



## The New Congressional Map: Winners and Losers

April 6, 2022

There were clear losers and obvious winners when Republican Gov. Lawrence J. Hogan Jr. on Monday signed the second congressional map that the General Assembly passed. This came after Democratic legislators dropped their appeal to a court ruling overturning their first congressional map.

But there were some less obvious winners and losers as well. Here's our tally:

### **Winner: U.S. Rep. Andrew P. Harris (R)**

After being targeted in the first map that Anne Arundel County Circuit Court Senior Judge Lynne A. Battaglia threw out, the state congressional delegation's lone Republican should glide to a seventh term.

### **Losers: Heather Mizeur (D) and David Harden (D)**

No matter how much of a crusade Mizeur has tried to make her campaign, and no matter how much distaste there is for Harris in certain corners of the 1st District — even among some Republicans — there just doesn't seem to be a path to victory for either Democrat seeking to unseat Harris, even though both were talking boldly on Monday. The notion that Harden is now a more viable contender because he's not, as he likes to say, a "Takoma Park liberal" like Mizeur is absurd, considering how lopsidedly the district now favors the GOP.

### **Winner: Hogan**

We'll give Hogan the win here, because he's been pushing redistricting reform since he got into office, and he deserves his victory lap. Hogan is pretty good at declaring victory even when there isn't a reason to. But this is at most a half loaf.

Yes, the map that the state's putting into place is less of an egregious gerrymander than the map Battaglia tossed. But it was thrown together over the course of a weekend, with zero public input. Even the map that the legislature initially adopted in December was the product of several public hearings. And from where we sit today, Hogan may lose his campaign to throw out the legislative district map.

Battaglia's ruling isn't precedential, because challenges to the original map never made it to the Court of Appeals, and Hogan's efforts to reform the redistricting process never got purchase in the General Assembly. So chances are, redistricting will be a partisan display dominated by legislative Democrats yet again a decade from now.

### **Push: The Maryland Citizens Redistricting Commission**

Sure, Walter Olson and Alexander Williams, the latter Hogan's favorite Democrat, have tilled this soil for several years and can take a measure of satisfaction from the ultimate result. Drawing a super-compact map with respect for county boundaries certainly created a contrast with the map put forward by legislators, and may have helped to define the debate. But the commission they headed was given absolutely zero agency during the formal redistricting process when all was said and done.

### **Winners: People who like easily describable districts**

Try describing, in detail, the old 3rd District. It can't be done in less than a few paragraphs. The new 3rd District is a much easier "largely consists of Howard and northern Anne Arundel counties with part of southern Carroll County." Most of the other districts, which are more compact than their predecessors, are also much easier to describe.

### **Push: U.S. Rep. David J. Trone (D)**

A Democratic incumbent in the 6th District with fewer resources than Trone might be in real trouble under the new map, but Trone has worked Western Maryland hard during his four years in Congress and has the wherewithal to stay competitive.

### **Winner: Del. Neil C. Parrott (R-Washington)**

Parrott has been crusading against Democratic gerrymandering for the past decade and now he can claim victory and contemplate a matchup with Trone in a more competitive district than he campaigned in in 2020. But he'll still be vastly outspent this year and we can't help but wonder whether there will be a Republican of greater wealth or greater stature jumping into this race at the last minute.

### **Loser: State Sen. Michael J. Hough (R-Frederick)**

Now that the 6th congressional district takes in all of Frederick County, Hough indirectly faces the prospect of running against Trone's millions as the senator seeks to become Frederick County executive this year. Trone's spending and Democratic turnout effort in Frederick should accrue to whomever the Democrat nominee is in the open-seat county executive race and are going to hurt Hough in what's expected to be a tossup race to replace term-limited County Executive Jan H. Gardner (D).

### **Loser: Former Rep. Donna F. Edwards (D)**

When she ousted then-Rep. Albert Wynn in the 4th District Democratic primary way back in 2008, Edwards relied on big numbers in the Montgomery County section of the district and in middle class Prince George's County neighborhoods outside the Capital Beltway. But the newly drawn 4th District has less turf in Montgomery than the map that Battaglia rejected – and more turf inside the Beltway in Prince George's. That's good news for Edwards' primary opponents, especially former Prince George's State's Attorney Glenn Ivey.

**Loser: Rep. C.A. Dutch Ruppertsberger (D)**

On paper, Ruppertsberger should be favored to win an 11th term, even though his 2nd Congressional District as newly drawn is considerably more competitive than it was in the prior map. And Ruppertsberger has plenty of cash on hand. But he lost Fort Meade from his district, a top priority for him. And he hasn't faced a competitive election since 2002, and sometimes it's hard for veteran incumbents to quickly crank up for a vigorous race. The biggest name in the Republican primary, radio personality Yuripzy Morgan, switched to the 3rd District race on Tuesday. But a top Republican could still get in. And what if Rep. John P. Sarbanes (D) decides to run in the 2nd District, where he lives, setting up a primary with Ruppertsberger?

**Loser: Sarbanes**

Sarbanes shouldn't have any problem holding on to his 3rd District seat, even with an intriguing Republican like Morgan in the race. But his current home in Towson is now 15 miles or more from his newly drawn district, which takes in all of Howard and most of Anne Arundel County, plus a slice of Carroll. Also, Sarbanes liked representing a piece of Montgomery County – it gave him cachet for a possible future statewide run. Now Montgomery is excised from the 3rd District, though Sarbanes will be able to say that he has represented a huge swath of Central Maryland in the House.

**Winners: State Sen. Sarah K. Elfreth (D-Anne Arundel) and Howard County Executive Calvin Ball (D)**

That 3rd District has got to look awfully enticing for Elfreth and Ball whenever Sarbanes moves on.

**Winner: Baltimore County Executive John A. Olszewski Jr. (D)**

That 2nd District has got to look awfully enticing for Olszewski whenever Ruppertsberger moves on.

**Winners: Howard and Anne Arundel counties**

For decades, local officials in Howard and Anne Arundel have complained about how fractured their congressional representation was. Under this new map, Howard will have just one representative – presumably Sarbanes – and Anne Arundel will have just two, Sarbanes and U.S. House Majority Leader Steny H. Hoyer (D).

**Push: Hoyer**

He loses his beloved College Park from the 5th District after all these decades, but overall, the district remains pretty favorable.

**Winner: State Sen. Michael A. Jackson (D-Prince George's)**

That 5th District has got to look awfully enticing for Jackson whenever Hoyer moves on – though any race to succeed Hoyer, who has already served in Congress for 41 years, will surely draw about 57 Democratic candidates.

**Push: GOP state lawmakers**

Republican lawmakers said the Democrats' second map, which Hogan signed into law, was still a gerrymander. Which, by their interpretations, means that TWO congressional gerrymanders have slipped by them over the past year. That said, some of them took part in game-changing lawsuits against the maps and got a map that nobody expected at the start of this session. It's a classic definition of a draw.

**Winner: Doug Mayer and Fair Maps Maryland**

Just one of several AstroTurf organizations that Mayer, an old Hogan hand, is running on the governor's behalf. This one stoked voter outrage over gerrymandering in creative ways and kept the redistricting issue front and center, especially with media outlets like WBAL Radio and Fox45-TV in Baltimore. And Mayer's mom would be so proud: He was quoted in The New York Times the other day.

**Winners: Jeremy Baker and Sally Robb**

The chief of staffs to House Speaker Adrienne A. Jones (D-Baltimore County) and Senate President Bill Ferguson (D-Baltimore City), respectively, working with other legislative operatives, drew a congressional map that passed constitutional and political muster in a short weekend, with Baker in the driver's seat and Robb riding shotgun. That's pretty impressive.

**Winner: State courts**

State courts in Maryland and in other states are flexing their muscles and making a difference in congressional redistricting lawsuits as federal judges largely abdicate their responsibilities.

**Winner: The Maryland Constitution**

It just got a LOT more formidable. Its provisions have, for the first time, been interpreted to apply to federal elections as well as state elections. Battaglia's interpretation, even if it doesn't set precedent, will live on. And Democrats may approach the next redistricting cycle very differently.

**Winners: Jones and Ferguson and their successors**

This year's redistricting process showed that the General Assembly's presiding officers will once again be in the driver's seat a decade from now.