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## **Federal Court Blocks Louisiana’s New Congressional Map, Orders Lawmakers to Draw Map with Two Majority-Black Districts**

BATON ROUGE, LA – Today, a federal judge in *Robinson v. Ardoin* [ruled](#) in favor of Black voters challenging Louisiana’s newly enacted congressional map as a violation of Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. The [decision](#) came after a week-long hearing in which Black Louisianians and civil rights groups presented their case for enjoining the discriminatory map, which severely dilutes Black voting power by packing Black voters from New Orleans and Baton Rouge into a single U.S. congressional district. As a result of the decision, lawmakers must draw a new map with two majority-Black districts to be used during upcoming elections, while litigation continues.

On March 30, 2022, the Legal Defense Fund (LDF), American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), ACLU of Louisiana, Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP, and Louisiana Lawyers John Adcock and Tracie Washington [filed a lawsuit](#) on behalf of the Louisiana State Conference of the NAACP, Power Coalition for Equity and Justice, and nine individual voters. The lawsuit was filed immediately after the Louisiana Legislature voted on March 30, 2022, to overturn Governor John Bel Edwards’ veto of the congressional plan passed by the Legislature in February.

"This is a huge victory for the thousands of Louisianians who participated in the redistricting process and initially did not have their voices heard in the overturn of the Governor's veto," said **Power Coalition President and CEO Ashley Shelton**. "The people of Louisiana asked for a fair and equitable process, one that allowed communities of color to elect candidates of their choice. This decision affirms the fact that the people deserve to have their voices heard. Their historic participation in the redistricting process will forever be remembered today."

"Today’s decision is welcome news for Black voters in Louisiana who, for decades, have been racially gerrymandered into a single district that has diluted the power of their vote and their ability to elect candidates of their choice," said **Mike McClanahan, President of the Louisiana State conference of the NAACP**. "A new map with two majority-Black districts will finally give Black voters the full representation that is their right."

"The Court’s ruling is a clear indication that Louisiana lawmakers failed in their duty to create a fully-representative congressional map that provides Black voters the ability to exercise their power at the ballot box," said **LDF Redistricting Counsel Kathryn Sadasivan**. "The Legislature must adhere to new Census data and their constituents’ demands for a fair map with two majority-Black districts that fully represents the reality of the population of Louisiana and the long-denied rights of Black voters in the state."

“The right of all Americans to equal voting power is a central pillar of our democracy and for too long Black Louisianan’s have been excluded from the democratic process,” **said Sarah Brannon, managing attorney of the ACLU’s Voting Rights Project.** “As the Census data confirms, Louisiana’s growth over the past decade is attributable to the growth in communities of color. Fair maps must adequately reflect that reality. To live up to the tenets of a representative democracy, the Louisiana Congressional map must reflect the richly diverse population it serves.”

The voting-age population in Louisiana is nearly one-third Black. Under the Legislature’s proposed map, Black Louisianans comprise the majority in only one of the state’s six congressional districts, and candidates supported by Black voters are routinely outvoted in the five other districts. The result is underrepresentation of Black voters in Louisiana’s congressional delegation, with Black voters having an opportunity to elect candidates of their choice in only one of the six congressional districts (i.e., 16.7% of the districts). At the same time, Louisiana’s white population is vastly overrepresented. While only 58% of Louisiana’s population is non-Hispanic white, white voters control the outcome in five out of six (83.3%) districts under the maps. That control has meant that no Black candidate has won election to any of those seats since Reconstruction.

LDF and coalition partners have been deeply involved in the redistricting process in Louisiana and other key states to prevent discriminatory redistricting plans and ensure legislatures comply with their obligations under the Voting Rights Act and the U.S. Constitution. LDF and the coalition have submitted several maps, testified before the Legislature, and sent multiple letters to legislators throughout the process. Learn more about LDF’s redistricting work in Louisiana and other states [here](#).

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