



# History of Texas Gerrymandering

- 1874 – 1999:** Democrats ruled the state by restricting the vote of minorities and gerrymandering. Democrats held the governorship unabated from 1874 – 1979. It retained control of the state house and senate until 1999.
- 1932 - 1970:** Racial minorities began voting Democratic, as the party began embracing social reforms. Conservative Democrats fled to the Republican Party in the early 1970s.
- 1965:** Landmark Voting Rights Act passed.
- 1973:** Racial gerrymandering by Democrats. In the Texas case, *White v. Regester*, the court determined that majority Democrats had purposefully drawn larger districts to dilute the voting strength of racial and ethnic minorities, guaranteeing that white Democrats would win elections instead of African American or Hispanic candidates. In another Texas case, *Robinson v. Anderson County Commissioners Court*, the court ruled that districts must better reflect communities of interest and not dilute the voting impact of minority voters.



# History of Texas Gerrymandering

- 1971, 1981:** Partisan Gerrymandering by Democrats. Though more voters leaned Republican, the maps ensured Democratic control of both state houses.
- 1991:** *Almanac of American Politics* states that the Democrats in Texas engaged in the “shrewdest gerrymander of the 1990s” with “incredibly convoluted lines” to ensure additional Democratic seats. Republicans challenged the partisan gerrymandering in court and lost. Some racial gerrymandering due to oddly shaped minority districts was ruled unconstitutional.
- 2000 – 2003:** Republicans won the majority of the seats and created one of the most partisan gerrymanders in history. Initially the 2001 maps fell to the courts which kept the 1991 maps.



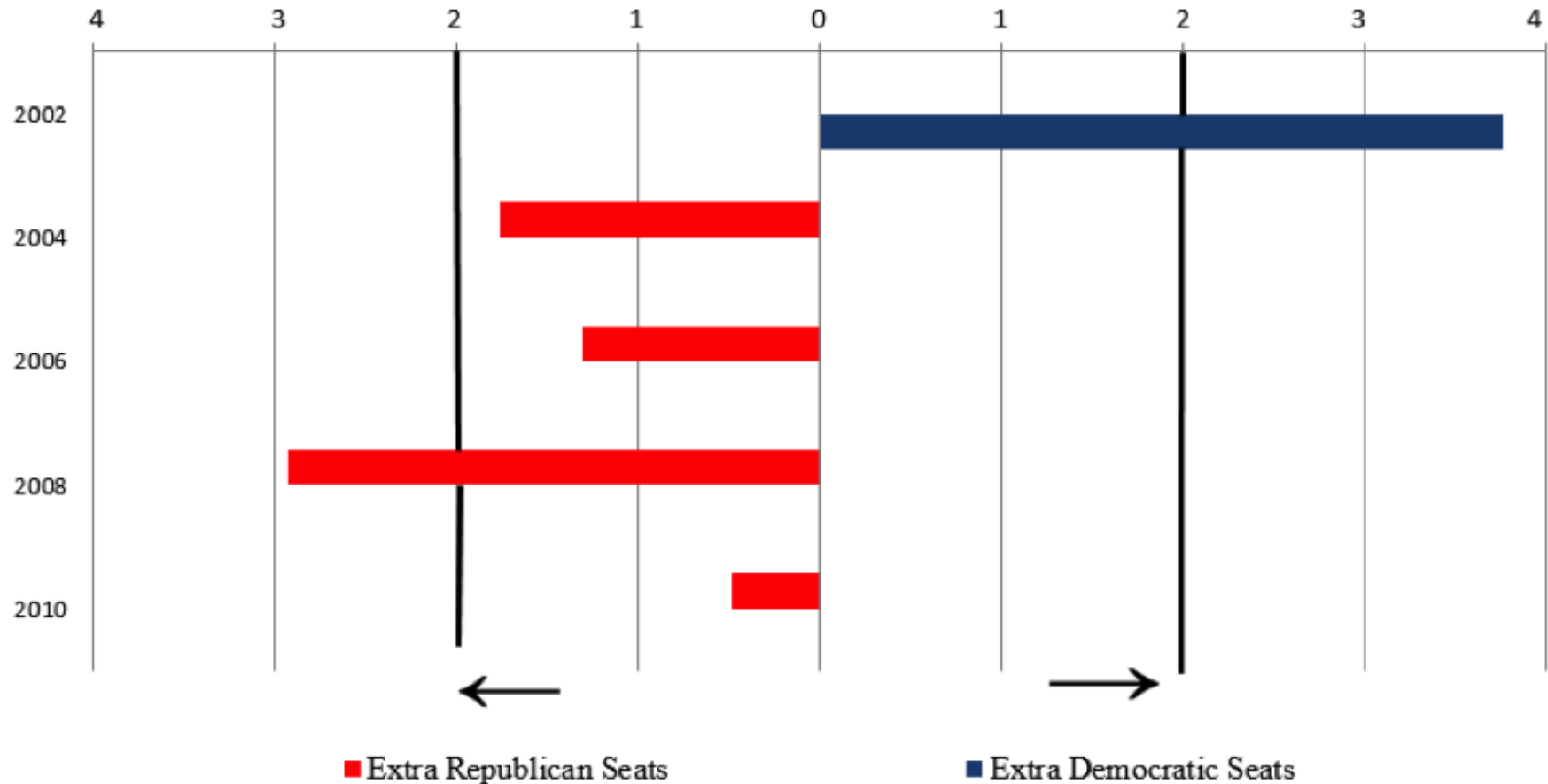
# History of Texas Gerrymandering

- 2003:** Republicans engineered a controversial mid-decade redistricting effort, causing Democrats to flee the state to deprive the Republicans a quorum for voting on the maps.  
May, 2003: TX House Democrats fled to a hotel just on the other side of the border in Oklahoma to prevent a redrawing of the map to give Republicans an additional 4 seats. They returned only once the Republicans promised to shelve the plan.  
Special Session 2003: Governor Rick Perry revived the plan causing 11 of the 12 TX State Democrats (Texas 11) to flee to New Mexico for a month. Eventually Democratic state senator John Whitmire returned to Texas, which allowed the Republicans to pass the redistricting Plan 1374C in October 2003. Republicans picked up 6 seats.
- 2003:** This redistricting effort was the master-mind of former House Majority Leader Tom DeLay. He called on the FAA to get the Democrats to return – a violation of House Ethics rules.
- 2005:** Justice Department lawyers said the Republicans knowingly violated the voting rights act with this plan; however, Senior Justice Department officials overruled them. Ultimately the Supreme Court invalidated one district. Democrats continued to lose seats.



# History of Texas Gerrymandering

**Partisan Bias in Court-Drawn Plan (2002),  
Mid-Decade Plan (2004), &  
Court-Modified Plan (2006, 2008, & 2010)**



*Note: Bold lines = thresholds of statistically significant partisan bias*



# History of Texas Gerrymandering

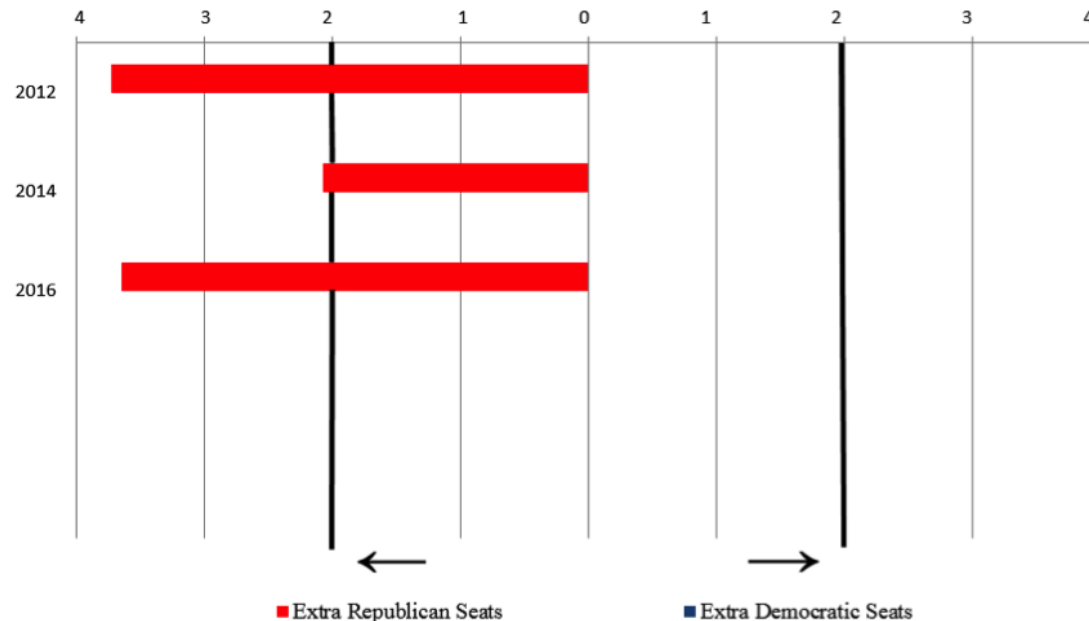
**2011:**

Republican drawn maps further diluted the Hispanic vote despite the fact four new congressional seats were added due to Hispanic population growth. Ultimately, in 2017, the Federal Court ruled that Texas purposely racially gerrymandered in 2011.

**2013:**

Based on lower court challenges to the 2011 maps, the maps were redrawn in 2013 which reduced some of the racial gerrymandering. The 2013 maps are still in effect.

**Partisan Bias in Texas Legislature's Enacted 2011 Plan**



*Note: Bold lines = thresholds of statistically significant partisan bias*



# History of Texas Gerrymandering



JUNE 2013. U.S. Supreme Court in its ruling on *Shelby v. Holder* has struck down a key requirement for states and communities with a history of discrimination against minority voters. No longer will federal approval be required before changing their voting laws and drawing district maps. This is known as pre-clearance.

The action in the **Shelby v. Holder** case has triggered outraged reactions from civil rights leaders across the nation.



# History of Texas Gerrymandering

**2013 - 2018:**

The racial gerrymandering that remained in the 2013 maps has been escalated to the Supreme Court. Hearings are to commence in April, 2018. The courts refused to hear complaints on partisan gerrymandering. The Supreme Court will hear the case in April, 2018 and has generally been consistent in ruling on racial gerrymandering cases, including North Carolina in 2017. Should the Supreme Court rule against Texas, it must then also consider whether Texas should be put back on Pre-Clearance.





# Why is gerrymandering such a big deal in Texas?

