

A Flawed Democracy and How New Mexicans Can Help Fix It

Major institutions which evaluate the status of democracy in the world have cited gerrymandering as a contributing factor to the erosion of democracy in the U.S. The Economist Magazine publishes an annual report on the status of democracies in the world. It rates the U.S. 17th in the world – calling it a flawed democracy. It cites Electoral College and gerrymandering as major flaws. New Mexico did its part in addressing the question of the Electoral College by passing a joint resolution in support of National Popular Vote. New Mexico can do its part in addressing the second major flaw by creating an independent redistricting commission to constrain gerrymandering.

The United States is the only democratic country that allows legislators to draw their own districts. Those other countries recognize the inherent conflict of interest of allowing legislators to draw their own districts.

Despite all the publicity around *partisan* gerrymandering, most gerrymandering is about incumbency protection - when legislators of both parties collude to protect one another's seats. That contributes to the polarization we are experiencing in the United States and in New Mexico. So, Republican and Democratic candidates have to worry more about their primary races and much less about the general election.

Incumbency protection leads to the very high number of uncontested legislative races in New Mexico. Potential candidates of an opposing party know that they cannot win a race when the two major parties have colluded to create safe districts for one or the other party. According to Ballotpedia, in the 2022 election 45.7% of New Mexico Legislative seats were uncontested. Compare this to the percentage of uncontested legislative seats in three states with independent redistricting commissions: California 2.0%; Colorado 7.3%; and Michigan 0.7%.

Ask your legislators to make New Mexico a leader in rebuilding democracy in the United States. You want them to support a joint resolution that will allow the people of New Mexico decide if they want an independent redistricting commission.

Fair Districts for New Mexico and its partners:

Adelante Progressive Caucus; American Association of University Women (AAUW), New Mexico; American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of New Mexico; Braver Angels North-Central New Mexico Alliance; Brennan Center for Justice; Campaign Legal Center; Central New Mexico Democrats; Democratic Party of New Mexico Rural Caucus; Common Cause New Mexico; Election Reformers Network; Fair Albuquerque Redistricting; Fair Vote NM; Green Party of Albuquerque Metro Area; Green Party of New Mexico; Indivisible Albuquerque; Indivisible Las Cruces; Indivisible Rio Grande; Indivisible Sandoval County; Indivisible Santa Fe; Indivisible SOS Santa Fe; International District Healthy Communities Coalition (IDHCC); League of Women Voters of New Mexico; League of Women Voter U.S.; Lutheran Advocacy Ministries - New Mexico; National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) Doña Ana County; National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), Santa Fe Branch 6109-B; Native American Democratic Caucus of New Mexico; New Mexico America Votes; New Mexico Black Voters Collaborative; New Mexico Chamber of Commerce; New Mexico Democratic Black Caucus; New Mexico Ethics Watch; New Mexico First; New Mexico Foundation for Open Government (NMFOG); New Mexico Open Elections; Princeton Gerrymandering Project; Progressive Democrats of America (PDA), Central New Mexico; Republican National Hispanic Assembly of New Mexico; Retake Our Democracy; Rio Rancho Regional Chamber of Commerce; Vecinos United; Veterans and Military Families Caucus-DPNM



Hannah Burling: 505-603-1601
Kathleen Burke: 505-255-0103 calls only
Dick Mason: 505-239-3804
fairdistricts@lwvnm.org
www.fairdistrictsnm.org
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