

# NEWS RELEASE

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## **Firm's DC Office Wins Another Major Redistricting Case**

A team of Jenner & Block attorneys in the Firm's DC office won another significant redistricting victory in the wake of the 2000 Census; this time, when a three-judge federal court adopted a new congressional district plan for Texas.

The case was a major victory for the Democrats because it prevented the Republicans from gaining approximately 6 seats in the U.S. House of Representatives and makes it likely that Democrats will continue to constitute a majority of the members of Congress from Texas.

Earlier this year, the team of lawyers convinced three federal judges in New Jersey to uphold the New Jersey Apportionment commission's redistricting plan, which also rejected proposals to dramatically change the make-up of the state's congressional delegation in favor of local Republicans.

The cases gained national significance because they were among the first redistricting cases following the 2000 Census and because of their impact on the political balance of power. The stakes in the Texas case were particular high, given the narrow majority held by the Republicans in the U.S. House of Representatives: had the Democrats lost the six seats at stake in Texas, it would have been virtually impossible for the party to regain the House in the 2002 elections.

The Texas victory was important to the voters of the state as well because the court-approved plan keeps most people in the districts where they currently reside, while adding two new districts because of the state's growing population. In doing so, the court recognized the primary role of state legislatures in redistricting efforts and a fundamental principle of judicial restraint; that is, courts should make as few independent policy judgments as possible when redrawing the boundaries of congressional districts.

The four attorneys in charge of the redistricting cases are Donald B. Verrilli Jr., the managing partner of the Firm's DC office and co-chair of its Telecommunications Law Practice; Paul M. Smith, vice-chair of the Firm's Appellate and Supreme Court Practice; and Partners Sam Hirsch and Tom Perrelli. In the Texas case, they were aided by Partners Deanne Maynard and Bruce Spiva