



**Congressional Hearing on Gerrymandering and Voter Suppression
In The State Of New Jersey**

The House Administration Committee Subcommittee on Elections

Implications for Hearing

| Issue | Support |
|---|---|
| Voter Suppression through Felony Disenfranchisement | Felony Disenfranchisement has particularly caused a lot of damage to the black community because of the War on Drugs. Advocacy efforts have improved voting rights for people who have been incarcerated through the New Jersey Voting Rights Act, ensuring that all eligible individuals know they can vote and have access to the ballot. |
| Redistricting and Gerrymandering | In the 7th district of New Jersey in 2022, Democratic-leaning towns were eliminated from the district, and the Republican won. This outcome also resulted in the Republican candidate winning New Jersey, which could be attributed to Gerrymandering. Additionally, the 11th district removed conservative-leaning towns and added Democratic-leaning towns, which may be the reason why Mikie Sherrill won the Primary from the Democratic Party in New Jersey. |
| Reform and Voter Protections | Currently, the New Jersey Voting Rights Act, a state-level law, aims to reinforce and protect voting rights at the state level. One thing that points out from this bills is increase language assistance their should be more word out that people that went jail who have been out can now vote and not feel obliged to not vote. |

Individuals Called to Testify Before This Committee

Ryan P. Haygood - *President, NJ Institute for Social Justice*

Reason: Legal expertise and record of restoring voting access for over 83,000 formerly disenfranchised people.

Dr Sam S. H. Wang - Professor of Neuroscience at Princeton University

Reason: Developed quantitative methods used by Supreme Court in benchmark trials related to gerrymandering and is cofounder of the Gerrymandering Project to detect partisan map manipulation.

Hon. John E Wallace Jr, - *Chair of the NJ Congressional Redistricting Commission.*

Reason: Retired NJ Supreme Court Justice with experience in redistricting standards and public accountability in map drawing.

Mikie Sherrill - *Representative, NJ District 11* Reason: She has a past history after what happened to the NJ 11th district in her 2021 election when her district was reshaped to include several Democrat leaning towns.

Representative Verlina Reynolds Jackson - *Sponsor of Voting Rights Act of NJ*

Reason: She sponsored the voting rights act of NJ and is an outspoken advocate for stronger protections against voter suppression and for expanding voting access and preclearance.

Tahesha Leila Way - *New Jersey Secretary of State*

Reason: She is the Secretary of State and one of her main responsibilities is to ensure that New Jersey has a safe and fair election.

Goals and Outcomes of Hearing

| Goal | Outcome(s) Advocating For |
|---|---|
| Raise awareness about the lasting impact of the “War on Drugs” and continued felony disenfranchisement in New Jersey. | Acknowledge that there is a felony disenfranchisement and what they are planning to do and what specifically their goal is so that these people can vote. |
| Take accountability for known gerrymandering in Districts 7 and 11. | Hear that they will go on record and that this will not happen again, and hold those people to a higher level of law if it happens again. |
| To understand what is stopping the voting rights act in New Jersey passed. | I want a Time period for them to get this act passed. That this will get passed and find a bi Partisian way to get this passed. |

Hearing Questions by Witness

(in order of requested appearance before Committee)

Ryan P. Haygood

1. During your time helping 83,000 people overcome voter disenfranchisement, what are some of the most common causes you've noted?
2. What do you feel we need to be doing on the state and federal level to improve this disenfranchisement?

Dr. Sam S. H. Wang

1. How do your quantitative methods work and what is their accuracy when it comes to partisan map manipulation?
2. In the course of your research with the Gerrymandering Project, are there any findings you'd like to share that you feel would be useful for this committee?

John E Wallace Jr

1. In your career, how many cases have been brought before you related to voter suppression and/or redistricting?
2. In your time as Chair, have you been privy to any discussions, messages, or meetings about gerrymandering taking place in New Jersey, or are you aware of any attempts during the past three presidential elections?

Mikie Sherrill

1. If redistricting hadn't been redone during your 2021 campaign, do you think you still would've won?
2. What is your stance on redistricting in ways that appear to shift the political balance in another direction and what actions could be taken to stop that, either in practice or appearance?

Verlina Reynolds Jackson

1. In what ways do you feel we can get younger people informed of the proposed Act to support its passage?
2. Do you feel that the current Voting Rights Act in New Jersey that you sponsored provides enough protection against voter suppression, or do you feel like more should be added?

Tahesha Leila Way

1. How does your office make sure that redistricting doesn't affect voter access and cause people to feel that their vote doesn't matter?
2. Do you believe it should be necessary for all counties to require preclearance before changing voting maps?