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Boundaries That Matter: Redistricting Congressional Election Districts

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The Importance of Election Boundaries

When the Lines are Drawn with One Party in Control

http://bit.ly/reagan-on-redistricting

Congressional Redistricting in Ohio

<u>Who Decides?</u>

➢ **In Ohio – the state legislature**
– every 10 years after the census

➢ Population of each district must be as close to the average in each state as "reasonably possible". (therefore equal populations within a state)

➢ Voting Rights Act of 1965 – minority representation

➢ There are no other requirements.

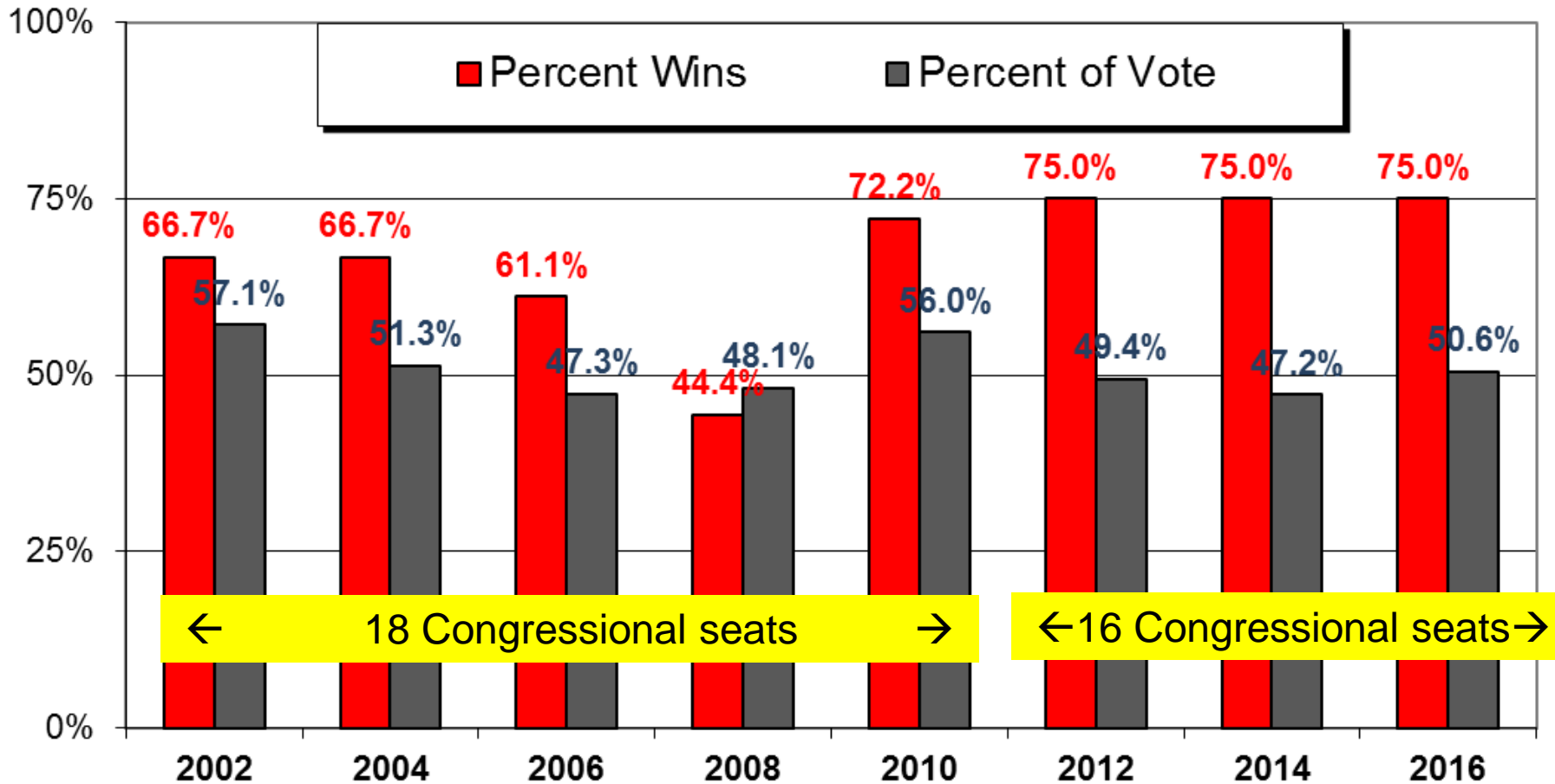# But there are other possible considerations

Compactness

Communities of Interest. e.g., keep whole counties or municipalities together

Competitiveness. Maximize the number of legislative districts that could be won by either party.

Representational Fairness. Minimize the difference between proportions of votes for the political parties and the legislative seats won by those parties.

Representational Fairness

Congressional Wins and Percentage of Vote for the Controlling Party in Ohio, 2002 - 2016

Year	Percent Wins	Percent of Vote
2002	66.7%	57.1%
2004	66.7%	51.3%
2006	61.1%	47.3%
2008	44.4%	48.1%
2010	72.2%	56.0%
2012	75.0%	49.4%
2014	75.0%	47.2%
2016	75.0%	50.6%

← 18 Congressional seats → ←16 Congressional seats→

Additional seats won:

2002	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012	2014	2016
2	3	2	-1	3	3	3	4

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Percent Republican Congressional Representatives
1973 to 2012

OHIO

Control of districting
1971 - Republicans
1981 - divided
1991 - Republicans

Percent Republican

50%
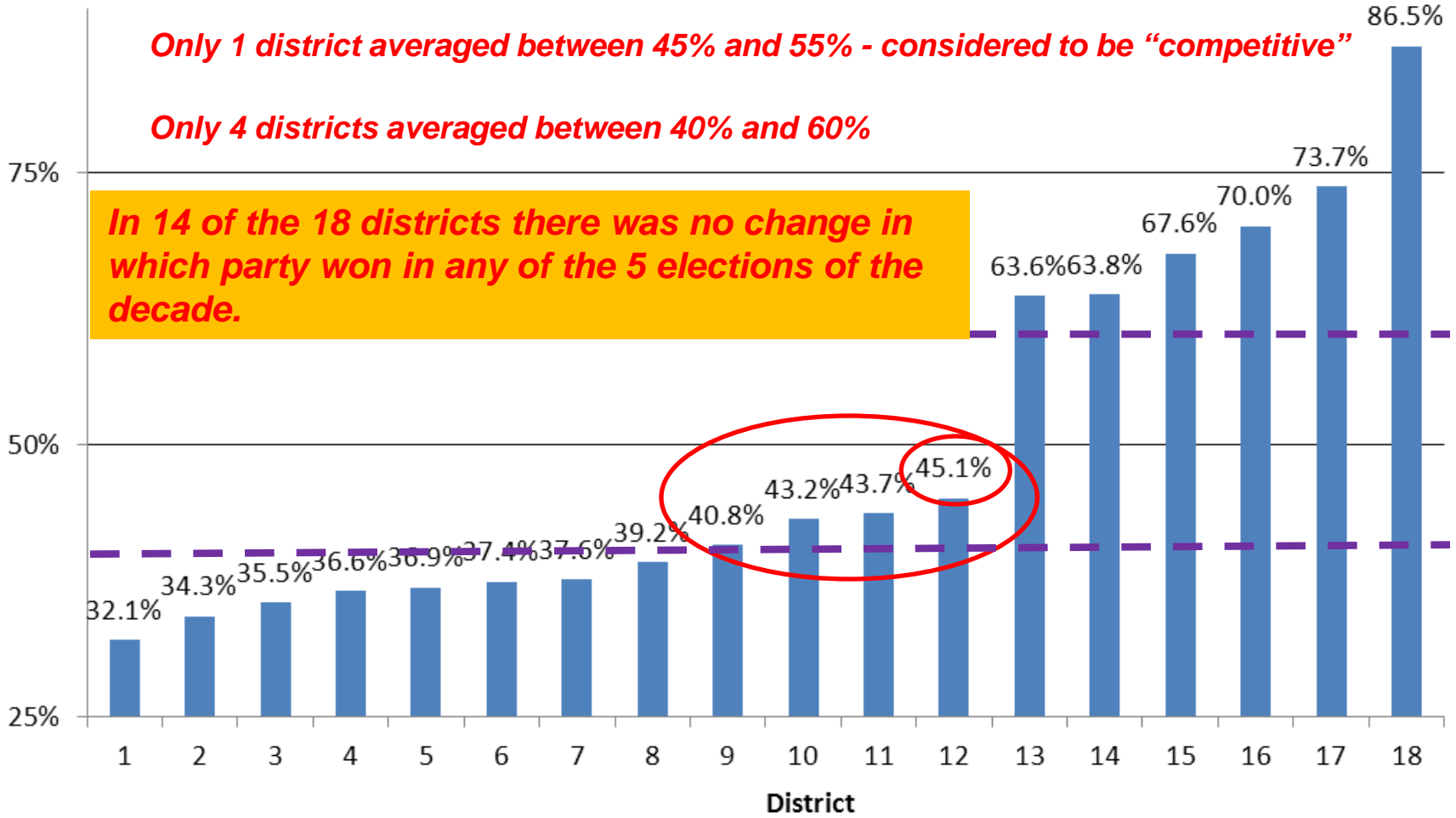
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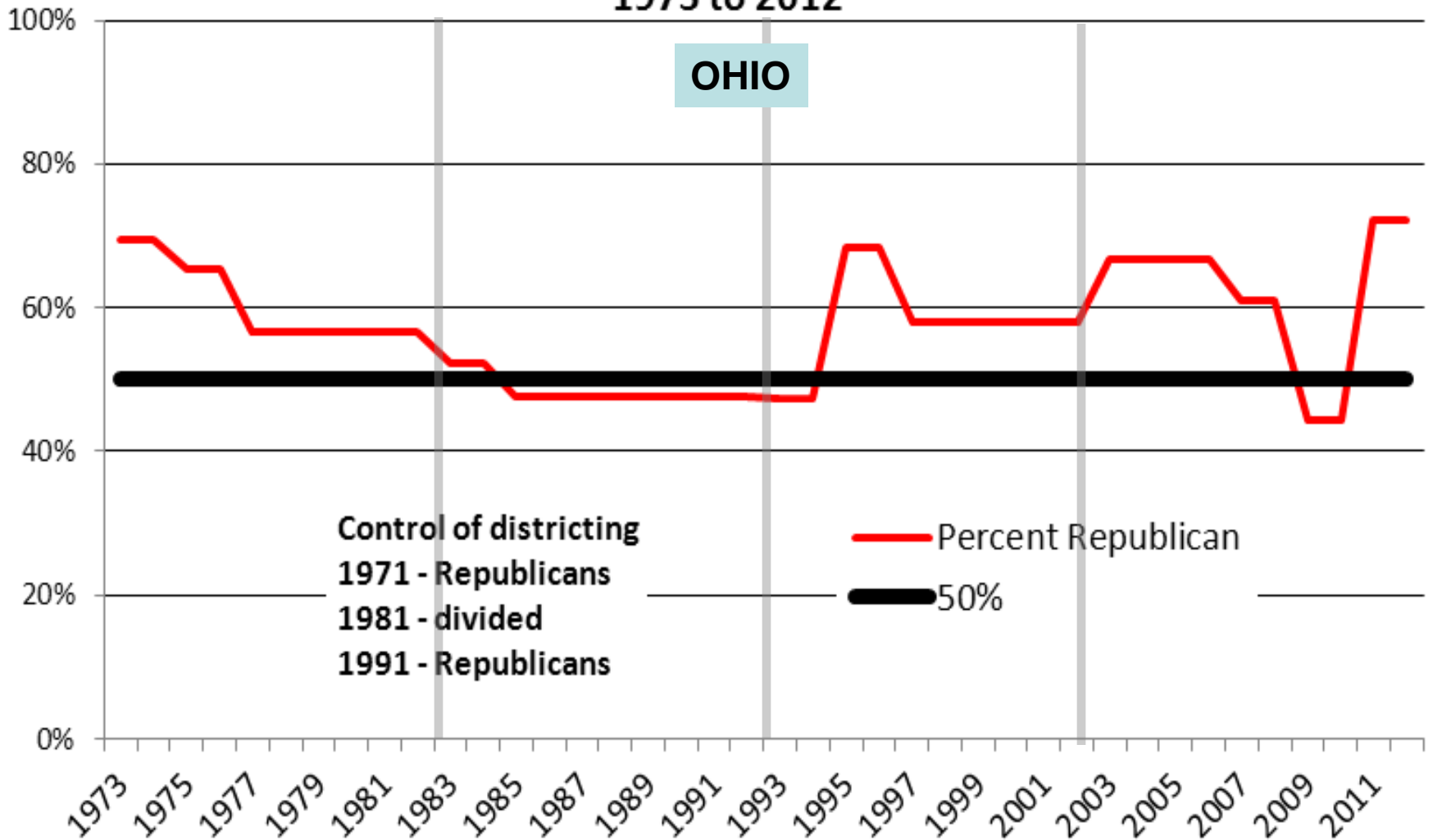
Competiveness

**Percentage of Votes for Congressional Candidates
for <u>Party Not in Control of Redistricting</u>
2002 - 2010**

Only 1 district averaged between 45% and 55% - considered to be "competitive"

Only 4 districts averaged between 40% and 60%

In 14 of the 18 districts there was no change in which party won in any of the 5 elections of the decade.

Chart values by district: 1: 32.1%, 2: 34.3%, 3: 35.5%, 4: 36.6%, 5: 36.9%, 6: 37.4%, 7: 37.6%, 8: 39.2%, 9: 40.8%, 10: 43.2%, 11: 43.7%, 12: 45.1%, 13: 63.6%, 14: 63.8%, 15: 67.6%, 16: 70.0%, 17: 73.7%, 18: 86.5%
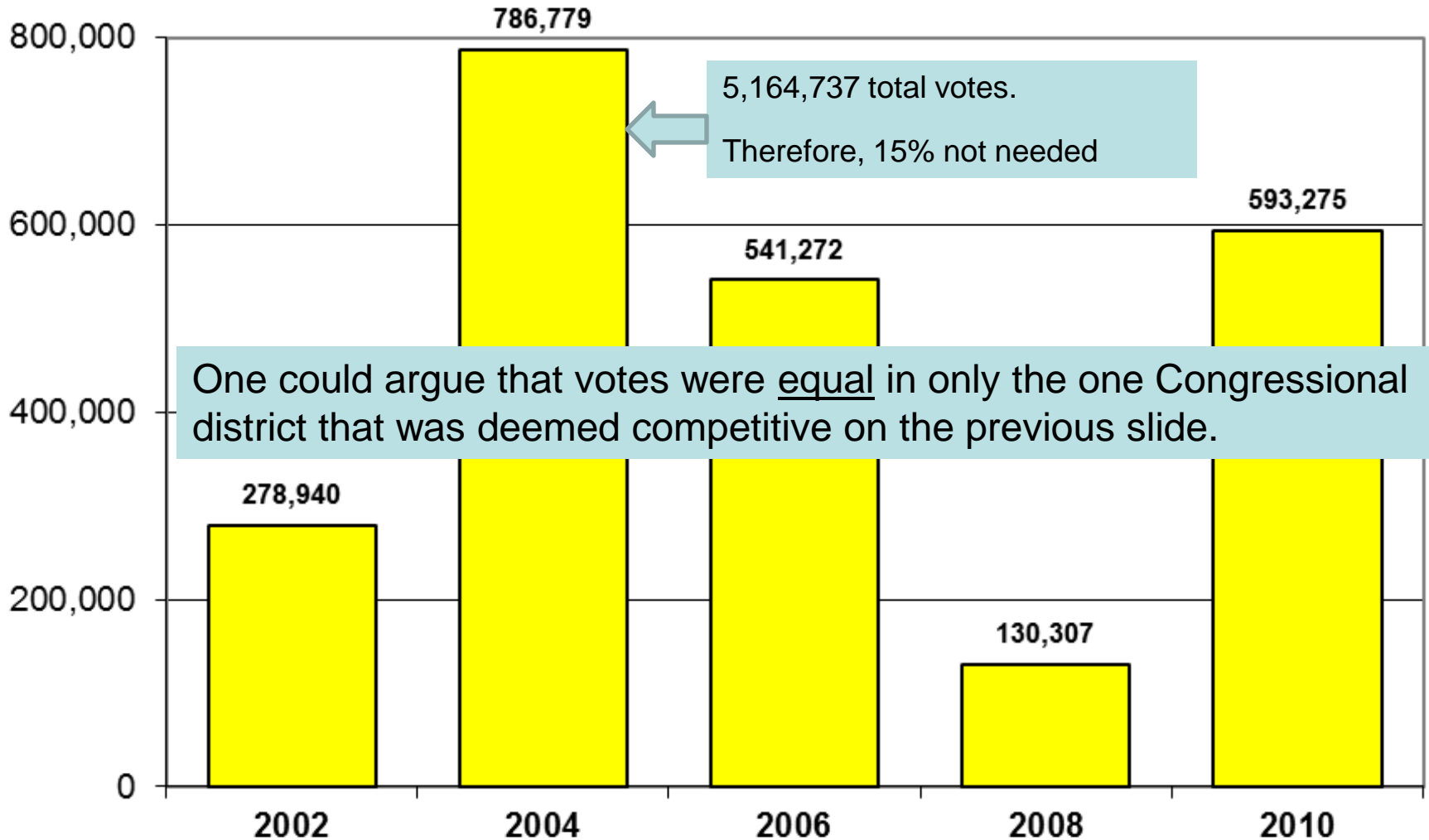
District

OHIO

Within states, when boundaries don't reflect the preferences of the electorate,

votes don't count the same.

Wasted Votes by Party Not in Control of Redistricting Ohio Congressional Elections, 2002-2010
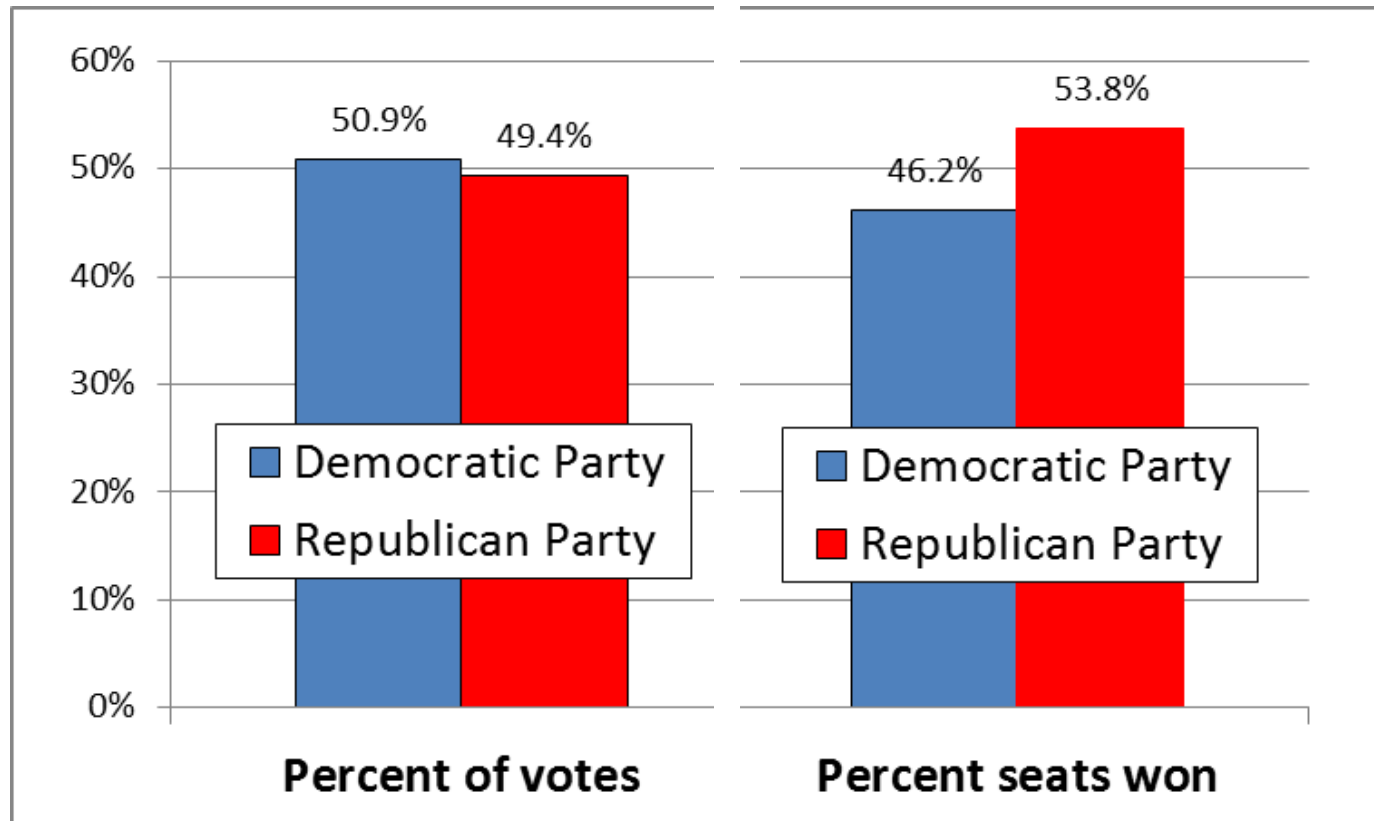
(votes beyond those needed to attain the number of elections won)

5,164,737 total votes.

Therefore, 15% not needed

One could argue that votes were <u>equal</u> in only the one Congressional district that was deemed competitive on the previous slide.

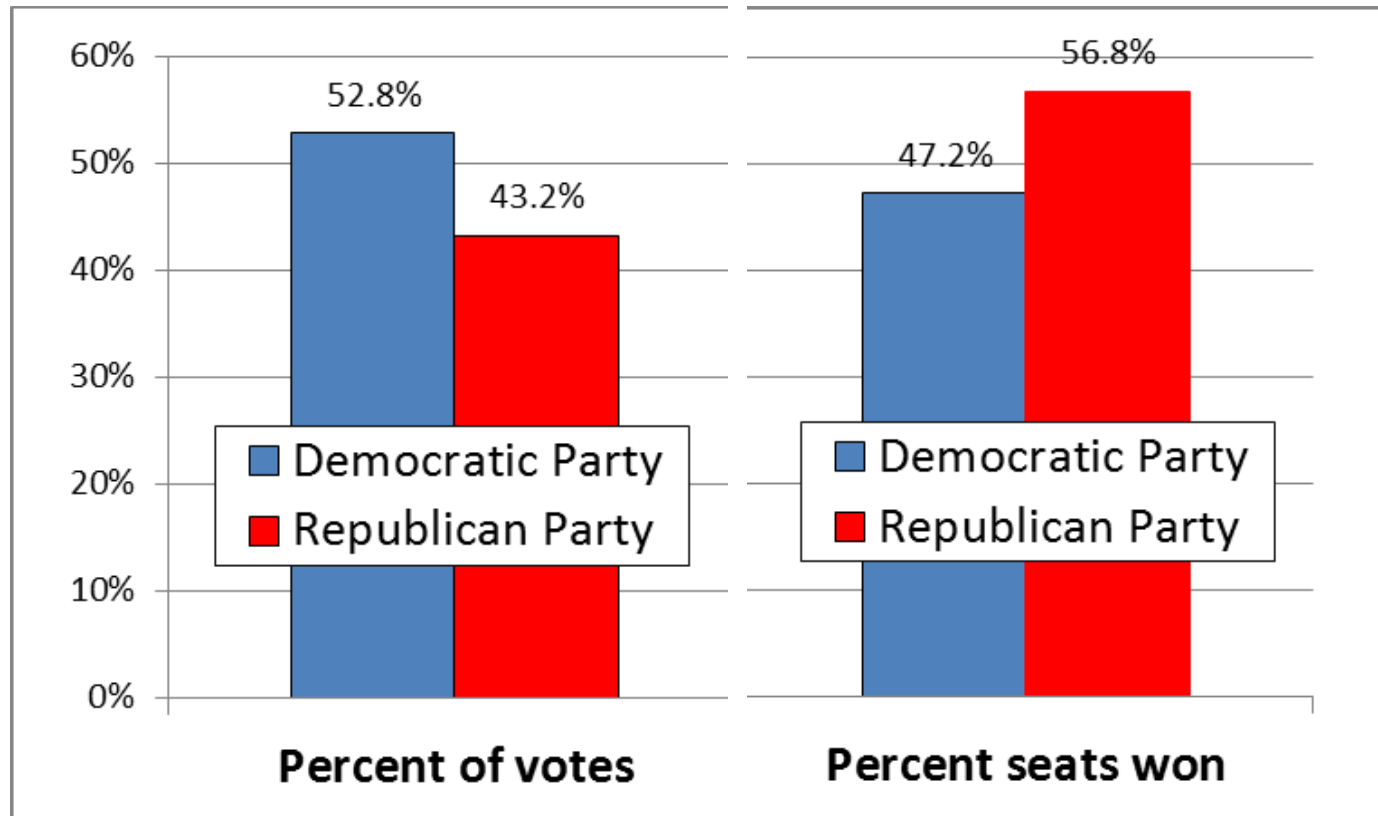| Year	Wasted Votes
2002	278,940
2004	786,779
2006	541,272
2008	130,307
2010	593,275

National Picture

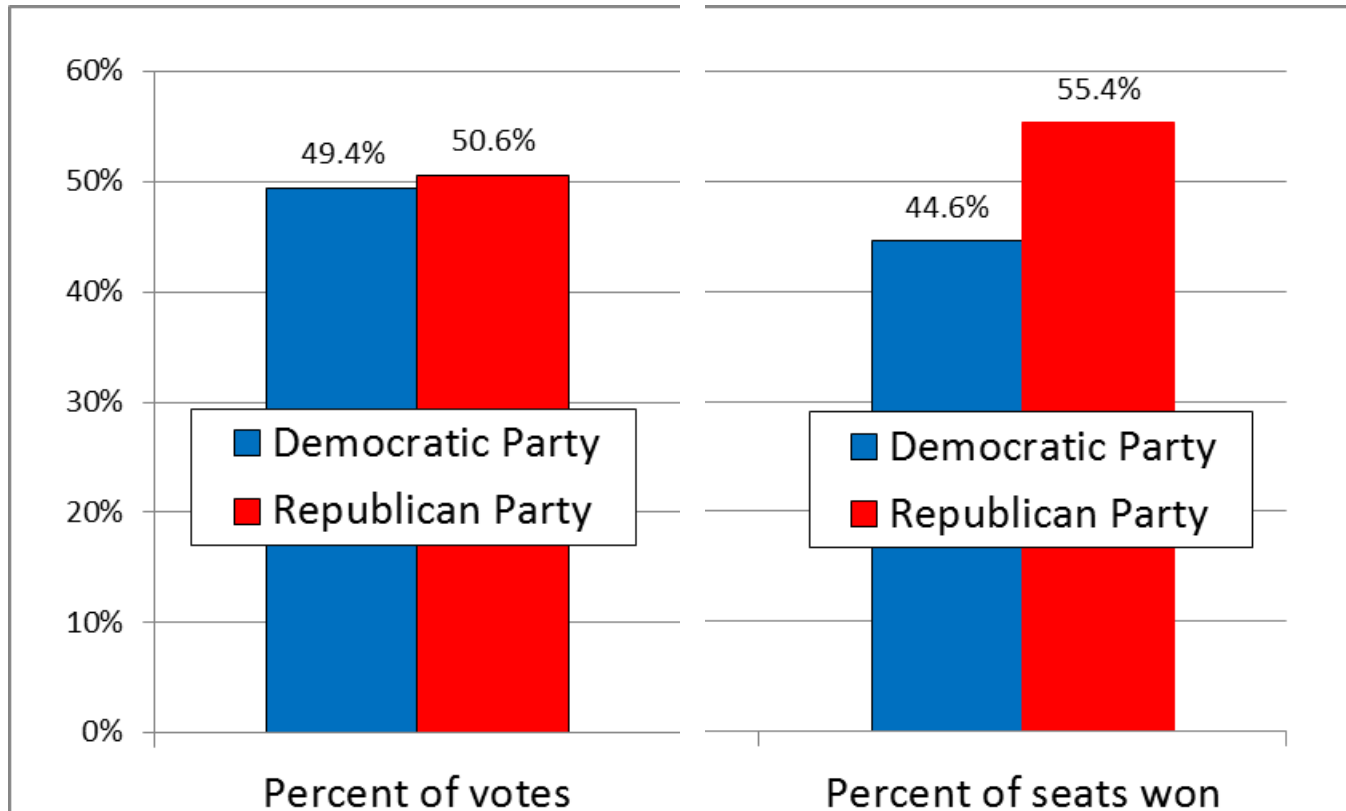# National Congressional Fairness, 2012

**20 seats won by Republicans more
than their share of votes would indicate.**

National Congressional Fairness, 2014

17 seats won by Republicans more than their share of votes would indicate.

National Congressional Fairness, 2016

**21 seats won by Republicans more
than their share of votes would indicate.**

END