



## **ACTION Kit: Redistricting**

### **Redistricting: End politicians' unfettered power to manipulate district lines!**

You have a right to expect that your vote will matter in choosing your representative. Your community has the right to choose representatives who are accountable and reflective of the people who live in their district. Unfortunately, politicians have drawn their own district maps to maintain their electoral advantage and manipulate the democratic process.

Reform starts at home! We're here to help you end the reign of gerrymandered districts! Use this ACTION Kit to get started.

### **People have the passion...LWV has the ACTION!**

- Whether you're new to activism or a seasoned activist, this ACTION Kit will help you develop your plan.
- Whether by yourself or in a group, YOU have the power to make a difference. Be a HERO for democracy!
- Read the [League of Women Voters position on redistricting and voting rights](#) and learn about the League's [activism on redistricting](#).
- Don't stop with one ACTION item. Keep the momentum going — We need your help!

### **Talk about it! Here are questions to get you started.**

- Why is redistricting a priority to you?
- What is your primary concern about gerrymandered districts?
- How have you seen gerrymandered districts influence democracy? Share your story!

- How can you help make DEMOCRACY work?
- What is one thing you can do now to make a difference?

Ask these questions, or create your own questions that are more relevant to your area and audience.

## Change it! Here's what YOU can do at the local and state levels.

### Only have 5 minutes to do ACTION? We've got something for you!

- [Join the League of Women Voters!](#) Already a member? Recruit a friend!
- Become an e-activist. [Sign up for the League's Action Alerts](#) and share them with friends and family.
- [Join an online discussion group](#) to learn what others are doing.
- On Twitter? Use #LWV and #Redistricting, #VoterSuppression, or #Gerrymandering when sharing posts. Add your state, community, and friends to the conversation by tagging them. It's as simple as adding hashtag and a name (for example, #Minnesota).
- On Instagram? Take pictures of your meetings, events and forums and post them!
- On Facebook? Use Facebook Live to host conversations. Encourage active participation by taking questions from your online audience.
- Send your legislator a brief email or social media message advocating for fair districts and an end to political gridlock.



### In 10 minutes, you can do Something Great!

- Write a letter to the editor or op-ed for your local newspaper. Download our template letter to get you started (see attachment)!
- Contact your [U.S. Senators and U.S. Representative](#) and your [local and state representatives](#) and tell them redistricting reform is a PRIORITY. Simply pick up the phone and give them a call. It's that easy! Inspire your friends to do the same.
  - Here is a brief script you can use:

*I urge you to support redistricting reform. Specifically, I urge you to support an independent commission to draw district lines through a process that uses objective criteria. Legislators and political parties should not be allowed to draw their own district lines. I believe that, in so doing, politics becomes more divided, special interests get more influence, and my vote matters less. An independent commission will give legitimacy to the process and ensure all voters are represented fairly. I urge you to support redistricting reform.*

- Question elected officials on Facebook, on Twitter, in the newspaper, or at a town hall meeting about their experience running in a district that is uncompetitive due to gerrymandering. Ask if they support redistricting reform and what their plan is to stop gerrymandering.
- Start a blog. Research the issues, share your ideas, and ask questions. Don't forget to share your blog on social media.
- Meet your elected officials. Make appointments and visit their offices. Discuss ideas to improve representation within each district in your state. Invite your friends and carpool!

### With 30 or more minutes, you will be a Defender of Democracy!

- Communicate with your elected officials often: Visit, email, call. Build professional relationships between your elected officials and you and the League. Keep redistricting reform a part of the discussion.



- Share your officeholders' district office phone numbers and email addresses throughout your community. Encourage the public to get engaged. Share this ACTION Kit!
- Go to town hall meetings, invite your friends to join you, and ask officeholders what they will do to fix gerrymandering.
- Attend a local League forum or meeting.
- Host a social gathering to bring friends together to talk about gerrymandering and voter suppression. Ask your friends to host future social events.

## Get organized. Two speak louder than one.

### It takes less than an hour to make a Big Impact!

- Get to know other activists like you, find other groups in your community, and get organized. *We the People*.
- When hosting events with your group, start with a "pop" quiz! Test your knowledge on voting rights, redistricting, and apportionment. Discuss and learn the issues.
- Start a book group with *Democracy Reforms* as the theme. Use #redistricting, #VoterSuppression, and #LWV on Twitter and Facebook to keep the conversation going.
- Create posters and images about the gerrymandering in your legislative districts and share with community members, on social media and in your newspaper.
- Start a discussion group using Facebook, Eventbrite.com, and/or Meetup.com. To get the conversation started, use our discussion questions in the *Talk about it* section above.
- Work with your group to engage elected representatives on Facebook, Twitter, and email. Tell them why gerrymandered districts is a problem. To join others like you online, use #redistricting, #VoterSuppression, and #LWV when posting on Twitter and Facebook. Also use your state's hashtag.
- Organize friends and family to make weekly calls to legislators about the importance of fair districts and ending gerrymandering. Use the script above to get your group primed for their first calls.



### Got a few days to plan? Stretch your advocacy muscle.

- Host a Q&A table at a public event. Bring district maps to illustrate the serious problem.
- Start a petition—traditional and/or electronic. Make sure you review your state's regulations when starting a petition campaign.
- Interview elected officials about their experience connecting to voters and representing their interests. Afterwards, share your interview observations with your League or discussion group to determine how to get elected officials to work on redistricting reform.
- Organize a field trip! Invite your elected official(s) and/or their staff member(s) to visit your district and to take a drive along the district lines. Demonstrate how the community is "packed" or "cracked" and how this is not fair representation.
- Organize a day with friends and/or family and coordinate a calling party. Use the script above and the "reform options" listed below. Tell your elected officials you want fair districts and less gridlock.
- Host a letter writing campaign aimed at elected representatives letting them know how redistricting and democracy reforms are a priority to you. Use our discussion questions in the *Talk about it* section above, to get your group primed for writing.

- Schedule a series of meetings with your elected representatives—local, state, and national. We’ve created sample questions for you to ask (see attachment).
- Host a forum and invite city planners, community leaders, leaders in redistricting reform, and/or elected representatives to lead the conversation about redistricting. Share the experience on social media.
- Make it come to life. Organize your group by having members drive, bike, or walk their district. Make a list of the significant areas that are excluded (or included) in your district. Write to your newspaper and share your observations about the district lines. Take pictures or videos and share on Facebook and/or Instagram.
- Game night! Host a game night where teams draw new districts with criteria that are set in the Voting Rights Act. Compare the newly drawn maps and award the winner(s). Share the fun on social media, in newspapers, and email. Take and post lots of pictures!

## Start here to learn more!

- Read [our national position](#) and some [useful resources](#) we’ve gathered for you.
- Develop your plan with [League’s Advocacy 101 handout](#).

For more information about the League’s mission to protect voters, check out the [League of Women Voters website](#).

## Start with an ACTION list. Advocate for these reforms!

### Key Elements for Redistricting Reform

- Independent Redistricting Commission
- Clear and enforceable criteria
- Public input and transparency throughout the process
- Judicial review

### Citizens First! Involving Citizens in the Redistricting Process

- Public hearings with sufficient notice
- All meetings open to the public
- All records made open and accessible to the public, including proposed plans before they are adopted
- Computers and other technology available to the public

### Draw Fair Districts! Criteria for District Boundaries

- Develop substantially equal populations in the districts for each type of elected official
- Ensure effective representation of racial and linguistic communities
- Promote partisan fairness
- Maintain communities of interest in single districts, as well as municipalities and counties, to the extent possible
- Disregard protection of incumbents or political parties.

