

1046-05-1653 **richard b freeman***, 1050 nber, 1050 mass avenue, cambridge, MA 02138. *Will contiguous redistricting create competitive races for legislative elections?*

Most plans that call for redistricting to create more competitive races for the House of Representatives seek to change boundaries in contiguous ways that do not resemble classic gerrymandering. However, because people of similar income or ethnicity tend to live in the same areas, there would be surprisingly little improvement in competitiveness from almost any plausible redistricting scheme that follows reasonable geographic bounds. This suggests that something beyond redistricting is needed to create greater competitiveness in political races. (Received September 16, 2008)