

Which of the following statements do you think most accurately describes the type of representative democracy the Framers intended to create?

1. A nation where the voters get to choose their representatives.

2. A nation where the representatives get to choose their voters.

Rules for Drawing Districts

1. They must be contiguous (touching).
 2. They must be relatively compact.
 3. They must be relatively equal in population.
- Cannot draw lines based on discriminating factors, such as race, religion, etc.

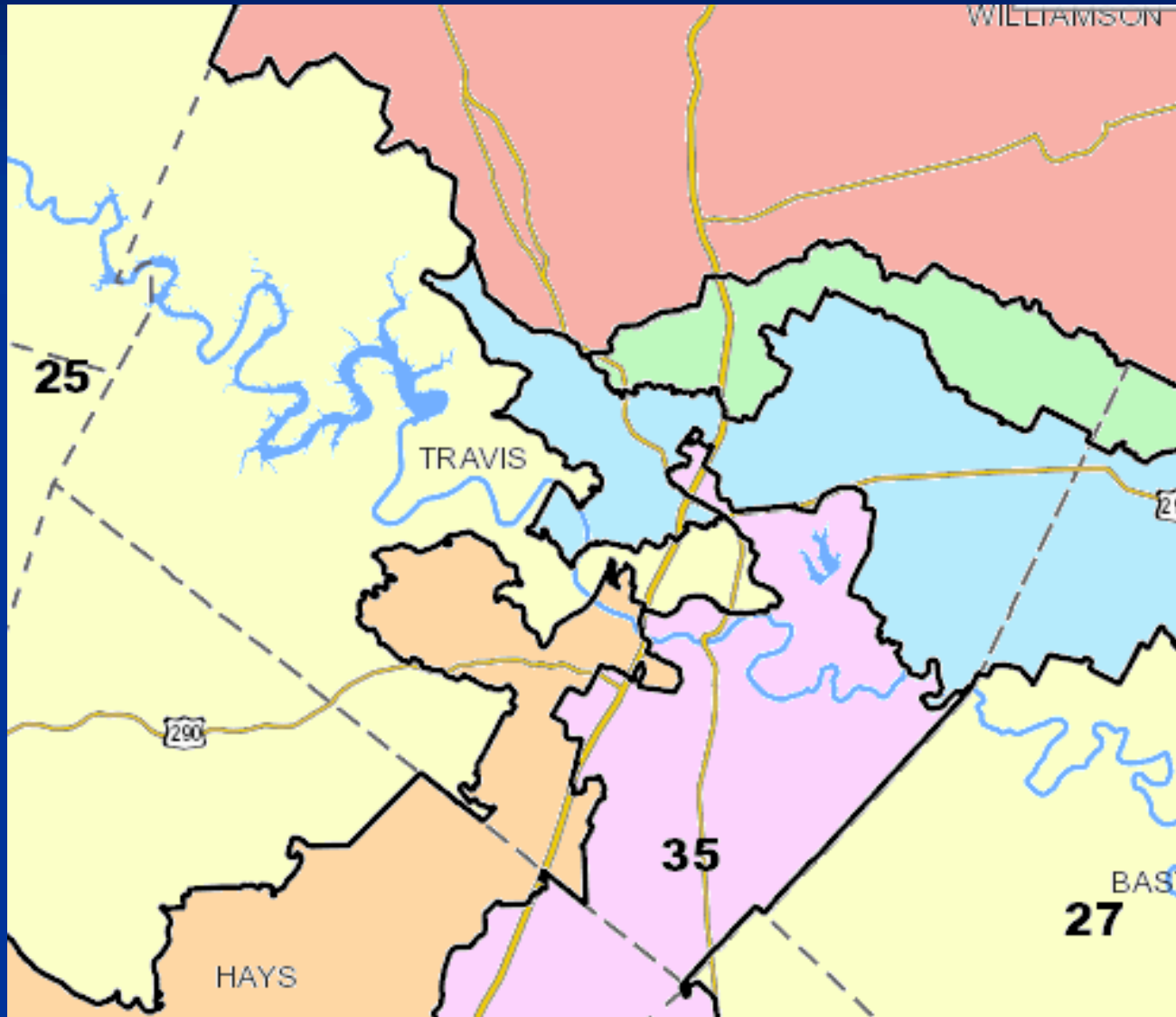
Gerrymandering

- The party in control of the state legislature creates congressional districts to favor their party.
- Goal= create “safe” districts
- 2 ways they do this:
 - Cracking- spread opposing party thinly across the districts to dilute their vote.
 - Packing- concentrate like votes of the opposing party into as few districts as possible.

- Take a few minutes to do the redistricting activity on the last page of the Gerrymandering handout.

R	D	D	R	R
R	R	D	R	D
R	R	D	R	D

Central Texas Congressional Districts

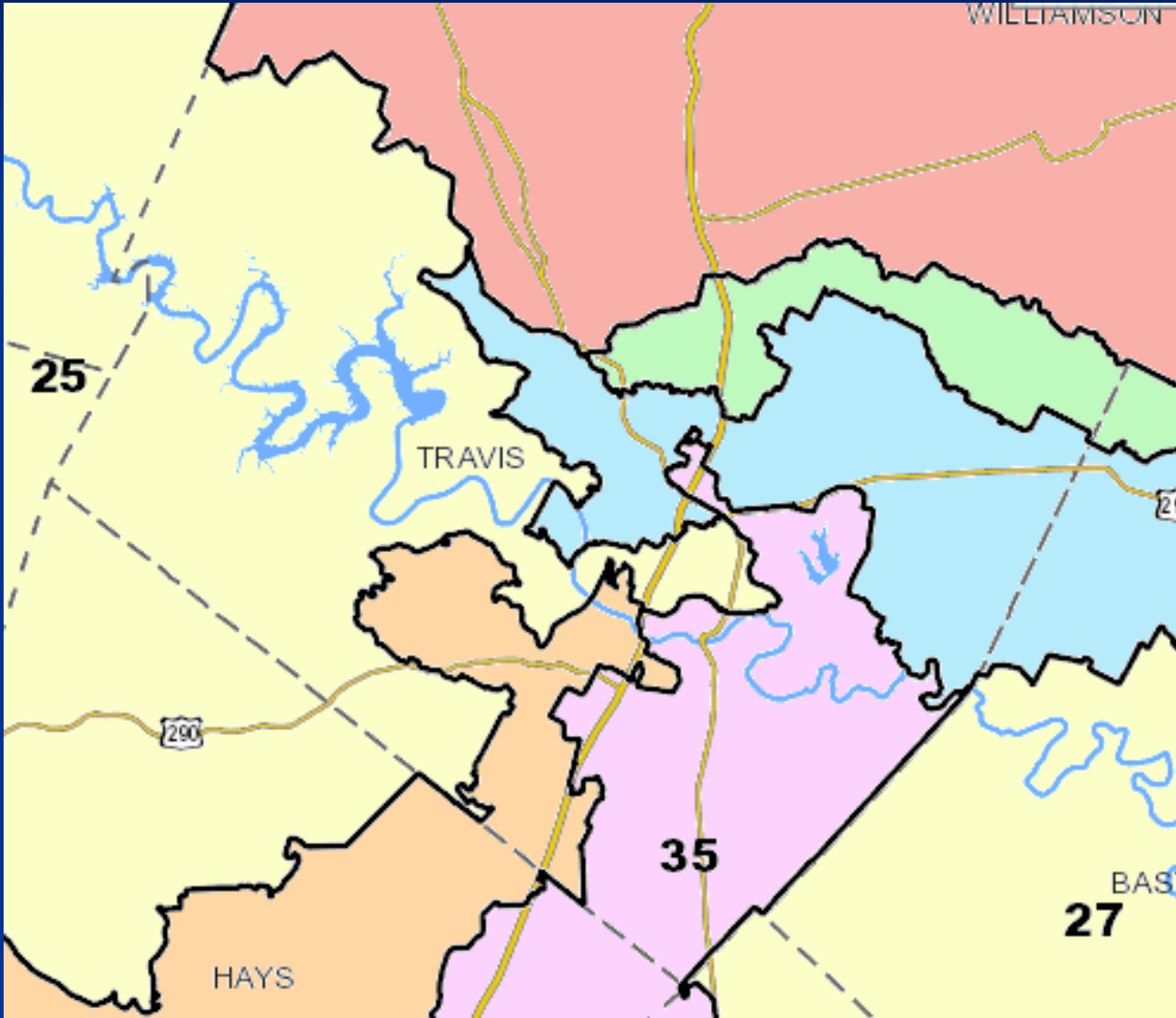


Effects of Gerrymandering

Gerrymandering distorts the political process.

- **The political voice of a large number of voters is not heard.**

Central Texas Congressional Districts



#2

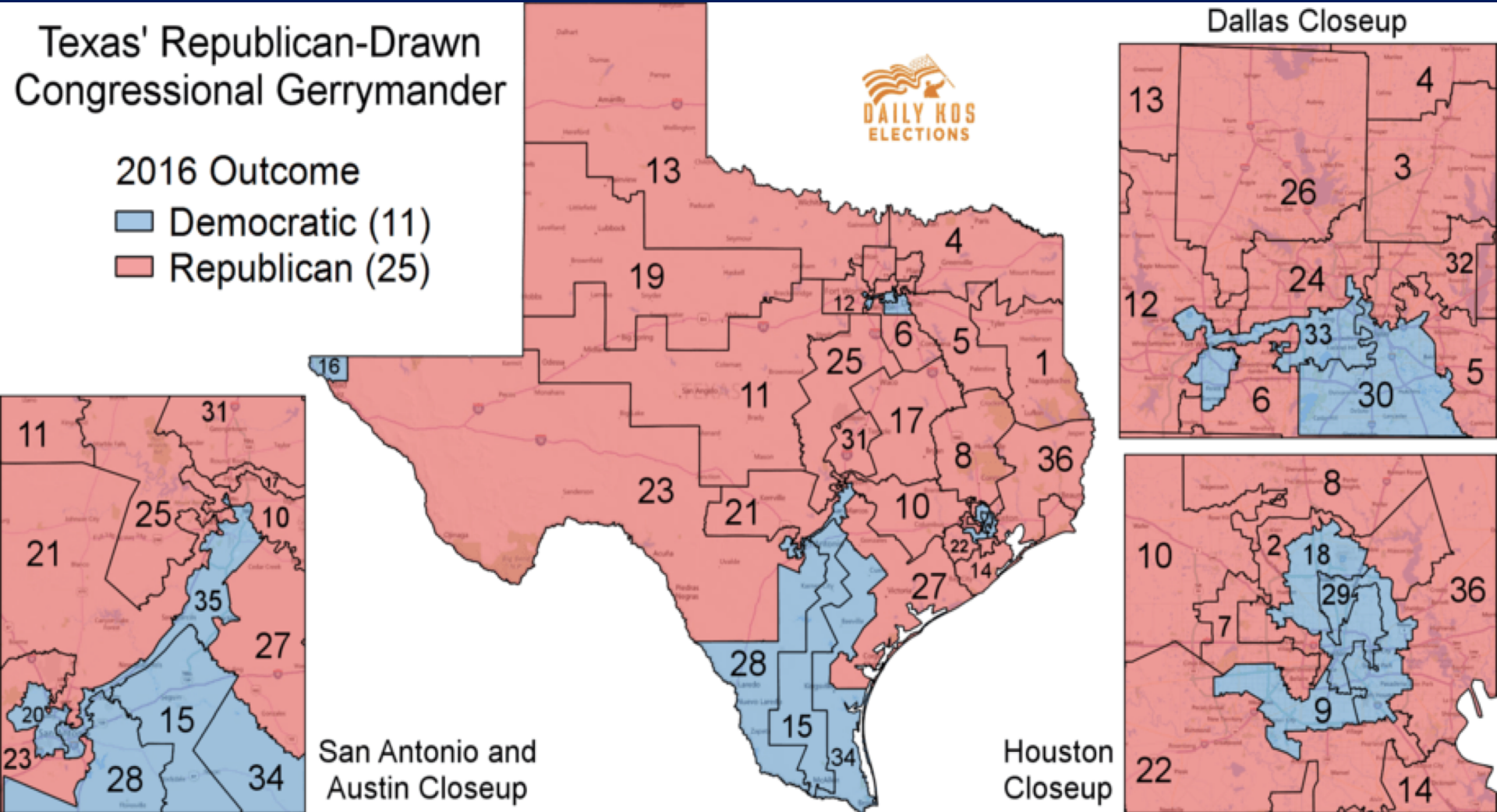
Current Texas Congressional Districts

Texas' Republican-Drawn Congressional Gerrymander

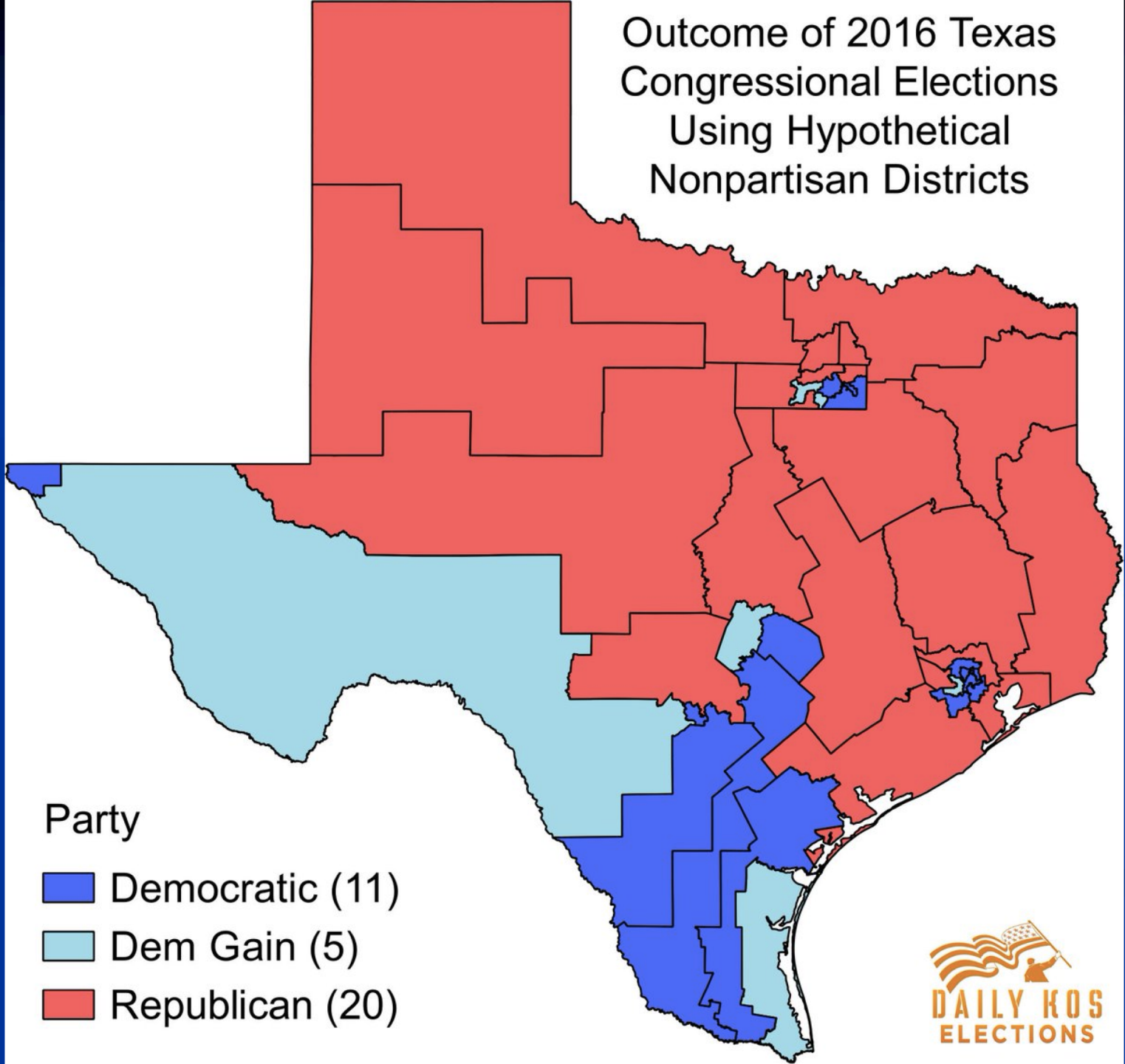
2016 Outcome

Democratic (11)




Republican (25)



Outcome of 2016 Texas Congressional Elections Using Hypothetical Nonpartisan Districts



Party

-  Democratic (11)
-  Dem Gain (5)
-  Republican (20)



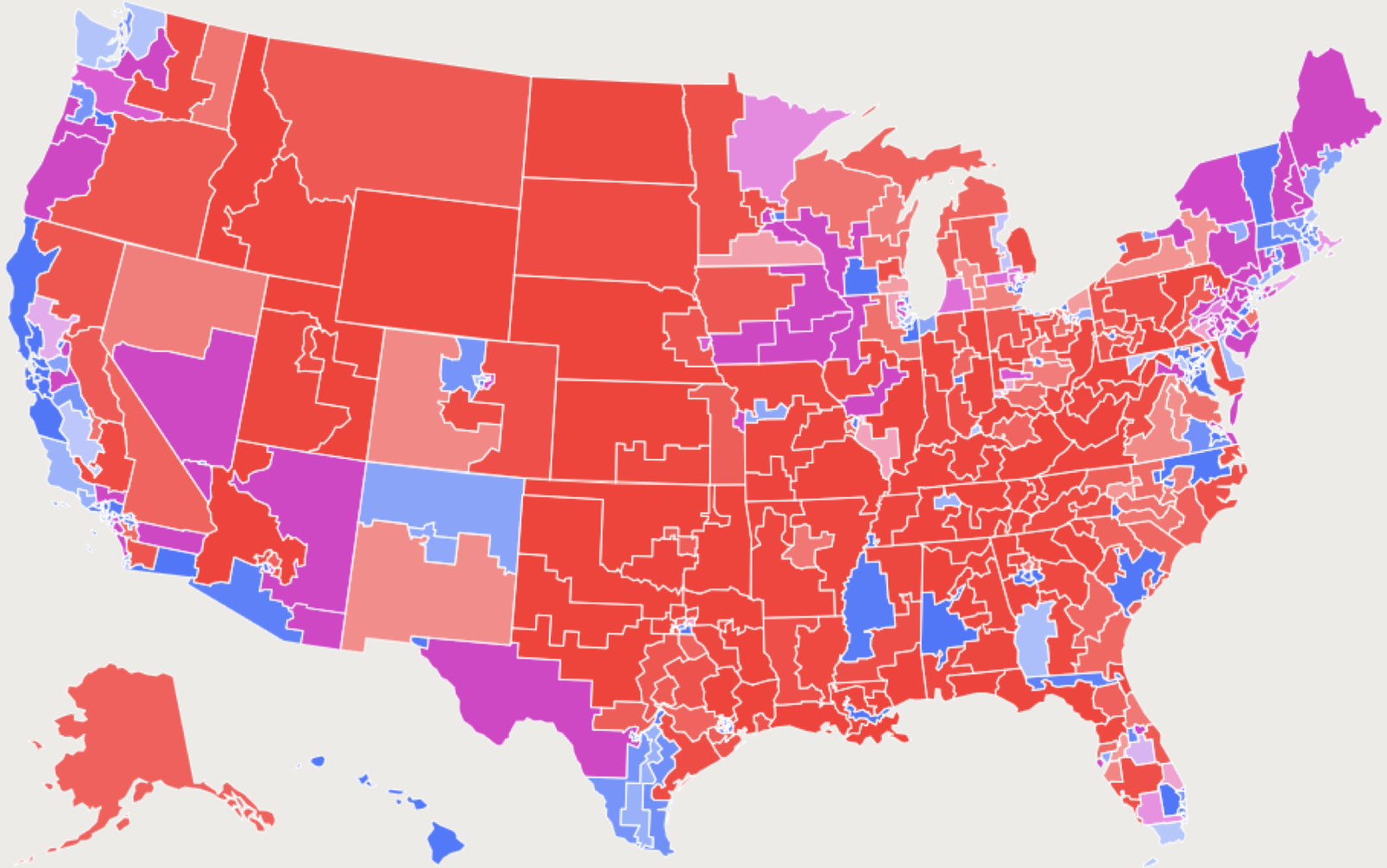
#5b

Effects of Gerrymandering

Gerrymandering polarizes the political process even more.

- **Politicians are forced to pander to their political base in order to win a primary election rather than cater to any concerns of the minority party members.**

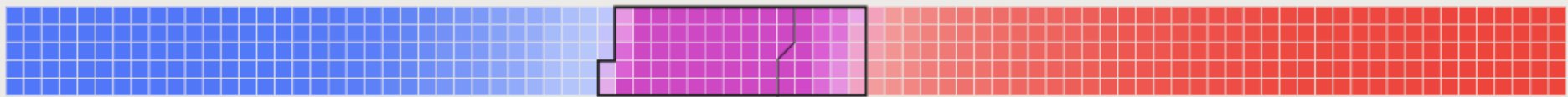
Very few districts are really up for grabs.



168 USUALLY DEMOCRATIC DISTRICTS

72 HIGHLY COMPETITIVE DISTRICTS

195 USUALLY REPUBLICAN DISTRICTS



EVEN SPLIT

Possible alternatives to Gerrymandering

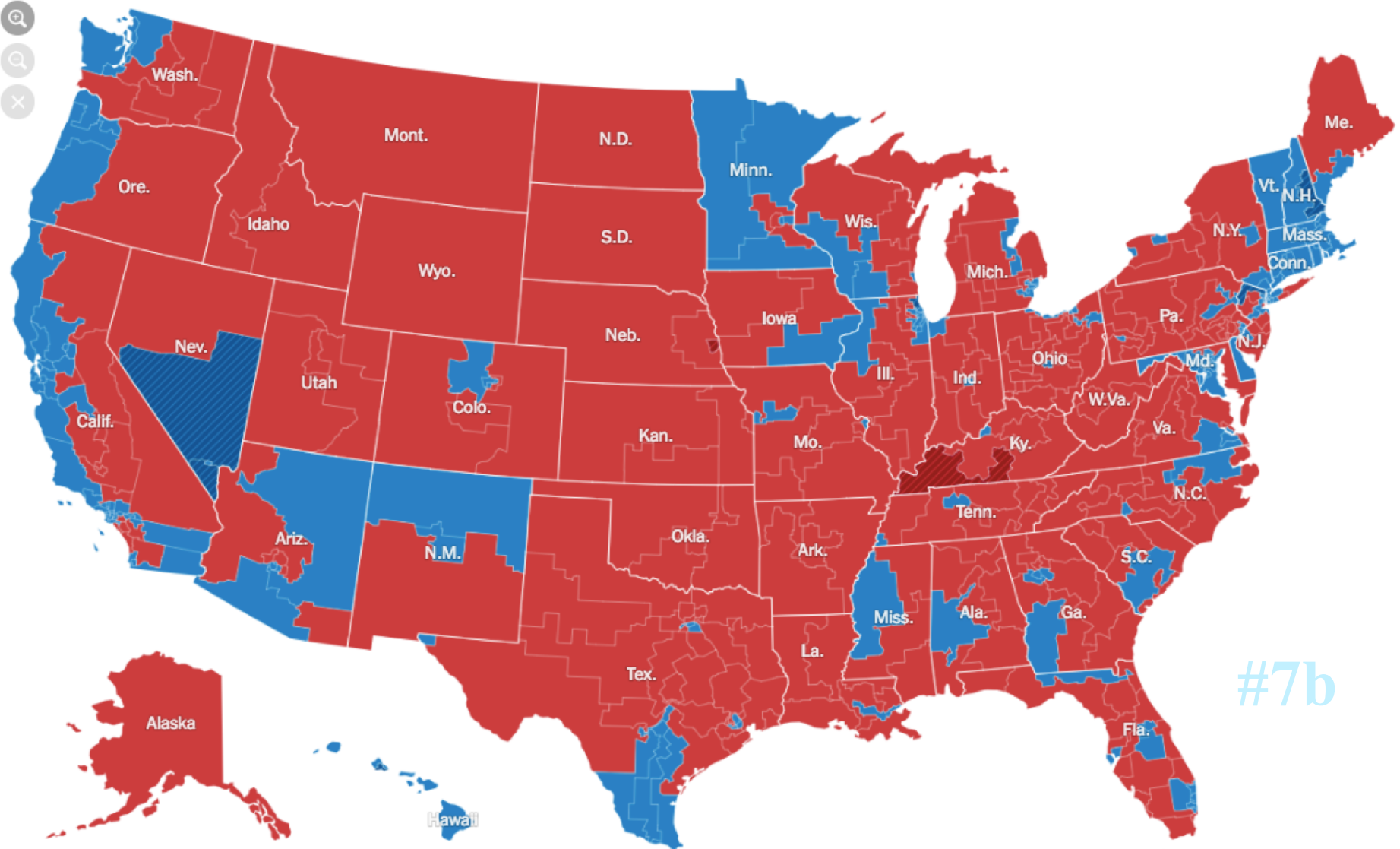
- **Allow nonpartisan committees to draw the districts.**
 - **Republicans, democrats, and independents would be forced to work together to make the number of districts reflect the political representation of the people of Texas.**

Current make up of 115th Congress: 2017-18

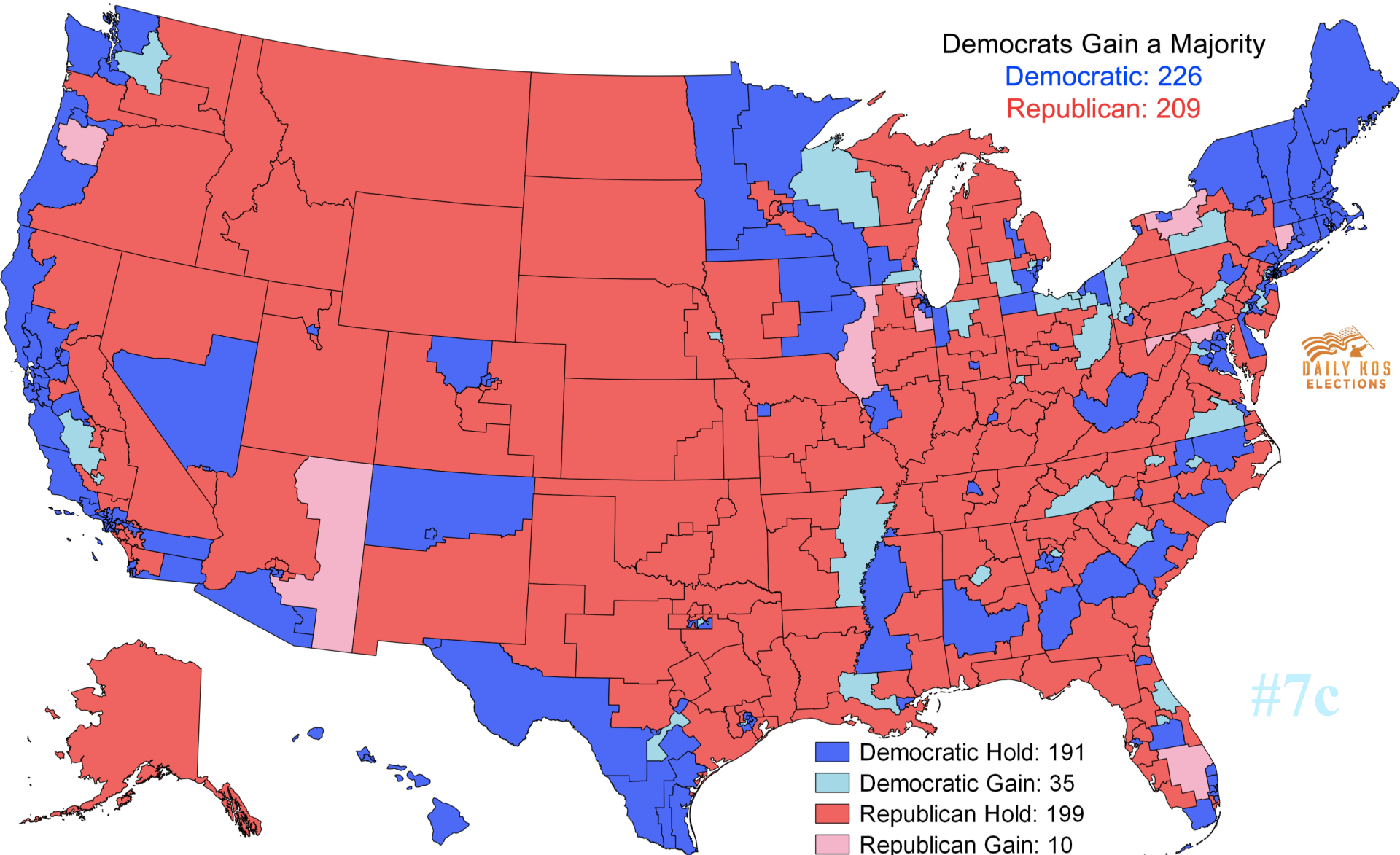
194 Democrats

241 Republicans

218 to win



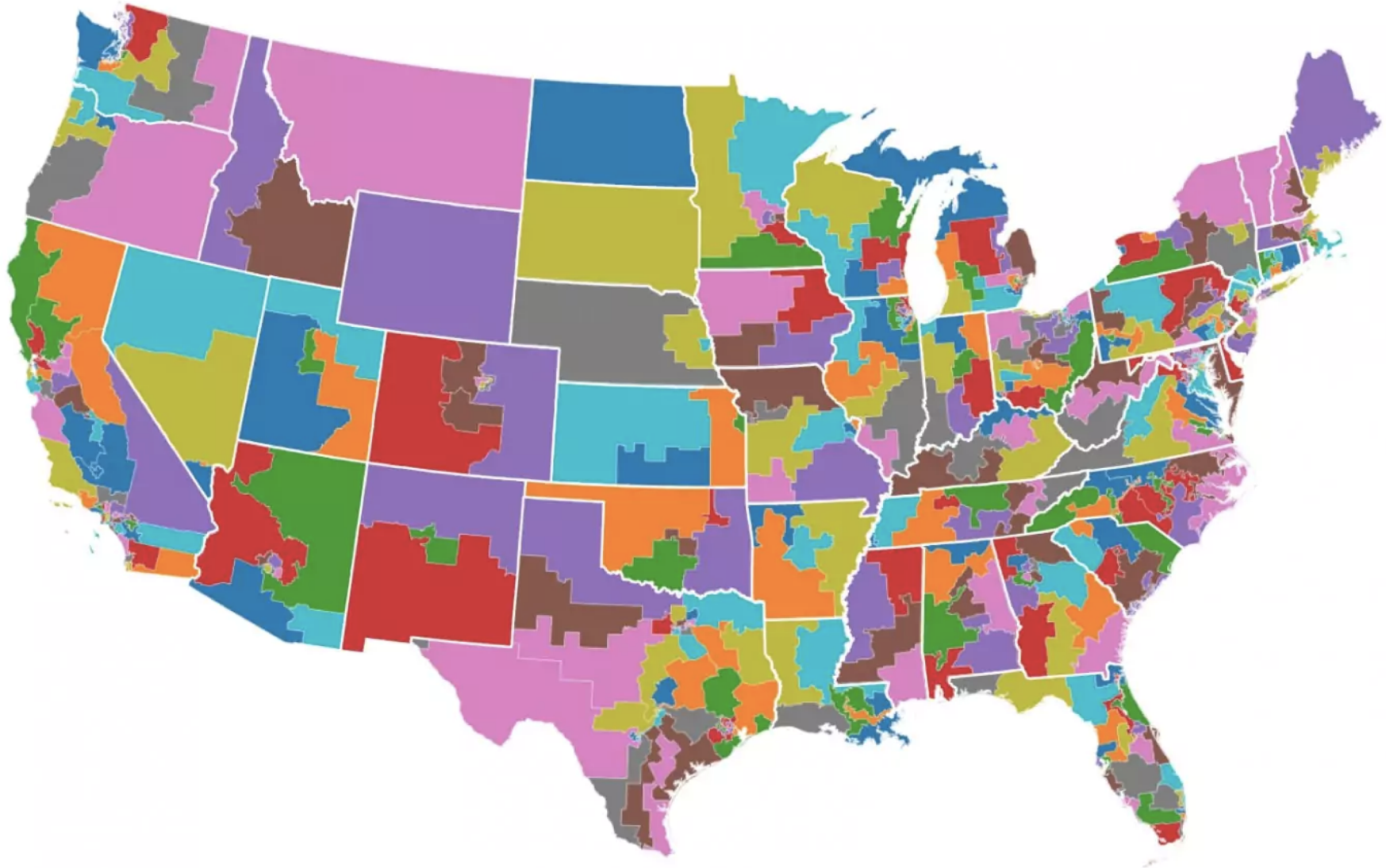
Net impact of hypothetical non-partisan districts



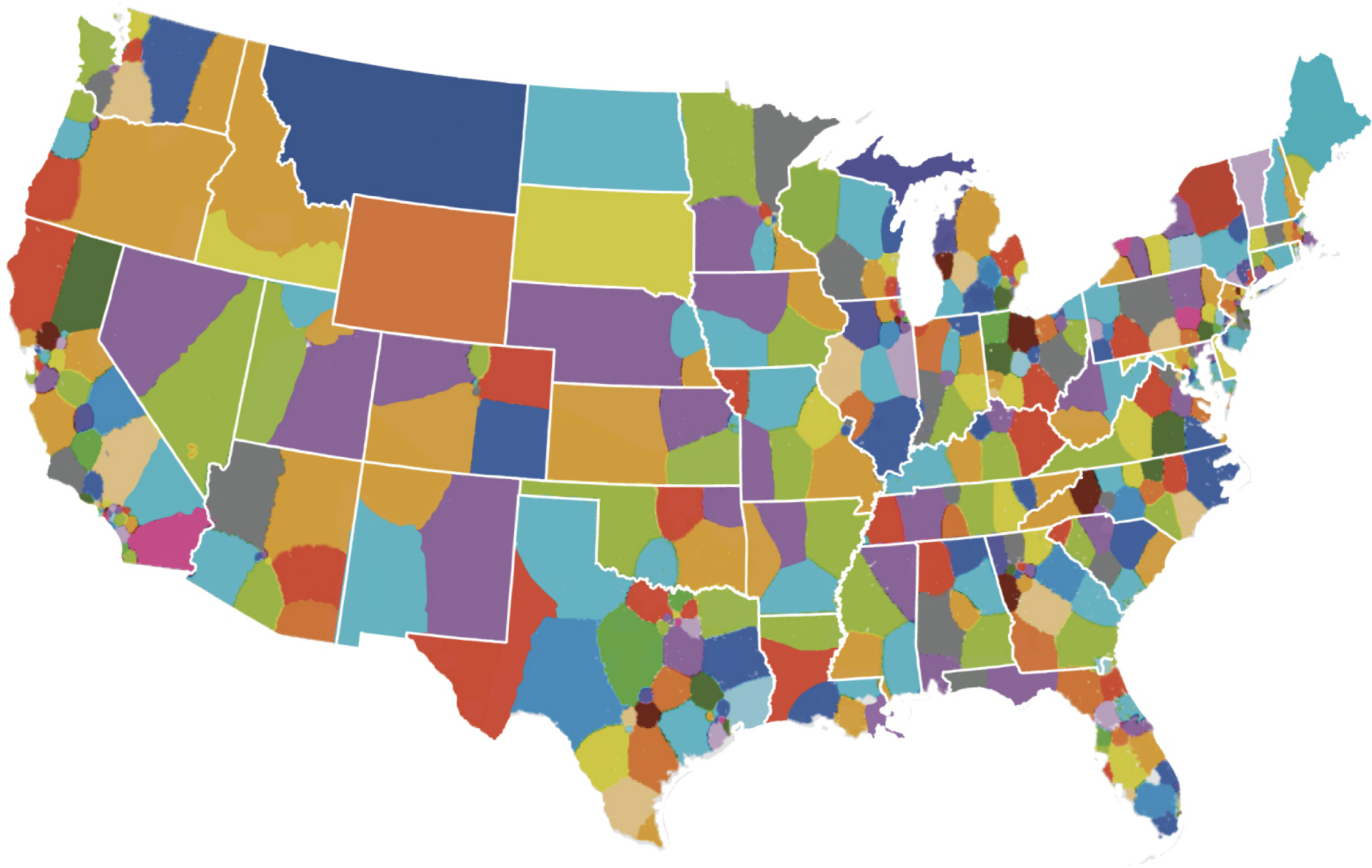
Possible alternatives to Gerrymandering

- **Allow computers algorithms to draw the districts.**
- **Districts would be drawn for compactness and based on current US Census “blocks.”**

Current congressional district map



Computer-drawn map to optimize compactness



Why not change the process?

- **Politicians and parties who benefit from the practice want to keep it.**
- **It protects incumbents and enables them to keep their jobs.**