the three districts in West Virginia are also extremely uncompetitive, with only Nick Rahall's incumbency keeping the third in play. Rahall does ensure that the state's minority party is represented, giving the state a roughly proportional delegation.

View redistricting alternatives at FairVotingUS.com

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Listed below are recent election results and 2014 election projections for West Virginia's three U.S. House districts. All metrics in this table are further explained in the Methodology section of this report.

Partisanship is an indicator of voters' underlying preference for Democrats or Republicans. It is determined by measuring how the district voted for president in 2012 relative to the presidential candidates' national averages. Developed by FairVote in 1997 and adapted by Charlie Cook for the Cook Partisan Voting Index, this definition of partisanship is based on only the most recent presidential election.

Performance Over Average Candidate (POAC) is an indicator of how well the winner did compared to a hypothetical generic candidate of the same district, incumbency status, and party, based on their winning percentages in 2010 and 2012. A high POAC suggests that the winner appealed to independents and voters from other parties in addition to voters from his or her own party. A low POAC suggests that the winner did not draw many votes from independents and other parties.

District	Incumbent	Party	Race/Gender	Year First Elected	2012 2-Party Winning Percentage	POAC	District Partisanship (Dem)	2014 Projected Dem %	2014 Projection
1	McKinley, David	R	White/M	2010	62.5%	-9.9%	34.7%	38.5%	Safe R
2	OPEN (Moore Capito, Shelley)	R	White/F	2000	69.8%	3.3%	37.1%	37.1%	Safe R
3	Rahall, Nick	D	White/M	1976	54.0%	15.7%	32.0%	49.1%	No projection

West Virginia's Fair Representation Voting Plan

Super District (w/current Cong. Dist. #s)	# of Seats	Pop. Per Seat	% to Win (plus 1 vote)	Partisanship (D/R %)	Current Rep.: 2 R, 1D	Super District Rep.: 2 R, 1 D
A (CDs - 1,2,3)	3	617,665	25%	35 / 65	3 R, 1 D	2 R, 1 D



Partisan and Racial Impact: This fair voting plan would preserve the current partisan split of West Virginia's delegation. While Democrats are only likely to be represented in West Virginia as long as incumbent Nick Rahall continues to be re-elected, however, fair voting would ensure that Democratic voters will always have the ability to elect a preferred candidate in the state. West Virginia does not have a sufficiently large racial minority population for racial minorities to elect a candidate of choice.

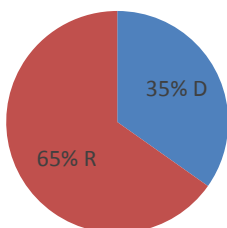
How Does Fair Representation Voting Work?

Fair representation voting methods such as ranked choice voting describe American forms of proportional representation with a history in local and state elections. They uphold American electoral traditions, such as voting for candidates rather than parties. They ensure all voters participate in competitive elections and ensure more accurate representation, with the majority of voters likely to elect most seats and backers of both major parties likely to elect preferred candidates.

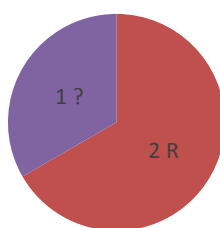
Instead of three individual congressional districts, our fair voting plan combines these districts into one larger "super district." Any candidate who is the first choice of more than a quarter of voters in a three street district will win a seat.

Comparing a Fair Representation Voting Plan to West Virginia's Current Districts

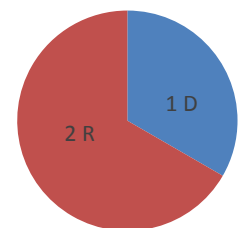
Statewide Partisanship



2014 Projections



FairVote's Plan



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Benefits of a Fair Representation Voting Plan

More accurate representation: Congressional delegations more faithfully reflect the preferences of all voters. Supporters of both major parties elect candidates in each district, with accurate balance of each district's left, right, and center.

More voter choice and competition: Third parties, independents and major party innovators have better chances, as there is a lower threshold for candidates to win a seat. Because voters have a range of choices, candidates must compete to win voter support.

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

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

View more fair voting plans at FairVotingUS.com

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