

In Republican Win, Supreme Court Retains G.O.P. District in New York

In an emergency ruling, the justices preserved the district of a Republican congresswoman, despite a lower-court ruling that it illegally diluted the power of minority voters.



A voter at a polling center on Staten Island in October

March 2, 2026

The Supreme Court on Monday announced that it would keep in place a New York congressional map, overruling a judge who had found that the map violated the Constitution by diluting the power of Black and Latino voters.

The emergency decision, which was unsigned and did not include a vote count or reasoning, as is typical in such cases, was a victory for Republicans, and may help them keep a seat in Congress.

Although the court's decision is temporary, allowing the old map to remain in place as legal appeals continue, it means the map will most likely be used for the midterms.

Representative Nicole Malliotakis, a Republican whose district encompasses Staten Island and parts of South Brooklyn, had filed an emergency application with the Supreme Court asking the justices to pause a state judge's ruling requiring her district lines to be redrawn. Such an effort would have endangered her seat.

In a statement, Ms. Malliotakis thanked the justices, writing that they had "stopped the voters on Staten Island and in southern Brooklyn from being stripped of their ability to elect a representative who reflects their values."

The legal battle focuses on control of New York's 11th Congressional District, the only district in New York City held by a Republican. It is the latest in [a series of midcycle redistricting cases](#) to

The New York Times

come before the justices on their emergency docket after President Trump urged Republicans to draw new maps that could bolster the party's chances to retain control of the House, where Republicans hold a razor-thin majority.

Texas redrew its maps, and California responded with a ballot measure overwhelmingly approved by voters that redrew the state's maps to favor Democrats.

In both cases, the legal fight zoomed up to the Supreme Court on its emergency docket, and the justices cleared the way for the states to use their new maps in the midterms.

The battle over the New York map also takes place against the backdrop of a major voting rights case currently pending before the justices.

In that case, *Louisiana v. Callais*, the justices are considering whether Louisiana violated the Constitution when it [created a second majority-minority district](#). A ruling could come at any time, and depending on the outcome, the case could [scramble the country's congressional maps](#).

The New York case appeared to break along partisan lines, with the court's three liberal justices all dissenting from the decision.

In a 13-page dissent, Justice Sonia Sotomayor, joined by Justices Elena Kagan and Ketanji Brown Jackson, criticized the court's decision and warned that the Supreme Court had inserted itself into the politics of a heated midterm election.

"By granting these applications, the court thrusts itself into the middle of every election-law dispute around the country, even as many states redraw their congressional maps ahead of the 2026 election," Justice Sotomayor wrote.

She added that she feared the decision would lead to a flood of emergency requests for the court to step into legal battles "without even bothering to ask the state courts first."

In a concurrence, Justice Samuel A. Alito Jr. wrote that he supported the decision to block the lower court's order and keep the current district map in place. By focusing on the voting power of minorities, he said, the lower court had "blatantly discriminated on the basis of race," calling it "unadorned racial discrimination" that violated the Constitution.

The fight over the New York district map began last October, when four New Yorkers [sued to challenge](#) the district held by Ms. Malliotakis. The case, filed by Elias Law Group, which has handled much of the Democratic Party's redistricting litigation, signaled that New York had entered the national race to redraw maps before the midterms.

The challengers argued that the district map, which was [redrawn in 2024](#), unconstitutionally diluted the power of Black and Latino voters. In January, a Manhattan judge found that the district had a pattern of "discrimination against minority voters."

The judge, Justice Jeffrey H. Pearlman, a Democrat who previously served as special counsel to Gov. Kathy Hochul, also a Democrat, [ordered the state](#) to convene the Independent Redistricting Commission to redraw the district maps.

The New York Times

The emergency application by Ms. Malliotakis was filed on Feb. 12 to Justice Sotomayor, who oversees such cases for that region of the country.

In [a brief](#), lawyers for the congresswoman asked the justices to restore the district map approved in 2024 by lawmakers. The lower-court judge found that the map illegally diluted the votes of minorities. The judge said it made it difficult for Black and Latino voters to elect their preferred candidate — often a Democrat, based on past voting habits — even though they represented a growing share of the district.

The Black and Latino population of Ms. Malliotakis’s district has risen to 30 percent from 11 percent over the past 40 years, according to the court filings. Even so, the 11th District has become more conservative. It was the only one in the city Mr. Trump won in 2016. In 2020, the district favored Mr. Trump over Joseph R. Biden Jr. by 24 percentage points.

The same year, Ms. Malliotakis beat the incumbent, Representative Max Rose, a moderate Democrat.

Lawyers for Ms. Malliotakis argued that the lower-court ruling had caused “chaos and uncertainty” that not only jeopardized “the rights of candidates and political parties to participate in a timely and fair election process,” but also ran the risk of “disenfranchising voters, who may be left without clear information about their districts or representation.”

Lawyers for the Trump administration weighed in on the case, [siding](#) with the Republican lawmaker. They asked the justices to overturn the lower court and keep the old map.

They argued that it was different — and simpler — than the Texas and California redistricting fights, and that the state judge had “ordered an open and unabashed racial gerrymander” by ordering New York to swap out a district map “where the candidate backed by white voters usually wins” for a district map “where the candidate backed by Black and Latino voters usually wins.”

In response, lawyers for plaintiffs who challenged the map asserted that it was “premature” for the justices to get involved in the map fight, and that Ms. Malliotakis had leapfrogged the New York State appeals process in hopes of getting a more favorable ruling from the Supreme Court.

In a statement, Edward F. Cox, the chairman of the New York State Republican Party, celebrated the decision, calling the lower court’s decision “a full-blown racial gerrymander.”

“The case was a disgrace,” he said, which he placed in the history of Democrats’ attempts to redistrict to their advantage.

Lawyers for the New Yorkers who sued did not respond to requests for comment, nor did Governor Hochul or New York’s Democratic Party.