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Senate's redistricting map advances; Georgia Assembly honors Max Cleland

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By: **Donna Lowry**

Lawmakers Special session Day 5 11/09/21



"I'm glad it only happens once a decade," said Sen. John Kennedy (R-Macon), who chairs the Senate Reapportionment and Redistricting Committee, of the redistricting process. "We have an additional million people that we didn't have last time, and we've had significant population migration with the state."

Kennedy presented the map his committee worked on since U.S. Census figures came out last summer. It reduces the number of Republican-leaning districts from 34 to 33 — but Democrats pushed back, saying that is not enough.

"We have been entrusted with diverse maps that are reflective of our diverse communities here in Georgia," said Sen. Elena Parent (D-Atlanta).

Two Democratic senators whose diverse districts will now lean Republican spoke on the bill — including Sen. Michelle Au (D-Johns Creek), the first Asian American woman elected to the Senate.

Au told the chamber, "A majority-minority state should have a representative number of majority-minority districts, but that's not what this map before us shows," Au said.

Sen. Emmanuel Jones (D-Decatur) will see the Henry County area he represents become a split district. He took to the Senate floor during debate and said, "I don't know how to explain to my county... what this chamber is now doing to a majority African American county."

As expected, the bill passed 31-21 along party lines. But, the day started with unity on a somber note, as both chambers reflected on the overnight death of former U.S. Sen. Max Cleland.

"He was indeed a patriot," said Rep. Scott Holcomb (D-Atlanta). "He was a son of Georgia. He loved this state so much and so many people. And he was pained by what has become of our politics today. And he knew that we could do better,"

Lt. Gov. Geoff Duncan (R-Georgia) said, "If you just take a peek at his life and legacy that he leaves behind, it's just an amazing journey and an inspiration for so many of us."

About the author



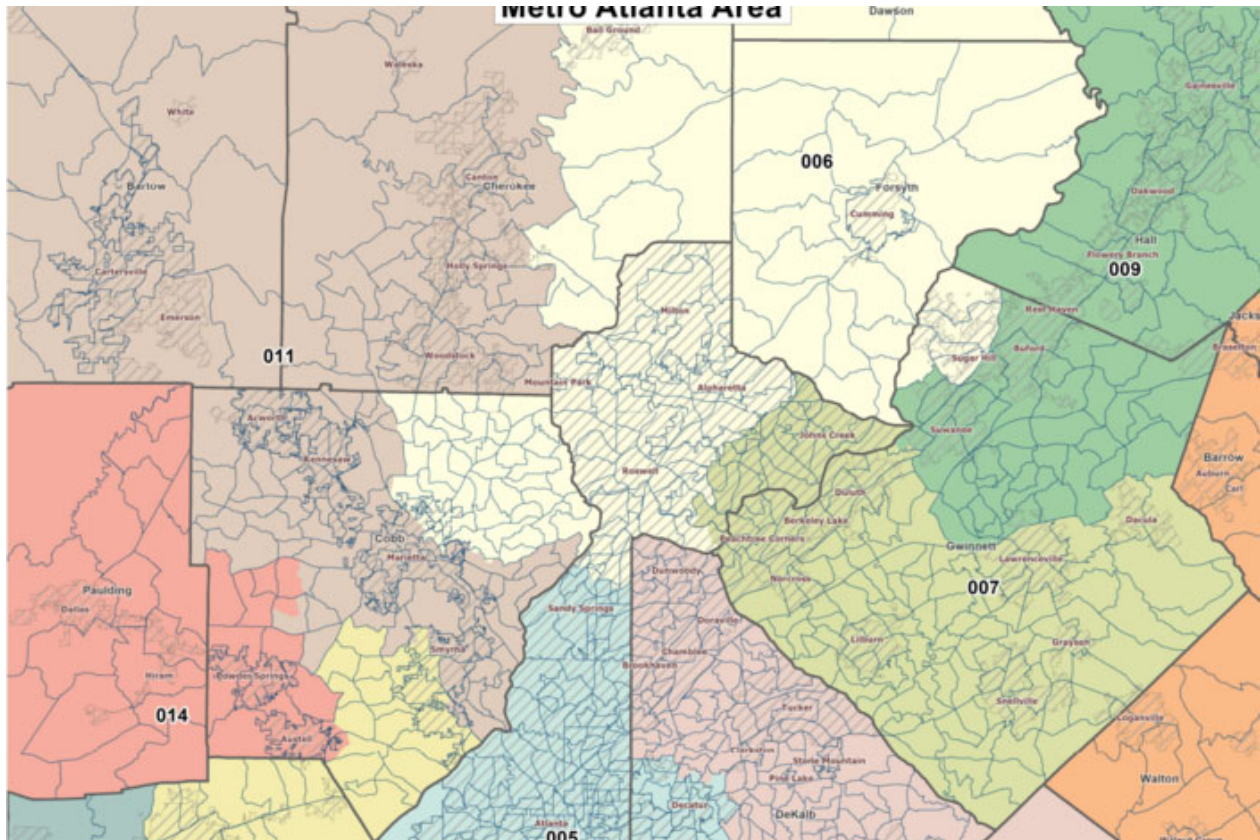
DONNA LOWRY

Host

Donna Lowry is an award-winning journalist with a passion for storytelling.

She currently serves as Capitol correspondent for GPB's Lawmakers.

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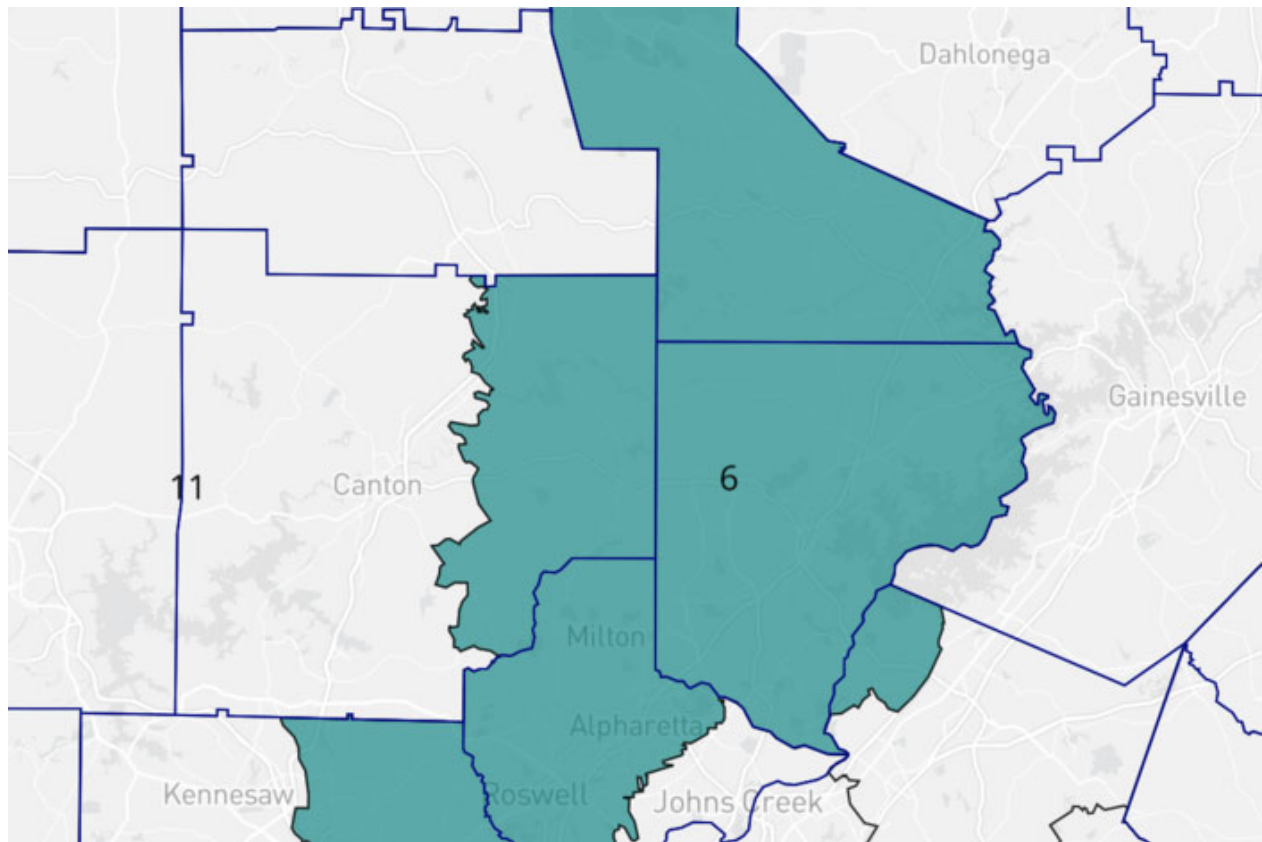


POLITICS

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