Breaking Ground
The ABCs of Redistricting

Justin Levitt
Associate Professor
Loyola Law School

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The basics

- Why?
- When?
- Who?
- Where?
- How?
The basics

- Why?
- When?
- Who?
- Where?
- How?
Why re-draw?

Districts have to have roughly equal population.
And so...

2000 — Census Day
2001 — Redistricting

2010 — Census Day
2011 — Redistricting

2020 — Census Day
2021 — Redistricting
The basics

• Why?
• When?
• Who?
• Where?
• How?
Key dates

December 31, 2010
- Commission established
- Hire staff

April 1, 2011
- Official Census data comes in
- Begin taking testimony
- Continue testimony
- Draw maps
- Draft explanatory report

August 15, 2011
- Approve maps
- Litigation
The basics

- Why?
- When?
- **Who?**
- Where?
- How?
The commission

Within 10 years

- No federal/state office
- No employee of party or candidate
- No registered lobbyist
- No paid legislative staff
- No maxed-out contributors

Diversity reflecting the state
The basics

- Why?
- When?
- Who?
- Where?
- How?
Highest priorities

• Equal population

• Race and ethnicity
Highest priorities

- Equal population
- Race and ethnicity
The Voting Rights Act

Section 2

- Are half of the potential voters in a concentrated area minorities?
- Would they generally vote together?
- Would the rest of the voters in the area choose different candidates?
- Are there other threats to minority voting rights, in the “totality of the circumstances”?
If so...

Ensure that the district gives the minority voters equal opportunity to elect representatives of choice
The Voting Rights Act

Section 5

- Preclearance (Kings, Merced, Monterey, Yuba)

- Is the new map intended to dilute minority votes?
- Does the new map leave minority voters worse off?
Beyond the VRA

- Even beyond the protection of the Voting Rights Act, it is OK to consider race and ethnicity, among other factors.
- Race and ethnicity just can’t “predominate” without a really good reason.
Where: other priorities

- Equal population
- Race and ethnicity
- Contiguity
- Political geography
- Compactness
- Nesting
- Political candidates
Where: other priorities

- Equal population
- Race and ethnicity
- Contiguity
- Political geography
- Compactness
- Nesting
- Political candidates
Contiguity

- All parts of the district are connected to each other
Where: other priorities

- Equal population
- Race and ethnicity
- Contiguity
- Political geography
- Compactness
- Nesting
- Political candidates
Political geography

- City
- County
- Local neighborhood
- Local community of interest

“a contiguous population which shares common social and economic interests that should be included within a single district . . .”

- urban
- rural
- industrial
- agricultural
- etc.
- living standards
- transportation
- employment
- media markets
Lines may be irregular

City of Los Angeles

Bel Air-Beverly Crest

Harbor Gateway North
Where: other priorities

- Equal population
- Race and ethnicity
- Contiguity
- Political geography
- Compactness
- Nesting
- Political candidates
Compactness

Some think of “compactness” as abstract shapes
Compactness

California standard: Don’t bypass nearby population
Compactness

California standard: Don’t bypass nearby population
Compactness

California standard: Don’t bypass nearby population

Source: 2000 Census
Where: other priorities

- Equal population
- Race and ethnicity
- Contiguity
- Political geography
- Compactness
- Nesting
- Political candidates
Nesting

Senate
Assembly

Not nested

Nested
Where: other priorities

• Equal population
• Race and ethnicity
• Contiguity
• Political geography
• Compactness
• Nesting
• Political candidates
Political candidates

- Can’t consider residence
- Can’t draw districts in order to favor/disfavor incumbent, candidate, or party
- **Can** consider party registration/voting info (and may have to, for Voting Rights Act)
- No priority for drawing districts that are half-Democratic and half-Republican
The basics

• What?
• Who?
• Where?
• Why?
• How?
If you don’t want to consider it all...

- Equal population
- Race and ethnicity
- Contiguity
- Political geography
- Compactness
- Nesting
- Political candidates
It’s OK to keep it simple

- City
- County
- Local neighborhood
- Local community of interest

“a contiguous population which shares common social and economic interests that should be included within a single district . . .”

- urban
- rural
- industrial
- agricultural
- etc. . . .

- living standards
- transportation
- employment
- media markets
Just talk about your community
Further information

Justin Levitt
Loyola Law School
justin.levitt@lls.edu

Brennan Center for Justice
Citizen’s Guide to Redistricting
www.brennancenter.org