

News

Missouri First to Adopt Fairness Test Against Gerrymandering

Initiative marks a new frontier in growing movement against partisan redistricting

By David A. Lieb  
Associated Press

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. — The votes won't be cast for another four years, yet Democrats already appear likely to gain seats in Missouri's Republican-dominated Legislature in 2022.

The reason: a one-of-its kind redistricting initiative approved by voters in the recent midterm elections.

Missouri's initiative marks a new frontier in a growing movement against partisan gerrymandering that has now notched ballot-box victories in eight states over the past decade.

Other states have created independent commissions and required bipartisan votes to redraw legislative and congressional districts. Missouri will be the first to rely on a new mathematical formula to try to engineer "partisan fairness" and "competitiveness" in its state legislative districts; the Legislature will continue drawing the state's congressional districts.

An Associated Press analysis of the new Missouri formula shows it has the potential to end the Republicans' supermajorities in the state House and state Senate and move the chambers

closer to the more even partisan division that is often reflected in statewide races. But the size of the likely Democratic gains remains uncertain, partly because the formula has never been put to a test.

"Missouri's engaged in an experiment," said Sam Wang, director of the Princeton University Gerrymandering Project, which uses math to measure partisan advantages in redistricting.

“Democrats have a fighting chance in a way that they didn't before

"Democrats have a fighting chance in a way that they didn't before," Wang added. But "a lot of it depends on what they do with it."

After the 2010 census, Republicans nationwide controlled more state legislatures and governor's offices than Democrats. They used that power to draw legislative and congressional districts that benefited the GOP.

Since then, advocates have been trying to reform the system to elim-

inate or greatly reduce partisan gerrymandering, which has been used by both parties over the years to draw political boundaries in ways that give the dominant party a disproportionate hold on power. They have succeeded in making the process less partisan in a number of states, mostly through ballot initiatives approved by voters.

Nov. 6 was the latest example of the trend, when voters in Colorado, Michigan and Utah joined Missouri in approving new redistricting systems.

All states must redraw their congressional and state legislative districts after the 2020 census. Those new maps generally will kick in for the elections two years later. Although the criteria vary by state, most require districts to contain similar populations, keep communities together when possible and give minorities a chance to elect candidates of their choice.

The constitutional amendment approved by Missouri voters in November keeps those criteria. But it also requires a new nonpartisan state demographer to base state House and Senate districts on the votes cast in the previous



In this Aug. 31, 2018 file photo, supporters of Missouri's redistricting ballot measure hold signs behind former state Sen. Bob Johnson as he serves as their spokesman during a press conference outside the Cole County Courthouse in Jefferson City, Mo. Voters approved Constitutional Amendment 1 on the Nov. 6 ballot. It is unique among redistricting reforms adopted by a number of states in recent years because it requires Missouri's state legislative districts to be drawn using a new mathematical formula to try to achieve "partisan fairness" and "competitiveness" after the 2020 Census.

three elections for president, governor and U.S. senator — races that are decided by voters statewide and are not affected by gerrymandering.

The districts must come as close as practical to achieving "partisan fairness" as measured by a formula called "the efficiency gap."

That formula was created earlier this decade by Eric McGhee, a researcher at the nonpartisan Public Policy Institute of California, and University of Chicago law professor Nick Stephanopoulos. It compares the statewide share of the vote a party receives with the statewide percentage of seats it wins, taking

into account a common political expectation: For each 1 percentage point gain in its statewide vote share, a party normally increases its seat share by 2 percentage points.

Although the efficiency gap has been cited in

court challenges to politically gerrymandered districts in Wisconsin and elsewhere, no other state has made it a legally required test for redistricting.

Read the rest of this story at **TheSkanner.com**

TV

cont'd from pg 7

McEntire is joined by Tony Bennett, Brett Eldredge, Amy Grant, Diana Krall, Martina McBride, Brad Paisley, The Isaacs and others, with classic songs and new collaborations part of the two-hour show.

"Pentatonix: A Not So Silent Night," 10 p.m. Monday, Dec. 10, NBC. The vocal group is joined by Kelly Clarkson, the Backstreet Boys, Maren Morris and Penn & Teller on a musical exploration of Las Vegas.

"Darci Lynne: My Hometown Christmas," 9 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 11, NBC. Singer-ventriloquist Darci Lynne Farmer, an "America's Got Talent" champion, celebrates the holiday with guests including Kristin Chenoweth, Toby Keith, Hunter Hayes and electronic violinist Lindsey Stirling.

"Christmas with the Mormon Tabernacle Choir," Monday, Dec. 17, PBS and BYUtv (check local listings). Actress-singer Sutton Foster is the guest artist and Hugh Bonneville ("Downton Abbey") is the narrator for an evening including carols and a reading of the Christmas story from the Book of Luke.

"Great Performances from Vienna: The New Year's Celebration 2019," 9 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 1, PBS. Bonneville is back

as host of this Vienna Philharmonic concert with conductor Christian Thielemann, featuring Strauss family waltzes and the Vienna City Ballet.

**AULD LANG SYNE**  
"That's Entertainment!" marathon, 8 p.m. Monday, Dec. 31, TCM. Hosts Ben Mankiewicz, Eddie Muller, Alicia Malone and Dave Karger present the trio of films that revisit the MGM studio's glory days. "Live from Lincoln Center: New York Philharmonic New Year's Eve with Renee Fleming," 9 p.m. Monday, Dec. 31. The orchestra and opera great Fleming join in a celebration of classical music and dance.

"NBC's New Year's Eve," 10 p.m. Monday, Dec. 31, NBC. Hosts Carson Daly and Chrissy Teigen will be joined by Leslie Jones in New York City, with Keith Urban hosting and performing from Nashville's Bicentennial State Park. More artists were to be announced.

"Dick Clark's New Year's Rockin' Eve with Ryan Seacrest 2019," 8 p.m. Monday, Dec. 31, ABC. The special hosted by Seacrest promises five-plus hours of performances and updates on celebrations around the world. Jenny McCarthy will be on hand to share her observations.

Lynn Elber can be reached at [lelber@ap.org](mailto:lelber@ap.org) and on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/lynnelber>.

Need health insurance?

CareOregon's goMobile Team can help you sign up for Oregon Health Plan (OHP).



SNAP assistance available at ALL locations

MULTNOMAH COUNTY

CAREOREGON

315 SW 5th Ave, Portland  
Dec 5.....9-11 a.m.  
Dec 12.....9-11 a.m.  
Dec 19.....9-11 a.m.

CLACKAMAS SERVICE CENTER

8800 SE 80th Ave, Portland  
Dec 11.....10 a.m.-12 p.m.

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

50 SW 2nd Ave, Portland  
Dec 4.....9-11 a.m.  
Dec 18.....9-11 a.m.

JOIN

1435 NE 81st Ave, Suite 100, Portland  
Dec 13.....12-2 p.m.

MT OLIVET BAPTIST CHURCH

8725 N Chautauqua St, Portland  
Dec 8.....10 a.m.-1 p.m.

PORTLAND RESCUE MISSION

111 W Burnside, Portland  
Dec 13.....8-10 a.m.

UNION GOSPEL MISSION

3 NW 3rd, Portland  
Dec 18.....2-4 p.m.

WORKSOURCE GRESHAM

19421 SE Stark St, Portland  
Dec 6.....2-4 p.m.

WASHINGTON COUNTY

BEAVERTON LIBRARY

12375 SW 5th St, Beaverton  
Dec 12.....1-3 p.m.

For information, or to host our team, call Tamara at 503-416-1479 or Caleb at 503-416-4883.

[careoregon.org/gomobile](http://careoregon.org/gomobile)

