

Re-elections

MUST KNOW:

You must be familiar with the term: **gerrymandering**, which may be defined as “redrawing (Congressional) district lines to the advantage of the political party in power.

- When a state gains or losses Congressional seats (after a census is taken) new district lines are drawn. In almost every state, the party which controls the state legislature creates a plan which is often to own benefit.
- Historically, gerrymandering first occurred in 1788, when Patrick Henry tried to make sure that James Madison was not elected in Virginia’s 5th District.
- Gerrymandering was named after Massachusetts Governor Elbridge Gerry who had a heavy hand in redrawing district lines in 1810.
- Demographically, the industrial states of the Midwest and the northeast have steadily lost seats in congress in the last 30 years....New York, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Ohio— have been particularly hard hit when steel, coal, auto industries were “outsourced.” By the same token, California, Florida, Texas, have consistently gained seats after each of the last 3 censuses were taken.
- A prime example of gerrymandering can be found in Pennsylvania, where democratic Reps. Mascara and Murtha were forced to compete for one seat.
- In Texas, democrats left the state and hid out in an Oklahoma hotel in an unsuccessful. Attempt to avoid a republican backed redistricting plan

Incumbents have tremendous advantages in raising money. The average incumbent in the House will spend over 300,000 dollars in a re-election campaign. Opponents will spend about 50,000 dollars, on average. In the Senate, the average incumbent spends about 3 million dollars. As you might expect, a majority of PAC money goes to incumbents. In California, for example, Senator Boxer spent almost 9 million in her last campaign and Senator Feinstein spent 8 million.

Campaign spending limits

	To a candidate	national party	to political committee	in 2 years
Individual may give	2,300	28,500	5,000	108,200
PAC may give	5,000	15,000	5,000	no limit
Non PAC committees	2,300	28,500	5,000	108,200