



# The Partisan Implications of a Nonpartisan Redistricting Commission: Examining the 2022 Midterm Elections in Michigan



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## Abstract

This research examines the question of whether a nonpartisan redistricting commission is capable of creating more partisan-neutral electoral districts in the State of Michigan. For decades, Republicans in Michigan used partisan gerrymandering to manipulate the boundaries of electoral districts to maintain control of the state legislature. In 2018, Michigan voters adopted a ballot initiative that amended the state constitution to create the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission. The Commission was tasked with creating a partisan-neutral electoral map that would first be used in the 2022 midterm elections.

I hypothesized that due to the redistricting done by the Redistricting Commission, Michigan's state Senate, and House would flip to Democratic control. In November 2022, the results of the midterm elections in Michigan proved my hypotheses to be correct.

## Hypotheses

**Hypothesis One:** Due to the redistricting done by Michigan's Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission, the state House of Representatives will change to Democratic control for the first time in 14 years.

**Hypothesis Two:** Due to the redistricting done by Michigan's Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission, Michigan's state Senate will change to Democratic control for the first time in more than 30 years.

Table 4.2: House Districts 1-10

District	2022 Democrats <sup>7</sup>	2022 Republicans <sup>7</sup>	Change Since 2020	2020 Democrats <sup>8</sup>	2020 Republicans <sup>8</sup>	2020 Results
1	Carter, Tyrone (87.45%)	Campbell, Paula M. (10.81%)	Remained Blue	Yancey, Tenisha R. (75.83%)	Lanier, Latricia Ann (22.17%)	Blue
2	Liberati Jr., Tullio (60.93%)	D'Onofrio, Michael Joseph (39.07%)	Remained Blue	Tate, Joe (74.12%)	Rodriguez, Mayra (23.77%)	Blue
6	Weiss, Regina (83.90%)	Villerot, Charles T. (16.10%)	Remained Blue	Carter, Tyrone (100%)		Blue
7	Scott, Helena (100%)		Remained Blue	Scott, Helena (93.03%)	Cole, Ronald (2.27%)	Blue
8	McFall, Mike (78.88%)	Noble, Robert (21.12%)	Remained Blue	Young, Stephanie A. (96.74%)	Gorak, Mirosława Teresa (3.26%)	Blue
10	Tate, Joe (68.43%)	Corcoran, Mark (31.57%)	Remained Blue	Cavanagh, Mary (84.75%)	Alcorn, Cathy L. (15.25%)	Blue

Table 3.1 Change in Senate Districts

2018 State Senate Districts (2011 Reapportionment) <sup>1</sup>	2022 State Senate Districts (2021 Reapportionment) <sup>2</sup>	Level of Change
District 1: Wayne County	District 1: Wayne County	Mild Change
District 2: Wayne County	District 2: Wayne County	Mild Change
District 3: Wayne County	District 3: Wayne County, Macomb County, Oakland County	Heavy Change
District 4: Wayne County	District 4: Wayne County	Mild Change
District 5: Wayne County	District 5: Wayne County	Mild Change
District 6: Wayne County	District 6: Wayne County, Oakland County	Medium Change
District 7: Wayne County	District 7: Wayne County, Oakland County	Heavy Change
District 8: Macomb County	District 8: Wayne County, Oakland County	Heavy Change
District 9: Macomb County	District 9: Oakland County, Macomb County	Medium Change
District 10: Macomb County	District 10: Wayne County, Macomb County	Medium Change

## Methods

- The independent variable was defined as the new districts created by the Redistricting Commission and was measured by the new districts and the new methods used to reach the redrawn Michigan electoral map.
- The dependent variable was defined as the results of Michigan's 2022 midterm elections and was measured using state election data compared to the previous election cycle.
- Data from the 2022, 2020, and 2018 Midterm elections were organized in table form and then cut down for analysis.
- The change in partisanship was recorded as Flipped Red, Flipped Blue, Remained Red, and Remained Blue

## Results

- House:** 37 seats remained Republican (33.6%), 35 seats remained Democratic (31.8%), 17 seats flipped into Republican control (15.5%), and 21 seats flipped into Democratic control (19.1%). Combined, the 2022 election resulted in 56 seats in Democratic control, while Republicans controlled 54 seats.
- Senate:** 14 seats remained in Republican control (36.8%), and 4 seats were flipped into Republican control (10.5%). Democrats maintained control of 12 seats (31.6%), and 8 seats were flipped into Democrat control (21.1%).