



Doris "Granny D" Haddock

THE EQUAL VOICE

A newsletter for those who walk the talk of campaign finance reform



Spring 2021

Executive Director's Message

How COVID Changed Democracy

With the exception of the Seacoast and Granny D Memorial Walks last year, our events have been online via Zoom. Doreen, Brian and I have only met in person a handful of times over the year. Yet in many ways, our organization has never been stronger. How did THAT happen, particularly in this last 12 months of attacks on Democracy?

Technology played a huge part in the transformation on how we do our work. Video platforms like Zoom have helped us to develop relationships with volunteers around the state without the time and expense of travel. Our teams have thrived on this model, allowing us to meet more frequently and keep them up to date with our weekly briefings and timely actions. As organizers, we spend less time on the road, and more time preparing actions to make it easier for folks to take those actions.



The technology at the State House has also changed, grudgingly, so that the public can testify from the North Country or the Monadnock regions, and anyone can register their support or opposition to a bill. Over 6,000 people recently signed in opposition to a controversial bill, something which would have been physically impossible to do in the State House. Last Monday, students from around the state spoke from their campuses about the anti-voter bills proposing to disenfranchise them. Never before in NH has it been easier to get involved in the process. All good, right?

But just last week, HB 216, which would have made this access to remote hearings permanent was voted Inexpedient to Legislate, dooming it in the full House. Some state reps seem not to like all the public attention, and have complained that remote hearings are too hard to manage and should be ended. We're fighting back against this and other anti-voter measures.

We rejoice that we will be able to gather and share a meal or coffee later this summer, or for our Seacoast and Granny D walks. Online or in person, there's never been a better - or more important - time to be engaged on redistricting, voting rights and money-in politics.

Until we meet again, thank you for your actions, your time and your financial support to protect New Hampshire's Democracy. Stay safe!

Olivia

Olivia Zink, Executive Director

Absentee Ballots

can still be used for all 2021



- Town election ballot votes
- School District elections
- City elections
- State Special elections

By order of Gov. Chris Sununu

Steps to voting absentee

- ✓ Apply through your town or city clerk
- ✓ Check "Disability" if concerned with COVID to
- ✓ Check "Disability" on your affidavit envelope
- ✓ Procedures & forms may vary by town
- ✓ Contact your town or city clerk for info

Don't Let COVID-19 Keep you from Voting!

A public service announcement from Open Democracy, A nonpartisan, pro-voter NH organization



Coming Up

April 10, 2-4 pm, Redistricting Forum workshop featuring Ellen Freidin, Fair Districts Florida, [RSVP](#)

April 15, 7 pm, Open Democracy Book Club, Lessig's "They Don't Represent Us," [RSVP](#)

OD/ODA Annual meeting - TBD

July 10- Seacoast Walk

Aug. 14- Granny D Mem. Walk

CLICK TO BECOME A SUSTAINING DONOR



After a Year of Supporting Absentee Voting, Focus Shifts to the Fight for Fair, Nonpartisan and Transparent Redistricting

Most of our work in 2020 involved helping New Hampshire vote safely and securely, whether by absentee ballot or in person. The voting rules that were bent by the Secretary of State and Attorney General are still in effect for as long as the Governor's state of emergency declaration is in effect.

With a change of power in the legislature, and the hostility shown to pro-voter bills in the NH House and Senate, the Open Democracy and Open Democracy Action boards shifted their attention to redistricting and attacks on the freedom to vote. NH is not alone in this fight; gerrymandering and new deliberate efforts to keep Americans from voting are a coordinated, nationwide effort by partisan actors.

The Fight for Fair Voting Districts

The Table has been Set for Further Gerrymandering of New Hampshire



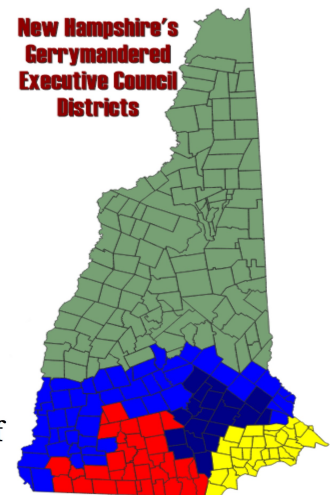
It appears that a slow-motion choreographed effort has transpired in New Hampshire as well. The logical solution to the partisan gerrymandering which occurred in NH in 2011, an independent redistricting commission, was passed and vetoed in 2019 and 2020. In 2021, three bills, HB 121, SB 80, and CACR 4 were killed by the House and Senate.

Without the independent commission, the redistricting process defaulted to the traditional majority-led committee of legislators, called the Special Committee on Redistricting. Two other bills, HB 428 and SB 90 proposed requiring the Special Committee to conduct all of its map making in public, and making all the software, materials, data, and maps available for public inspection. Both bills were given negative recommendations in committee.

Then in February, GOP chairman Steve Stepanek was [quoted by WMUR](#) suggesting that "Because of this we control redistricting," he said. "I can stand here today and guarantee you that we will send a conservative Republican to Washington, D.C. as a Congress person in 2022."

A Refresher of What Happened in 2011

In 2010-2012, a similar legislature left a 10-year legacy of gerrymandering in the Congressional, Executive Council, NH Senate and NH House voting district. Like 2021, a Special Committee on Redistricting was convened, but was mostly sidelined, while just a few legislators drew the maps out of the sight of the committee and the public, using software, data and a criteria not available to members of the committee. When public hearings were held, maps were not shown, and the public only heard about some of the criteria used. NH House maps were not released to the public until 24 hours before the vote. Of the 152 towns of 3,291 population or larger which should have gotten their own state House district, 62 of them did not. The maps went to the NH Supreme Court, which decided they had done a good enough job, and allowed the maps to go forward. Fast forward to 2019, when the U.S. Supreme Court decided that redistricting was a state function, and that other than racial gerrymandering, it would not take steps to guarantee fair redistricting.



What are We Doing About It?

Our tools are limited, but we're partnering with the League of Women Voters-NH, Kent Street Coalition and the Fair Maps Coalition to pressure the legislature to the right thing, and the Governor to support a nonpartisan and transparent process. Our Open Democracy Teams are on it, but we need YOUR help, too!

NH Resolution for Fair, Nonpartisan Redistricting

With the help of our Open Democracy Teams and town warrant leaders around the state, we've done petitions to place the NH Resolution for Fair, Nonpartisan Redistricting [\[Read the Resolution\]](#) on the town warrants of 80 towns. Last year, a similar resolution passed in 18 towns, and just last week, the resolution was passed in 19 towns, losing only in Mason. And in cities and towns with a council form of government, the NH Resolution for Fair Nonpartisan Redistricting has passed in Keene, Dover, Franklin, Lebanon and Durham. That brings the two-year total to 42 towns. As we predicted, the margins of victory are 2-1 and sometimes 3-1, even in conservative towns like Londonderry and Hudson.

Upon passage, the results of the vote are sent to the town's state reps and senator, and town leaders are sending the results to the Special Committee on Redistricting.

As part of this effort, our Open Democracy Teams have placed scores of letters throughout the state's media, amplified by social media.

Drawing Our Own Maps

Given the gerrymandering which occurred in 2011 and the likely conditions for it happen again, Open Democracy and its allies will be taking matters into their own hands and drawing alternative, fair, maps and releasing them to the press and the public. The "Live Free, Map Fair" project is in its organization stages, but expect more details in our summer newsletter.

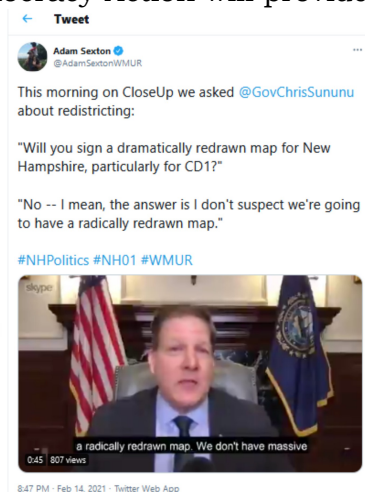
Testifying and Providing Resources

The Special Committee on Redistricting just met for the first time March 9, and Open Democracy Action was there to testify, asking for a fair, nonpartisan and transparent process of which the state can proud. The text of the NH Resolution was shared, as were the towns and cities which have approved the article. Open Democracy Action will provide resources and suggestions of stakeholders who should be consulted, including leaders of towns which did not receive a state House district.

Asking the Governor to Honor His Commitment to a Fair & Transparent Process

In 2019 and 2020, Governor Sununu noted in his veto statements of HB 706 and HB 1665 that gerrymandering was rare in NH. In recent interviews [with WMUR](#) and [NHPR](#), he now acknowledges Executive Council 2 is gerrymandered, but does not acknowledge the NH Senate or House districts. It was due to the volume of questions submitted by our Open Democracy Teams to NHPR that the question was even asked, and when it was, it was the Monadnock Team's Anne Huberman's.

Your Vote Should Matter!
With gerrymandering, it may not.
At Town Meeting this year,
Vote YES on the
**NH Resolution for Fair
Nonpartisan Redistricting**
We have a chance to end gerrymandering for the next 10 years,
but we need you to use your vote at Town Meeting and tell
your elected representatives that you want a process that is
Fair, Nonpartisan & Transparent
Gerrymandering...
- Doesn't represent voters properly
- Towns lose say in Concord
- Makes districts uncompetitive
- Incumbents get locked in
- Voter participation drops
Get more info
OpenDemocracyNH.org/fairmaps



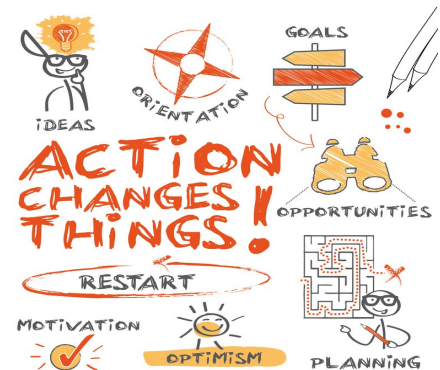
Governor Sununu's answer:

"The answer is yes and yes. It has to be transparent. In our entire state, I think there are a couple of districts you could point out that are really funky. Everyone could point to Executive Council district two. And I agree. That's got to be fixed. It's a weird one. It's like a snake lying across the middle of the state. Very bizarre. But I think for the most part -- the House and the Senate districts -- I can't think of any that are really out of whack. We'll look at the population. The House has their process and they put this committee together and it has to be done in a bipartisan way and be transparent I always say with redistricting, it's got to pass the smell test. You've got to be able to look at the map and say, OK, at first blush, this makes general sense. We're not, like, twisting around here and there. Whatever we do, it has to be fair, it has to be balanced."

We intend to make sure Governor Sununu keeps his commitment to a transparent and fair redistricting process.

Mobilizing Voters to Question Their Legislators

Ultimately, the legislature as a whole has to approve the maps, so it will be important, particularly in December 2021 and early January 2022 that you [contact the Special Committee on Redistricting](#) and your [other elected representatives](#). They must know that the people want fair and nonpartisan voting districts.



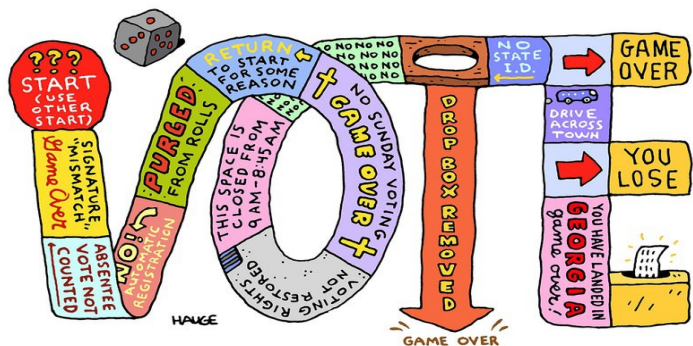
I want to do more! What do you need me to do?

Joining a team is the most effective way of helping, but getting involved with the Live Free, Map Fair project, [attending the Redistricting Forum](#), and helping to organize friends or groups in your community to get active. It will take a tsunami of voter actions to stave off a perfect storm of partisan politics, so [reach out to Brian Beihl](#) with your ideas and talents.

Students & Absentee Voters, Your Freedom to Vote is Under Attack

Since March 1st, Executive Director Olivia Zink, Deputy Director Brian Beihl, OD & ODA Board members Bob Perry, Bev Cotton and members of the Open Democracy Teams have testified on bills in House Election Law committee. While there were a few helpful bills ODA supported like an “online voter portal” for updating registration details, most were designed to tighten restrictions on absentee voting, voter registration. Among these are:

- A bill ending same-day voter registration in NH
- A bill requiring a copy of an ID or driver's license number to be returned with an absentee ballot application or ballot – even though you're already registered
- A bill which would remove dormitories as a legitimate domicile
- A bill which would end the “Qualified Voter Affidavit” so a voter missing an ID or a piece of documentation to register can still vote.

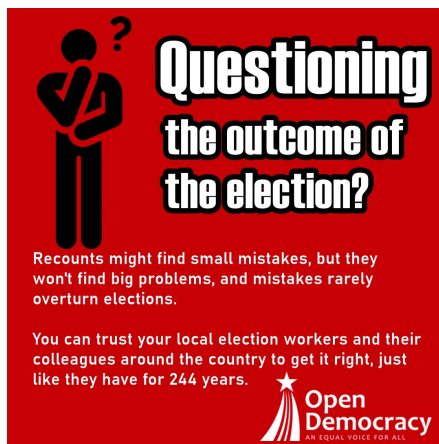


- A bill which would require that documentation to vote, and only get a “provisional” ballot, which wouldn't be counted unless the voter returns with the document (tough luck if your birth certificate is at Mom & Dad's house in California).
- A bill which removes a college ID as identification
- A bill trying to restore signature matching as part of the verification of absentee voters, a provision previously struck down by the NH courts.

Fortunately, due to some heroic testimony by Dartmouth, UNH and PSU students, some bills have had negative recommendations out of committee and others have been retained in committee for more work – or for a day when the press and public aren't watching so carefully.

Countering the Voter Fraud Narrative

We reported last fall that Open Democracy was partnering with Common Cause in the effort to counter the narrative that the 2020 Presidential election was riddled with widespread fraud. This inaccurate narrative continues in NH and elsewhere, and being used as justification for the voting restrictions. Open Democracy and Open Democracy Teams stayed engaged after the election to report misinformation and intel from New Hampshire groups, and continues to be vigilant.



Open Democracy also fielded 90 volunteers to monitor polling places around the state, talked with election officials and voters, and observed the opening of absentee ballots. There were no accusations of fraudulent activities at any of the polling places we observed, and Governor Sununu has himself said that New Hampshire's elections officials provide the “gold standard” in U.S. Elections.

We are also monitoring Windham, where significant discrepancies between the original count and recount have triggered a review of the processes and machines. Open Democracy supports this review, but cautions anyone from drawing conclusions too soon.

H.R. 1 & S. 1 – The Most Sweeping Democracy Reforms of Our Time

Open Democracy Action, through its membership in the 170-organization [Declaration for American Democracy](#), is actively supporting H.R. 1 & S. 1, the For the People Act. Open Democracy Teams wrote valentines to our Congressional delegations, thanking them for their co-sponsorship and support of the bills – an action that got adopted nationally!

H.R. 1 has now passed the U.S. House, but S. 1 is embroiled in a debate on whether the filibuster rules should be ended or modified to allow a 51-vote majority, or whether Republican votes would be needed to reach 60 and suspend the filibuster.

Should the For the People Act pass, it contains many reforms that Open Democracy and Open Democracy Action have fought for over many years. The following summary is from prime sponsor [U.S. Rep. John Sarbanes' website](#).



About H.R. 1 and S. 1

CLEAN AND FAIR ELECTIONS

Improve Access – H.R. 1 expands access to the ballot box by taking aim at institutional barriers to voting, including cumbersome voter registration systems, disenfranchisement and limited voting hours. H.R. 1 will create automatic voter registration across the country, ensure that individuals who have completed felony sentences have their full voting rights restored, expand early voting and enhance absentee voting, simplify voting by mail, reduce long lines and wait times for voters and modernize America's voting system.

Promote Integrity – H.R. 1 commits Congress to build the record necessary to restore the Voting Rights Act, as embodied by the House-passed H.R. 4. It also commits Congress to deliver full congressional voting rights and self-government for the residents of the District of Columbia, which only statehood can provide, prohibits voter roll purges like those seen in Ohio, Georgia and elsewhere and ends partisan gerrymandering to prevent politicians from picking their voters.

Ensure Security – H.R. 1 ensures that American elections are decided by American voters, without interference, by enhancing federal support for voting system security, particularly with paper ballots and also by increasing oversight of election system vendors and by requiring the development of a national strategy to protect U.S. democratic institutions.

END THE DOMINANCE OF BIG MONEY IN OUR POLITICS

Guarantee Disclosure – H.R. 1 shines a light on dark money in politics by upgrading online political ad disclosure and requiring all organizations involved in political activity to disclose their large donors. H.R. 1 also breaks the so-called 'nesting-doll' sham that allows big-money contributors and special interests to hide the true funding source of their political spending.

Empower Citizens – H.R. 1 strengthens the political power of hardworking Americans by creating a multiple matching system for small donations. This innovative, 21st-century system of citizen-owned elections will break the stranglehold of special interests on Congress and lay the groundwork for an agenda that meets the needs of the American people. The voluntary multiple matching system will be completely paid for by a new surcharge on corporate law breakers and wealthy tax cheats. That way, the individuals and corporations who break the public trust – like Wells Fargo, which created fake bank accounts for unwitting customers, or Volkswagen, which lied about harmful carbon emissions from its vehicles, or Facebook, which violates Americans' privacy, or Purdue Pharma, which fueled the opioid crisis – bear the cost of building a more just and equitable democracy. H.R. 1 also reaffirms Congress' authority to regulate money in politics, pushing back on the Supreme Court's wrong-headed Citizens United decision.

Strengthen Oversight – H.R. 1 ensures that there are cops on the campaign finance beat that will enforce the laws on the books. H.R. 1 tightens rules on super PACs and restructures the Federal Election Commission to break the gridlock and enhance its enforcement mechanisms. It also repeals Mitch McConnell's riders that prevent government agencies from requiring commonsense disclosure of political spending.

ENSURE PUBLIC SERVANTS WORK FOR THE PUBLIC INTEREST

Fortify Ethics Law – H.R. 1 breaks the influence economy in Washington and increases accountability by expanding conflict of interest law and divestment requirements, slowing the revolving door, preventing Members of Congress from serving on corporate boards and requiring presidents to disclose their tax returns.

Impose Greater Ethics Enforcement – H.R. 1 gives teeth to federal ethics oversight by overhauling the Office of Government Ethics, closing loopholes for lobbyists and foreign agents, ensuring watchdogs have sufficient resources to enforce the law and creating a code of ethics for the Supreme Court.

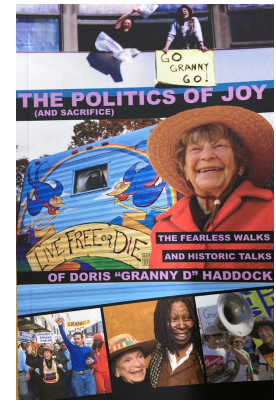
Call your U.S. Senators and tell them to do what it takes to get the For the People Act passed!

Granny D Legacy Committee

by Pat Waterman and Carol Wyndham

The Granny D Legacy Committee had a very active and rewarding year. We grew out of a small committee to promote a play about Doris' walk across America, and have evolved into a dynamic group of 25 members dedicated to the idea that "Democracy isn't something we have, it's something we do."

The Politics of Joy (and Sacrifice) The Fearless Walks and Historic Talks of Doris “Granny D” Haddock - Through the generosity of Dennis Burke, co-author of Doris’ two books about her life and her walk, some of our members chose 40 of the most inspirational 100 speeches in his book Democracy Road to create this compact publication. Visit our [Politics of Joy page](#) to order your copy for a donation of \$20.00.



GrannyD.org: At one of our meetings, the subject of how we could create an informational website came up and member Peter Martel found that the domain [GrannyD.org](#) existed but would expire in a few days. So we secured the name for Open Democracy, created a shared document for contributions to the content of the website and it is now live with videos, photos, and other educational materials. We're actively seeking volunteers to help with the development of the WordPress-based site. Contact [Brian Beihl](#) if interested.



The Rescue of Rosie:- What started out as a question “What ever happened to Rosie?” (the brightly painted vehicle that carried Doris and her team some of her campaigns) resulted in a multi-member effort to find her (stored in the back of a repair garage in Keene), secure ownership for Open Democracy, and relocate her to the dedicated care of Bob Perry. Bob has committed to working on her engine and volunteers have offered to brighten her artwork. With warmer weather, more progress will be made on Rosie’s “makeover”. Watch for a video on this story coming soon.

Granny D Day: Unfortunately, Doris' day will need to wait yet another year After wonderful remote testimony by Dennis Burke, Olivia Zink, Bob Perry and written testimony by Advisory Committee members Carol Shea-Porter and Brad Cook, the bill was retained in committee. It may get revisited next January, just in time for her 112th birthday!

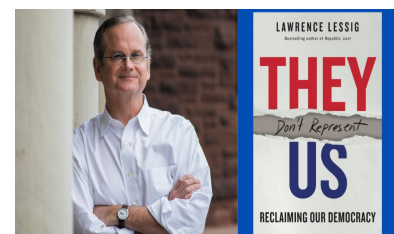


Upcoming Projects: Besides being committed to the passage of 2021 legislation for an annual Granny D Day in NH and encouraging young adult activists, the Committee has plans for a Democracy Stage in Peterborough; Granny D statue/bust or portrait at State House; Granny D U.S. Postage Stamp; Granny D Historical Roadside Marker.

Want to help preserve the inspiring legacy of Doris Haddock? The committee would love to have your ideas and energy as part of the team! Contact [Pat Waterman](#) or [Carol Wyndham](#) to be a part of the fun!

Open Democracy Book Club

One of the wonderful things about the Open Democracy Teams is some of the creative ideas which get brought up. The Open Democracy Book Club was one of those ideas. Now reading up on our third book, Larry Lessig's [They Don't Represent Us](#), the book club will meet again online on April 15. , 7-8:30. Professor Lessig will be joining us to discuss his book. [RSVP for the event](#)

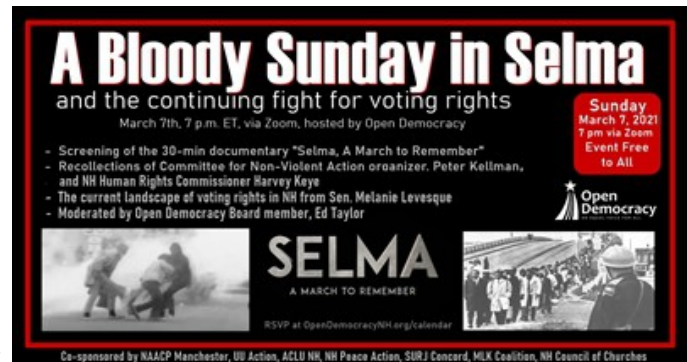


Previous books included [Corporations Are Not People](#) by Jeff Clement, and [Unrigged](#) by David Daley, and both authors joined the book club members for a discussion. We're reading on a six-week cycle, so get to your local bookseller and order a copy!

Open Democracy Events

A Bloody Sunday in Selma

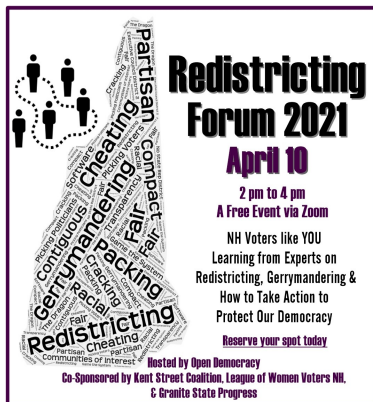
Hopefully you didn't miss the excellent program on March 7, "A Bloody Sunday in Selma." Attended by 150 people from around the country, the event featured an online screening of Selma: A March to Remember, followed by stories from Harvey Keye and Peter Kellman, activists who were part of the fight for voting rights in Alabama.



Harvey, a member of the NH Human Rights Commission and Nashua radio host told stories of his youth and his return to Alabama after serving in the Korean War. Peter, sent down to help organize logistics for the Selma marches painted a picture of the anticipation of fear and violence and its aftermath. Senator Melanie Levesque spoke of the fight for voting rights, not in 1965, but the fact that we're still fighting for today, and right here in New Hampshire.

"A Bloody Sunday in Selma" was recorded and is [available to view on YouTube](#), and the actions we prepared are still available [here](#).

April 10 Redistricting Forum



In order to fight against a plague of gerrymandering in New Hampshire and elsewhere in the U.S., we need to learn what redistricting and gerrymandering are, how it's done, and how to fix it when it's broken. Open Democracy, the League of Women Voters-NH, Kent Street Coalition and Granite State Progress are hosting the Redistricting Forum to help you become a better advocate for fair, nonpartisan and transparent redistricting.

Among the guest speakers are Moon Duchin or a member of her team from MGGG at Tufts University, one of the nation's leading authorities on redistricting technology, and Ellen Freidin of Fair

Districts Florida, which was successful in the fight for an independent redistricting commission in Florida, and beat back court and legislative challenges as well. Over 100 people have already signed up. The event is free, so please [RSVP now](#).

Want to Fix Gerrymandering and Make our Voting Districts Fair?

- [Join an Open Democracy Team](#) to make our state officials accountable.
- [Write letters to the editor](#) on fair redistricting
- Help support your town's [NH Resolution for Fair Nonpartisan Redistricting](#)
- Use your social media to communicate to your community about redistricting and voting rights by sharing posts from [Open Democracy Action](#).
- Get an invitation for OD or ODA to speak to churches, town political committees, or fraternal and business groups. We are happy to make a presentation to your group.
- Become a [monthly sustaining donor](#). You can see what we're accomplishing-- please help us fund the work!
- Or contact Dep. Director Brian Beihl 603-620-8300 to find out how you can help!