

Presentation Pro

Magruder's American Government

CHAPTER 10

Congress



Congress

SECTION 1 The National Legislature

SECTION 2 The House of Representatives

SECTION 3 The Senate

SECTION 4 The Members of Congress

The House of Representatives

- What are the size and terms of the House of Representatives?
- How are House seats reapportioned among the States after each census?
- How can we describe a typical congressional election and congressional district?
- What are the formal and informal qualifications for serving in the House?

Size and Terms

- The exact size of the House of Representatives, currently at 435 members, is determined by Congress.
- The Constitution provides that the total number of seats in the House shall be **apportioned** (distributed) among the States on the basis of their respective populations.
- Members of the House of Representatives serve two-year terms.
- Although there have been recent movements to limit terms, there are no limits set on the number of terms a representative may serve.



Reapportionment

Article I of the Constitution directs Congress to **reapportion**—redistribute—the seats in the House after each decennial census.

- As the United States grew in population, the number of representatives in the House also grew.
- The Reapportionment Act of 1929 set the “permanent” size of the House at 435 members, and provided for “automatic reapportionment.”



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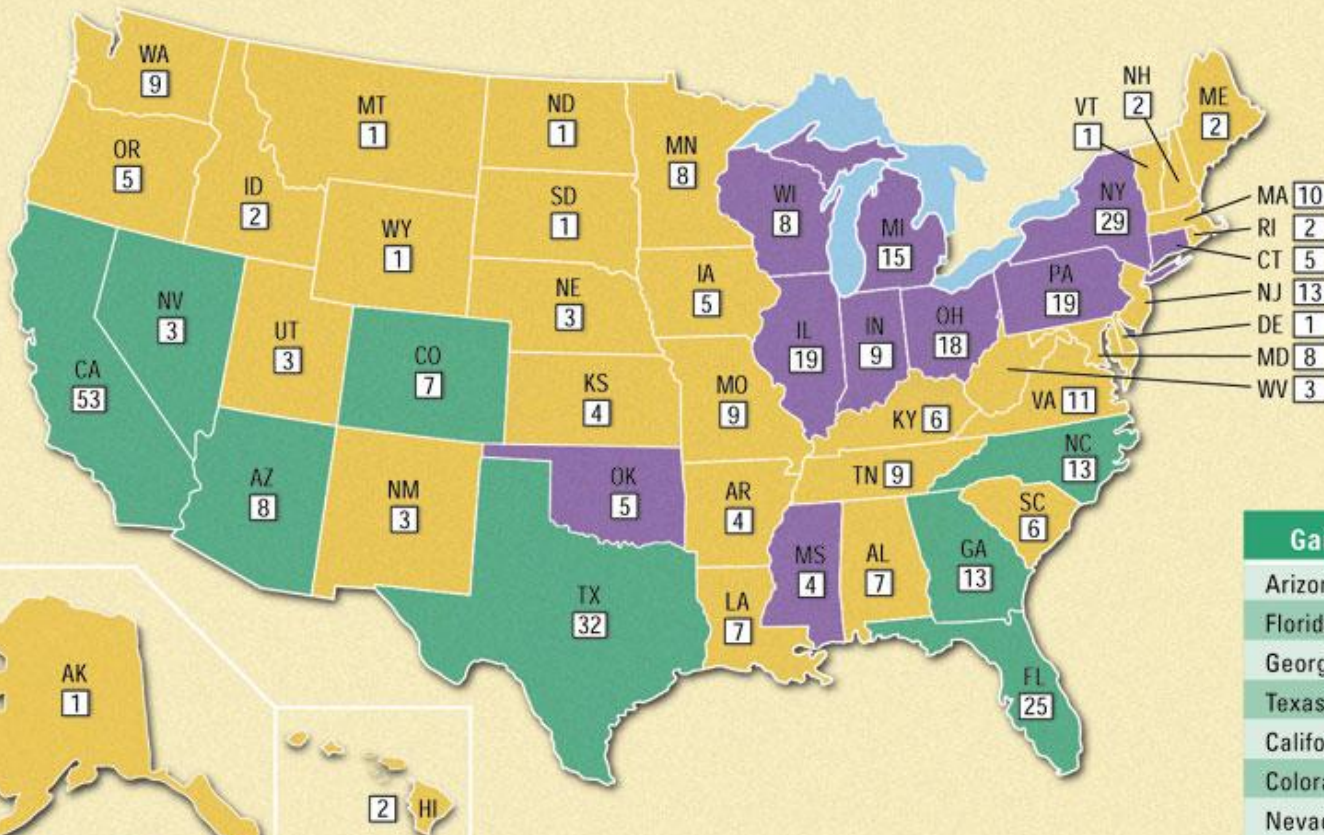
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Current Apportionment

Congressional Apportionment, 2003–2013



KEY

- Gained representation
- Lost representation
- No change
- 2 Number of Representatives

Gained Seats		Lost Seats	
Arizona	+2	New York	-2
Florida	+2	Pennsylvania	-2
Georgia	+2	Connecticut	-1
Texas	+2	Illinois	-1
California	+1	Indiana	-1
Colorado	+1	Michigan	-1
Nevada	+1	Mississippi	-1
North Carolina	+1	Ohio	-1
		Oklahoma	-1
		Wisconsin	-1

SOURCE: Census 2000

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Congressional Elections

- Congressional elections are held on the Tuesday following the first Monday in November of each even-numbered year.
- **Off-year elections** are those congressional elections held between presidential elections.



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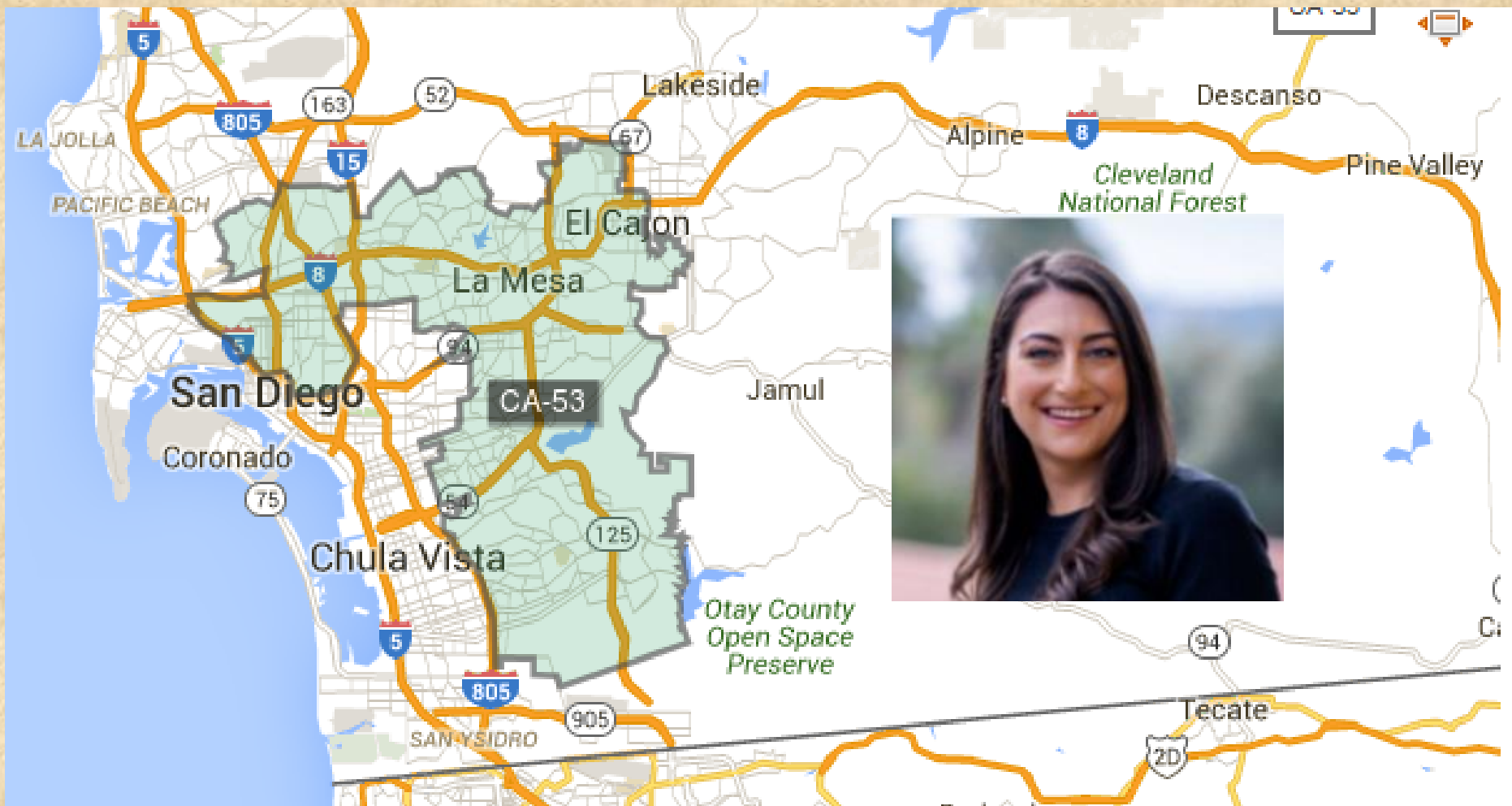
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Districts and Gerrymandering

- Under the **single-member district** arrangement, the voter's in each district elect one of the State's representatives.
- The general-ticket system, no longer in use, provided that all of a State's seats were filled **at-large**.
- Districts that have unusual shapes or even defy description have sometimes been **gerrymandered**.
- Gerrymandering refers to the act of drawing congressional districts to the advantage of the political party that controls the State legislature.



53rd Congressional District – Sara Jacobs



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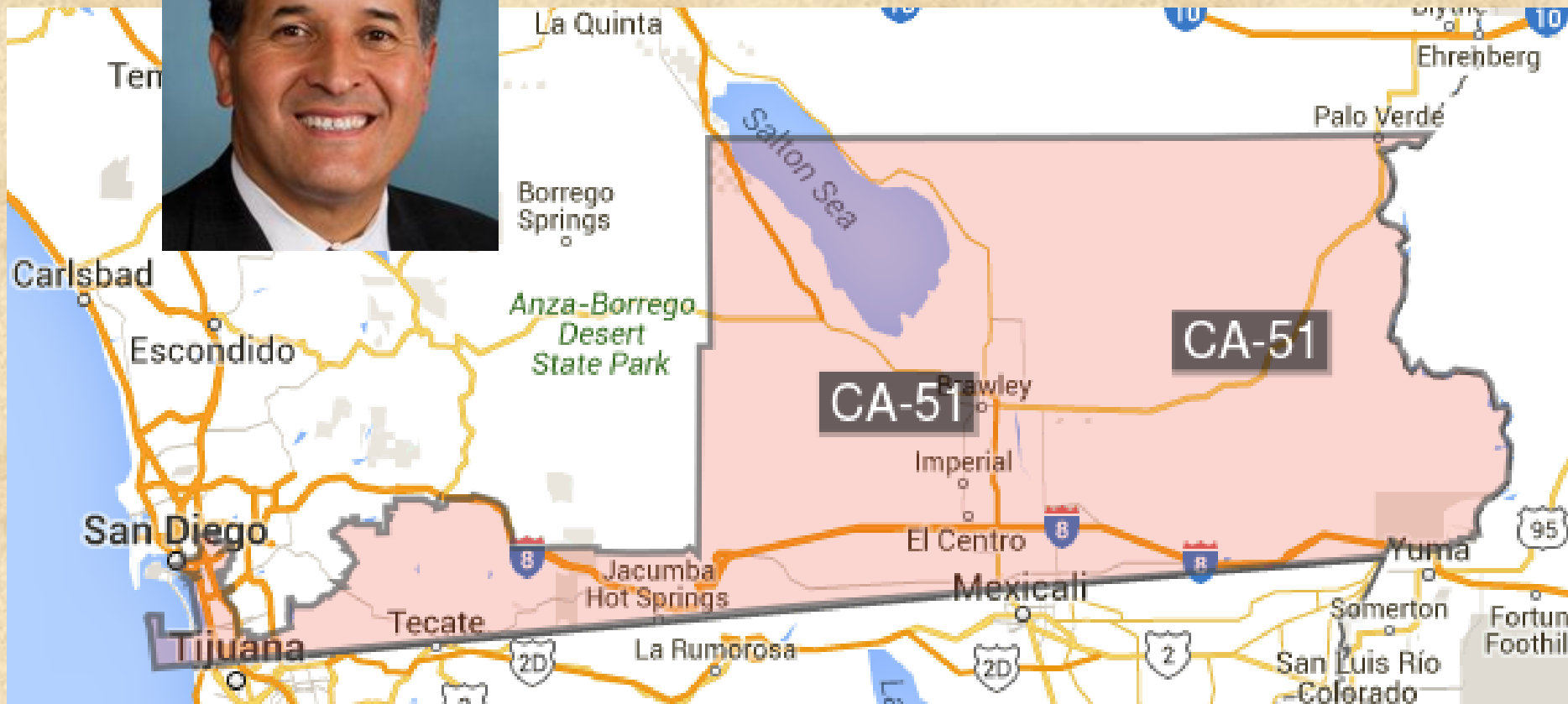
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51st Congressional District – Juan Vargas



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Qualifications for House Members

- The Constitution says that a member of the House
 - (1) must be at least 25 years of age,
 - (2) must have been a citizen of the United States for at least seven years, and
 - (3) must have been an inhabitant of the State from which he or she is elected.
- The realities of politics also require some informal qualifications, such as party identification, name familiarity, gender, ethnic characteristics, and political experience.



Section 2 Review

1. Members of the House of Representatives are elected for
 - (a) two-year terms.
 - (b) six-year terms.
 - (c) four-year terms.
 - (d) five-year terms.

2. The Constitution requires a member of Congress to be
 - (a) an inhabitant of the State from which he or she is elected.
 - (b) a property-owning male.
 - (c) a natural-born citizen.
 - (d) at least 40 years of age.

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