

## A Quick (Descriptive) Look at the Proposed Maps In WNC

Chris Cooper, Madison Distinguished Professor at Western Carolina University

[ccooper@email.wcu.edu](mailto:ccooper@email.wcu.edu)

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On Wednesday October 18, The North Carolina General Assembly released two potential new maps for Congress (14 districts) and one each for the State House (120 districts) and the State Senate (50 districts). Here's a quick (descriptive) rundown on what the proposed maps might mean for Western North Carolina.

### Congress

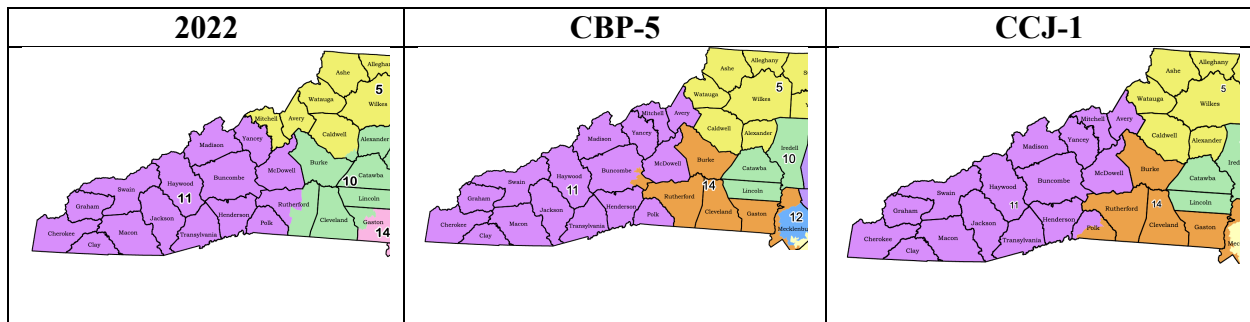
Most of Western North Carolina rests in the 11<sup>th</sup> congressional district, currently represented by Chuck Edwards (R). In terms of partisanship, the district gave 55% of its 2-party vote share to Donald Trump for President in 2020. Neither of the proposed districts would shift NC-11 into different partisan territory. Under both potential congressional maps, approximately 56% of the two-party presidential votes in NC-11 were for former President Trump.<sup>1</sup>

With that said, there are some notable differences in terms of geography.

Here is an (admittedly lazy copy and paste) comparison of the current map as compared to the proposed maps. As you can see CBP-5 would put Rutherford County entirely in NC-14 and pull the Southeast corner of Buncombe County out of NC-11 and into NC-14. It would also place Mitchell and Avery counties in NC-11.

CCJ-1, by comparison would put Rutherford County entirely in NC-14, but would keep Buncombe County entirely in NC-11. It would also place the Eastern side of Polk County into NC-14 and would (like CBP-5), put Mitchell and Avery in NC-11.

Bottom line: the effects on partisanship is very little under either of the proposed maps. Depending on which map they choose, however, it could have an impact on who represents constituents in Buncombe, and Polk counties. Regardless of which map they choose, Avery, Mitchell counties will now be in NC-11 and Rutherford County will be in NC-14.

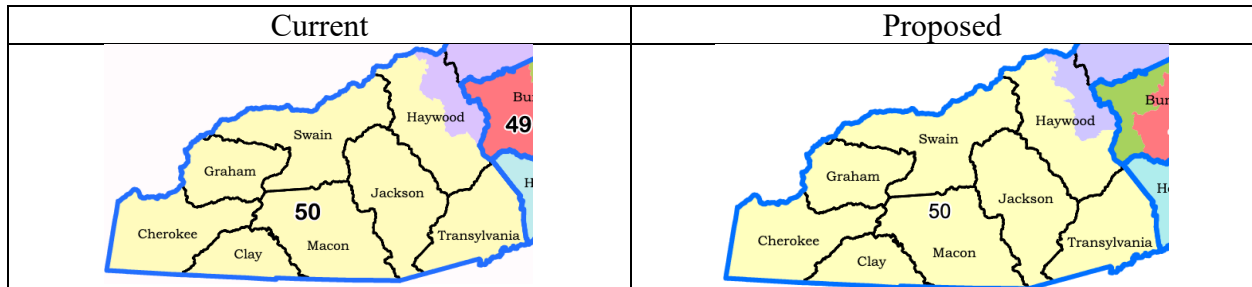


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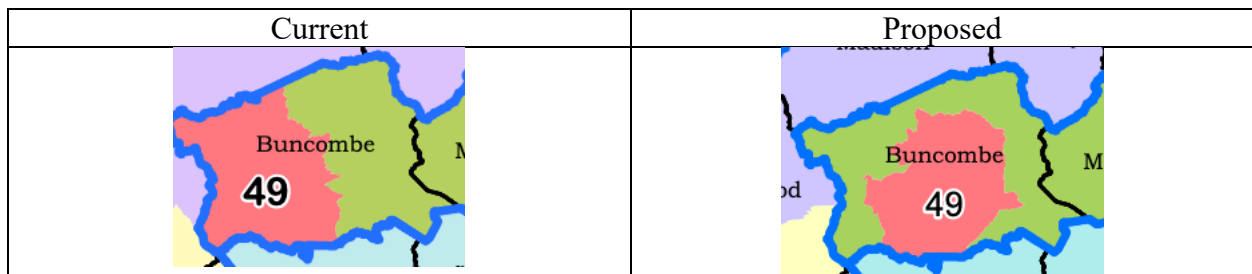
<sup>1</sup> Two-party vote share just means that I removed the third-party candidates from both the numerator and the denominator.

## NC Senate

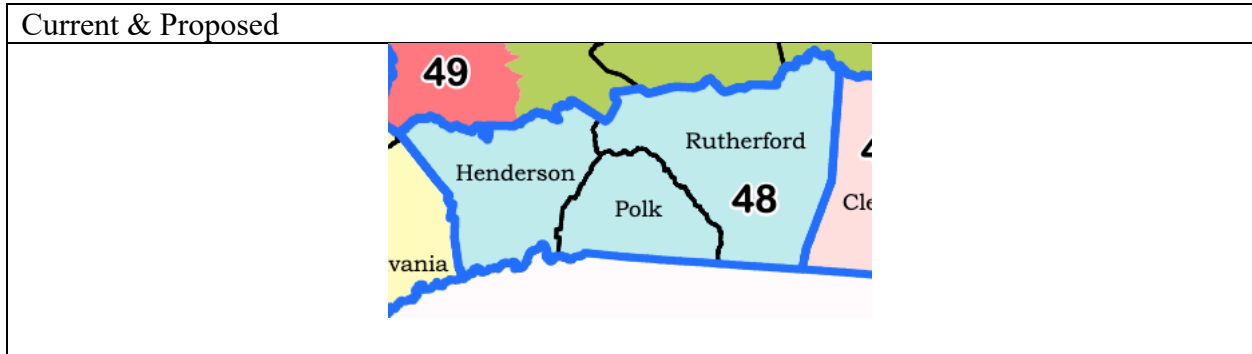
**50:** Currently represented by Republican Kevin Corbin, Senate District 50 currently includes Cherokee, Graham, Clay, Macon, Swain, Jackson, Transylvania and part of Haywood Counties. The district boundaries would change *very* slightly on the Northeastern edge of Haywood County. The partisan change is negligible. Currently 64.73 Trump; the new district would be 64.77. Bottom line: pay attention if you live in the Northeastern part of Haywood County to make sure your district didn't shift. Otherwise, nothing to see here.



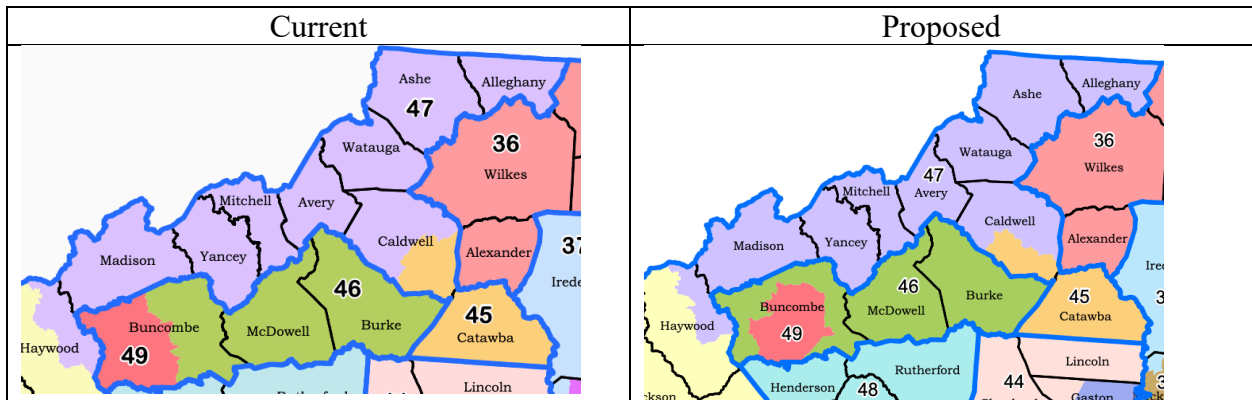
**49:** Currently represented by Democrat Julie Mayfield. Although the district will still be contained entirely within Buncombe County, the district lines are very different. In general terms, Mayfield used to represent the Western side of Buncombe; in the new version, she will represent the middle of Buncombe. It will go from 36% Trump to 34% Trump. Bottom line: Mayfield's seat is safe, but if you live in Buncombe county, your Senator might change.



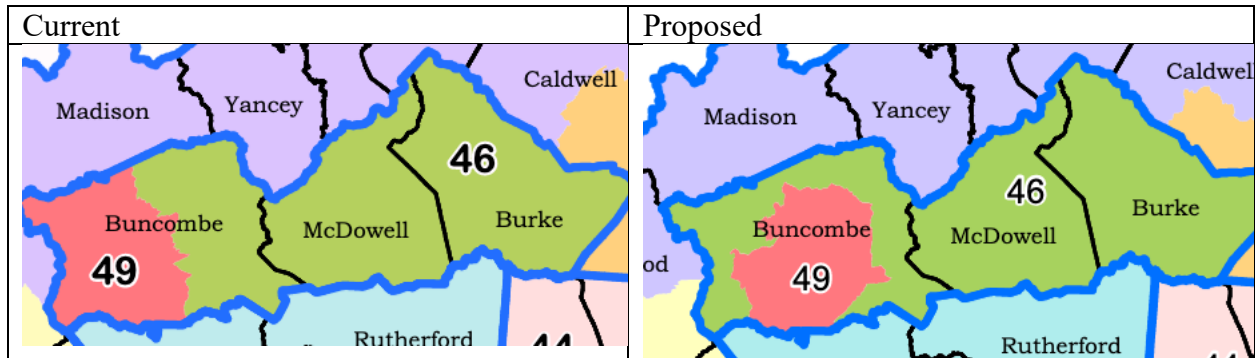
**48:** Republican Tim Moffitt currently represents this district, which makes up the entirety of Henderson, Polk, and Rutherford Counties. 63.99% of the district 2-party vote for President was cast for Donald Trump. This district does not change at all under the proposed maps. Bottom line: nothing to see here; move on.



**47:** Republican Ralph Hise represents this district, which includes all of Alleghany, Ashe, Watauga, Avery, Mitchell, Yancey and Madison Counties as well as the Northeast portion of Haywood County and the North and Western portion of Caldwell County. SD-47 gave 64.3 percent of its two-party vote share to Trump in the 2020 election. The proposed map would change the geography slightly in Haywood and Caldwell Counties. Otherwise, it's the same. In terms of partisanship, it's a wash (the new map is 64.4 Trump). Bottom Line: if you live in Caldwell or the Northeastern part of Haywood Counties, check the map. Otherwise, nothing to see here.

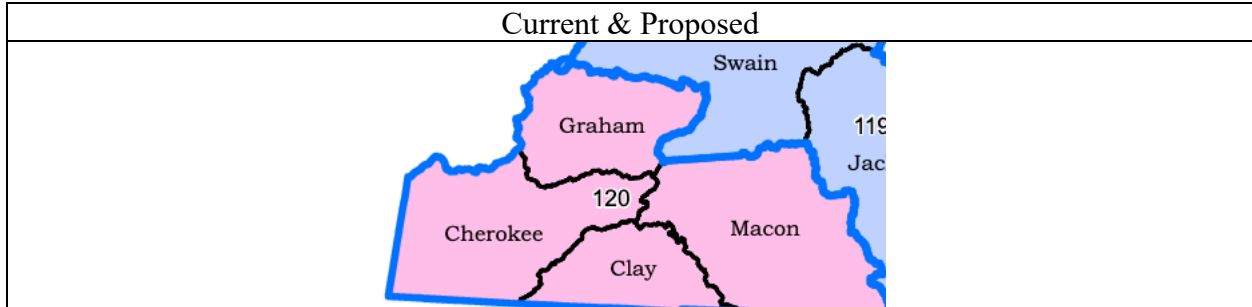


**46:** Republican Warren Daniel currently represents this district, which gave 62.2% of its two-party votes for President to Donald Trump in the 2020 election. It currently consists of Burke, McDowell and the Eastern side of Buncombe County. Under the new map, it comes slightly more Republican (66.3% Trump 2-party vote share), but most importantly, the geography changes so that it includes the Eastern, Northern, and Western edges of Buncombe County—circling the city of Asheville. Bottom line: Daniel’s seat remains safe, but if you live in Buncombe County, your Senator might change.

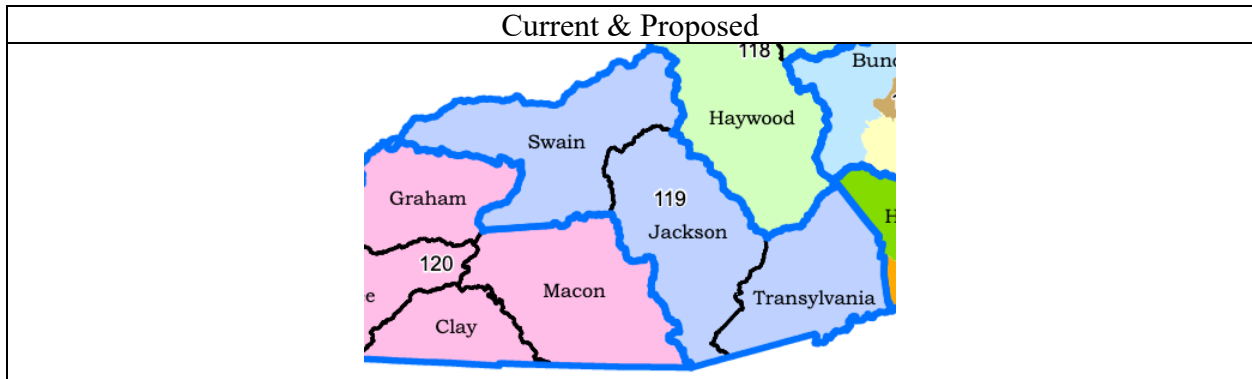


## House

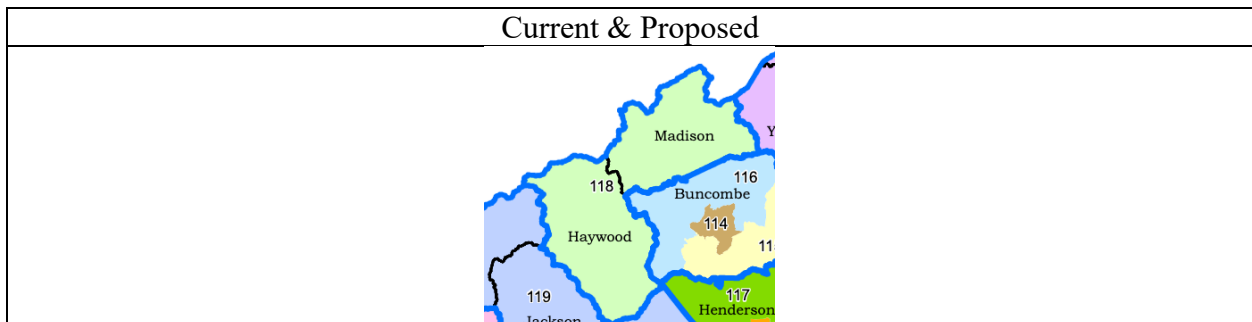
120: Republican Karl Gillespie represents this district, which consists of Cherokee, Clay, Macon, and Graham Counties. It gave 75% of its two-party vote for President to Donald Trump in 2020. It does not change at all under the proposed maps. Bottom line: nothing to see here; move on.



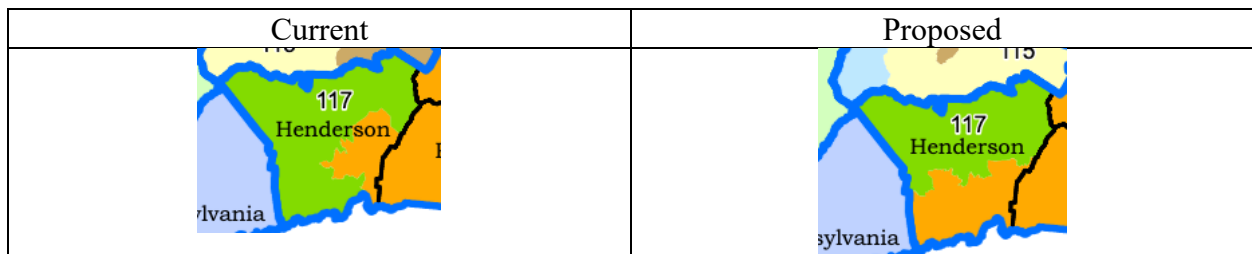
119: Republican Mike Clampitt represents this district, which includes all of Jackson, Swain and Transylvania Counties. It gave 57% of its two-party vote share to Donald Trump in 2020. It does not change at all under the proposed maps. Bottom line: nothing to see here; move on.



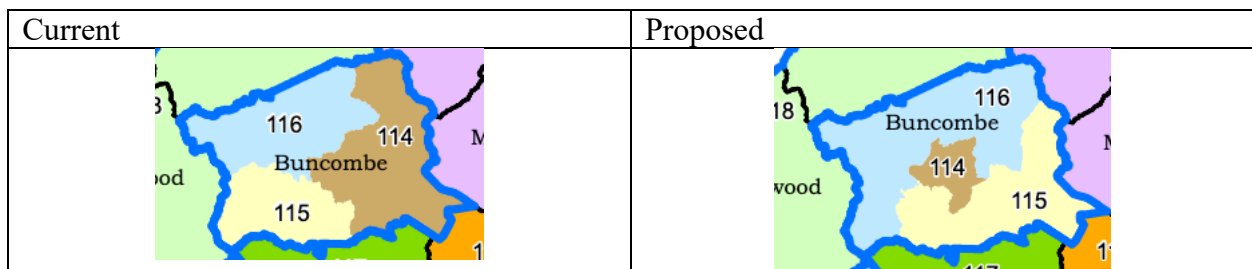
118: Republican Mark Pless represents this district, which includes all of Haywood and Madison Counties. It gave 64% of its two-party vote share to Donald Trump in 2020. It does not change at all under the proposed maps. Bottom line: nothing to see here; move on.



117: Republican Jennifer Balkcom currently represents this district which includes the Northern, Western and Southern portions of Henderson County. It gave ~58% of its two-party vote share to Donald Trump in 2020. Under the proposed map, Balkcom’s district would shift slightly. Instead of representing the outline of a C shape, she would represent roughly the Northern part of Henderson County, leaving the southern part in H-113, Jake Johnson’s district. In terms of partisanship, this shift would mean very little (still ~58% Trump). Bottom line: pay attention to this one if you live in Henderson County, as your representative might change, although in terms of partisanship it won’t give either party any more or less of an edge.



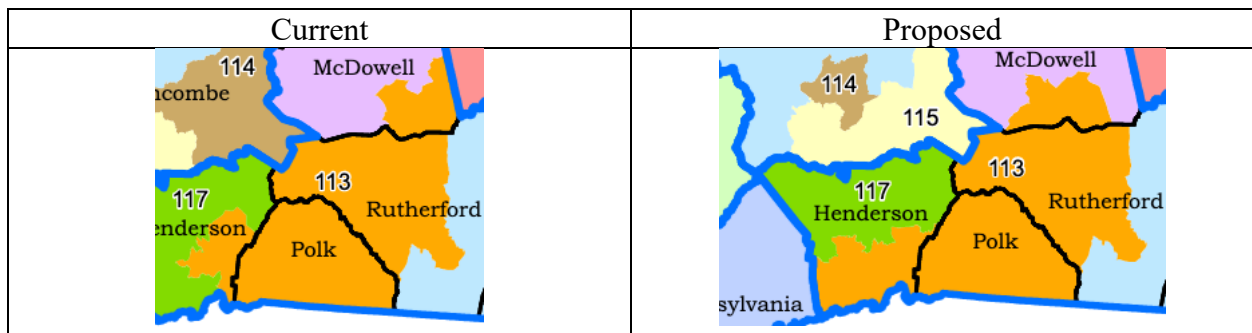
116: Here’s where it gets complicated. H116, 115 and 114 are all contained within Buncombe County. That remains—but that’s about all that remains. H116 is currently represented by Democrat Caleb Rudow. The current version of H116 gave 41% of its two-party vote for President to Donald Trump. The proposed version, however, would shift that district line dramatically—to 54% Trump. The shape of the district would also change in important ways—the shape changes so much, in fact, that the current incumbent Caleb Rudow no longer lives in 116, but now lives in the redrawn 114. Lindsey Prather, however, does live in the proposed 116, making her the incumbent. Confused yet? Me, too. Oh, and the Buncombe County Commission lines follow the state legislative lines so we could see some changes there, too. Bottom line: pay attention to this one (and the next two).



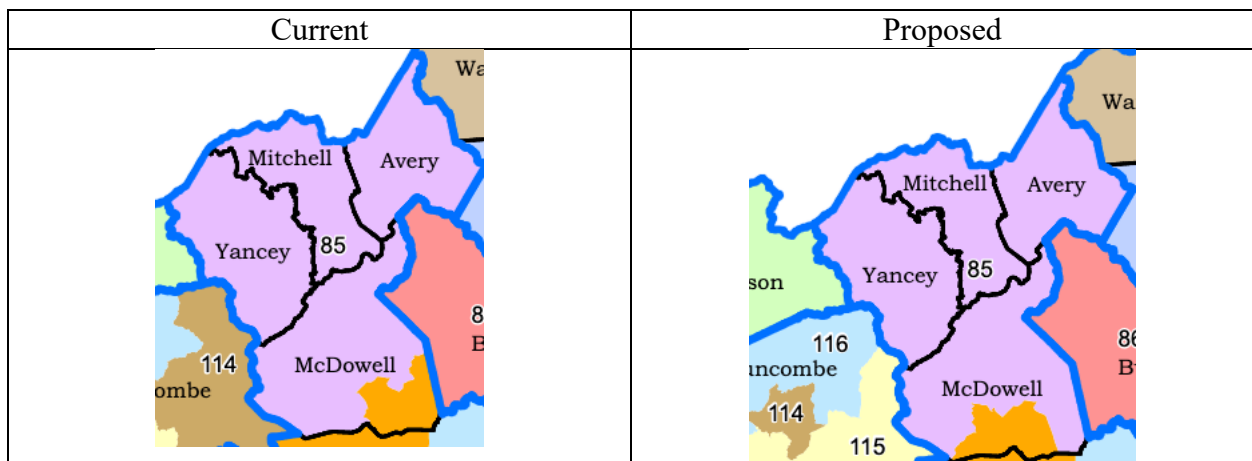
115: H115 is currently represented by Democrat Lindsey Prather. Trump garnered 43.7% of the two-party vote for President in the current H115 and 44.1% in the new district. Don’t let the small movement in partisanship fool you, however. Prather no longer lives in this district; Eric Ager will now be the incumbent in this district that should easily stay in Democratic hands. Bottom line: if you live in Buncombe County, check to see which district you’re in.

114: H114 is currently represented by Democrat Eric Ager. H114 gave 34% of its two-party vote for President to Donald Trump in 2020. The proposed map would make it even more Democratic—20% for Trump. Ager is now in 115, Prather is now in 116, so in the game of NCGA musical chairs, that puts Caleb Rudow in 114. Bottom line: if you live in Buncombe County, check to see which district you're in.

113: H113 is represented by Republican Jake Johnson. H113 currently includes most of Rutherford County, all of Polk County, a pocket in the Southeast portion of McDowell County and a pocket on the Eastern side of Henderson County. Under the proposed map, 113 will again include all of Polk, and the same portion of Rutherford. The details of what is covered in McDowell and Henderson change, however. While these changes could be critical if you live in Henderson or McDowell Counties, the partisan make-up of the district changes very little—from 66.3% Trump to 66.0% Trump. Bottom line: not super-important for partisanship in the NCGA, but pay attention to it if you live in Henderson or McDowell Counties.



H85: H85 is currently represented by Republican Dudley Greene. The current district lines include all of Avery, Mitchell and Yancey Counties, along with most of McDowell County. Avery, Mitchell and Yancey counties remain entirely in the district, although the details in McDowell County have changed slightly. In terms of partisanship, it won't make much difference—from 73.68% Trump to 73.67% Trump. Bottom line: Pay attention to the details if you live in the Southern Half of McDowell County; otherwise, there's not much to see here.



## **Additional Notes**

**Caveats:** These maps were released less than 24 hours ago. This is far from a complete description and I have not have time to check back over this. If you notice any errors, please let me know. I'll also add that this is meant to be descriptive, rather than analytical. I'm hoping this might be useful for people living in WNC to better understand how their district lines might (or might not) change and how it could affect who represent them. Nothing more.

**On County Clustering:** Statewide, roughly half of all districts changed shape in a way that results in more than a 1 percentage point shift in partisanship. The reason for this is that the Stephenson County Clustering rule provides some stability in many districts (particularly the most rural ones). Stephenson doesn't preclude the NCGAs ability to draw districts within clusters, but it does provide some guard rails in some places. To better understand what all of this means, I strongly recommend Blake Esselstyn's explainer on Stephenson:

<https://www.mapfigure.com/2020/08/04/explaining-north-carolinas-county-grouping-requirement/>

**On Measurement:** I used two-party presidential vote share in 2020 for all of these calculations. If I had chosen a different measure, I would have gotten largely the same answer. See here for an explanation about why: <https://www.oldnorthstatepolitics.com/2022/03/understanding-district-partisan-lean-in.html>

**Trust but Verify:** to get these measures, I downloaded the statpack from the NCGA web site, then used OCR to transfer the data to a csv file. About 80% of it uploaded cleanly and I adjusted the rest by hand. If you want to look over the data yourself, have at it:

<https://www.chriscooperwcu.com/s/Trump-2-party-numbers.xlsx>

**Want to dig deeper?** And if you want to go a step further and examine the statpacks, shapefiles and maps yourself, it's all available here: <https://www.ncleg.gov/Redistricting>

**Just Want the statewide congressional numbers?** Want a quick & dirty look at the partisan effects of proposed changes to the congressional maps statewide? See the next page.

**Got questions?** Drop me a note [ccooper@email.wcu.edu](mailto:ccooper@email.wcu.edu)



2020 Trump 2 Party Vote Share Under Current & Proposed NC Congressional Maps.

District	Incumbent	Inc. Party	Current	SB756	SB757
1	Don Davis	D	47	27	49
2	Deborah Ross	D	35	30	32
3	Greg Murphy	R	63	55	56
4	Valerie Foushee	D	32	58	27
5	Virginia Foxx	R	61	57	58
6	Kathy Manning	D	44	57	58
7	David Rouzer	R	56	57	58
8	Dan Bishop	R	67	56	59
9	Richard Hudson	R	54	58	57
10	Patrick McHenry	R	70	57	58
11	Chuck Edwards	R	55	56	56
12	Alma Adams	D	35	25	25
13	Wiley Nickel	D	49	58	59
14	Jeff Jackson	D	42	58	58
Predicted Party Lean			7D-7R	3D-11R	3D-10R-1?

Notes: Data from NCGA Statpack. 2-Party vote share computed by Chris Cooper.