



PUBLIC POLICY ADVISOR

Redrawing Michigan's Congressional Districts

by Craig Ruff, President

Losing two of eighteen congressional seats, Michigan clearly will lose clout in Washington, D.C. Not yet clear are how sixteen districts will be carved from the current eighteen, who among our members of Congress will be most threatened, and how the 11-7 Democratic edge may change. This Public Policy Advisor discusses district by district the range of options and relative threats to sitting members. For maps of Michigan's congressional districts refer to page 16.

Seniority counts on Capitol Hill. Long service delivers prime committee assignments, committee and subcommittee chairships, budget negotiating chits, and policy and party caucus leadership. As late as the early 1960s, southern Democrats armed with decades of seniority chaired nearly all the key committees of the U.S. House. Age, growing Republican competitiveness in the South, increased registration and voting by more liberal African-Americans in southern Democratic primaries, and incumbent entrenchment in the North and Midwest largely have reversed geographical clout in the U.S. House. Michigan, not South Carolina nor Mississippi, now lays claim to a powerhouse delegation.

Collectively, the eighteen members of the U.S. House of Representatives from Michigan have 286 years of service in Washington, D.C. Excluding Barbara-Rose Collins and David Camp, who were elected in 1990, the remaining sixteen members average nearly 18 years each in the U.S. Congress. Those long tenures translate into key committee positions, pork barrel, and clout, particularly among majority Democrats.

MICHIGAN'S MOST INFLUENTIAL MEMBERS OF THE U.S. HOUSE

Not to downplay the constituent work, personal and political influence, and respect enjoyed by other Michigan congresspersons, eight Democrats and three Republicans are certainly movers and shakers in Washington, D.C.

John Dingell (D-Dearborn, 19th term in the House) chairs the Energy and Commerce Committee, through which passes almost half of all national legislation. His only rival for power in the U.S. House is the Speaker. William Ford (D-Taylor, 14th term) chairs the Education and Labor Committee. John Conyers (D-Detroit, 14th term) chairs Government Operations. David Bonior (D-Mt. Clemens, 8th term) is majority whip, only two rungs down in party leadership from the Speaker.

Bob Carr (D-East Lansing, 8th term) and Bob Traxler (D-Bay City, 10th term) are influential members of the key Appropriations Committee. Howard Wolpe (D-Lansing, 7th term) chairs the Investigations and Oversight Subcommittee of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology. Dale Kildee (D-Flint, 8th term) sits not only on the Education and Labor Committee but also the Budget Committee, which sets overall spending targets.



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William Broomfield (R-Birmingham, 18th term) is the ranking Republican on the Foreign Affairs Committee and the senior GOP spokesperson on international affairs. Because both Michigan senators are Democrats, protocol gives Broomfield, as the state's senior Republican congressman, the ability to recommend to the White House key political and judicial appointments. Carl Pursell (R-Plymouth, 8th term) sits on the Appropriations Committee and was selected by his Republican peers to draft the compromise plan during the 1990 federal budget crisis. Guy Vander Jagt (R-Luther, 14th term) serves both on the Joint Committee on Taxation and the Ways and Means Committee, which oversees tax policy. He also chairs the National Republican Congressional Committee, the primary fund-raising, candidate recruitment, and campaign support arm of House Republicans.

Michigan's influence on Capitol Hill is jeopardized by reapportionment—not only by the loss of two House members but also by the threats to the other sixteen that come with new and larger districts and emboldened, stronger challengers.

HOW WILL DISTRICTS BE REDRAWN?

Drawing congressional seats is vested with the legislature and governor. The two state legislative houses pass and the governor signs into law a statute that details the boundaries of each congressional district. Legally, the law's only challenge could come from a group alleging before federal court that the plan deprived racial minorities of fair representation.

Pleading that an impasse existed between the Republican Senate and Democratic House, state Democrats asked the federal district court to take jurisdiction. Their strategy was guided by a belief that the federal district judge, (Stewart Newblatt) appointed by a Democratic president, and the chief judge of the court of appeals, likewise a Democratic appointee, would approve in the end a congressional plan sympathetic to their party. The strategy went awry when the chief judge created a panel of two Republican appointees (District Judge Robert Holmes Bell and Circuit Appeals Judge James Ryan) and Newblatt. Therefore, if the state legislature and governor cannot agree upon a plan, these three federal judges will write or adopt the final maps.

Democrats are now under the gun to achieve a negotiated settlement with Republican legislators and Governor Engler or risk that an "impartial" but Republican-oriented tribunal would approve a plan that favors Republican candidates. Of course, the tribunal could end up approving a Democratic gerrymander, a threat that gives the GOP an incentive to negotiate as well. (The current district maps, for example, are decidedly pro-Democrat. As an example, the sixth congressional district takes in half the City of Lansing, stretches eastward through only northern Livingston County, and swallows all of Pontiac. The 1982 map surrendered heavily Republican Jackson County, western Washtenaw, and southern Livingston to other districts. The gerrymandering allowed Democrat Bob Carr, ousted by Republican Jim Dunn in 1980, to regain the seat. The current plan, submitted by the Democratic Party, was adopted by Democratic nominees to the federal bench in 1982).

Unbiased logic would hold that if Michigan has to sacrifice two congressional seats, one would be held by a Democrat and one by a Republican. But there is little about reapportionment that is unbiased and only slightly more that is logical. Now on the defensive, Democratic state legislators may feel that they are better off giving up two Democratic seats than risking even greater losses if the federal court adopts a plan as biased for Republicans as the current district lines are biased for Democrats.

Other than protecting the right of minority voters to representation, the federal courts impose only one other strict criterion on reapportionment: Each congressional district must have a population as close to equal as possible to the population of any other district. The tolerance of deviation is low, certainly less than one percent variance in population among all sixteen new districts. Each district, consequently, will have a population extremely close to 580,956; the average population after the 1982 reapportionment was 514,560.

Only the 18th congressional district (Broomfield) must cede population to reach an ideal population. Every other district must expand. District 13 (Collins) must add about 185,500 people in Detroit and neighboring areas. District 1 (Conyers) must add 130,000 people. On average, each district must gain about 64,600 people.

Democratic districts must gain far more people and territory than ones now held by Republicans, reflecting declining populations in the state's major cities and growth in many suburban and outstate areas. The eleven districts now held by Democrats must acquire a total of 968,500 people, an average of 88,000 each. The seven held by Republicans must add 193,500 people, an average of 27,600 each.

Because population, as well as politics, dictates changing configurations, we provide for each district an estimate of population to be gained or lost to reach the ideal of 580,956. These figures, rounded to the nearest 500, are based on estimates filed by the Democratic Party with the federal court.

Each member of Congress is trying to solidify ties in the state legislature, urging that his or her seat be protected. Somewhat disadvantaged are the U.S. representatives who never served in the state legislature (Carr, Conyers, Dingell, and Upton). Therefore, mention is made of ties to or service in the state legislature.

Reapportionment Is Not Everything

Readers should be cautioned that redistricting, no matter how severely partisan, only takes a political party so far toward gain. The quality of the candidates fielded, the party's fortunes in the election year, the bankroll behind the candidates, and issues on people's minds often convert a heavily Republican district into one held by a Democrat and, less frequently, vice versa. Unquestionably, the Democrats historically have fielded more assertive candidates. The Democratic edge of 11-7 in Michigan's delegation is partly explained by the 1982 gerrymander but also by the district-by-district retention and recruitment of top drawer campaigners.

The awesome benefits of incumbency, from name recognition to franking privileges, work to protect the existing Democratic edge. Money will be critical in 1992. Incumbents have it; challengers do not. Some Republicans are buoyant about their 1992 prospects because President Bush looks invincible and on the ballot, no other office separates those of president and member of Congress. The GOP envisions long coattails. But straight party voting is disappearing fast; it is by no means certain whether Bush will run, let alone how well he will end up doing; and the incumbents' natural advantages may offset any coattails.

Some national political analysts predict a high number of retirements in the House in 1992. In part, they attribute that expectation to redistricting; but they also cite a "reform" that allows senior members to convert to personal use unspent campaign funds only if they end their tenure by the end of 1992. Even Ways and Means chair Dan Rostenkowski (D-Chicago) is said to be tempted to do so. Michigan has several veterans, including Dingell, Broomfield, and Vander Jagt, who stand to benefit greatly from retirement.

What with the controversial pay raise, fixed parking tickets, bounced checks, unpaid restaurant tabs, lack of discipline, and publicized perks, Congress is not the rewarding place it may once have been. Retirement

may look more attractive to some members than a tough reelection slugfest and having to face intemperate and aggravated voters.

What follows is a discussion of how each member of Congress may be affected by redistricting, not of other forces. In most cases, the discussion focuses on how the district could be affected under a best-case Republican, best-case Democratic, and a negotiated or bipartisan plan.

What Michigan's Members of Congress Face

DISTRICT 1 JOHN CONYERS Democrat, Detroit

Population needed to reach ideal: +130,000

Background

The Voting Rights Act protects John Conyers, who is African-American and represents Highland Park and northern and western portions of the City of Detroit. Close to three out of four residents of the 1st District are minorities. It has one of the nation's highest concentrations of African-Americans. At 62, Conyers could look forward someday to chairing the House Judiciary Committee. For all his years in Congress, Conyers may be best remembered for his ill-fated run against Detroit Mayor Coleman Young in the 1989 mayoral primary. He finished third.

Prospects

Under a Democratic or bipartisan scenario Conyers is likely to gain the City of Hamtramck and significantly more people in Detroit. It is possible, as well, for the 1st District to gain constituents in adjacent Wayne County cities and townships, such as Redford, Harper Woods, and possibly Dearborn. The district likely will add areas with white majorities: not in sufficient numbers to offset the current majority of minority voters, but enough to permit the other minority district in Detroit (13th) to be dominated by minority, Detroit voters.

If a one-sided Republican plan is adopted, Conyers could pick up Democratic Oak Park, Ferndale, and/or Southfield in Oakland County. That would swallow up many of the county's Democratic areas, including the home of 17th District Congressman Sander Levin. That would leave Levin the unenviable choice of contesting Conyers in a primary, running in a much more Republican seat in more northern Oakland County, or contesting Hertel (14th District) or Bonior (12th District) in a Democratic primary.

Conyers's district will remain safely Democratic, and notwithstanding his quarrelsome primary against Mayor Young, he is a heavy favorite to win a Democratic primary and the general election.

DISTRICT 2 CARL PURSELL Republican, Plymouth

Population needed to reach ideal: +45,500

Background

The 2nd District starts in the extreme northwest corner of Wayne County (Plymouth, Northville, and part of Livonia) and runs west and south through Washtenaw (except the Ypsilanti area), Lenawee, Jackson, and Hillsdale counties. Regardless of Pursell's home in Wayne County, the heart of this district is the Ann Arbor area. Pursell served in the Michigan Senate and has many friends on both sides of the aisle in the Michigan legislature and the U.S. Congress. Pursell is one of the GOP's most effective, behind-the-scenes mediators on Capitol Hill, particularly on appropriations.

Prospects

A strictly Democratic plan could cause Pursell problems, by moving Ann Arbor and Northville/Plymouth into the western Wayne County district (15th) of William Ford. Pursell then would be forced into a difficult race against Ford or find himself facing new constituents in areas north and west of Washtenaw County (Livingston, more of Branch County, maybe even Shiawassee and Calhoun counties). Democrats also could merge much of the 2nd District into the western half of Broomfield's 18th District and pit against one another the two Republican incumbents.

A strictly Republican plan would build into the district more Democratic areas of western Wayne or Monroe counties but leave Pursell a heavy favorite for reelection. A bipartisan plan likely would have Pursell giving up his slice of Wayne County, gaining the rest of Branch, Jackson, and Washtenaw counties and picking up Monroe County.

Pursell has frightened off the most serious Democratic challengers. He has one of the state's best constituent services programs. He can make news nearly any time he cares to. Short of losing Ann Arbor and Northville/Plymouth to the 15th District, Pursell is a shoo-in for reelection.

DISTRICT 3 HOWARD WOLPE Democrat, Lansing
Population needed to reach ideal: +63,500

Background

The 3rd District was created by Democrats to give Wolpe a fighting chance to win the typically Republican areas of south central Michigan. The district starts in Kalamazoo County, includes all of Calhoun and Eaton and parts of Barry counties and the City of Lansing. Wolpe's base, starting from when he served as city commissioner and later as state representative, is Kalamazoo. He lost to incumbent GOP Congressman Garry Brown in 1976, but returned to oust Brown in 1978. Wolpe never wins more than 60 percent of the vote, against weak or strong Republican challengers. The way he wins is by attentive constituent casework, round-the-clock community relations, and close bonds with local leaders.

Prospects

Most people speculate that the Democrats can save Wolpe or Carr (6th District) but not both. They share Lansing and the Lansing media market, so important to campaign advertising. Either could be saved by making Ingham County lie entirely within one district. Wolpe has several advantages over Carr: more seniority, service (that is, personal ties to people) in the state legislature, and stronger ties to labor and the Democratic Party's organization.

Under a Democratic plan, Wolpe likely would pick up the rest of Lansing and all of East Lansing, leaving his 3rd District relatively intact.

Republicans could damage Wolpe severely. They could lop off Lansing and possibly some Democratic areas of Calhoun County and add solidly GOP territory in Branch, Hillsdale, St. Joseph, and Barry counties. A bipartisan plan either would give Wolpe more Ingham County voters or trade his portion of Lansing for all of Jackson County.

Most likely, Wolpe will not face a primary from Carr, but he will face a somewhat more Republican district, in a year in which Bush's GOP coattails could offset much of his earned rapport with normally Republican voters. The GOP's primary difficulty is finding a candidate with the energy and credibility to

match Wolpe. The congressman is very much at risk and could face the toughest fight since beating Brown in 1978.

DISTRICT 4 FRED UPTON Republican, St. Joseph

Population needed to reach ideal: +50,500

Background

The 4th District is the southwest corner of Michigan. It is the most Republican district in the state; apart from the City of Benton Harbor, there is hardly a Democratic jurisdiction in the territory. Fred Upton is the grandson of the founder of Whirlpool. He served on former Congressman David Stockman's staff and in 1986 contested and beat the maverick, arch-conservative incumbent, Mark Siljander, in a primary. He staved off a challenge from another arch-conservative, State Senator Ed Fredricks, in the 1990 primary.

Prospects

Upton is almost immune to redistricting problems. Bordered by Lake Michigan and Indiana, the district can extend only north or east, gaining heavily or marginally Republican territory. His own party could merge Kalamazoo County and perhaps part of Calhoun County into his district. (There would have to be partially offsetting losses.) Upton, then, may have to square off against Wolpe. It would be his most difficult general election, but the political makeup heavily favors Upton.

A bipartisan or Democratic plan would add Republican territory probably in Allegan and Ottawa counties.

Upton is all but certain to return to Congress in 1993.

DISTRICT 5 PAUL HENRY Republican, Grand Rapids

Population needed to reach ideal: +2,000

Background

Grand Rapids is the heart of the 5th District, which also takes in portions of Kent, Newaygo, Ionia, Barry, and Allegan counties. While a Democrat won the 5th District in a special election (to fill vice president Gerald Ford's vacant seat), the area is assuredly as Republican as it comes. Paul Henry served in both the state House of Representatives and Senate and is regarded by people of both parties as one of the ablest and brightest members of the state's congressional delegation. Republicans frequently mention Henry as gubernatorial or senatorial material; at 49, he certainly has ample time to find the right year to move up.

Prospects

Kent and Ottawa counties are populous, Republican blood brothers. It is impossible to put all of both Kent and Ottawa counties into one district, for there are too many people in both. If Ottawa is self-contained in one district, it may be joined by a good portion of Kent, leaving Henry to face a new group of constituents to the west but with his Grand Rapids city base intact. That is the worst case scenario (one perhaps that the Democrats might attempt). Even with that and a possible primary with an arch-conservative from Ottawa, Henry almost certainly returns to Congress. He faces no threat from a Democrat.

If Republicans seek to divide Wolpe's 3rd District, they could remove some of Kent and all of Newaygo and Allegan counties from the 5th and extend the district down to include Eaton County and the balance of Barry County. That would not endanger Henry in the least, nor would any change in a bipartisan plan.

DISTRICT 6 BOB CARR Democrat, East Lansing
Population needed to reach ideal: +41,000

Background

The 6th District was created to deny Republican Jim Dunn reelection in 1982. It worked. Bob Carr, who served in the U.S. House from 1975 to 1980 and had been ousted by Dunn, revenged his 1980 loss, largely on the basis of Democratic voting in Pontiac and Waterford Township in Oakland County and the loss of Republican votes in Jackson County. (The district resembles a pistol aimed at Canada.) Since Dunn, Carr has been fortunate to have either weak Republican opponents or none at all (1990). Carr, an assistant attorney general and legislative staffer, ran against an entrenched Republican congressman in 1972. He was 29 at the time. In the Watergate year, 1974, he ran again and won.

Prospects

Probably the first district anyone mentions as dispensable and dividable is the 6th. That is partly because of its strange configuration, but also because Carr is neither as well known nor as well liked in Lansing as his peers. His voting record has become more conservative, further estranging him from Democratic Party regulars. Recently, Carr said that he would be moving his residence to Oakland County, where prospects of winning a redesigned seat may be better; that shows how fragile this district is.

Even under a Democratic plan, the 6th likely would give up more of Ingham County to Wolpe, forcing a greater chunk of Oakland County and perhaps Shiawassee County to be moved into it. That would not make the district more Democratic but perhaps would save Wolpe and give Carr, an aggressive door-to-door campaigner, a shot at the new seat.

Under a Republican or bipartisan plan, the 6th would lose all of its Oakland County cities and townships and probably move north into Clinton, Gratiot, and Shiawassee counties and add the balance of Lansing.

Carr's campaign ability cannot be shortchanged, but it is going to be an uphill fight for him to stay in Congress beyond 1992.

DISTRICT 7 DALE KILDEE Democrat, Flint
Population needed to reach ideal: +77,000

Background

This compact district takes in all of Lapeer County, nearly all of Genesee, very small parts of Sanilac and Shiawassee counties, and a few northern townships of Oakland. Genesee County is dependably Democratic and its 430,000 residents entitle it to about three-fourths of a congressional seat. The last Republican to serve in Congress from the area was Donald Riegle. Dale Kildee, a former state representative and state senator, succeeded Riegle when he gave up the seat to run successfully for the U.S. Senate in 1978. Kildee has a pastoral style; he received his B.A. at the Sacred Heart Seminary in Detroit. He is viewed somewhat as a loner, intellectual and earnest, but not gregarious among colleagues. He is very popular, however, among his constituents.

Prospects

Short of a bizarre gerrymandering in a Republican plan, the 7th District will grow but not have its character changed. It could take in more of Shiawassee County, perhaps go deeper into the Thumb, and/or slice off a

southern portion of Saginaw County. But Flint would remain the core, and the Democrats would continue to have a safe seat. Under either a Democratic or bipartisan plan, this change would affect Kildee only mildly.

A very partisan Republican plan could hurt Kildee in one of two ways. It could split off all of Genesee County except Flint and a few townships and, to offset the lost Democratic areas, take in the entire and solidly Republican Thumb counties. Flint's votes alone would make the district no worse than marginal. Kildee would have to work considerably harder at general election time; whether or not he really would be in trouble would depend on the quality of the Republican challenger. A different Republican configuration could single out Flint and narrowly run a district up I-75 to take in Democratic areas in Saginaw and Bay counties, possibly even running south to include Pontiac. This new I-75 district could include a high proportion of minority voters but likely would not result in a new district dominated by minority voters. The problem for Kildee under this scenario is that he may be thrown into a Democratic primary against Bob Traxler and possibly Bob Carr.

Kildee appears to be in good shape, barring an almost farcical gerrymandering in a Republican plan.

DISTRICT 8 BOB TRAXLER Democrat, Bay City

Population needed to reach ideal: +92,000

Background

Nearly all the Thumb counties join Saginaw, Bay City, and parts of Arenac and Genesee counties to make up the 8th District. On paper, it is Republican. Bob Traxler makes it dependably Democratic. Traxler, who served a dozen years as a Democrat in the state House of Representatives, won a special election in 1974 at the height of the Watergate scandal. He shocked not only the district but the nation in winning this GOP citadel. Through energetic campaigning, first-class constituent service, and using his clout on the Appropriations Committee to win projects for the area, Traxler has earned the kind of electoral security of which politicians dream. To boot, he is very popular among colleagues in Washington, D.C., and Lansing.

Prospects

Under a Democratic or bipartisan plan, Traxler faces little threat. Some territory may be added in St. Clair or Lapeer counties. His district could run a little farther north along Lake Huron. But his margins of victory are so enormous that even some additions of Republican voters would not imperil him.

One of two strictly Republican plans could hurt Traxler. One could remove the Thumb (and all the GOP voters he has groomed so carefully) from his district and anchor the district on the east by Bay City and Saginaw. That would shift the district far westward, into Midland, Gratiot, Isabella, Gladwin, Clare, and/or Montcalm counties. It also would add Republican townships in Saginaw County. By doing so, Republicans could force Traxler to contest Dave Camp (R-Midland, 10th District) in a general election. Traxler has had easy wins against no-name challengers, but how would he fare against a fellow incumbent when the turf was evenly divided?

Another strictly Republican plan was described above (please see District 7). This extreme plan could put Traxler in a primary with Dale Kildee.

The odds today favor Traxler. But as is true of Kildee, the degree of gerrymandering allowable to Republicans could cost him dearly.

DISTRICT 9 GUY VANDER JAGT Republican, Luther
Population needed to reach ideal: +24,500

Background

From Holland to Traverse City along Lake Michigan stretches the 9th District. Ottawa and Muskegon counties, at the southern tip, form the population hub. It is, for the most part, Republican territory. It had been safe for its congressman, Guy Vander Jagt, until 1990, when he received only 55 percent of the vote against an unknown Democrat. I believe that he lost 10 or 11 of the district's 13 counties. Ottawa County's votes largely saved him from defeat. Vander Jagt had a wretched year and had been paying more attention to the national campaign committee than the district. Just before the election, "60 Minutes" spotlighted Vander Jagt in an expose on congressional junkets. Some incumbents with close scares mend fences and regain their invulnerable status, while others retire or lose the next time out. It remains to be seen what this House veteran of nearly 25 years faces. Vander Jagt also spent two years in the Michigan Senate before winning the seat in Congress.

Prospects

To gain population, this district either goes inland or south. The expansion of the 4th District could take much of Ottawa away from the 9th; the expansion of the 5th could do the same. Traverse City could be lost to the 11th. In any of these situations, the district pushes inland, swallowing smaller counties like Wexford, Osceola, and Mecosta. These are traditionally Republican areas. Map makers could extend the 9th south to take in much more of Ottawa County, if its population was not necessary to add to adjacent districts. This approach probably would make Vander Jagt sleep easier.

Next to the 11th and the Detroit districts, this district probably risks less dramatic partisan change than any other. Democrats cannot move many more Democratic areas into it; Republicans cannot extract many Democratic voters from it.

What fate awaits Vander Jagt depends less on a redrawn district than on the restoration of his relations with his constituents and the strength or weakness of his next Democratic opponent.

DISTRICT 10 DAVE CAMP Republican, Midland
Population needed to reach ideal: +43,500

Background

If you live in the suburbs of Traverse City, you might find yourself in the same district as a relative living in the suburbs of Lansing, about a three-hour drive away. That would be the 10th Congressional District. Most of the district is farmland; that which is not houses "up north" retirees, Central Michigan University faculty, staff, and students, and Dow Chemical, Dow Corning, and GM employees in Midland and Saginaw. Its congressman is a freshman, Dave Camp, a Republican from Midland who served a term in the state House of Representatives. He won the seat of Bill Schuette, who challenged Carl Levin for the U.S. Senate in 1990. This district is not so Republican as one might think. A Democrat held this seat from 1979 to 1984. Camp is young (38) and a good campaigner; he won in 1990 by a nearly two to one margin.

Prospects

When Democrats point to the one seat the Republicans should give up, this is it. After all, Camp is in his first term, so less seniority is lost. Also, the spread of the district enables bits and pieces to be carved into

neighboring districts to protect at least four other incumbents. If the Democrats had their way, Camp would lose Grand Traverse and portions of several other northernmost counties to the 11th; Wexford, Osceola, Kalkaska, and Missaukee to the 9th; perhaps Ogemaw, Roscommon, Gladwin, and Saginaw to the 8th; and the balance to the 5th, 6th, or 7th. That would leave Camp with little base from which to make any reasonable race.

A bipartisan plan would do little repair work, simply adding counties or sections of counties, probably to the south of the district (such as Montcalm or Ionia). In this case, Camp is fine.

As mentioned in the above discussion of **District 8**, a Republican gerrymander could take the central and southeast parts of Camp's district and meld them into the Bay and Saginaw portions of Traxler's district. That would pit the two incumbents against each other, with Camp preserving more than one-half of his district and a slight edge, at least on paper. That would make for a very exciting contest.

Aside from the risk his own party may pose, Camp is likely to come back to Congress in 1993. That defies the conventional wisdom of a year ago, before Engler was elected governor and the federal court panel took on a Republican tilt, that the freshman-elect would be a goner.

DISTRICT 11 ROBERT DAVIS Republican, Gaylord
Population needed to reach ideal: +59,500

Background

This congressional district is larger than some states, containing about 40 percent of Michigan's land area. The Upper Peninsula holds 313,915 people. District map drawers simply will keep adding Lower Peninsula counties until the total population reaches 581,000. The Upper Peninsula is fairly Democratic, while the northern counties of the Lower Peninsula are Republican. Since 1967, this seat has been held by Republicans; since 1979, by Robert Davis, a former member of both the Michigan House of Representatives and Senate. Davis has mastered the art of constituent relations and winning federal grants, projects, and protection for local businesses and communities. Consistently, he wins 60 percent or more of the vote, even against solid Democratic challengers.

Prospects

The 11th District now takes in nine entire lower peninsula counties and parts of four others. After reapportionment, Davis will add voters in the south. Gerrymandering by either party could not hurt him very much. Most likely, he will gain all of populous Grand Traverse County (he now has only two smaller townships) or he will pick up two or three smaller counties, such as Kalkaska, Missaukee, or Roscommon and the balance of Crawford, Oscoda, and Iosco now in the 10th District.

In the right year against a strong and well-financed Democrat, Davis could lose. But the prospects of his winning reelection in 1992 are overwhelming. Reapportionment can only help him add Republican territory.

DISTRICT 12 DAVID BONIOR Democrat, Mt. Clemens
Population needed to reach ideal: +47,500

Background

The 12th District comprises eastern Macomb and nearly all of St. Clair counties. Much of St. Clair is Republican, as are the northern townships of Macomb. The Democratic strength lies in the votes of Warren,

Roseville, and Fraser. Statewide and state legislative races have been more politically volatile in this area than anywhere else in the state. No fewer than four state House seats and a Senate seat that lie in the 12th have changed hands between the parties since 1982. Bonior served two terms in the state House before winning this seat in 1976. Several times, he has been held to less than 55 percent of the vote, but he can also take 65 percent, as he did in 1990, against a weaker Republican opponent. At 46, as majority whip, Bonior could be Speaker of the House in the not too distant future if he continues to win reelection. While casting liberal votes, he works hard to hold this increasingly conservative district.

Prospects

Despite population growth, the 12th District still must expand. To protect Dennis Hertel in the 14th District, Democrats could yield Warren, St. Clair Shores, Fraser, and part or all of Clinton Township to the neighboring district to the south. However, that would force solidly Republican areas in northwestern Macomb County, Oakland County, or the Thumb into Bonior's district, giving him an increasingly difficult time cultivating GOP voters. In fact, it could doom him. But if he assumes more area in south and southwest Macomb, such as Warren, Centerline, and East Detroit, it almost certainly would force Hertel to challenge Bonior, Conyers, or Collins in a Democratic primary or retire. It is a Hobson's Choice for Democrats.

A bipartisan plan likely would start drawing a district at Eight Mile Road, the boundary between Macomb County and Detroit. It would work its way north, through about 80 percent of the county's 717,400 residents. It would be compact, cross no other county lines, and pit Bonior and Hertel in a no-win contest for the Democrats.

A Republican plan probably would combine the most Democratic areas of southeast Oakland County, such as Southfield and Oak Park, and southern Macomb County. Such a plan could pit Levin against Hertel and leave Bonior to choose between entering that Democratic primary or facing a very Republican district that spreads into the Thumb.

Bonior may be a power on Capitol Hill, but he faces an uphill fight to preserve a district in which he is a shoo-in to win a primary and general election. At this point, the most likely scenario is that Bonior will be forced into a primary against Hertel, should he choose to seek reelection. The good news for Bonior is that he may end up with one difficult primary election in 1992, but a much more Democratic district for the future.

DISTRICT 13 BARBARA-ROSE COLLINS Democrat, Detroit

Population needed to reach ideal: +185,500

Background

Extreme contrasts in wealth and poverty are found in the 13th District, which takes in Grosse Pointe and Grosse Pointe Park and clings along the Detroit River to innercity, downtown Detroit. No district in the country lost more people than the 13th since the 1980 census. In 1960, the old 13th District's area contained 576,000 people; today, those same boundaries (much smaller than the current district) would contain about 200,000 people. Barbara-Rose Collins spent six years in the state House of Representatives, trading in that seat to serve nine years on Detroit's city council. She came very close to defeating Congressman George Crockett, Jr., in the 1988 Democratic primary. When he choose to retire at age 81 in 1990, Collins easily won the primary and general elections. She has received fairly negative press in the early going for staff turnovers and defense of congressional perks; but she is an indefatigable campaigner and networks well with key community and neighborhood organizations.

Prospects

Collins has many things working against her. Her district must expand by 50 percent, adding almost 200,000 new constituents. Dennis Hertel in the 14th has a base of support in Harper Woods and the Grosse Pointes and is not unknown in the City of Detroit. Conyers's district to her north and west must also add thousands of residents. If her district starts winding farther south or west in Wayne County, adding places like Dearborn, Lincoln Park, Grosse Ile, Trenton, and Brownstown Township, she gains overwhelmingly white voters and competes for John Dingell (16th District) voters. Two things in her favor, however, are the Voting Rights Act, which will preserve minority control within her district, and her broad public recognition from city council days.

Under any plan, Collins will gain at least the remaining Grosse Pointes, River Rouge, and Ecorse. The district probably will go from 75 percent minority to 65 or 60 percent minority. It could cause Collins a primary, but she would have a significant advantage against Hertel or another white challenger. The district will remain solidly (80 percent) Democratic. Collins, for all the threats, appears to be in good shape to win reelection in 1992.

DISTRICT 14 DENNIS HERTEL Democrat, Harper Woods
Population needed to reach ideal: +78,500

Background

The 14th District starts in Grosse Pointe Farms, cuts through northeast Detroit, jogs through southwest Macomb County, chews off Hazel Park and parts of Madison Heights and Troy in Oakland County, and ends up with Sterling Heights and Utica in Macomb County. It is designed to be a Democratic district. Dennis Hertel won a somewhat different district in 1980 after six years in the state House of Representatives. Brother Curtis serves there; brother John served in the state Senate and is now a Macomb County commissioner. Hertel had one tough election (1980) when he defeated a Republican TV newsman by only 7 percent and easy ones since. He got 64 percent of the vote in 1990.

Prospects

Aside from Bob Carr, no Michigan congressman faces a more severe reapportioning problem than Hertel. His southern and western neighbors, Collins and Conyers, must gain a tremendous number of residents, and under almost any plan, Hertel will lose all or nearly all his Wayne County constituents. (His own home in Harper Woods is likely to move into the 1st or 13th District.) Those losses will push his district north (eating into Bonior's 12th District) or northwest (into Levin's 17th). Either way Hertel suffers.

Democrats can protect two of the three Democrats, but probably not all three. A bipartisan plan could give Democrats a southern Macomb district and a fair shot at a southern Oakland district. A Republican plan could carve a single, strongly Democratic district in south Oakland and Macomb, and two Republican-leaning districts north of it.

Hertel is a good campaigner, but then so are almost all of his colleagues. The protection of two minority districts in Wayne County almost certainly forces Hertel into one of two primary contests he will be hard-pressed to win. Should he win a primary, he likely will hold a more Democratic district and face easy general elections. But a tough primary and the recarved district are his greatest and perhaps insurmountable threats.

DISTRICT 15 WILLIAM FORD Democrat, Taylor

Population needed to reach ideal: +73,500

Background

The 15th is a fairly compact district in central, western Wayne County (including cities like Wayne, Westland, Romulus, and Taylor; townships like Van Buren, Canton, and Sumpter) and the southeastern corner of Washtenaw (including Ypsilanti and Saline). These are the gateways to Detroit Metropolitan Airport. These older Wayne County suburbs are heavily Democratic, as is Ypsilanti. For 26 of his 64 years, William Ford has served in the U.S. House. He served as a delegate to the 1961-62 state constitutional convention, followed by two years in the state Senate. Ford is a New Deal Democrat, much like his neighbor John Dingell. Unlike Dingell, Ford makes few headlines; he is probably the least well-known Michigan congressman in Lansing and other areas outside his district. He is, however, a potent vote-getter in the 15th, winning between 60 and 75 percent regularly.

Prospects

Partisanship could have a major bearing on Ford. The Democrats could take his district farther north into Republican Northville, Plymouth, and a greater share of Livonia without crippling his reelection chances. They might add even more territory from Pursell's 2nd District in Washtenaw County and force the two senior congressmen to square off against one another, but with Ford sitting in a more enviable position. A bipartisan plan probably would resemble this design.

Republicans could injure Ford by lopping off Washtenaw County and Livonia and/or Westland residents and merge the 15th District into John Dingell's 16th. That would force either a retirement by one (Would Dingell give up his most powerful House position?) or an intramural Democratic primary. By doing so, Republicans shore up Pursell and eliminate one of the Wayne County Democrats.

The Republican threat here, perhaps more than anywhere else, may force Democrats in the state legislature to find a negotiated settlement. The party cannot afford to run the risk of a GOP-sponsored gerrymander to be adopted in federal court to end the tenure of Ford or Dingell, who combined have 62 years in Congress.

DISTRICT 16 JOHN DINGELL Democrat, Dearborn

Population needed to reach ideal: +84,000

Background

This district starts at the extreme southwest border of Detroit and goes downriver to the Ohio border. It sweeps inland to assume Dearborn, a few other Wayne County communities, all of Monroe County, and a third of Lenawee County. On paper, it looks like a short-tailed dinosaur looking over his shoulder. It is primarily Democratic territory, but Lenawee County and parts of Monroe are quite Republican. John Dingell succeeded his father, who died in office, in 1955. His son, Christopher, serves in the state Senate. Arguably, he and Gerald Ford are the most influential members of the U.S. House to come from Michigan in this century; certainly, he is the most influential Democrat ever to serve from Michigan. He controls the committee that controls 40 percent of all federal legislation. He rules that committee in autocratic style. He may be the last well-disciplined and disciplining member of the Congress. Back home, he regularly wins 70 to 75 percent of the vote in general elections.

Prospects

People fear Dingell. Dingell's power gives Michigan disproportionate clout in Congress. Conventional wisdom, then, suggests that map makers will help him out in reapportionment. Certainly under a Democratic or bipartisan plan, Dingell should escape redistricting problems. He may have to cede some territory that borders Detroit to the 1st or 13th districts; he may have to gain some people in southwestern Wayne County or reach farther into Lenawee County. But those changes will not hurt him very much.

His greatest threat may come from a severe gerrymandering by Republicans, which would merge his district into William Ford's. (Please see discussion of the **15th District**.) It is hard to imagine, however, Dingell not trouncing a primary opponent and not easily winning a solidly Democratic district in the general election. If Dingell would choose to retire and bank his enormous campaign war chest, he certainly is displaying no signs of it.

John Dingell will be back in 1993 should he choose to stay. That is the way to bet.

DISTRICT 17 SANDER LEVIN Democrat, Southfield

Population needed to reach ideal: +96,000

Background

The 17th District benefits Democrats; it is drawn to do so. It takes heavily Democratic areas in northwest Detroit (such as Rosedale Park), Wayne County townships and cities that border Detroit (Redford and Dearborn Heights), and trails into Democratic and marginal jurisdictions of southern Oakland County (Southfield, Oak Park, and Ferndale). The heaviest Republican areas are pretty much restricted to Clawson and Royal Oak. Since 1983, the district has been represented by Sander Levin, who replaced Democrat William Brodhead, who retired young to practice law. A good portion of the 17th today used to lie in James Blanchard's 18th District. Levin served in the state Senate in the 1970s, but his claim to fame came from two close gubernatorial races lost to William Milliken in 1970 and 1974. His younger brother, Carl, is U.S. senator; his cousin, Charles, sits on the state supreme court. Levin comfortably wins the numerous Jewish and African-American votes in Southfield and Oak Park and does very well in the working class neighborhoods of Detroit, Redford, and Dearborn Heights; typically, he wins about 70 percent of the vote in general elections.

Prospects

The Democrats may feel fairly safe, given Levin's broad name recognition, in ceding his Wayne County turf to the 1st, 15th, and 16th congressional districts and adding more Republican voters in Oakland County (Farmington Hills, Bloomfield Hills, Troy and/or Birmingham). It could cause Levin a tougher general election, but he has vote-getting appeal to spare. A bipartisan plan, too, likely would remove Wayne County and add Republican cities and townships in Oakland.

The problem for Levin will be a Republican plan. One option would be moving John Conyers's 1st District into Southfield and Oak Park, areas with increasing minority voters. Another would move these same Democratic, south Oakland County areas into south Macomb County, forcing a primary between Levin and Bonior and/or Hertel. Another option would remove all of Wayne County's voters and push Levin's district so far north that he would be forced into a general election battle with veteran William Broomfield (18th District).

The Levin name is magical. It is hard to imagine him not successfully battling primary and general election opponents and returning to Congress in 1993. On the other hand, he may feel he has one more statewide run in his career, retire next year, and use his free time to run for governor in 1994.

DISTRICT 18 WILLIAM BROOMFIELD Republican, Birmingham
Population needed to reach ideal: -32,000

Background

The only district needing to contract, the 18th typifies the fine art of gerrymandering: to combine as many as possible of your opponent party's voters into one district. That district goes overwhelmingly for the opposition party, but more numerous neighboring districts become marginally in your party's favor. Nowhere is that so true as in the 18th District, carved in the Democratic gerrymander to give the Republicans an absolutely, rock-solid Oakland County district. Actually, the district starts in Brighton (heavily Republican Livingston County) and marches along southern Oakland County until it hits Democratic Southfield. It weaves north to capture Birmingham, Bloomfield Hills, and Bloomfield Township and still farther north to Auburn Hills, northeastern Oakland County, and even three Republican-leaning townships of Macomb County. William Broomfield has held an Oakland County seat in Congress since 1957; he previously served in both the state House of Representatives and Senate. At 69, he is a quiet but effective member of the House minority caucus. His national forum is foreign affairs; back home, he attends to party organization building and sponsorship of Michigan nominees for judicial and executive vacancies.

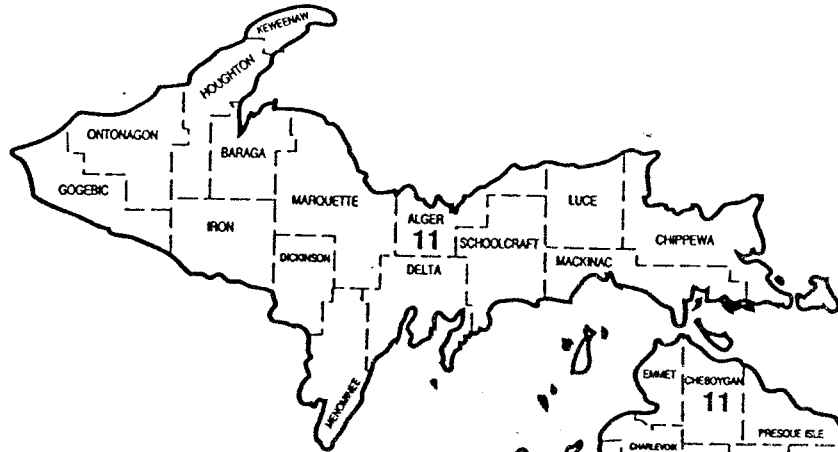
Prospects

Under a bipartisan plan, the district likely would give up territory in Livingston and Macomb counties and assume a part of Pontiac or Southfield, both Democratic areas. It would remain safe for Broomfield.

Bloomfield's threat comes from a Democratic or Republican gerrymander. The Democrats could force him into a general election contest with the younger Levin, preserving as much of south, Democratic Oakland County as possible. A different approach would merge the western portion of the 18th into Purcell's 2nd District, forcing a primary between the two GOP incumbents. The Republicans could carve out his most ardently GOP areas to convert into two congressional wins, possibly with Troy, Bloomfield Hills, and Birmingham added to a much larger north Macomb district (Bonior) or Southfield and Oak Park (Levin). In any partisan plan, Broomfield faces a stiffer general election than he has had. Like Dingell, he has the ability to transfer unspent campaign funds to personal use if he retires in 1992; like Dingell, he shows no such inclination. Broomfield probably will return to Congress.

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MICHIGAN CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS



UNITED STATES CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS METROPOLITAN DETROIT AREA Wayne/Oakland/Macomb Counties

