



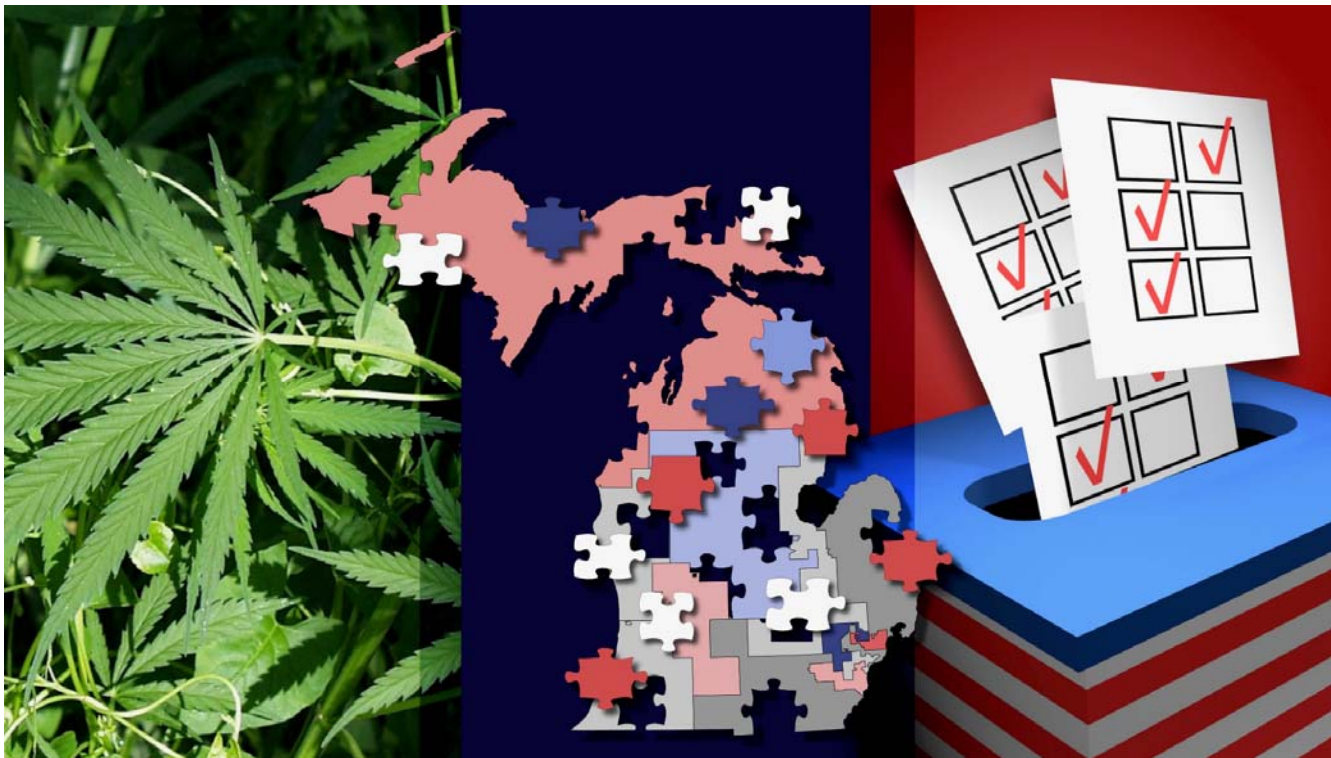
Proposal 2:
Redistricting Reform

November 2018 Statewide Ballot Issues

Webinar - October 17, 2018

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Citizens Research Council of Michigan

Access our analyses, official ballot language, PowerPoint slides, and recorded webinars: crcmich.org/ballot-issues



Citizens Research Council

- Founded in 1916
- Statewide
- Non-partisan
- Private not-for-profit
- Promotes sound policy for state and local governments through factual research – accurate, independent and objective
- Relies on charitable contributions from Michigan foundations, businesses, and individuals
- *www.crcmich.org*

Jordon Newton, Research Associate for Citizens Research Council of Michigan



- Citizens Research Council's researcher focused on state affairs
 - 2017-present
- Education Background
 - MPP, Michigan State University
 - B.A. in Economics, Gonzaga University

Current State of Redistricting

How Redistricting Currently Works

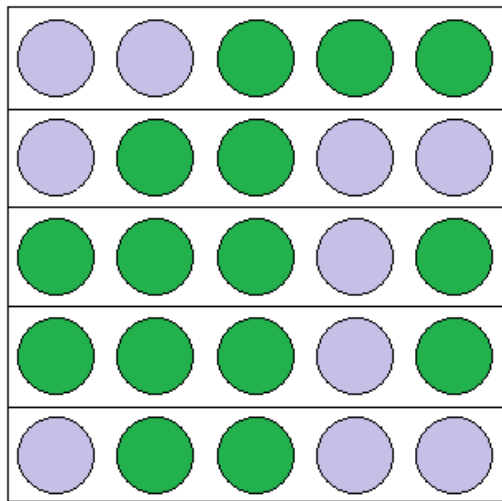
- 1963 Michigan Constitution created independent commission
 - 4 from 2 major parties
 - Deadlocked 3 times (1964, 1971, 1981)
- Michigan Supreme Court invalidated constitutional provisions in 1982
 - Violated one person, one vote requirement in U.S. Constitution
- Responsibility handed to Michigan Legislature
 - Only criteria are federal (equal population, Voting Rights Act)
 - Unitary control of government allows gerrymandering to occur
 - Freedom of Information Act does not extend to the legislature

Gerrymandering – The Problem

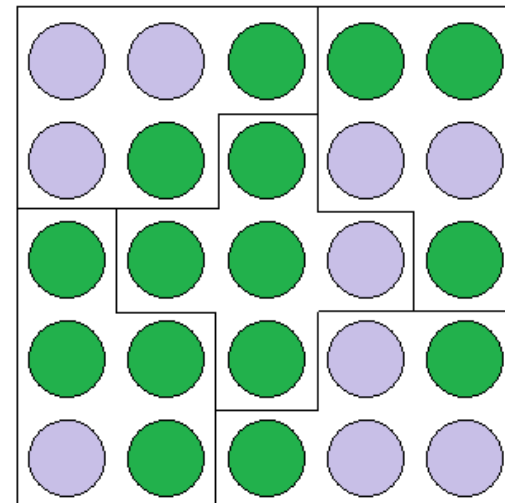


- Gerrymandering: The abuse of redistricting to advantage or harm a particular candidate, group, or party.
- Two main functions:
 - Packing
 - Cracking

What Should Redistricting Accomplish?



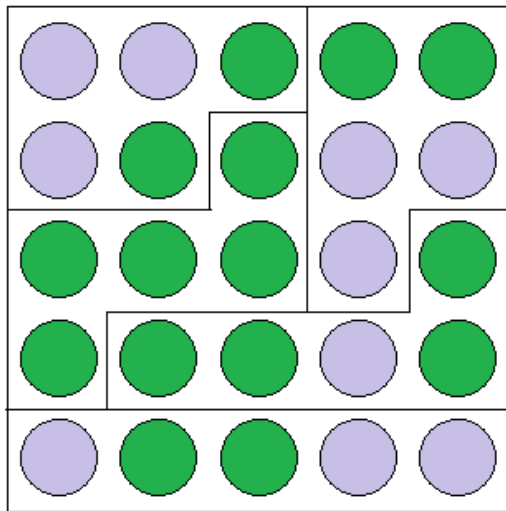
3 Green-2 Purple



3 Green-2 Purple

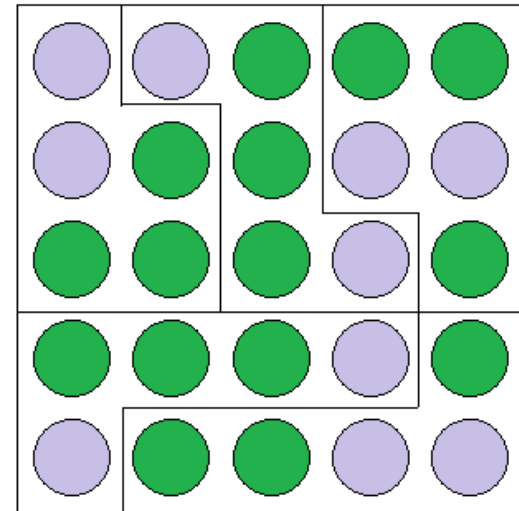
How Gerrymandering Functions

Packing



3 Purple-2 Green

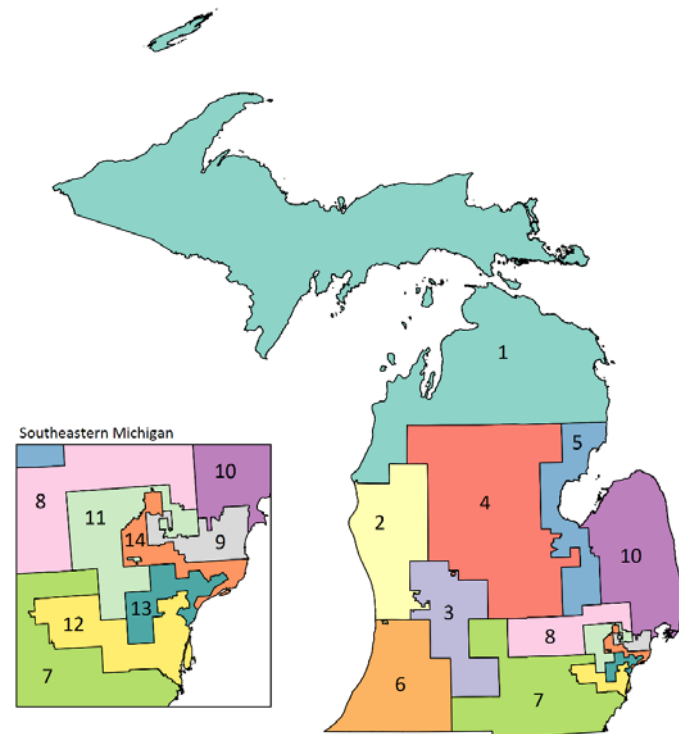
Cracking



5 Green-0 Purple

Michigan has a Gerrymandering Problem

- Metrics show Michigan is gerrymandered:
 - District shapes
 - Proportional outcomes
 - Three tests
- View our report “Quantifying the Level of Gerrymandering in Michigan” to learn more:
 - <https://crcmich.org/quantifying-the-level-of-gerrymandering-in-michigan/>



Proposal 2 in Detail

Establishes a Commission

- Michigan would have a 13 member commission
 - 4 Republican
 - 4 Democrat
 - 5 Independent/Unaffiliated
- Randomly selected commissioners
 - Secretary of State mails applications and makes them available
 - Selects 3 applicant pools based on the above groups
 - Legislative leaders can object to names
 - Commissioners selected randomly from remaining applicants

What the Commission Does

- Requires the commission to meet across the state
 - At least 15 meetings, 10 before maps are drafted
 - Subject to the Freedom of Information Act, no private communication
- Create redistricting plans based on guidelines
- Establishes lengthy voting procedure
 - Majority vote
 - At least two from each group
 - Rank order voting
 - At least two independents rank it highly
 - Random selection among submissions

Redistricting Standards

- Prop 2 sets a list of criteria in order of priority:
 - Maintain equal population and follow Voting Rights Act
 - Districts must be contiguous (connected in one piece)
 - Reflect diversity and communities of interest (new)
 - Shall not provide disproportionate advantage to a political party (new)
 - Shall not favor or disfavor an incumbent or candidate (new)
 - Reflects local boundaries
 - Maintains reasonably compact districts

Key Issues

Gerrymandering

- The proposal is designed to limit gerrymandering
 - Removes political operatives from the process
 - Requires consensus
 - Places limitations on biased maps
- Some areas leave open
 - Independent commissioners aren't always neutral

New Redistricting Criteria

- Communities of interest is open to some interpretation, but is defined as:
 - Cultural or historical characteristics
 - Economic interests
 - Not relationships with a party or candidate
- No partisan fairness standard is adopted
 - “Accepted measure” of partisan fairness
 - Uncertain what this would include

Transparency And Openness

- Proposal 2 requires an open and accessible commission
 - Minimum of 10 meetings before maps are started
 - Regional diversity of meetings
 - All communication is subject to open meeting and FOIA rules
 - Data used for maps must be published
- Does not prevent politicians from communicating with commission
 - All communication would be a matter of public record

Commissioner Selection and Representation

- The selection process is by no means perfect
 - No evaluation of qualifications to create district schemes
 - Commissioners cannot be held accountable by citizens
- Negative effects are somewhat limited
 - Legislature primarily uses consultants now
 - Rules allow courts to serve as a check on the commission's outcomes

More Costly and Time Consuming

- Cost of commission will increase
 - ~\$4.6 million annual appropriation
 - Commissioner salaries ~\$40,000
 - Additional costs for meetings, travel, and legal counsel
- Longer timeline
 - Requires a minimum of 15 meetings, months of deliberation
 - Legislature finished quickly

Secretary of State Influence

- Proposal 2 shifts management of the redistricting process to the Secretary of State
- Responsibilities include:
 - Distributing and collecting applications
 - Reviewing candidates
 - Non-voting member of the commission
 - Providing technical services to the commission

An evaluation of ideals

Balancing Priorities

- Redistricting reforms tend to be zero sum
- Proposal 2 has a positive effect on the process by
 - Increasing transparency and access to decision makers
 - Limiting partisan bias and influence
- The tradeoffs for these improvements include
 - A more costly and time consuming process
 - Reduced ability to hold decision makers accountable

Questions?

Citizens Research Council of Michigan

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