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Study: Indiana electoral maps among the most gerrymandered in U.S.
More transparency urged; national expert hired to review new district maps this fall

"All elections shall be free and equal."

— Indiana Constitution, Article 2. Section 1.

New independent research released today found that Indiana's current electoral maps are more tilted in favor of one party than 95% of all the maps enacted in the United States over the last 50 years, and Indiana's bias is worse than those of its neighboring states of Kentucky, Ohio and Illinois.

Women4Change Indiana, a nonpartisan organization, commissioned the study, which was conducted by Dr. Christopher Warshaw, a national expert on gerrymandering and a tenured associate professor of political science at George Washington University. He holds a Ph.D. in Political Science and a J.D. from Stanford University. Courts in Michigan and Pennsylvania have relied on his testimony to find partisan gerrymanders that violated constitutional limits. Read his study at women4changeindiana.org/redistricting.

"This study proves Indiana's elections are not free and equal, despite the Constitutional mandate," said Rima Shahid, executive director of Women4Change Indiana. "We have an opportunity this fall, when the General Assembly will redraw state and Congressional legislative districts, for a fairer map-drawing process. Women4Change is calling for a more transparent approach so that the voices of all Indiana voters are fairly represented in future elections."

Among other things, the research found these highlights.

- Indiana's maps dilute minority party votes by packing Democratic voters into a few heavily Democratic districts, leading to Democrats holding a disproportionately small number of seats.
- The maps eliminate many competitive districts, which would otherwise elect moderate representatives.
- The maps are not responsive to changes in voter sentiment.
- Indiana's geography did not cause these unfair maps. The map-drawers did.

Gerrymandering hurts Indiana in two ways. First, it promotes polarizing candidates, because it minimizes the number of competitive districts in which candidates would otherwise need to appeal to centrist voters. In the 2020 elections, 40 of the 125 seats in the General Assembly were uncontested.

Second, it gives the controlling party a disproportionate legislative supermajority that can ignore any input from the minority party. As a result, new laws make no allowance for the wishes of one party's voters.

"We see these effects in our polarized General Assembly today," said Jay Yeager, an Indianapolis lawyer for voters in recent gerrymandering litigation and a volunteer with Women4Change. "One party holds supermajorities in the Indiana House and Senate that exceed by wide margins the share of votes that

party earned on election day. As a result, moderates are squeezed out, our legislature can and often does ignore the views of over 40% of voters, public confidence suffers, and Indiana's rank in voter turnout among states continues to languish in the bottom ten."

After 2020 Census data is released this fall, the Indiana General Assembly will draw – and eventually vote to accept – new district maps. Women4Change has commissioned Dr. Warshaw to analyze the new maps as soon as they are released, and his analysis will be shared publicly.

"Specifically, Women4Change is calling for the General Assembly to open its map-drawing process to public scrutiny; disclose fully the funding and process by which maps are drafted; hold its meetings in public; and ultimately draw fair maps," said Shahid.

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INTERVIEW SOURCES

- Rima Shahid, executive director of Women4Change
- Dr. Chris Warshaw, study author
- Jay Yeager, an Indianapolis lawyer for voters in recent gerrymandering litigation and a volunteer with Women4Change