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Partisan Fairness in Districting. Preliminary report.

A basic principle of fairness in legislative districting is partisan symmetry: the expected number of seats that party A receives given X% of the vote should be the same as the expected number of seats that party B would receive if it received X%. We discuss applications of this principle and two places where it breaks down or needs to be extended: (1) settings where parties are geographically distributed in dissimilar ways, and (2) settings where it is not plausible that the two parties will get the same share of the vote. (Received September 11, 2008)