



Fact Sheet: *Benisek v. Lamone*

After the 2010 census, Gov. Martin O'Malley and Democrats in the Maryland General Assembly successfully redrew the Sixth Congressional District and increased the number of Democrats in the congressional delegation from six to seven of the state's eight districts. The map was challenged as a partisan gerrymander, for violations of voters' First Amendment free speech and political association rights.

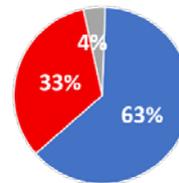
THE ISSUE

Marylanders should have the right to choose their representatives. Partisan gerrymandering undermines our democracy.

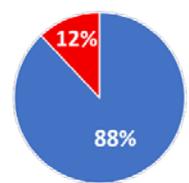
- Approximately 56% of registered voters in Maryland are Democrats while 26% voters are Republicans. Prior to the 2011 redistricting, Maryland was represented in the House of Representatives by an eight-member congressional delegation composed of six Democrats and two Republicans, which corresponded closely with relative share of registered voters in the state.
- Maryland Democrats targeted then-U.S. Rep. Roscoe Bartlett in the Sixth Congressional District by drawing district lines to “crack” it into pieces, turning it from a reliably Republican district to a reliably Democratic one.
- Maryland Democrats intentionally weakened the voices of Republicans in the Sixth District to increase their political power. The redrawn district has fragmented a cohesive community of Maryland Republicans, diminishing their voices.

2012 U.S. House Races in MD

Votes Won
Statewide



Total Seats
Won



THE CASE

On March 28, 2018, the Supreme Court will hear *Benisek v. Lamone*.

- In 2013, the original plaintiff, Common Cause member Stephen Shapiro, argued that Maryland had drawn an unconstitutional partisan gerrymander.
- In 2015, the Supreme Court of the United States instructed the lower court to convene a three-judge panel to rule on the merits of the partisan gerrymander claims.
- The plaintiffs, now challenging the Sixth District on First Amendment grounds, filed a motion to prevent the use of the gerrymandered map for upcoming elections. Plaintiffs appealed to the Supreme Court after a three-judge panel denied the motion.
- The Supreme Court will hear arguments on *Benisek v. Lamone* on March 28, 2018. Common Cause and many other organizations and redistricting leaders (eg. Schwarzenegger, Brennan Center, Campaign Legal Center) will stand with plaintiffs as friends of the court.

“Partisan gerrymandering is the intentional “drawing of ... legislative [or congressional] district lines to subordinate adherents of one political party and entrench a rival party in power”

- Supreme Court in AZ State Legislature v. AZ Independent Redistricting Commission (2015)