

**2017 AFT Pennsylvania Biennial
Political Action Committee
Co-Chairs: Rosemary Boland and Hillary Linardopoulos**

Page 1 of 1

End Gerrymandering of Pennsylvania Voting Districts

WHEREAS: Pennsylvania is one of the most heavily gerrymandered states. Behind closed doors, lawmakers draw the borders of their own voting districts, resulting in politicians picking their voters, not voters choosing their elected leaders.

WHEREAS: In 2016, with all 203 House seats up for re-election, 98 politicians ran unopposed and only nine House seats were considered competitive or mildly competitive. In the PA Senate, only 12 of 25 Senate candidates faced competition in the general election.

WHEREAS: Ballotpedia found that 41.8 percent of state legislative candidates faced no major party opposition in the primary, up from 32.7 percent in 2010; and 48.7 percent of candidates ran without opposition in the general election, nearly half of all voters had no choice at the ballot box.

WHEREAS: After the 2020 U.S. Census, the federal government determines Congressional reapportionment and in Pennsylvania, the majority party in the state legislature introduces congressional maps, which must be voted on by the General Assembly and signed by the governor.

WHEREAS: It is a conflict of interest to have the same people whose political futures rest on the composition of political districts to be the ones who draw the maps.

WHEREAS: PA has engaged in “cracking and packing” districts – splitting a population and spreading its members among several districts where their votes become irrelevant or concentrating voters of one party in as few districts as possible to maintain one party’s majority.

WHEREAS: Mapping and data mining technology have made it possible to specify particular demographics and characteristics so that the politicians drawing the maps can select exactly the voters likely to keep them in office.

WHEREAS: Legislative composition doesn’t reflect voter composition, fewer races in Pennsylvania are competitive, minority voters are cracked and packed to limit representation and voters face limited choice at the polls.

RESOLVED: AFT Pennsylvania supports the efforts in Pennsylvania to end gerrymandering and encourage drawing fair districts based on the 2020 U.S. Census.

RESOLVED: Pennsylvania should create an independent citizens’ commission to recommend new districts.

RESOLVED: Pennsylvania follow models used successfully in California and Arizona in which neither elected officials, members of the immediate families of elected officials, government and party officials who may benefit from gerrymandered districts be excluded from the commission.

RESOLVED: Redistricting takes into account established political subdivisions, geographical features and communities and follows all constitutional and Voting Rights Act requirements.

RESOLVED: The process of redistricting is transparent, impartial and accountable to all voters.