Federal Criteria: Voting Rights Act

• Section 2 of the federal Voting Rights Act prohibits electoral systems (including district plans), which dilute racial and language minority voting rights by denying them an equal opportunity to nominate and elect candidates of their choice.

• “Language minorities” are specifically defined in federal law to mean persons of American Indian, Asian American, Alaskan Natives or Spanish heritage.
Federal Criteria: Voting Rights Act (cont.)

“‘Packing’ refers to the practice of filling a district with a supermajority of a given group or party. ‘Cracking’ involves the splitting of a group or party among several districts to deny that group or party a majority in any of those districts.”


• Creation of minority districts required only if the minority group can form the majority in a single member district that otherwise complies with the law. Bartlett v. Strickland, 556 U.S. 1 (2009).

Four districts of even “Blue” and “Gold” party voters, OR one “packed” district of 14 Blue voters and two Gold voters with the remaining 18 Blue voters “cracked across the other three districts. The result is a 3-1 advantage for the Gold party