

# UTAH DEMOCRATS

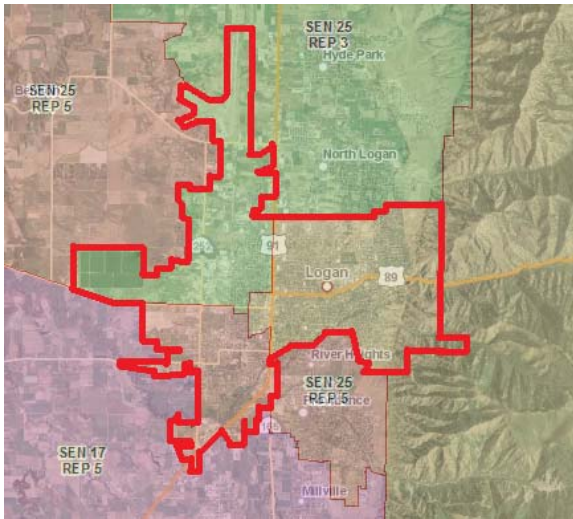
## UTAH STATE DEMOCRATIC PARTY

### 2011 REDISTRICTING REPORT

Redistricting is in full swing, and all signs are pointing to the fact that Republicans will, once again, draw boundaries that favor the Republican Party and those of the voter. Though no official map has been decided upon, we can expect that House and Senate Republicans will be up to their same old tricks. Indeed, it seems entirely suspect that Carl Wimmer would announce and file to run for a Congressional seat without knowing, in some way, where his boundaries would be drawn.

As the redistricting debate continues on – take a look at some of the districts Republicans decided upon ten years ago and try to find similarities to the maps being created today.

#### Division



State House Districts 3, 4, and 5 are a perfect example of gerrymander politics at play by the Utah Republican Party. They literally divide Logan into three different districts, dividing Logan's electoral power in the process.

This mode of gerrymandering is often justified by legislators claiming that by dividing a location up, it increases its effectiveness and better balances the needs of a diverse set of citizens. This logic is why Salt Lake City and St. George have the same congressman, and it explains why Logan is divided.

What legislators fail to say is that this division is unfair to just about everyone.

In 2001, Logan had the right to 1.4 house seats, meaning that Logan would have one representative to itself, and sharing another representative with the surrounding area. This means that Logan would have one legislator focusing just on the interests of citizens in Logan, ensuring that they are properly represented.

Of course, you can't have .4 of a house seat – you need a full one. So, a second house district would need to be created in the surrounding area – that district would be made up of 40% Logan residents and 60% non-Logan residents, putting Logan residents in the minority in that district.

The Republican legislature instead divided Logan into three, meaning that Logan only represents 33.3% of a total district while 66.6% come from other areas. Now, if you were running for office, who would you be more likely to listen to?

Utah Republicans purport that power can be multiplied through division, but any electrician knows that when you cut power, you can't run the machine.

Other examples: House Districts 55 and 69 with Moab, House Districts 72 and 73 with Cedar City, Senate Districts 24 and 17 with Tooele, and Federal House Districts 1, 2, and 3 with Salt Lake City.

### The Lop Over and the Cut In



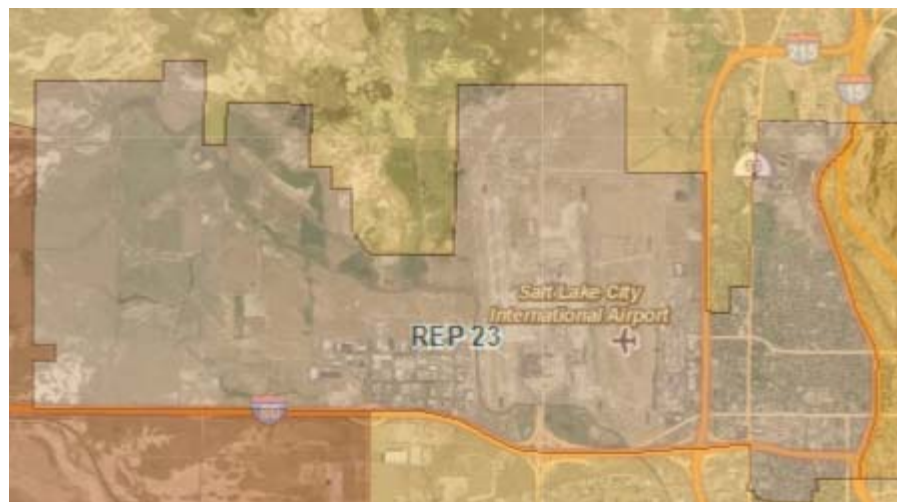
State House District 20 has 25 precincts in it, 20 of them are in Davis County and five are in Salt Lake County. This is a classic example of the gerrymandering technique I call the “lop over.”

Doesn't it seem odd that one section of the largest city in Utah is suddenly put into the same district in another county?

Did you know there are three zip codes in HD 20: 84010 (Bountiful), 84054 (North Salt Lake), and 84116 (Northern Salt Lake City) – The average house price for a house in Bountiful in December 2008 - \$325,000; in North Salt Lake it was \$299,000 at the same time; in December 2008 the average house price in Salt Lake City for the section HD 20 represents was \$170,000.

Of course, house prices don't mean everything, but it does show just how different these three areas really are.

But the lop over is really just a symptom of the “cut in.”

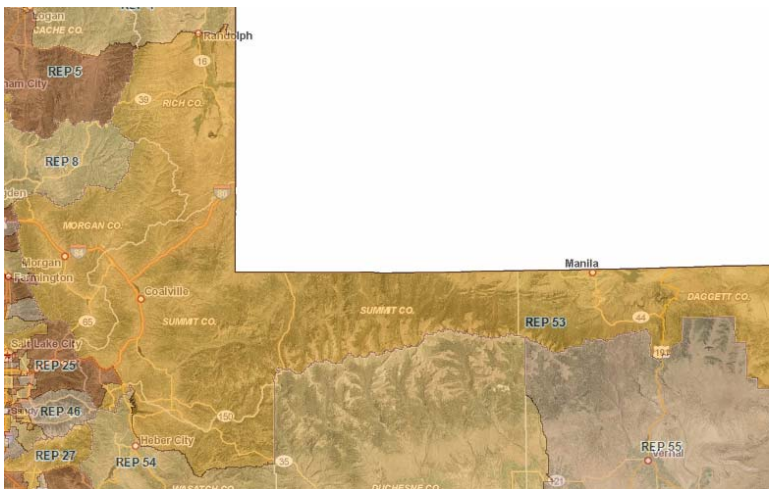


House District 20 cuts into House District 23. And the five precincts that were out of place in HD 20 do match the similar economic, political, and social fabric of HD 23. So why divide the area up? **The politics of gerrymandering – a callous grab for power that throws aside the will of the voter for numerical gains at the cost of our democratic process’s integrity.**

HD 23 has traditionally been a Democratic area, and the populated precincts that were part of HD 20’s lop over have also traditionally voted Democratic as well. The rest of HD 20 (the parts in Bountiful and North Salt Lake) has traditionally voted Republican by wide margins. By lopping over the county line, HD 20 absorbs a few Democratic voters, but not so many that it would harm the ability for Republicans to win in Davis County. Meanwhile legislators weakened Democrats in HD 23, making the possibility of a Republican win in the area somewhat more possible.

Other Examples: House District 2 in Box Elder and Cache Counties, House District 4 and 53 with Randolph, House District 73 cutting in and out (and then back in) to Sevier County, and Senate District 12 between Salt Lake and Tooele Counties, .

### **The Long and Winding Road**



We all know that Utah is a large state, comprised of an urban core and vast rural lands. The natural result of this is that some legislative districts must be large. The key to fair districts is not that it is big or small; rather it is if the district is as small as it reasonably can be – “compactness” as it is

called, is what matters.

Why are compact districts important? Because the more compact a district is, the more likely its voters will have similar political, social, and cultural interests – meaning that legislators from those areas are more likely to represent the majority of those interests when they have to vote on issues at the capitol.

House District 53 is not an example of compactness...rather it represents a large and sprawling district that means that the most efficient way to travel from one section of the district to the other is to pass through Wyoming. **By creating such massive districts of representation, it is almost guaranteed that a majority of the district lives several hours away from their representative, placing representative unnecessarily further**

**and further away from the interests and needs of the citizens they are charged to represent.**

Other Examples: House District 55, House District 69, House District 73, Senate District 24, Senate District 24, Senate District 27, and Senate District 28.

### **The Blob and the Jagged Edge**



The Blob and the Jagged Edge are the misfits born from the questionable redistrict listed above. Because every district is required to have a certain number of people in it, and because legislators can sometimes go out of their way to make some districts less competitive than others, lawmakers sometimes have to make districts that fill in the gaps.

These types of districts generally share similar interest, but look rather odd. This is because when you are purposefully shifting the boundaries of one district around for political reasons, they have to bulge out or suck in other areas to ensure that all districts have the same number of people.

Think, for a moment, of a glass of water. Now imagine that you put as many ice cubes as you can into that glass and fill the rest of the glass with water. Well, in redistricting, the glass is the state, the ice cubes are the districts that legislators purposefully work to create, and the space that the water fills are similar to the blobs and jagged edges filling in the rest. Blobs and jagged edges are symptoms of gerrymandering.



In the real world, blobs tend to form in rural areas where natural boundaries rule, such as in House district 67. Jagged edges can be seen in districts such as House District 25 and tend to take place in cities where man made objects such as roads, plots of land, and political boundaries dominate.

Based on the Republican Legislature's historical behavior, the arrogant proclamations of the GOP that they are smarter than their voters and current statements from serving legislators at this time, it is crystal clear: **The Republicans are, once again, trying to steal the whole glass of water.**

Other examples: House Districts 1, 26, 28, 30, 33, 49, 68, and Senate Districts 9 and 13

