



The Republican Attack on Fair Maps

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IRC 2.0: AZ Republicans Try, Fail to Destroy Independent Redistricting, Fair Maps

- **November 2, 2011: “Arizona Governor and Senate Oust Redistricting Leader”**

<https://nytimes.com/2011/11/02/us/chairwoman-of-arizona-redistricting-commission-ousted.html>

Republican Governor Jan Brewer and 21 Republican State Senators removed IRC 2.0's Independent Chairwoman Colleen Mathis, accusing her of “skewing the redistricting process toward Democrats.”

*“Paul Charlton, a former United States attorney who is representing Ms. Mathis, dismissed those accusations and said **Ms. Brewer and other Republican politicians in the state were politicizing the process because they were frustrated that they could not control it.**”*

- **November 17, 2011: “Jan Brewer DENIED: IRC Chair Colleen Mathis Reinstated”**

<https://www.phoenixnewtimes.com/news/jan-brewer-denied-irc-chair-colleen-mathis-reinstated-6499802>

In a unanimous decision, the Arizona Supreme Court rejected the Republicans' attempt to remove the Independent Commissioner, and reinstated her as Chair.

“Arizona Governor Jan Brewer's incompetent overreach of power in removing the Arizona Independent Redistricting Commission's chairwoman Colleen Mathis -- one aided and abetted by former state Senate President Russell Pearce's "Tea Party Senate" -- has been overturned by the Arizona Supreme Court, which today reinstated Mathis as chair.”

- **April 27, 2012: “Republicans file 2 lawsuits challenging redistricting maps”**

<https://azcapitoltimes.com/news/2012/04/27/republicans-planning-2-lawsuits-challenging-redistricting-maps/>

“Republican critics of the Arizona Independent Redistricting Commission filed two lawsuits today that seek to force the redrawing of the commission's approved legislative and congressional districts.

The lawsuits, filed by attorney Mike Liburdi of the Republican-led FAIR Trust effort, take aim at the maps at both the state and federal court levels...

- **April 20, 2016: “Supreme Court Upholds Arizona’s Redrawn Legislative Map”**
<https://www.nytimes.com/2016/04/21/us/politics/supreme-court-upholds-arizonas-redrawn-legislative-map.html>

“The Supreme Court on Wednesday unanimously upheld an Arizona state legislative map drawn by an independent redistricting commission, rejecting a challenge from Republicans who said the map was too favorable to Democrats.”

- **June 7, 2012: “Arizona Legislature Sues Independent Redistricting Commission”**
<https://kizz.org/content/1754/arizona-legislature-sues-independent-redistricting-commission>

The first of the two Republican lawsuits against IRC to ultimately fail at the US Supreme Court was AZ State Legislature vs the IRC. The Republican State Legislature challenged the new Congressional map, claiming that *“the voter-approved law creating the Independent Redistricting Commission is unconstitutional, and wants the court to give the job of redrawing Congressional district lines back to state lawmakers.”*

- **June 29, 2015: “Supreme Court Rebuffs Lawmakers Over Independent Redistricting Panel”**
<https://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/30/us/supreme-court-upholds-creation-of-arizona-redistricting-commission.html>

“Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, writing for the majority in the 5-to-4 decision, endorsed what she called “an endeavor by Arizona voters to address the problem of partisan gerrymandering — the drawing of legislative district lines to subordinate adherents of one political party and entrench a rival party in power.”

- **July 10, 2015: “Behold, the \$1.5 million slap in the face”**
<https://www.azcentral.com/story/laurieroberts/2015/07/10/taxpayer-tab-for-redistricting-lawsuit-supreme-court/29955605/>

“That’s the amount that Arizona taxpayers are on the hook to pay, because Republican legislators decided to grab some power from the people they (supposedly) represent.

According to The Republic’s Mary Jo Pitzl, their bid to reclaim the right to draw congressional districts cost us \$1.5 million. And that’s not counting their other pending lawsuit -- the one involving legislative districts...

But don’t fret. Senate president Andy Biggs -- the power behind that slap you’re feeling -- says it’s so worth it because it settles the matter.

Actually, I thought the matter had been settled in 2000, when voters overwhelmingly decided to take the Sharpie out of the self-interested hands of legislators.

Here's what our leaders' arrogance cost you: \$1,565,353.73...

Of course, Elections Director Eric Spencer got in on the act, costing us another \$1,117, and Gov. Doug Ducey sent his attorney Mike Liburdi and his deputy chief of staff Danny Seiden. Cost: \$3,027.

All for a losing battle to wrest power from the people.”

- **May 3, 2017: “Lawsuit settlement signals end of current redistricting commission”**

<https://azcapitoltimes.com/news/2017/05/03/lawsuit-settlement-signals-end-of-current-redistricting-commissions-work/>

“The commission voted unanimously at its April 28 meeting to accept a settlement with a group of Republican activists who sued the IRC in 2012. The plaintiffs agreed not to appeal a Maricopa County Superior Court judge’s ruling against them...

The resolution of the final lawsuit marks the end of a tumultuous redistricting process that included years of litigation, partisan infighting, allegations of misconduct, three lawsuits against the IRC’s maps and the impeachment of its chairman, which was later reversed by the Arizona Supreme Court.

[Maricopa Superior Court Judge Roger] Brodman’s ruling was the third in a string of legal victories for the IRC in lawsuits over the 2011-12 redistricting process.”

A Decade of Ducey and the Republicans' Thumbs on the Scale

- **August 12, 2013: "2020 Redistricting? The Arizona GOP Is ON IT"**

<https://www.rollcall.com/2013/08/12/2020-redistricting-the-arizona-gop-is-on-it/>

"This cycle, Republicans are quietly searching for a registered Independent who can get appointed to the committee to help the GOP in the next round of mapmaking after 2020.

"The key to Arizona redistricting is that you need to find an independent who is on your side," said an Arizona Republican consultant, who was granted anonymity to speak candidly.

The local GOP's new committee includes Republicans from every House district in the state, and attorney Mike Liburdi will serve as chairman."

- **May 2, 2019: "Democrats cry foul, say Ducey is stacking commission that helps pick Arizona's top judges and others"**

<https://www.azcentral.com/story/news/politics/arizona/2019/05/02/doug-ducey-stacking-arizona-commission-appel-late-court-appointments-democrats-say/3630708002/>

"Does the state Commission on Appellate Court Appointments — the group that helps decide who draws political districts and settles high-profile cases — actually reflect the state's population?..."

Democratic senators allege five new commission appointees, submitted by Gov. Doug Ducey and confirmed by Republican senators Tuesday, represent an attempt to stack the board with people who "don't even come close" to looking like much of the state.

They argue his picks, four of whom are white and none of whom are Democrats, fly in the face of the constitutional requirement that demands officials "endeavor to see that the commission reflects the diversity of Arizona's population."

- **February 25, 2020: "Democrats Decry 'Sham' Interviews for Seat on Board Key to Arizona Redistricting"**

<https://www.phoenixnewtimes.com/news/ducey-held-sham-interviews-for-board-key-to-az-redistricting-11447266>

"When a position opened recently on a statewide board that holds great sway over redistricting in Arizona, Todd Francis was eager to apply.

Francis, an active Democrat, grew up in Chinle, on the Navajo Nation. For years, he has worked for organizations in the Valley that help first-time Native American homebuyers obtain mortgages...

“Somebody needs to be looking out for tribal representation... I just want to make sure that there’s fair representation for these communities.”

*But, as Francis and others who applied for the open seat in Maricopa County soon learned, their chances of being appointed were slim, if they had a shot at all, because **even before some candidates had their interviews, the seat had already been filled...***

*Democrats have long alleged that **Ducey is flouting the Constitution with his appointments and trying to stack the commission in Republicans’ favor.** The state Democratic party has pointed out that public members of the appellate court commission include one person of color, not one Democrat, and not a single person from a tribe...*

A few weeks later, Francis was called for an interview, and at 1 p.m. on February 13, he went to the Ninth Floor of the Executive Tower....

But that same day, the Senate Judiciary Committee confirmed Jonathan Paton, a Republican who had been appointed by Ducey in 2015, to the very seat representing Maricopa County that Francis was interviewing for...

*The panel of four interviewers spent about half an hour asking Francis what he took to be serious questions, like the qualifications of a good judge. But ultimately, **he felt the process was “a sham.”***

- **August 26, 2020: “Partisan groups laying the groundwork to shape Arizona redistricting”**
<https://www.azmirror.com/2020/08/26/partisan-groups-aiming-to-shape-arizona-redistricting-are-laying-the-groundwork/>

“Steve Gaynor, a businessman who was the Republican nominee for secretary of state in 2018, created... Fair Maps Arizona last year, which he runs with former GOP lawmaker Jill Norgaard.

Gaynor would not comment on Fair Maps Arizona’s activities, but he told the Arizona Mirror last year that his organization could play a number of roles, including recruiting and vetting candidates for the IRC, testify or lobby the commission on the boundaries of congressional and legislative districts, or perhaps even draw maps itself...

Several Republicans say Gov. Doug Ducey and members of his outside political operation have played a role in recruiting candidates for the AIRC...

The governor’s greatest contribution to the Republicans’ redistricting efforts may have been finished before the Commission on Appellate Court Appointments even began accepting applications. The governor denuded the commission of Democratic members, leaving it with only Republican and independent members, some of whom had clear GOP ties, for more than a year. Democrats vociferously criticized Ducey for the commission’s lack of political diversity, as well for the lack of racial and ethnic diversity, as it included very few non-white members.”

- **September 18, 2020: “Ducey-appointed CACA Advances Major Donors, Former Staffers In IRC Selection Process”**

<https://azdem.org/release-ducey-appointed-caca-advances-major-donors-former-staffers-in-irc-selection-process/>

*“Yesterday, the Ducey-appointed Commission on Appellate Court Appointments voted to interview 51 of 138 applicants to the Independent Redistricting Commission (IRC). **Many of the applicants, who made the first cut and have been selected for interviews, are recent Ducey staffers and major donors, as well as a number of registered “Independents” whose political activities and affiliations demonstrate strong Republican leanings.**”*

- **September 28, 2020: “Two independent candidates for redistricting panel support GOP candidates”**

<https://www.azmirror.com/2020/09/28/two-independent-candidates-for-redistricting-panel-support-gop-candidates/>

“Two people who applied to be the independent chairman of Arizona’s next redistricting commission have shown recent support for Republican candidates, public commenters warned the nominating panel that vets the candidates...”

[Robert] Wilson, who owns a gun store and business consulting practice in Flagstaff, hosted an Aug. 20 event by President Donald Trump’s re-election campaign in the parking lot of his store, Timberline Firearms and Training... A Facebook post by Wilson the day before the 2018 election invited people to his store to meet Gov. Doug Ducey and Republican candidates Walt Blackman, who was elected to the Arizona House of Representatives, and Wendy Rogers, then a candidate for Congress...

Anders Lundin, a retired attorney who lives in Fountain Hills, submitted a letter earlier this month to the Fountain Hills Times defending Republican Congressman David Schweikert, who represents the area, over his admission to 11 ethics violations...

Neither Wilson’s political activity nor Lundin’s letter to his local newspaper were discussed by the appellate screening commissioners.”

- **October 6, 2020: “Arizona Democratic Party Chair Calls For Reopening Of IRC Interview Selection In Response To New Report, Echoes Concerns Of Legislative Leaders”**

<https://azdem.org/arizona-democratic-party-chair-calls-for-reopening-of-irc-interview-selection-in-response-to-new-report-echoes-concerns-of-legislative-leaders/>

“The Arizona Democratic Party echoes the request made this week by legislative leaders to re-open the interviews to include more applicants of color:

“Arizona is a diverse state and the members of this Commission need to accurately represent the multitude of people living in our state...”

Currently, only 8 of the 51 [applicants] selected (or about 15%) for an interview are applicants of color. Yet there are several eligible and qualified applicants of color that we urge you to consider to ensure that this process is fair and truly representative of the state of Arizona.

There is no acceptable excuse for the relative lack of people of color chosen for the important duty of redrawing the state's congressional and legislative districts."

- **January 14, 2021: "Independent IRC Finalist Reveals Ties To Chair Of GOP Recruitment Effort"**

<https://azdem.org/release-independent-irc-finalist-reveals-ties-to-chair-of-gop-recruitment-effort/>

"...IRC Chair finalist Thomas Loquvam revealed his ties to an attorney who reportedly led a committee to find a GOP-friendly registered Independent who could get appointed to the next commission.

Mr. Loquvam cited Mr. [Mike] Liburdi while explaining to the panel how he came to be hired to do legal work for Governor Ducey's PACs.

According to Loquvam... former Ducey aide Liburdi was in the process of shedding clients in anticipation of a judicial appointment and gave Loquvam a referral.

Mr. Liburdi, in addition to his status as a former aide to the Governor, also represented the Plaintiffs in the 2014 lawsuit *Harris v Arizona Independent Redistricting Commission*, which unsuccessfully sought to throw out the legislative district map drawn by the 2011 IRC. He has also reportedly been active in GOP efforts to recruit a favorable IRC in 2021.

The Arizona Democratic Party has previously opposed Mr. Loquvam's application, citing his status as a registered lobbyist, a line of work prohibited in the Arizona Constitution under voter-approved Proposition 106 that created the IRC in 2000."

- **January 14, 2021: "Arizona Republicans make sneaky moves to rig redistricting commission before any lines are drawn"**

<https://www.salon.com/2021/01/14/arizona-republicans-make-sneaky-moves-to-rig-redistricting-commission-before-any-lines-are-drawn/>

"Indeed, someone fair-minded might look at the list of five finalists recently selected by the state's Commission on Appellate Court Appointments — an ostensibly nonpartisan personnel board — and wonder if the **Republicans are trying to [expletive] Arizona's independent commission before a single line has even been drawn.**

Four of the five finalists, while registered as independents, have either strong public opinions, or close ties and/or financial interests through jobs, family and partners into the state's political power structure.

Those opinions and connections largely lean in the same direction — toward Arizona Republicans.

If the Commission on Appellate Court Appointments — yes, CACA for short, because you can't make this stuff up — produced a list of names overwhelmingly likely to give Republicans that 3-2 edge on the independent redistricting commission, well, that might not be a coincidence either.

Gov. Doug Ducey, a Republican, has stacked CACA with loyalists throughout his time in office, and, for more than a year leading up to this appointment, refused to name any Democrats at all to this quietly influential board.

- **January 20, 2021: “A GOP senator marshalled her supporters to back a gun store owner to lead the redistricting panel”**

<https://www.azmirror.com/blog/a-gop-senator-marshalled-her-supporters-to-back-a-gun-store-owner-to-lead-the-redistricting-panel/>

“...the Mirror found 61 comments that used language verbatim to that on social media posts... promoted as coming from Sen. Wendy Rogers, a freshman Republican from Flagstaff.

*“The 5th member must be an independent. **YOU NEED TO WRITE IN A SUPPORTIVE COMMENT FOR INDEPENDENT ROB WILSON FROM NORTHERN ARIZONA! Rob Wilson is Wendy Rogers’s choice,**” reads the post, which includes a link to the form for submitting comments.”*

2021 Republican Redistricting Distortions

- **August 11, 2021: “Redistricting commission hears community concerns, partisan talking points on listening tour”**

<https://www.azmirror.com/2021/08/11/redistricting-commission-hears-community-concerns-partisan-talking-points-on-listening-tour/>

Fair Maps Arizona, a group created by businessman Steve Gaynor, a former secretary of state candidate who is now seeking the GOP nomination for governor, recruited candidates for the redistricting commission last year. Now, it preps people to testify before the AIRC. The group has a [guide on its website](#) on how to write effective testimony, and an email to supporters offered to go over the final product one-on-one...

In Florence, one woman commented to a person sitting nearby that Jonathan Paton, a former Republican state lawmaker, “did a good job giving us the talking points.”... Others read from papers that contained extensive lists of talking points, rattling off statistics about population differentials between legislative districts and urging the commission not to support competitiveness to the detriment of other factors, echoing the language in the Arizona Constitution’s redistricting criteria.

*Throughout the tour, people urged the commission to ensure that legislative districts have populations that are as equal as possible, **alleging that the previous districts had population differentials of up to 12%. According to the data from the 2011 commission...the differential was actually within 9%.** The number may have originated with Fair Maps Arizona, which states on its website that, “Some districts had 12% more population than others.”...*

The talking points from the Fair Maps Arizona website encourage people to “explain that the previous commission was too focused on competitiveness.”