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68 ALTERNATIVES TO GERRYMANDERING
Judging begins in Virginia College Redistricting Competition
68 alternative maps viewable online for General Assembly and Congressional districts

Student teams at 13 Virginia colleges have fashioned fair alternatives to gerrymandered political districts as state lawmakers race to remake Virginia's electoral map.

Using fresh population data from the 2010 Census, the student teams have submitted 68 maps that pose new boundaries for Virginia's 11 congressional districts, 100 state House districts and 40 state Senate districts.

Nationally recognized experts Thomas Mann of the Brookings Institution and Norman Ornstein of the American Enterprise Institute begin judging today. The winners will be announced on March 22.

The maps in the competition are viewable at <https://districtbuilder.varedistrictingcompetition.org>.

"This is the first step in opening up redistricting to citizens, adding much-needed transparency to a politicized and opaque process," said Ornstein.

In addition to cash prizes, the best maps will be considered by the Independent Bipartisan Advisory Commission on Redistricting created by Gov. Bob McDonnell.

With input from the college competition and others, the Advisory Commission will make its recommendations on April 1, to allow for full consideration by the General Assembly. Legislative committees are also working on new district boundaries, and the Assembly will convene a special session to vote on new maps in early April.

The Constitution requires all 50 states to reapportion legislative districts in accordance with the population shifts recorded by the Census. With state elections looming this fall, Virginia is the first to act.

In what organizers envision as a model that other states could use to open the redistricting process to broader citizen involvement, the Virginia College and University Legislative Redistricting Competition (www.varedistrictingcompetition.org) began Feb. 10, when 2010 Census data was released to Virginia.

The competition was organized by Dr. Quentin Kidd of Christopher Newport University (qkidd@cnu.edu) and Dr. Michael McDonald of George Mason University (mmcdon@gmu.edu).

Thomas Mann is the W. Averell Harriman Chair and senior fellow in Governance Studies at the Brookings Institution. Between 1987 and 1999, he was director of Governmental Studies at Brookings. Before that, Mann was executive director of the American Political Science Association.

Norman Ornstein is a long-time observer of Congress and politics. He writes a weekly column for *Roll Call* and is an election analyst for CBS News. He serves as co-director of the AEI-Brookings Election Reform Project and participates in AEI's Election Watch series.

Here is a list of the college teams and faculty sponsors, with e-mail contacts:

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