



Pennsylvania Conference of Teamsters

Strength in Numbers 95,000

LEGISLATIVE ACTION ALERT

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GOP begins advancing new plans to remake Pennsylvania courts

BAD FOR THE UNION

HARRISBURG — Republicans who control the state Legislature on Monday began advancing a new plan to remake Pennsylvania's courts, the latest GOP strategy that could cut short the state Supreme Court's Democratic majority.

The House Judiciary Committee voted along party lines for two proposals to amend the state constitution, one to limit state Supreme Court justices to two terms and another to make the justices and judges at all levels run for re-election in partisan elections if they want to serve another term.

Democrats accused Republicans of trying to politicize the courts and protested that the committee had held no hearings on the proposals before passing them.

Currently, state Supreme Court justices and lower-court judges serve 10-year terms, without limit on the number, until they reach the mandatory retirement age of 75.

They are elected in partisan elections to a first term, but run for subsequent terms in nonpartisan retention elections where they face no opponent, only an up-or-down vote on general election ballots.

Democrats have held a majority on the state Supreme Court since 2016 and, under the current rules, that majority might last well beyond 2030.

Republicans have complained bitterly about the court's decisions, including in election-related cases last year, and other GOP-penned plans targeting the courts are pending in the Legislature.

Amendments to the state's constitution must pass the Legislature in two consecutive two-year sessions before going to voters in a statewide referendum.

Because of years of jerrymandering in PA, Republicans have gained control of legislative. senatorial and congressional districts in PA. When the Republican Party controlled the PA Supreme Court there was never any issue or complaint on its structure or how judges are elected. Now, since we have a court that protects workers' rights, the Republican Party wants to change that. In the jerrymandered state we are in, changing the way judges would be elected would be bad for the union.

Pennsylvania Party Control: 1992-2021

One year of a Democratic trifecta • Twelve years of Republican trifectas see chart next page

Year	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
<u>Governor</u>	D	D	I	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	R	R	R	R	D	D	D	D	D	D	D
<u>Senate</u>	R	D	I	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
<u>House</u>	D	D	I	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	D	D	D	D	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R