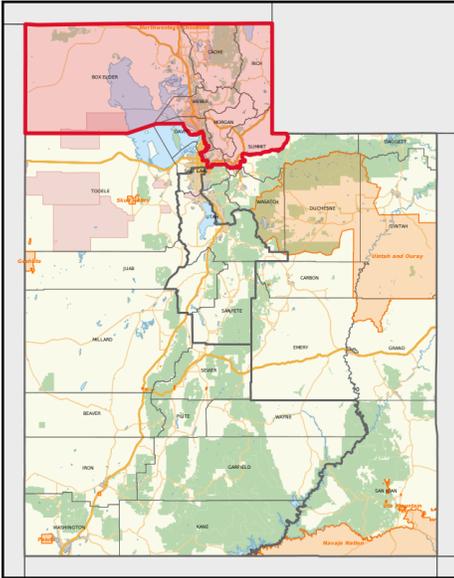


The dividing of Utah

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Utah's congressional districts

Carilyn Pointer - In Utah debates have arisen concerning the new congressional [districts](#) that were approved in 2021. At the time, it was considered to be a partisan gerrymander. Further evidence shows that the new map divides the Democratic leaning Salt Lake County, effectively diluting their votes. Gerrymandering can be explained through the concept of territory, a geographic entity that is often the cause of many conflicts. Gerrymandering is often contested, which then gives us opportunities to resolve them using legal methods at different scales, such as state or federal courts.

[Territory](#) is often defined by putting boundaries around a space and calling everything within that space a single unit. Known as territorialization, this relates to the idea of sovereignty which claims that citizens within a territory are subject to being ruled by that government. This happens on a large scale as countries claim and maintain their territories. For example, a person living in the territory of the United States is a citizen and, therefore, subject to our laws and judicial system. National territories are large, and usually further broken up into states and counties. As a democracy, the way congressional districts are broken up, or territorialized, continues to be applicable because it can affect the power of our votes which is how state laws get made. The *New York Times* reports that *gerrymandering*

or “political maps unduly favoring a candidate or political party” is outlawed. However, deciding if the political maps are truly partisan presents its own challenges.

The current problem is deciding whether this problem should be dealt with by the state courts or the U.S. Supreme Courts. Many see this as a local issue that should be dealt at the local [scale](#), whereas others see it as an issue needing a higher level of influence.

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