



A Campaign of Citizens Union and the League of Women Voters of New York State

PROPOSAL 1: VOTE YES FOR PROGRESS

***A Rare Opportunity to Fix an Entrenched, Broken Redistricting System
And Remove a Stain on Our Democracy***

For more than 50 years, New York elected officials have controlled the redistricting process, drawing district lines that protect them from challengers and eliminate fair, competitive elections. New Yorkers now have the opportunity to fix this problem of a rigged system by voting Yes for Proposal 1 this November 4th. This state constitutional amendment will ban partisan gerrymandering by outlawing legislative maps drawn for political advantage and give New Yorkers new power to hold legislators accountable.

If we don't act, we may never have a chance to take power back.

Proposal 1 puts power back in the hands of New Yorkers by creating an open and fair redistricting process that will hold legislators accountable to the people and ensure they cannot draw lines to favor incumbents or political parties. It:

- **CURBS THE POWER OF STATE LEGISLATORS TO DRAW THEIR OWN LINES:** Proposal 1 strips legislators of their unchecked power to draw their own district lines by establishing a politically balanced commission. The commission consists of 10 members with significant bans on who can serve to eliminate conflicts of interest.
 - **Equal representation** from each of the 4 legislative leaders, with 2 additional members not affiliated with either major party appointed by the commission members; and
 - **No legislators, lobbyists** or other political figures serving as commissioners.

If the legislature TWICE fails to approve the commission's plan, it can't just start over. It must then work from the commission's plan to develop a plan that must comply with the new rules and standards established in the state constitution and no one district's population can be changed by more than 2%.
- **ESTABLISHES NEW RULES THAT REMOVE PARTISANSHIP & ENSURE IMPARTIALITY:** Current redistricting rules are weak and vague, requiring only that districts be contiguous and compact. Proposal 1 will strengthen the process with powerful guidelines and clear standards to protect voters, including:
 - **Ending "partisan gerrymandering"** by requiring that districts not be drawn to favor or disfavor any incumbents, candidates or parties or to discourage competition;
 - **Drawing maps to preserve communities of interest and protect minority groups** by codifying national Voting Rights Act language in the state constitution; and
 - **Preventing drastic and arbitrary changes to districts.** If the proposed legislative districts are not nearly equal in population, a written explanation from the Commission must accompany the plan.
- **CREATES A FAIR AND PUBLIC PROCESS:** Any plan approved by the commission must have a supermajority of 7 out of 10 members vote in favor, ensuring balance and cooperation. Additional controls are in place to require a higher threshold for approval in the legislature should one party control both houses, a further check against lines drawn for political advantage. The amendment also requires that the commission release data, maps and information to the public to allow it to develop alternative proposals, and requires 12 public hearings be held throughout the state.

We urge all New Yorkers to vote for progress on Election Day by voting YES on Proposal 1.