

White voters will dominate redrawn Calif. political districts

By Jim Sanders, Sacramento Bee

Most of California's legislators and congressional representatives will be elected over the next decade from districts dominated by white voters, the state's new political maps show.

Districts drawn by the state's first-ever redistricting commission may bolster the clout of other racial groups – particularly Latinos – but probably not end the longtime political dominance by whites.

Caucasians currently hold nearly two of every three legislative seats, for example, even though California's white population fell to below 50 percent of the state total more than a decade ago.

“The overrepresentation of whites, I think, will continue,” said Marqueece Harris-Dawson of the African American Redistricting Collaborative. “Hopefully, that will be a focal point of the redistricting process (in 2021).”

In six of every 10 new legislative and congressional districts drawn by the California Citizens Redistricting Commission, whites comprise more than 50 percent of the adult citizen population, exceeding the total of all other groups combined, according to statistics by Redistricting Partners, a research and consulting firm.

The imbalance is due largely to population distribution – not racial discrimination – analysts say, adding that candidates of any color are potential contenders in districts dominated

by their party.

“Minorities, more and more, are getting the ability to get elected almost anywhere,” said Paul Mitchell, a Democratic strategist and leader of Redistricting Partners.

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