



Memorandum

To: Interested Parties
From: John Bisognano, President, National Democratic Redistricting Committee (NDRC)
Date: October 2026
Subject: Democrats Stopped Trump's Effort to Rig the 2026 Midterms

The mid-decade gerrymandering crisis that Donald Trump started has failed. It began in Texas, continued into North Carolina, Missouri, Ohio, Tennessee, Louisiana, Alabama, and Florida, and redraws were thwarted in Indiana, Kansas, Nebraska, New Hampshire, South Carolina, and Georgia. Despite all their effort to cheat the American people, Republicans will lose the House majority in the 2026 midterms.

This plot failed, not only because they underestimated the intense dissatisfaction of Americans across the country, but also because Attorney General Eric Holder's leadership, in coordination with an aggressive, unified, multi-pronged Democratic response, played a central role in beating back Republicans' attempt to rig the 2026 midterms, ensuring the will of the people can prevail this November.

Republicans Sought to Gain 21 New Congressional Seats from Redistricting, Instead They'll Lose the Majority and Net Very Few Seats:

Originally, Republicans set out to draw themselves as many as 21 new seats in at least fourteen states. Instead, eight Republican states enacted new, mid-decade gerrymanders to give themselves 12 new seats—or so they hoped—and Democrats successfully responded in three states to take back seven seats. The result is that, based on redistricting, Republicans could net just five seats—and given the level of opposition they are facing from the voters, that number could go down to two or as low as zero—while wasting tens of millions of dollars and showing the American people they care more about holding onto power than the principles of our democracy.

The White House and its Republican allies wasted an incredible amount of time and resources to weaken the voting power of the American people—and it has backfired, with opposition among voters only increasing. Over the past year, they concocted legal briefs from the Department of Justice to justify stealing power, spent countless hours of White House attention and travel, including multiple trips to Indiana by the Vice President, and made an untold number of phone

calls to governors and state legislators attempting to browbeat them into submission through threats, potential bribes, and other nefarious means. The result will likely be the Republican Party taking on more political baggage than an airplane carousel with few net seats and no House majority.

Overwhelming Opposition from Voters Could Overcome Republican Mid-decade Gerrymanders in the 2026 Midterms:

Republicans overplayed their hand in a number of states where they enacted egregious mid-decade gerrymanders and are unlikely to gain the number of seats they claim they will in the midterms. In fact, given strong opposition amongst voters to Republican policies, they could see very little to no gains in the following states where they enacted mid-decade gerrymanders at the direction of Donald Trump and against the will of their own constituents:

- ***Texas:*** Texas Republicans enacted a mid-decade gerrymander that relied heavily on 2024 data and claimed it would deliver five new seats. Given voting trends, Republicans overplayed their hand and will likely only net two to three seats.
- ***North Carolina:*** In the Tar Heel State, Republicans enacted a mid-decade gerrymander that aimed to dismantle NC-01, a Black opportunity district, making the 50-50 state's congressional map an 11-3 gerrymander. However, Republicans have possibly drawn a dummymander where Democrats not only maintain NC-01, but have put the adjacent NC-03 in play.
- ***Ohio:*** Ohio Democratic state legislators successfully fended off the most extreme scenario gerrymander, with the likely result that Republicans will not gain a single new seat on the Buckeye State's new congressional map in November.
- ***Alabama:*** When Alabama Republicans moved quickly after the Supreme Court's disastrous *Callais* decision to dismantle the state's newest Black opportunity district, AL-02, they underestimated the fire they would ignite amongst voters. Given the level of outrage among Black voters in the South, Republicans could see no gains from their new egregious racial gerrymander.
- ***Florida:*** Governor DeSantis pushed a map that aimed to net Republicans four additional congressional seats, but voter trends make it likely Republicans will net only one or two seats.

Democrats' Multi-Pronged Strategy Played Key Role to Stop Republicans from Rigging the 2026 Midterms:

For nearly a decade, at the direction of Attorney General Holder, the National Democratic Redistricting Committee (NDRC) and its affiliates had been preparing to fight the threat of mid-decade gerrymandering in Republican states. When the potential threat became a dangerous reality, Attorney General Holder immediately galvanized support for an aggressive Democratic response. Under his leadership, NDRC and its affiliates quickly deployed a multi-pronged

strategy to fight back by sounding the alarm to the public about Republicans' attempt to rig the elections, utilizing its top-tier mapping team, coordinating with national and local partners, and empowering a growing grassroots network to get involved in the fight back. That strategy thwarted mid-decade red draws in several red states and reduced Republicans' net seat advantage from 12 seats to a ceiling of five.

This was foundational to ensuring the will of the people could prevail on the national congressional map in November. Without this success in the redistricting fight, Republicans could have achieved their initial goal of enacting as many as 21 new seats in at least fourteen states—an amount that would have made it exceedingly difficult for the will of the people to prevail on the national congressional map. The path to success in the redistricting fight ahead of the 2026 midterms was defined by six key moments:

1. ***Democrats Quickly United Behind an Aggressive Response:*** In the days after Donald Trump publicly confirmed his push for mid-decade gerrymandering, Attorney General Holder [took to the airwaves](#) to sound the alarm about Republicans' mid-decade gerrymandering scheme and issued [a statement](#) outlining Democrats' path forward, stating “We must preserve our democracy now in order to ultimately heal it.” Across the party's ideological spectrum, Democratic leaders quickly united behind the principles Attorney General Holder spelled out, paving the way for a strong response from voters in California and for strong bipartisan opposition to build against mid-decade gerrymanders in red states.
2. ***California Voters Strongly Backed a Countermeasure:*** While the White House pushed a top-down approach, the opposition responded from the bottom up, with California voters passing Proposition 50 with over 60 percent of the vote. The Proposition 50 election results in California, alongside the broad bipartisan opposition to the red draws in Texas, Missouri, and elsewhere, demonstrated the incredible breadth and depth of the opposition. It also showed the rest of the country that blue states would not leave Trump's mid-decade gerrymanders unchallenged.
3. ***Democrats Fended Off Most Extreme Gerrymander in Ohio:*** In 2025, Ohio was legally required to redraw its congressional map, and Republicans pushed for the consideration of a more extreme gerrymander—but they did not get it. The threat of overwhelming public opposition and a referendum on a legislatively-passed map in November pushed Republicans on the state's bipartisan redistricting commission to negotiate with their Democratic counterparts. Democrats came out of those negotiations with a new map that, although far from fair, could allow all Democratic incumbents to compete for and win their districts.
4. ***Overwhelming Bipartisan Opposition in Red States Made Politicians Think Twice:*** In Indiana, Hoosiers of all stripes opposed a mid-decade gerrymander, including major in-state Republican figures like Mitch Daniels. The White House threw everything it could into pressuring Republican state legislators and the governor, including threatening federal funding for the state, sending the Vice President to travel multiple times to the state, calling legislators, and threatening primaries. Republican legislators faced threats of

violence to themselves and their families. Yet, they stood up for the constituents, abandoning the effort to pass a mid-decade gerrymander. State legislators and governors in other red states—Nebraska, Kansas, New Hampshire, South Carolina, Georgia—followed suit by backing away from aggressive mid-decade gerrymanders, demonstrating the power of an engaged citizenry.

5. ***Utahns Won Years-Long Fight to Enforce Redistricting Reforms:*** For years, Utahns fought in court to enforce Proposition 4, a ballot measure enacted in 2018 that aimed to reform the state’s redistricting process and mapping parameters to ensure fairness. Leading up to the 2021 redistricting cycle, the Republican-led Utah legislature usurped the newly enacted ballot measure, replaced it with significantly watered-down reforms, and used that mechanism to enact an egregious congressional gerrymander. Utahns then took the fight to court. Finally, in 2025, Utah state courts ruled to fully reinstate Proposition 4 and strike down the state’s gerrymandered map. This resulted in a new, fairer map that allows Democrats to compete in at least one district.
6. ***Missourians Took the Fight to Court and the Ballot Box:*** After Missouri Republicans ignored overwhelming opposition from their constituents to enact an egregious mid-decade gerrymander, Missourians immediately pursued a ballot measure that would allow citizens to veto the state’s mid-decade gerrymander. State leaders did all they could to block Missourians’ ability to have the ultimate say, and Missourians took the fight to the Missouri Supreme Court, which invalidated the state’s mid-decade gerrymander and ordered the use of the 2022 congressional map in the 2026 midterms, while also allowing Missourians to have a chance to veto the state’s mid-decade gerrymander at the ballot box in November. Republicans did all they could to circumvent this clear decision, but Missourians took the fight up to the U.S. Supreme Court and won three times.

What Happens Next:

Republicans will not stop pursuing mid-decade gerrymanders; in fact, we anticipate they will immediately double down, pushing our country even further into a gerrymandering crisis in response to losing the House majority. The redistricting fight ahead of 2028 will begin on November 4th this year, with states like Georgia and Mississippi potentially using lame-duck legislative sessions to enact even more egregious gerrymanders. If Republicans’ mid-decade gerrymanders are left unchallenged and unresponded to, they could achieve a 25-seat advantage in the 2028 House elections by the middle of 2027. Any Democratic state with an ability to counter Republican gerrymanders should be prepared to do their part—quickly—to ensure the will of the American people can prevail again in the 2028 House elections.

Our goal remains the same: we want Congress to pass a federal ban on partisan gerrymandering and mid-decade redistricting as soon as possible to end this gerrymandering crisis. To get there, we must ensure the national congressional map remains responsive to the will of the American people. The immediate fight ahead will require everyone to do their part—just as the fight leading into the 2026 midterms required.