

Handicapping the Voting Rights Act

Jurisdictions that needed permission from the Justice Department to amend voting laws prior to last week's Supreme Court ruling are predominantly represented by Republicans. And that may matter moving forward.

Last week, the Supreme Court ruled unconstitutional Section 4 of the Voting Rights Act, which lays out the formula used to determine which jurisdictions have to get preclearance for voting law changes. Nine states and a handful of counties once fell under the act.

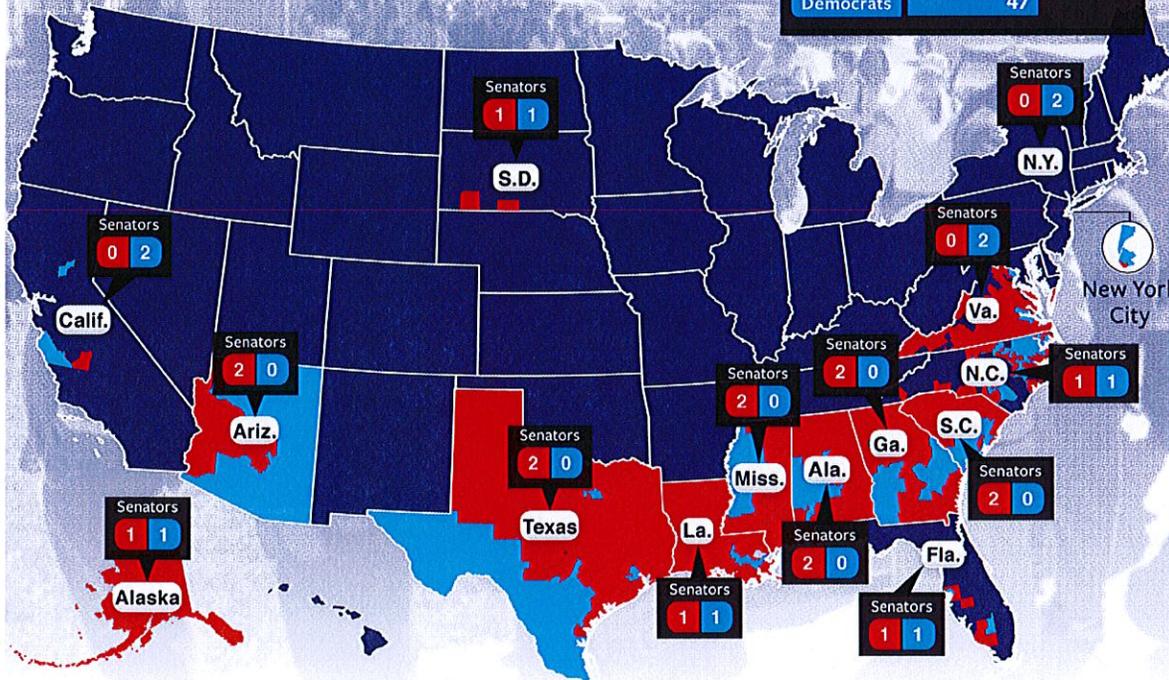
The Court suggested that Congress can rewrite the formula. It wouldn't be unprecedented—in 2006, the VRA passed 98-0 in the Senate and 390-33 in the House—but it would take major bipartisanship in a starkly divided Congress. In the meantime, five of these states—Alabama, Texas, Mississippi, Virginia, and South Carolina—are already pursuing voter ID laws.

—Elahe Izadi



Jurisdictions with election laws formerly subject to Justice Department approval, by party representation in the House

Representatives	
Republicans	82 districts
Democrats	47



Sources: Clerk of the House; Justice Department

(Peter Bell and Joey Carolino)

CORRECTION: An earlier version of this graphic incorrectly stated party affiliation for some senators in Alabama, Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina. The affiliations depicted are now accurate.