

## TUESDAY HW: REDISTRICKT VIRGINIA CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS

MGGG MAPPING TRAINING, SUMMER 2020

Let's start with Brian Cannon's notes on Virginia redistricting. Here are some things to keep in mind.

**Water.** Eastern Shore / Chesapeake Bay: it's devilishly hard to figure out how to cross the water when districting. The Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel connects the southern tip of Eastern Shore to the Northern part of City of Norfolk. Norfolk is one of the larger cities in VA– heavy military presence, mixed income, mixed race. The southern tip of the Eastern Shore– fishermen and chicken farmers: lower income, mostly White.

Instead, you could connect the Eastern Shore to Northern Neck (circa Kilmarnock) and Middle Peninsula (circa Mathews County) – corn and soybean farmers, low/middle income, just as White.

**Military.** There are a number of major bases, including some near areas that are relatively poor and Black. The bases count as high population but have a very low voting turnout, so they're a big apportionment boost. In Virginia Beach, there's Norfolk Naval Station. Also of note: Fort Lee, 15-20 mins east of Petersburg.

This raises issues reminiscent of prison gerrymandering – which will be corrected in the new reform. (see also [link](#))

**Informal divisions.** There's an informal division in Loudoun County between two culturally distinct groups. You'd have an interesting decision to make about whether to follow it with a district line or cut through it.

Loudoun County: one of the fastest-growing DC suburb counties (west of DC, via I-66)

- On one side, there's Ashburn (AKA "Cashburn") – consultants and their families; Dulles, etc
- West of rte 659 (Belmont Ridge Road), it's horse country, outlet stores, Leesburg; not commuting into DC

**City splitting.** There's a strong sentiment among legislative Dems that you need non-compact districts and lots of city splitting to get a good map for Dems

"independent cities" – cities act as county equivalents, even when inside of counties

Virginia is unusual because Democrats are spread out– for instance, in the so-called "Fertile Crescent" from NOVA to Richmond to Virginia Beach (see I-95 and I-64, intersecting at Richmond).

**Race and new coalitions.** It would be hard to find a third Black opportunity district in the Congressional map, but up near DC there is a growing Hispanic population and a growing South Asian population that might create some potential for an influence district.

**YOUR TASK:** Draw three 11-district Congressional maps for Virginia! Try to balance all the criteria that you can, and discuss it.

When you are done, please upload your work [here!](#)