

Notes on the Recalculation of Presidential Results by Congressional Districts for President 2004 and 2000 for the 110th Congress, September 19, 2006

In two states, Georgia and Texas, the boundaries for the districts of the 110th Congress, elected in 2006, were different than those used for the 109th Congress, elected in 2004. Thus, the Presidential Results by Congressional District were recalculated for both of these districts. These are the only changes made to the full dataset aside from reflecting changes in membership since the 2004 elections¹.

In both states that have new lines, the legislatures enacted new plans and in both states, the Department of Justice did not interpose any objection. Litigation commenced about the Texas plans and continued all the way through the Supreme Court (*LULAC v. Perry*, Jun. 2006).

The Supreme Court upheld the plan despite the basis of what most attacks were focused on: intra-decade districting and partisan gerrymandering. Nevertheless, the Court did overturn the lower court by invalidating a portion of the plan, deciding that one district, number 23, which had elected Henry Bonilla-R in 2004, violated section 2 of the federal Voting Rights Act².

The three-judge federal panel, which had seen dozens of iterations of the Texas congressional plans over the years following the 2000 census, promulgated a plan that changed the boundaries for 5 of the state's 32 districts; all five of which districts were located in the southern and western portions of the state. The boundaries for these five districts were changed to varying degrees by the court's plan. Yet, the residences of the incumbents meant they could still run in their district, no pairings were involved.

However, in Georgia, the district numbers did not remain the same: they were flipped between Marshall (from 3 to 8) and Westmoreland (from 8 to 3) and Norwood (from 9 to 10) and Deal (from 10 to 9). What possible purpose there was for this is unclear. It certainly will add a new discomfiting and tedious wrinkle to any future analysis³.

The data for Texas came directly from the Texas Legislative Council, whose Redistricting Application software (REDAPL) is used as the primary source for all TX districting information. The data for Georgia were compiled independently by two researchers from Georgia⁴, and their estimates for 2000 and 2004 were reviewed by Polidata for accuracy and inclusion. Both datasets for Georgia fell just short of being the preferred 'near-perfect' datasets but considering the degree to which resources are available at the current time, they are more than adequate for the purposes at issue. Polidata will endeavor to give a final review following the 2006 elections. Any changes should be very slight from a percentage basis.

There were few big changes in the Bush numbers in either Georgia or Texas on the basis of the Bush 2004 numbers. Basically, in Georgia, Linder-R and Norwood-R gave some strength to Gingrey-R and the Marshall-D district. In Texas, Bonilla-R lost some ground as more Bush voters ended up in the Smith-R and Doggett-D districts. However, there was one change (just barely) in the status of the districts as compiled for the Presidential Results by Congressional Districts Project. In GA-12 the district flipped from a Kerry/Democrat with 46% for Bush to a Bush/Democrat with 50.4% for Bush. This makes 42 Bush Democrats and 18 Kerry Republicans before the 2006 elections.

¹ Open seats are not indicated as such.

² This was as the act was renewed in 1982, not the new 2006 version.

³ A similar situation occurred in Georgia during the 1990s.

⁴ Thanks to Bryan Tyson and Dan O'Connor for their valuable assistance.