

# Virginia voters approve Democratic Party-backed redistricting amendment to shift congressional seats

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Virginia voters approved a constitutional amendment Tuesday in a special election that will redraw the state's congressional map, potentially shifting the state's delegation from 6-5 in favor of the Democratic Party to 10-1 Democratic, ahead of November's midterm elections. The passage of the measure—which has survived months of legal warfare, intense lobbying and bipartisan recrimination—marks a significant escalation in the two parties' mutual gerrymandering arms race.

As of this writing, the margin of victory for the “yes” vote is 51.4 percent to 48.6 percent for “no,” with about 3 million votes counted. Numerous publications, including the *New York Times* and NBC, have called the vote in favor of redistricting, while the Associated Press has yet to pronounce the projected results.

The victory is well within the 3 percent margin which can trigger a recount. Additionally, the amendment already faces numerous court challenges which the state supreme court has yet to hear.

The amendment temporarily transfers congressional redistricting authority from Virginia's bipartisan redistricting commission to the Democratic-controlled General Assembly, allowing a new congressional map signed by Governor Abigail Spanberger to govern elections through 2030, after which authority reverts to the commission.

Currently, Democrats hold 6 of Virginia's 11 congressional seats. Under the new map, 10 districts are projected to lean Democratic, with the shift anchored largely in the densely populated Washington D.C. suburbs of Northern Virginia, as well as the Richmond and Hampton Roads areas in the Southeast.

The referendum was conceived as a response to

Republican-led efforts in the national gerrymandering war. Trump publicly called on red states to redraw congressional maps mid-decade to lock in Republican advantages and retain control of Congress—where Republicans currently hold razor-thin majorities of 219–212 in the House and 53–47 in the Senate. Republican officials in Texas, Ohio, Tennessee and elsewhere moved to do exactly that. California Democrats responded first, producing five new Democratic House seats through aggressive redistricting approved in a statewide vote last November. Virginia now follows suit.

Republican opposition has been fierce—and not without hypocrisy. There were repeated legal challenges: A circuit court judge blocked the amendment in January, the Virginia Supreme Court reversed that ruling and allowed the election to proceed in March, pledging to take up further Republican lawsuits after the vote. On the eve of the election, Republicans filed yet another legal challenge targeting the state's voter ID rules.

The “no” campaign also ran into controversy in March, when a Republican-aligned dark money group sent mailers to black Virginia voters featuring Klan imagery, falsely invoking the history of black disenfranchisement to argue that the redistricting referendum was itself a form of voter suppression. The claim was doubly cynical given that it was the Virginia Republican Party that pursued an illegal redistricting scheme in 2011 packing black voters into majority-minority districts—a map the Supreme Court later struck down as an unconstitutional racial gerrymander.

The amendment's proponents, including Governor Abigail Spanberger and former President Barack

Obama, have framed the vote as a defense of democracy against Republican power grabs. House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries called redistricting the key to “restoring democracy” and retaking the House. Such language rings hollow from a party whose senators and congressmen have funded Trump’s war machine and bankrolled the ICE apparatus now terrorizing communities across the country.

Democrats and Republicans alike have erected virtually insurmountable legal barriers against third parties and independent left-wing candidates, ensuring that the two major capitalist parties enjoy an effective political monopoly.

Republicans have sought to exploit the referendum by painting Spanberger as a “left-wing radical.” The charge is absurd. Spanberger is a former CIA officer, one of more than a dozen representatives from a military-intelligence background (identified as the CIA Democrats by the *World Socialist Web Site*) first elected to Congress in 2018. She is a right-wing politician, who campaigned on a deliberately thin platform of “affordability” and bipartisan governance, in Congress and now as governor.

Republicans have made much of Spanberger’s decision in February to terminate state-level 287(g) agreements with Immigration and Customs Enforcement. The gesture left Virginia’s local law enforcement agencies free to maintain their own ICE partnerships, with Spanberger resisting legislation that would have closed that loophole.

Her record on the economy has exposed even her modest affordability pretenses. Spanberger moved to protect a projected \$2 billion annual sales tax exemption for data centers—gutting legislation passed by state Democrats to end the giveaway—arguing that doing so would violate the state’s “promises” to corporate investors. Virginia hosts the largest data center market in the world, accounting for 35 percent of all known hyperscale data centers worldwide.

The industry’s explosive growth has driven residential electricity bills up by \$11–16 per month as of January 1, 2026, caused by an 833 percent surge in wholesale electricity capacity prices driven by data center power demand in Northern Virginia.

Spanberger has also gutted a collective bargaining bill passed by the General Assembly for state employees, returning it with amendments that delay its

effective date until 2030—the year she leaves office—rendering it functionally inoperative for her entire term. Her signature affordability initiative is a \$3.5 million eviction prevention program amounting to roughly \$25 per recipient, in a state with the highest eviction rate in the country.

Five months into her term, Spanberger’s approval rating stands at 47 percent—with 46 percent disapproving—the lowest early-term rating of any Virginia governor since at least 1993, 13 percentage points below the historical average. This is a sharp decline from last November’s election, when the Democrats won 57 percent of the vote.



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