

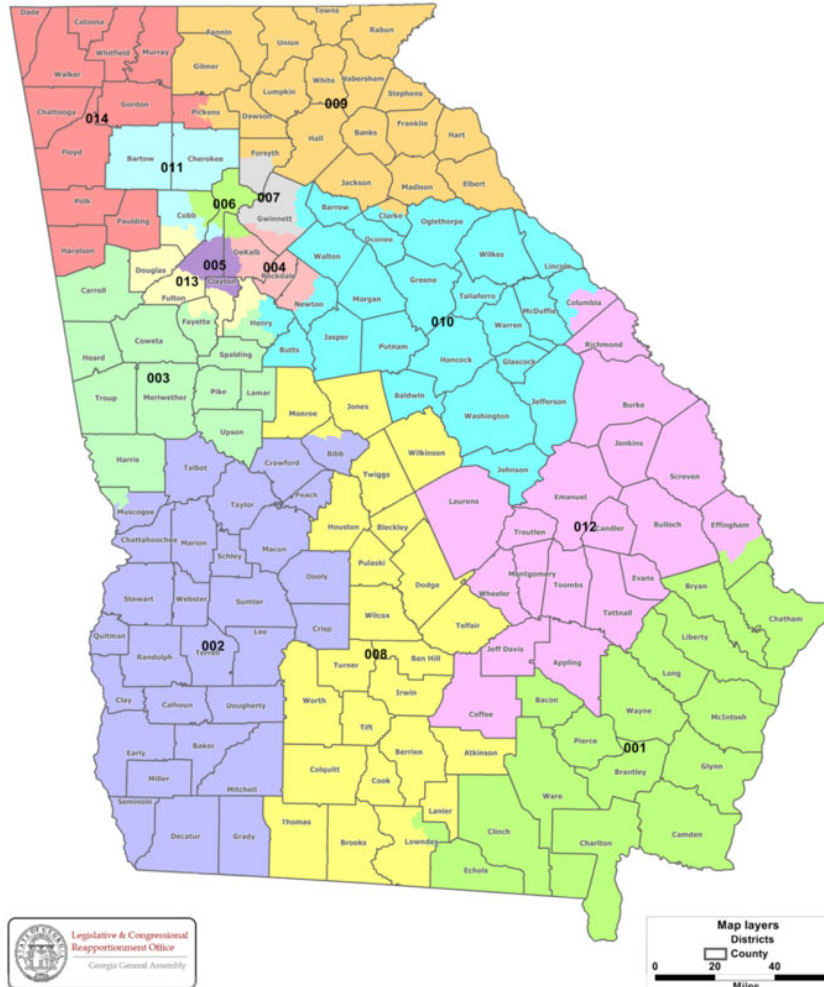
EXHIBIT 19

https://www.albanyherald.com/news/georgia-lawmakers-pass-republican-backed-house-redistricting-map/article_f5fe6ff6-431e-11ec-aa63-439c16f8deb6.html

FEATURED

Georgia lawmakers pass Republican-backed House redistricting map

By Dave Williams Capitol Beat News Service
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Special Illustration

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ATLANTA — The Republican-led Georgia House of Representatives has adopted new boundaries for the state's 180 House districts.

After nearly two hours of debate, the House approved a map proposed by GOP leadership 99-79, voting mostly along party lines.



The General Assembly redraws Georgia's legislative and congressional district lines each decade to accommodate changes in population reflected in the U.S. Census.

The map crafted by House Republicans not only keeps House districts as close to equal in population as possible – the goal being 59,511 residents – Rep. Bonnie Rich, chairman of the House Legislative & Congressional Reapportionment Committee, told her House colleagues.

The map also creates 49 majority black House districts, an increase of one district over the current House map lawmakers adopted in 2011, as well as 27 “minority-opportunity” districts where minority candidates should be competitive, said Rich, R-Suwanee.

The Republican map splits 69 counties, compared to 73 under the current map, Rich said.

It also pairs only eight incumbent House members in four districts, she said. The House map Democrats drew in 2001, the last time they held a majority in the chamber, paired 37 Republican incumbents and nine Democratic incumbents, she said.

“This is a map that complies with the law, first and foremost, with the Voting Rights Act and the United States Constitution,” Rich said. “The map is fair to Georgia.”

But Democrats complained the map favors Republicans in a state that has evolved into a 50-50 split between the two parties, which is reflected in the outcomes of recent statewide elections.

“Georgia has grown more diverse and urban,” Rep. Carolyn Hugley, D-Columbus, said. “This map ignores the fact the Georgia is equally divided politically.”



Other Democrats accused Republican leaders of diluting minority voting strength by “packing” minority voters into certain districts in order to reduce the minority voting-age populations of surrounding districts.

Rep. Winfred Dukes, D-Albany, who is paired in a House district with Rep. Gerald Greene, R-Cuthbert, cited District 153 in the city of Albany adjacent to his redrawn district as an example of such packing.

Rich objected to Dukes’ characterizing of Republicans’ strategy as packing.

“We didn’t have any packing in our map,” she said. “We have drawn legal districts that comply with the Voting Rights Act.”

The Republican map’s opponents also repeated complaints over the rushed pace of the special session they have raised frequently during the past week.

Hugley argued the 11 public hearings the committee held across the state during the summer were of little use when they came before the 2020 Census data were released and before the release of any proposed maps.

House Minority Leader James Beverly complained that the final version of the House map Republican leaders proposed was being voted on just two days after its release to the public.

“The people of Georgia deserve better,” Beverly, D-Macon, said. “The people demanded a fair and transparent redistricting process. What they got instead was a rushed and secretive process.”

But Rich said the 2022 election schedule requires the General Assembly to act without delay. 

“We have deadlines,” she said. “The elections officials are going to have to rush to implement this. ... We have a job to get done now.”

The House map now heads to the state Senate, which approved its new map on Tuesday.

