

[Redistricting Maps Could Mean Big Changes For Voters](#) (WSOC-TV.com – July 12, 2011)

The plan for North Carolina's new Senate and House voting districts was due out Monday, but lawmakers said they have received so much input from voters and want to ensure that the map is easily downloaded, so they postponed the release date until Tuesday. Eyewitness News spoke via Skype with Catawba College Professor of Politics Michael Bitzer to find out what he expected from the maps. "With the Republicans basically in complete control, they can draw the lines to benefit their party the most," he said. Bitzer said it could mean big changes for voters. "That means new representatives," he said. "That means voters need to learn who the candidates are all over again." The congressional redistricting maps released last week are already causing concern for some Democratic lawmakers. Congressman **Mel Watt** said his district is already about 40 percent African-American and votes Democratic, so adding predominantly African-American areas like Grier Heights to increase that percentage only takes away votes for Democrats in other districts. "They basically took that extra 10 percent African-Americans out of Larry Kissell's district and put them in my district to disadvantage him," **Watt** said. But Republican Ruth Samuelson said the changes reflect the new census. "There are more minorities in Charlotte, so his district should be more minority," she said. She said that the new Senate and House maps will also be fair and legal. "The state of North Carolina is more Republican and has more unaffiliated voters than before so the districts are going to look different than they used to look like," she said.

Watt

said he expects the state to face a lawsuit as early as September if Republicans move forward with the new districts. Bitzer said over the past 100 years, Democrats have also redesigned districts to their political advantage. For more information, [click here](#).