Apportionment & Redistricting

How have apportionment and redistricting changed the congressional landscape? The maps at the end of last decade still had a small net bias favoring Republicans. The new maps suggest a small net gain for Democrats, but with re-apportionment still shy of net proportional. Moreover, an approximate national balance obscures offsetting maps in a handful of states that are more unfair.

**Details**

The table below compares the maps used in the 2020 elections with the new maps that will be used in November. Both sets of maps are compared using same [election composite](https://medium.com/dra-2020/election-composites-13d05ed07864) which combines several statewide elections to abstract out the effects of individual candidates and campaigns. Hence, these comparisons isolate the impacts of the new apportionments and district boundaries.

* The “DEM %” column shows the composite’s statewide two-party Democratic vote share for each state. The corresponding Republican vote share is simply the complement and could be used instead.
* The “Apportionment” section shows the previous and new numbers of congressional districts for each state and which gained and lost seats.
* The “2020 Maps” section shows the cumulative fractional seat probabilities (Sf) for the old maps and the statewide vote shares as well as the corresponding first-past-the-post (FPTP) values (S#). It also shows the number of seats that would be closest to proportional (PR).
* As noted above, the sum of the FPTP seats (220) is slightly less than the sum of the PR seats (224), so the 2020 maps still had a small net bias favoring Republicans.
* The “2022 Maps” section shows the corresponding information for the new maps.
* Due to re-apportionment, the same statewide vote shares imply that Democrats should pick up a few seats (3: one-seat gains in FL, MT, NC, and TX less a one-seat loss in CA).
* The “Changes” section compares the new maps to the old both in terms of fractional seat probabilities (SfΔ) and FPTP seats (S#Δ).
* The bottom line is that the new maps favor Democrats slightly more (~1–4 seats), but still not quite proportionally (224 vs. 225), and that approximate balance obscures offsetting maps that are more unfair in favor of Democrats (~7–9 seats) and Republicans (~5–7 seats).

This analysis does not account for changes in the electoral environment (e.g., midterm effect, *Roe v. Wade*, etc.) which could easily overwhelm these small changes.

[INSERT: Table]

Source: Dave’s Redistricting which uses VEST data.

[end]