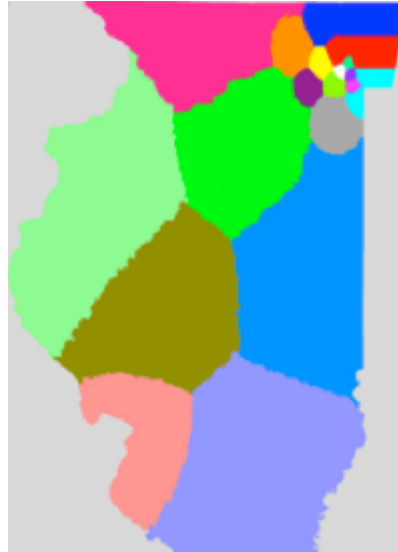




Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on July 6, 2011

New Illinois Law: Democratic Gerrymandering?

The state of Illinois has recently undergone a restructuring of its electoral map to suit the Democratic politicians, reports The Blaze. Some of the redrawing, which includes annexing into Chicago a small rural village 65 miles away, apparently borders on the absurd in order to accommodate the needs of the Democratic lawmakers. The Blaze writes:



A new census-based political map drawn by the states Democratic-controlled Legislature, and signed into law by Democratic Gov. Pat Quinn, has taken swaths of suburban and rural Illinois and added them to the districts of veteran Chicago Democrats such as U.S. Rep. [Jesse] Jackson Jr., who could be St. Annes next representative.

The move was one of the boldest by the national political parties this year as they sought to benefit by changing political boundaries.

The process of redistricting began in the states earlier this year when the new census data began to arrive. In most states, the process proved to be beneficial to Republicans as a result of the gains they made during the midterm elections in the fall. Most have redrawn the maps to their benefit.

Illinois has proven to be the exception, however, because Democrats are in control of all branches of the state government.

Predictably, the new map for Illinois will aid the Democrats in 2012 and hurt the Republicans, giving the Democrats an opportunity to regain control of the U.S. House of Representatives. But as noted by The Blaze, those living in rural areas will likely suffer from having representation that lives in a very different universe.

Scott Rigsby, former warehouse worker who lives in the village of St. Anne, addressed such concerns regarding his potential new Representative, Jesse Jackson Jr.:

Hes a long way from home, isnt he? For a hamlet that goes by the motto of "Preserving a Rural Life," were way too far for him to have his own personal finger on this town.

For example, Jackson voted in favor of cap and trade environmental legislation which has been opposed by farmers because it imposes increased regulation and raises the cost of diesel fuel and fertilizer.

The new map may not stand, however, as there will likely be a Republican-led court challenge. If it somehow passes the challenge, Democrats would have the opportunity to eliminate five Republican house members who are currently in districts with more Democratic voters.

The Blaze explains,



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Jackson and four other Democratic congressmen would have districts that stretch like tentacles from Chicago to take in and politically neutralize suburban and rural areas that recently have sent Republicans to Congress.

The new law would force four freshmen Republicans and one veteran Republican to run in districts where they will have to go up against other incumbents in 2012.

Jacksons new area would take territory from U.S. Rep. Adam Kinzinger, a GOP freshman, whose victory influenced the Tea Party coalition in Washington. The new district even includes Kinzingers hometown of Manteno.

One resident of the district, Karl Kruse, notes, Reality is that this district was drawn in a way that I dont think Adam could win.

Kinzinger remains optimistic, however, asserting he will definitely be running again.

Likewise, GOP freshman U.S. Representative Bob Dold will now have to face veteran Chicago Democrat Jan Schakowsky, who won in 2010 with 66 percent of the vote, as a result of the new map. Schakowsky has received an award from the Chicago Democratic Socialists of America. Also, the districts have been altered so that Chicago Democrats Daniel Lipinski and Mike Quigley will be cutting into Republican territory.

According to the Democrats, the new map is part of the Democratic Partys national strategy. Illinois and particularly the suburbs of Chicago have always been a center of gravity in our path to retake the House majority, because those districts have been competitive and will remain competitive, Rep. Steve Israel of New York, chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, told reporters in Washington at a breakfast hosted by *The Christian Science Monitor*.

Still, Democrats have defended their map as fair, contending that it is in line with the Voting Rights Act which requires map drawers to protect the interests of minorities. They claim that the new Chicago districts are inevitable, as the state lost one congressional seat because of its slowly growing population.



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