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## QuickPoint! – Redistricting: Partisan Power Grab

By Karla Kay Edwards

Partisan politics makes great news headlines but usually doesn't lead to sound policy decisions. The redrawing of Oregon's legislative districts, known as redistricting, is currently a very partisan process carried out by Oregon's legislators after each U.S. Census. The redistricting process supersedes all elections and can define Oregon's future policy path toward more government and taxes or toward free enterprise and liberty.

The redistricting process taking place next year is guaranteed to affect all policy decisions in Oregon for the next decade. The party in power will use redistricting to further consolidate its dominance, threatening the well-being of average citizens.

Luckily, there is a modest reform being put forward. If enough signatures are gathered, [Petition 50](#) would place a measure on the ballot in November that would amend the Oregon Constitution to create a redistricting commission comprised of one non-partisan Senior Circuit Judge from each existing Congressional district. It would remove the power of redistricting from the legislature and Secretary of State.

While there is no guarantee that a non-partisan redistricting commission would do a better job, commission members would have fewer incentives to engage in blatant gerrymandering than the Secretary of State has.

Petition 50 can be read and signed at [www.petition50.com](http://www.petition50.com).

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*Kathryn Hickok is Publications Director at Cascade Policy Institute and Director of the privately funded Children's Scholarship Fund-Portland, which provides partial tuition scholarships to Oregon elementary students from lower-income families.*

