Democrats are strongly considering calling a special session ahead of Election Day

Democrats in the General Assembly are strongly considering summoning legislators to Richmond next week for a special session. Several sources confirmed to Virginia Scope on Wednesday that one of the special session's focuses will be redistricting.

Senate Majority Leader Scott Surovell, D-Fairfax, did not provide a comment for this story. Speaker of the House Don Scott, D-Portsmouth, and his office did not respond to a request for comment.

Virginia passed a constitutional amendment in the early 2020s establishing a redistricting commission comprised of lawmakers and citizens. The commission failed to reach consensus on maps in 2022, leaving it to the Virginia Supreme Court to draw the current lines.

According to sources, Democrats in D.C. believe they can redraw Virginia's congressional districts to gain at least two more seats in the House of Representatives.

The race to redraw congressional districts to give one party an advantage began in Texas and is picking up steam across the country. California and North Carolina have both taken actions to redraw boundaries.

Now in Virginia, where Democrats currently control both chambers, they are considering making a move of their own.

Multiple sources told Virginia Scope that some options include breaking up heavily Democratic districts to make them more competitive, while changing districts that are friendly to Republicans to give Democrats a better chance at winning.

The reason for the timing of the special session — just days before a general election — has something to do with the process for amending the constitution.

To amend or repeal an amendment, the General Assembly must pass the proposal twice, with an election for the House of Delegates in between. Then the proposal goes to all Virginia voters for a referendum.

The current theory is that if they meet and vote to amend the constitution ahead of the Nov. 4 House elections, they can meet again during the legislative session in January and complete the second vote.

If both votes occur and the amendment passes identically, a referendum can be held within 90 days, per state code.

In theory, if Democrats can come together and use their slim majority in both chambers to advance an amendment, they could have time to redraw maps beginning in April, two months before congressional primary elections are scheduled to take place. *(Don't forget I said "**In theory**" at the beginning of this paragraph.)*

There has been pushback from Democratic legislators on this process, and Senate Democrats held a caucus meeting on Wednesday night to discuss the idea.

Many legislators feel they have been kept out of the loop and are unsure of the plan.

If the plan holds, the announcement is expected sometime today.

House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries, D-NY, did not respond to a request for comment.

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