



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®  
OF FLORIDA

# FLORIDA REDISTRICTING 2011-2012

**Are Legislators Following  
the Law of the Land  
or Looking for Loopholes?**

# What is redistricting?

- Every 10 years, after the Census, the Florida Legislature redraws the boundaries of our congressional, state House and state Senate districts.
- Redistricting was originally intended to be sure that districts are equal in population — to make sure that every vote counts equally. But through a process known as “gerrymandering,” our democracy has been threatened.
- Florida will engage in redistricting in early 2012.



**The people of Florida have spoken:  
We want fairly drawn legislative and  
congressional districts now!**

**Fair Districts Amendments 5 & 6 were  
approved by 63% of Florida voters in  
2010.**

# Why do we need fairly drawn legislative and congressional districts?

- To encourage voter turnout: A perfect storm of redistricting confusion and voter suppression laws could discourage potential voters in Florida and nationally.
- Florida General Election Voter Turnout
  - 2010: 49%; 2008: 75%; 2006: 47%
- Out of 34 democratic countries, U.S. ranked fourth from bottom.
  - Guatemala: 28%; Columbia: 32%; Switzerland: 38%; U.S.: 45%; Venezuela: 50%

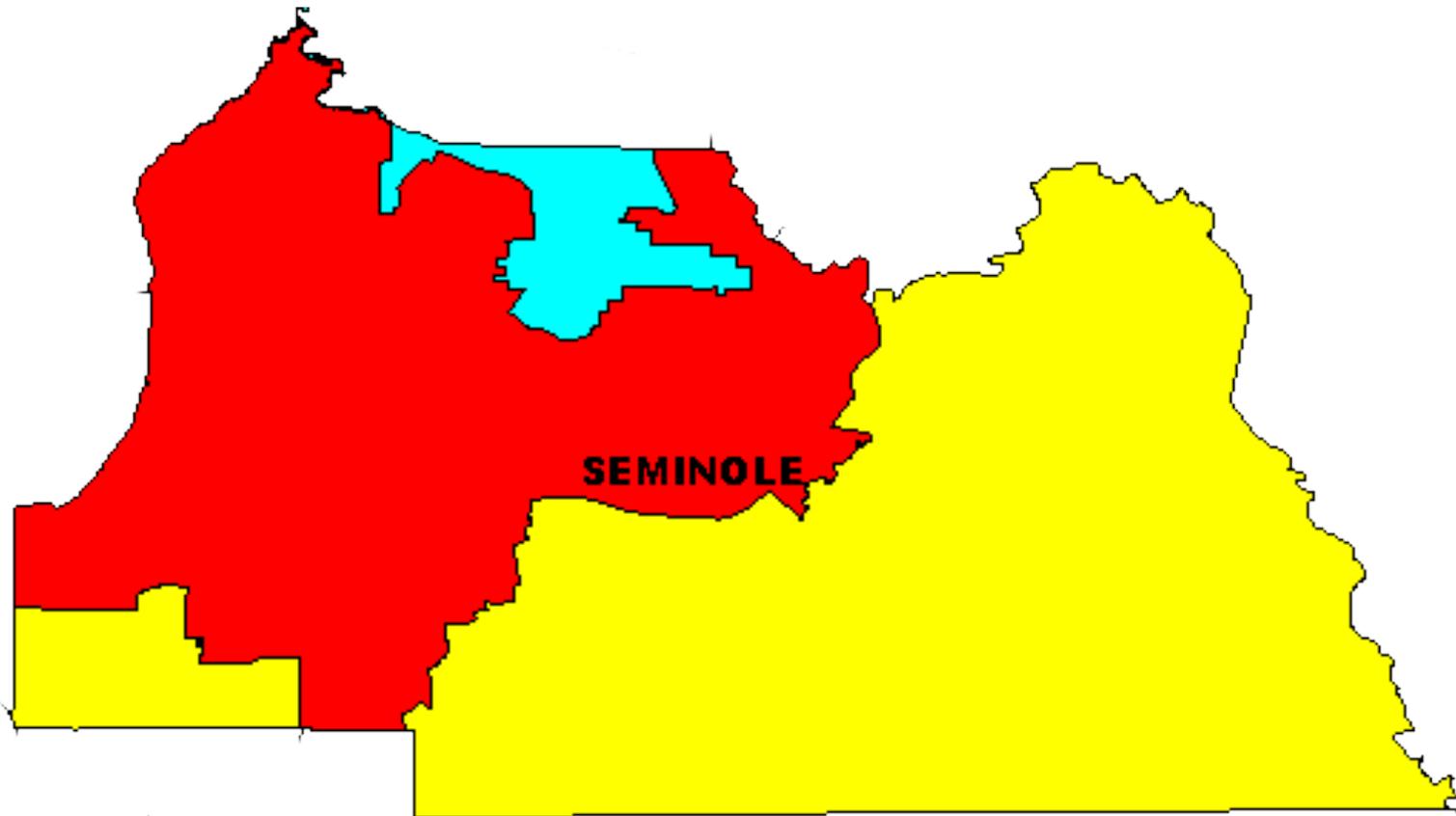
# Why do we need fairly drawn legislative and congressional districts?

- Florida is a politically balanced state, yet representation has not reflected that balance.
- In a process known as “gerrymandering,” majority-party politicians (from both parties) have packed minority party voters into very few districts to reduce their influence in government.
- Then they have created twice the number of “sure win” districts for themselves.
  - **Politicians have been choosing their voters instead of voters choosing their representatives.**

# Why do we need fairly drawn legislative and congressional districts?

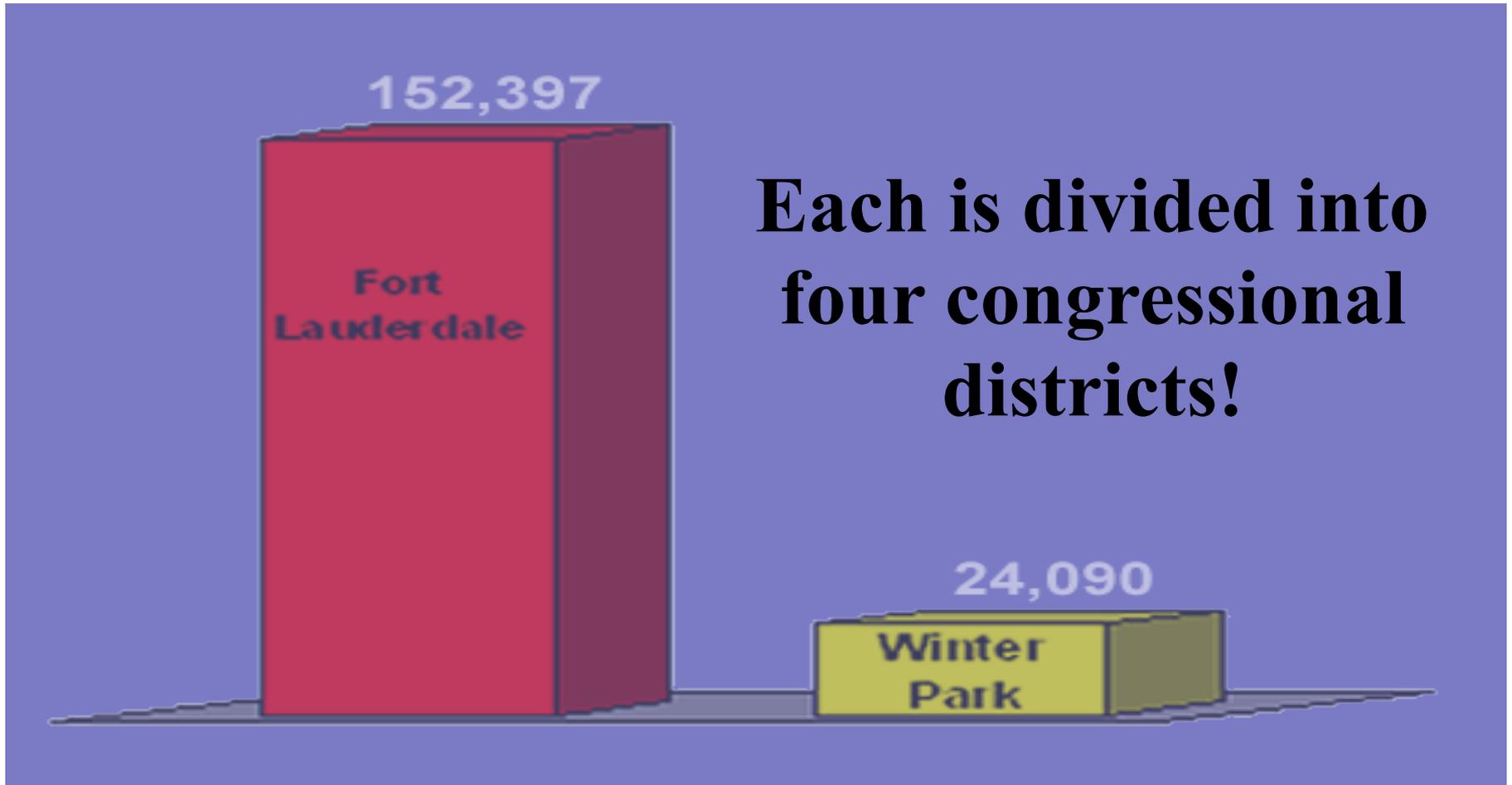
- Florida communities have been needlessly divided.
- Districts connect areas that have little in common.
- Districts are bizarrely shaped.
- In 2012, the state of Florida will gain two new congressional districts following the results of the 2010 Census.
  - That makes this process even more important!

# Florida's counties are needlessly divided

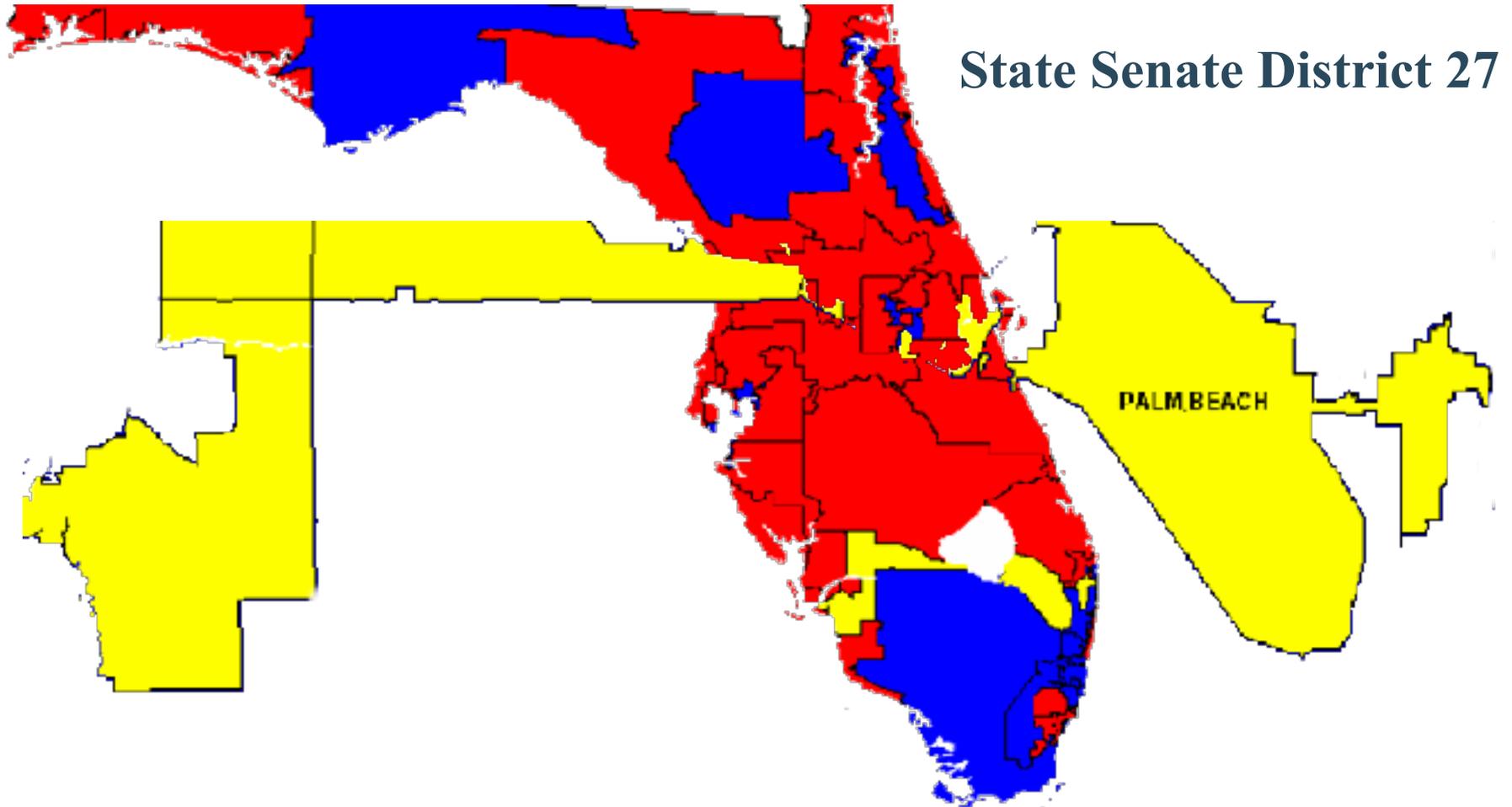


- Seminole County has 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of Hillsborough County's population, but both have three congressional districts.

# Florida's cities are needlessly divided



# Districts connect areas that have little in common



# Districts are bizarrely shaped



**Congressional District 11**

# What do the new standards require?

- Amendments 5 & 6 require that:
  - Districts shall not be drawn to favor or disfavor political parties or incumbents.
  - Equal opportunity for minority voters to participate in the political process and elect representatives of their choice will be preserved.
  - Compactness, contiguity, and the use of existing city, county and geographical boundaries are required.
  - In short, the new standards stop politicians and political parties from drawing districts to suit themselves and force them to draw districts that make sense for voters.

# What do the new standards require?

## Florida Constitution ARTICLE III LEGISLATURE

### SECTION 20. Standards for establishing congressional district boundaries.—In establishing congressional district boundaries:

- (a) No apportionment plan or individual district shall be drawn with the intent to favor or disfavor a political party or an incumbent; and districts shall not be drawn with the intent or result of denying or abridging the equal opportunity of racial or language minorities to participate in the political process or to diminish their ability to elect representatives of their choice; and districts shall consist of contiguous territory.
- (b) Unless compliance with the standards in this subsection conflicts with the standards in subsection <sup>1</sup>(a) or with federal law, districts shall be as nearly equal in population as is practicable; districts shall be compact; and districts shall, where feasible, utilize existing political and geographical boundaries.
- (c) The order in which the standards within subsections <sup>1</sup>(a) and (b) of this section are set forth shall not be read to establish any priority of one standard over the other within that subsection.

History.—Proposed by Initiative Petition filed with the Secretary of State September 28, 2007; adopted 2010.<sup>1</sup>Note.—The subsections of section 20, as it appeared in Amendment No. 6, proposed by Initiative Petition filed with the Secretary of State September 28, 2007, and adopted in 2010, were designated (1)-(3); the editors redesignated them as (a)-(c) to conform to the format of the State Constitution.

# What do the new standards require?

## Florida Constitution ARTICLE III LEGISLATURE

**SECTION 21. Standards for establishing legislative district boundaries.**—In establishing legislative district boundaries:

(a) No apportionment plan or district shall be drawn with the intent to favor or disfavor a political party or an incumbent; and districts shall not be drawn with the intent or result of denying or abridging the equal opportunity of racial or language minorities to participate in the political process or to diminish their ability to elect representatives of their choice; and districts shall consist of contiguous territory.

(b) Unless compliance with the standards in this subsection conflicts with the standards in subsection <sup>1</sup>(a) or with federal law, districts shall be as nearly equal in population as is practicable; districts shall be compact; and districts shall, where feasible, utilize existing political and geographical boundaries.

(c) The order in which the standards within subsections <sup>1</sup>(a) and (b) of this section are set forth shall not be read to establish any priority of one standard over the other within that subsection.

History.—Proposed by Initiative Petition filed with the Secretary of State September 28, 2007; adopted 2010.<sup>1</sup>Note.—The subsections of section 21, as it appeared in Amendment No. 5, proposed by Initiative Petition filed with the Secretary of State September 28, 2007, and adopted in 2010, were designated (1)-(3); the editors redesignated them as (a)-(c) to conform to the format of the State Constitution

# Some politicians don't want to follow the new rules

- Governor Scott and Secretary of State Browning secretly withdrew the request for pre-clearance of Amendments 5 & 6. LWVF and others filed suit to get them to follow the law. In response, the Legislature re-filed. The standards easily cleared June 1, 2011, but much later than they should have!
- Members of Congress Corrine Brown (D-3) and Mario Diaz-Balart (R-21) filed suit challenging the constitutionality of Amendment 6.
- Speaker Cannon and the Florida House of Representatives are using taxpayer money to join the suit on the side of Brown and Diaz-Balart.
- \$30 million has been put into the current budget for litigation of redistricting issues.

## Another win for 5 & 6!

- On September 9, 2011, a federal judge in Miami quickly and concisely ruled from the bench in the voters' favor in the case challenging the constitutionality of Amendment 6.
- However, on September 29, 2011, the Florida House joined Brown and Diaz-Balart in an appeal of the ruling and continues to spend taxpayer money to fight the will of the voters.
- **The fight now: timeline and transparency, NOT delay and diversion!**

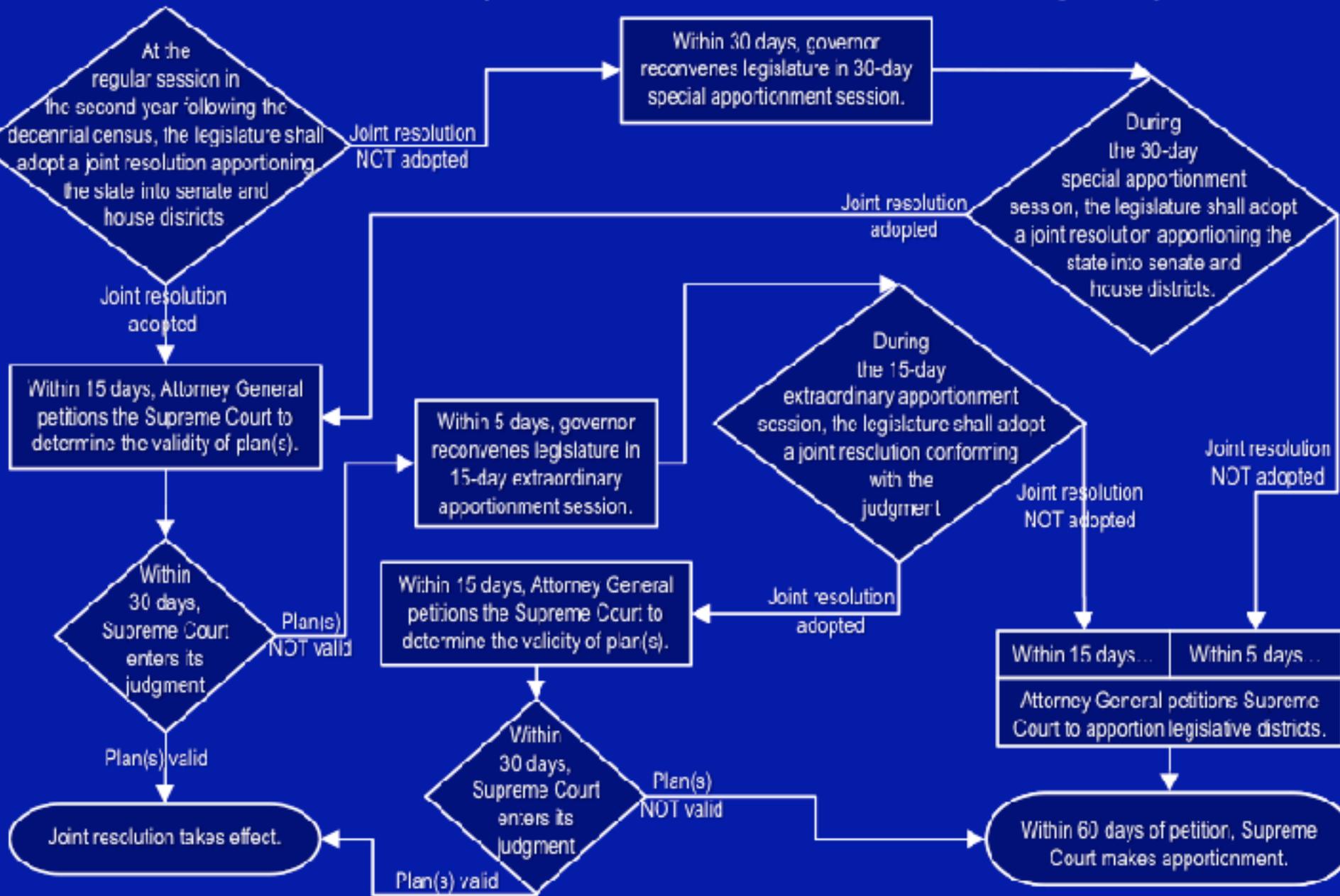
# Redistricting 101: Procedure

- **Congressional redistricting plans could be finished now!**
  - Passed by majority vote of the Legislature
  - Governor signs or vetoes
  - No automatic judicial review
  - Review in any trial court (state or federal)
- **State legislative redistricting plans could be finished January 1, 2012!**
  - Passed by joint resolution of the Legislature (majority vote in 2012 session)
  - No formal gubernatorial involvement
  - Automatic review by the Florida Supreme Court
  - Other review in state or federal courts

# Redistricting 101: Procedure

Just so you can see  
how complicated this all is,  
here is a flow chart and timeline  
prepared by the Florida Senate!

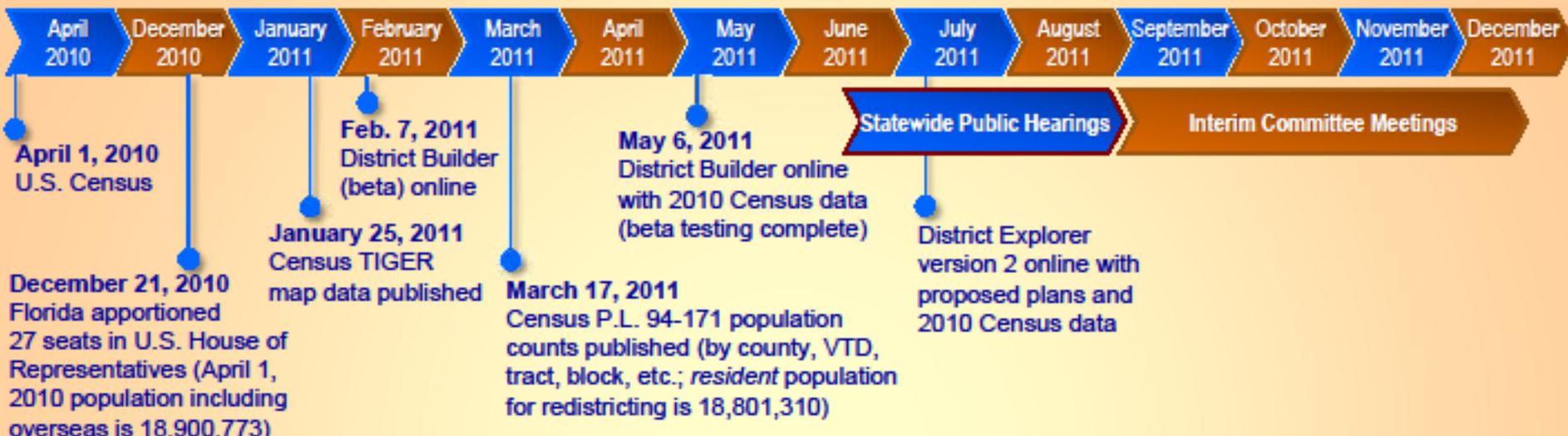
# Flow chart *(see, Fla. Const. art. III, § 16)...*



# Redistricting 101: Timeline

- 2011 session: Committees hold introductory meetings.
- July–September 2011: Legislature holds public hearings (29) around the state. (No legislatively drawn maps were presented, preventing meaningful, substantive public input.)
- September 19–December 2011: Legislative redistricting committees hold interim meetings.
- January 10–March 9, 2012: Legislature draws and passes redistricting plans.
- March 10–?: Courts review the plans.
- U.S. Department of Justice has 60 days after court approval to review plans for compliance with Voting Rights Act.
- June 4–8, 2012: Last day to qualify to run for new districts.
  - Will the maps be final?

# Reapportionment Timeline 2011



# Reapportionment Timeline 2012



# Timeline & Transparency

- The League is advocating for an expedited redistricting timeline and complete transparency.
  - Avoid delay and diversions!
- The timeline has already been whittled down by the pre-clearance refiling. The map drawing CAN AND MUST be accelerated by the Legislature. Maps cannot come out after candidate qualifying deadlines in June.
- The result of late maps is voter confusion and chaos — the opposite of voter education!

# Additional Resources

- **League of Women Voters of Florida:**  
[TheFloridaVoter.org](http://TheFloridaVoter.org)
- **Florida House of Representatives:**  
[www.floridaredistricting.org](http://www.floridaredistricting.org)
- **Florida Senate:** [www.flsenate.gov/session/redistricting](http://www.flsenate.gov/session/redistricting)
- **Fair Districts Now:** [fairdistrictsnow.org](http://fairdistrictsnow.org)
- **Collins Center:** [http://www.collinscenter.org/page/1gFLAmAmend5and6\\_MS](http://www.collinscenter.org/page/1gFLAmAmend5and6_MS)
- **Miami Herald:** <http://miamiherald.typepad.com/nakedpolitics/redistricting/>