

Destroying Democracy: Will Dems Trample on Voters' Will?

By Chris Braunlich

10/25/2025 -- You have to be pretty confident -- no, read that "arrogant" -- to tell 2.7 million Virginia voters that you're willing to stick it to them.

But that's exactly what Virginia House and Senate Democratic leaders appear **ready to do** at 4:00 pm on Monday, all in the cause of enhancing political power and rejecting the voters' will.

In 2020, Virginia approved a change to the highly partisan redistricting process in Virginia, with **more than 2.7 million voters** (66 percent of the vote) approving a Constitutional Amendment placing redistricting in the hands of a bipartisan **Redistricting Commission**. If the Commission fails to agree on new maps, the amendment threw the issue into the hands of the Virginia Supreme Court to decide.

Thanks to the voters' decision to support the amendment, that's exactly what happened when redistricting last took place. The result is a General Assembly with a 21-19 Democratic majority in the Senate and a 51-49 Democratic majority in the House of Delegates.

Of Virginia's 11 Members of Congress, 54.5 percent (six) are Democrats, having gained 51.8 percent of the votes for Congress. Five Members of Congress (45.5 percent) are Republican, having won 48.2 percent of the four million votes cast for Congress.

All in all, Virginia's district lines produced elected officials that are about as evenly matched as they could possibly be.

But that's not good enough for Democrats in the General Assembly.

Now, just five years later, Democratic leaders in Richmond are calling legislators back into session to reclaim the power voters deliberately took away. They intend to throw out the bipartisan redistricting commission and once again put the map-making process squarely under the thumb of politicians.

But this requires a Constitutional Amendment to replace or amend the one passed by 66 percent of Virginia voters in 2020. The process requires passage by the General Assembly in one session, an intervening election, passage by another General Assembly and approval by the voters.

The current Democratic House and Senate plan is to circumvent that process while paying lip service to it by a) passing changes in a “snap” session called on 72 hours notice, b) continue this year’s election as if nothing had happened, c) pass the changes again in January, and d) call a special election in the spring when fewer voters vote and no one is paying attention.

What took nearly two years to create will be undone in six months. One might ask Virginia voters why they would bother to vote if their decisions don’t count to the majority?

That it is a partisan power grab is made clear by gubernatorial candidate Abigail Spanberger. In an interview posted on **Blue Virginia**, **Spanberger** may have telegraphed the Democrat strategy when she says “I’m unwilling in Virginia to wait for 2028,” noting the “only option” is “to...f--king win those seats in the midterms by working hard and doing it!”

Even former Democratic Governor Doug Wilder’s campaign manager, former Democratic State Chairman Paul Goldman calls it an **“unprecedented power play.”**

But the strategy is very similar to California, where Governor Gavin Newsome has **proposed a special election** that would suspend the state’s current congressional districts, which were drawn by an independent commission, and replace them with a map intended to favor Democrats.

The 2020 Virginia constitutional amendment passed with nearly 66% of the vote — a resounding majority across partisan, racial, and regional lines. Supporters of the commission spanned the political spectrum, from the League of Women Voters to conservative taxpayer advocates. It was a genuine bipartisan achievement in an era of polarization.

But no one should be surprised at what is happening now. While progressives parade as paragons of democracy, when redistricting reform passed the General Assembly in 2019, only **one Senator and 13 of 100 Delegates** voted against it. A year later, progressives had taken control of both houses of the General Assembly and there was a sudden realization that the Left would control the entire process of redistricting if no changes were made.

As a consequence, **46 House Democrats changed their minds and voted “No.”** Only nine Democrats voted in favor, of which only three remain in the House.

Although the Democratic Party **campaigns against bipartisan redistricting reform**, 66 percent of the voters rejected the Party’s position. Take a moment to pity, please, the Democratic Party candidate for Delegate who will now be asked to vote *against* the overwhelming wishes of his or her constituents and overturn the mandate of the voters.

To be clear: This national effort to impose new congressional district lines began when **Donald Trump pressured Texas Republicans** to redraw their district lines. This was met by efforts to do the same for Democrats in **California, New York, and Illinois**. But no one wins when the result is **Mutually Assured Destruction**. It ought to be a reminder to both the Right and the Left that there is wisdom in the old saying “What goes around, comes around.”

Just because something *can* be done doesn't mean it *should* be done.

Fortunately, sober voices are beginning to be heard. While Republican leaders in the Indiana legislature are ready to redistrict again, rank and file Senators are resisting, bolstered by a **recent commentary** from popular former Governor Mitch Daniels.

Daniels, who recently retired as President of Purdue University (where he **reformed the university**), noted "As with other aspects of the currently debased public square – lawfare, demonizing opponents, the normalization of infantilism and profanity in public discourse – someone has to lead in climbing out of the mudhole. The side that does will not be unilaterally disarming; it will be establishing itself as the proper custodian of a system that most Americans still want to trust and believe in."

Virginia, home of "the oldest continuous law-making body in the New World," once prided itself on being that kind of custodian. We disdained the Potomac Fever that held Washington, DC captive and preached a system of honor, gentility, and democracy.

The redistricting commission was a pledge to voters that Virginia would be different – that we could rise above the cynicism consuming national politics.

Break that promise now, and the damage will last far longer than one election cycle.

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