Lunch + Legislation #15: What’s Up With.... Redistricting (and how animal advocates can use it)

Mon. Jan. 3, 12:00pm, via Facebook Live
BACKGROUND

* Every 10 years after each US census, Congressional and state legislative district boundaries are re-drawn to reflect the changing population

* In Michigan, the State Legislature was responsible for creating the new districts. Results? Maps drawn to favor the party in power in the legislature, i.e. gerrymandering


* Dec. 28, 2021: Commission releases maps re-drawing district lines for Congress, State Senate, State House

* Districts more compact, based on citizen input. non-political
IMPORTANT CAVEATS

* These may not be the final maps as lawsuits have been threatened from both the right and left

* Pundits divide new districts as Strong R, Leaning R, Toss-up, Strong D, Leaning D, Toss-up ....but....

* Nov. 2022 elections for all Congressional, MI Senate and MI House .....so....

* We don’t know who will end up representing any of the districts

* The example is for demonstration purposes only; we just don’t know who will end up representing a district

* This analysis is a work-in-progress and will be updated
AN OPPORTUNITY

* With all the uncertainty, what’s the point of discussing this now?

* It’s a “reset” on the legislative process and a good opportunity to become more knowledgeable about your elected officials so you can be a better advocate for animals

* **GOAL:** when you contact your elected officials, they (or their staff) should:
  a. know your name
  b. associate you with animal issues
WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW

* Familiarize yourself with the maps, with the process and what the analysts are saying:
  - https://www.bridgemi.com/michigan-government/congressional-map-adopted-michigan-panel-gives-democrats-7-6-edge
  - https://www.9and10news.com/2021/12/29/michigan-redistricting-commission-selections-final-maps-for-state/?gid=1&pid=1

* For a deep dive, Princeton’s Gerrymandering Project: https://gerrymander.princeton.edu/redistricting-report-card/?planId=recMi1jMpBPQdYuq

* Will you be in the same district? How to find out?

* It’s not too late to start contacting your current US representative, state Senator and state Representative with issues of concern

* Good resources: HSLF Legislative Scorecard (federal)
  - https://hslf.org/current_scorecard?st=MI
  - AFA’s Legislative Tracker
WHAT YOU CAN DO UP TO THE ELECTION

* Find out who’s running, what their position is on animal welfare (NOTE: you may have to call the campaign and ask)

* Remember, all 13 seats in Congress, 38 in the Michigan Senate and 110 in the House will be on the ballot this year

* Pay attention to the primary in August as well as the general election

* Look for endorsements from major animal welfare organizations
NOV. 2022 AND BEYOND

* Get to know your new (or newly re-elected) representatives and their staffs

* Contact when you want their vote (or sponsorship)

* Thank them (or ask them to do better next time)

* (What not to do: “I won’t vote for you if you ABC, or unless you XYZ)
AN EXAMPLE

* Remember the caveats! The map may change, current officials may decide not to run, or move to another district and, obviously, we don’t know who will actually win the election.

Top: Congressional Districts (13, down from 14)
Middle: State Senate Districts (38)
Bottom: State House Districts (110)
US Rep. Brenda Lawrence

* Current District: 14

* Potential New District: 12 (parts of Wayne and Oakland Counties, e.g. Dearborn, Dearborn Heights, Westland, Livonia, Redford and Southfield)

* Has 100% rating on animal welfare, per HSLF Scorecard

* Isn’t well-recognized for her pro-animal stance

* Opportunity if she’s currently your US Representative, or will represent you (potentially) in the future
CALL TO ACTION

* Learn about the process
* Get to know current elected officials
* Study candidates in upcoming elections
* Get to know new elected officials

Top: Congressional Districts (13, down from 14)

Middle: State Senate Districts (38)

Bottom: State House Districts (110)
Call to Action:

Thank You

Comments, questions, ideas for future episodes?
Info@attorneysforanimals.org

Missed an episode? Check out our library.

Next Lunch + Legislation:
Monday, Feb. 7, 2022, noon