

Why LatinoLines was Formed and Why We Must Demand Legal Voting Districts to Remedy Decades of Voting Rights and Civil Rights Violations in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

--The Voting Rights Act of 1965 prohibits 'vote dilution' in redistricting.

"Two provisions of the Voting Rights Act, Sections 228 and 5-29, prohibit the use of voting practices or procedures, including redistricting plans, that dilute minority voting strength"

More from the American Civil Liberties Union:

"Three techniques frequently used to dilute minority voting strength are "cracking," "stacking," and "packing." "Cracking" refers to fragmenting concentrations of minority population and dispersing them among other districts to ensure that all districts are majority white. "Stacking" refers to combining concentrations of minority population with greater concentrations of white population, again to ensure that districts are majority white. "Packing" refers to concentrating as many minorities as possible in as few districts as possible to minimize the number of majority-minority districts. All of these techniques may result in a districting plan that violates the Voting Rights Act, as well as the Fourteenth Amendment."

--The current voting district lines of Philadelphia's Seventh Councilmanic District and the 179th and 180th Pennsylvania State Legislative Districts have been gerrymandered, fixed and toyed with – all to benefit private interests and politicians' careers.

--The extremely peculiar shape of the Seventh Councilmanic District, the fact that it combines communities with different interests and distant physical locations and is barely contiguous, mark it as a classic example of political manipulation and gerrymandering of the highest rank.

--Across the United States, voting districts in Latino neighborhoods have been "fractured" or "packed" to benefit politicians' re-election capabilities. They do not benefit the voters or their interests.

--Just as it did in 1776, Philadelphia leads the nation again in this fight for freedom and equality

--LatinoLines is demanding that new lines be drawn to benefit and reflect the viable and growing Latino communities in our city. The new district should be properly compact and contiguous. The Latino vote should no longer be diluted because it is prohibited by the Constitution and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Eliminating this dilution assures the true strength of the Latino community's political voice and allows it to take its natural course among the leadership of the City of Philadelphia.

--LatinoLines is demanding that Latinos finally have the representation in this century that they did not have in the last.

--LatinoLines has reached out to Latino Justice, a national legal defense fund and educational advocacy group. Working with their experts and legal advisers, LatinoLines has drawn fair, logical and equitable maps. Their attention to the dynamics and physical realities of the neighborhoods involved are an obvious contrast to the illogical, community-splintering, 'fractured' voting district lines currently in use.

--John Garcia, Director of Communications for Latino Justice in New York City, New York noted, "The Latino community in Philadelphia has grown enough that it is due for fair and equitable representation in elected offices. The 2010 census demonstrates that the population numbers clearly and unequivocally exist to justify the creation of Latino majority districts."