



Two House Republicans Face Potential Defeat Under Redrawn Maps In Maryland, New Mexico

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New congressional maps in Maryland and New Mexico may endanger the one Republican in each of them as Democrats seek to defend their narrow House majority.

Maryland's Democratic legislature on Thursday approved a new congressional map that dramatically alters the makeup of Republican Rep. Andy Harris' seat, with the new 1st district including parts of liberal-leaning Annapolis. In New Mexico, the proposed map splits up Albuquerque, the state's Democratic stronghold, two ways, potentially imperiling Republican Rep. Yvette Herrell.

Though the Maryland map notably shakes up Harris' district — he won by 27 points last year and Democrats now have a slight advantage, according to the Princeton Gerrymandering Project (PGP) — the Republican was spared of what could have been an insurmountable disadvantage. The seat is now competitive, but Democrats could have drawn the district to have voted for President Joe Biden by more than 15 points, according to forecaster Dave Wasserman.

In a statement to the Daily Caller News Foundation, Harris said that the Maryland Democrats' ultimate goal was to “draw a map that ‘cracks’, ‘packs’ and has all the twists and turns necessary to ... minimize Republican influence in Congress,” noting that the gerrymandering was antithetical to reforms in congressional Democrats' national voting rights bill that has repeatedly failed pass the Senate.

The Maryland maps were also approved after a veto from Republican Gov. Larry Hogan, which the legislature's Democratic supermajority quickly overrode after disregarding a proposed map from the state's nonpartisan redistricting commission.

“Our job at the commission was to show what a map could look like if it were drawn without favor toward parties or candidates based on considerations like keeping counties together and respecting natural boundaries,” Walter Olson, a senior fellow at the Cato Institute and a member of the commission, told the Daily Caller News Foundation. “We did that, and I think our commission can be proud of the consensus we achieved from across many points of view and from around the state.”

“The Maryland legislative majority chose to take a different route,” Olson said.

In New Mexico, Democrats are coalescing around a proposal that would crack Albuquerque in order to give the party a double-digit edge in all three of the state's districts. While Herrell won

the state's 2nd district by seven points in 2020, the new district has an over 13-point Democratic advantage, the PGP noted.

Spokespersons for Harris and Herrell did not immediately respond to the DCNF's requests for comment.

Democrats are also pursuing a gerrymandered map in New York and signed a new map into law in Illinois that likely changes their edge from 13-5 to 14-3, but they are not the only party that has sought to change maps in order to bolster their representation in the House of Representatives.

Republicans have touted gerrymandered maps in Texas, Georgia, Ohio and North Carolina, and they have also floated maps in Florida that would decrease the number of Democrats in the House.

Several forecasters have said that Republicans' gerrymandering advantage alone could be enough to erase Democrats' 221-213 House majority, not including the political headwinds that Democrats have faced for the past several months.