

COMMON CAUSE V. RUCHO

FACT SHEET

Hundreds of thousands of North Carolinians were robbed of their ability to elect the candidates of their choice through this blatant partisan gerrymander by the Legislature.

- Republican Legislators publicly and repeatedly stated that their goal was to gerrymander congressional districts in North Carolina to ensure a 10-3 Republican majority despite an equally split electorate.
- There were 2.6 million registered Democrats, 2 million registered Republicans, and 1.8 million unaffiliated registered voters in North Carolina.
- In 2012, 51 percent of North Carolina voters cast their ballots for a Democratic U.S. House candidate, yet only 31 percent of the seats went to Democrats. In 2014, Democrats won 44 percent of the vote but only 23 percent of seats.

The Common Cause constitutional challenge to the 2016 Congressional redistricting plan includes four separate counts against the plan as a whole and each of its 13 congressional districts.

- The counts cite the gerrymander as a violation of the First Amendment, the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment, and Article I, sections 2 and 4 of the Constitution relating to the manner in which Representatives are popularly elected.

Letting politicians choose the voters in their districts is like putting the fox in charge of the henhouse.

- Voters should choose politicians; politicians should not choose voters. Letting politicians handpick their constituents bears no resemblance to a government of the people, by the people and for the people.
- Stopping partisan gerrymanders would prevent legislators from using the practice as justification for their racial gerrymanders.
- Common Cause advocates for impartial and independent redistricting commissions so voters pick their elected representatives, as opposed to politicians picking their constituents.
- Democratic and Republican gerrymanders both cheat voters from having their voice heard.
- We have fought against partisan gerrymanders from both Democrats and Republicans.
 - In Maryland, we are working closely with the governor and legislators to end the unfair drawing of districts by Democratic leaders in the General Assembly.
 - In North Carolina, in addition to this suit, we are leading a strong broad-based coalition spanning the political spectrum pushing for legislation that would bring the Iowa model of redistricting reform to the state. The measure, which has previously cleared the North Carolina House but not yet passed the Senate, would empower a nonpartisan legislative research agency to draw districts. The effort dates back more than a decade.

When elected officials don't have to worry about getting reelected they become too safe in their seats and are unresponsive to constituents.

- Legislators should be listening to the needs of ordinary voters, not wealthy and extreme special interests.
- Instead of backroom deals where politicians draw their own districts, we need real transparency and impartial redistricting systems so that our elected representatives' agenda reflect the will of the people.