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As Illinois House members react to the latest federal corruption indictments, several representatives have raised concerns about the fact that next year is a redistricting year as they weigh whether they will support Michael Madigan as House Speaker.

Indeed, next year is a redistricting year and Speaker and Democratic Party of Illinois Chairman Madigan long has opposed meaningful remap reform. The ongoing federal investigation should only underscore that the need is paramount for ethical and transparent redistricting that prioritizes the people of Illinois over political interests.

The decisions made in redistricting frequently determine the fate of elected officials. Those who draw maps have inordinate power over the members, not only when it comes to drawing districts, but also on myriad policy votes like energy and utility regulation.

One of those who was indicted last week is former ComEd lobbyist John Hooker. Hooker played a leading role in preventing an independent redistricting commission option from being presented to Illinois voters several years ago. Hooker worked closely with longtime Madigan lawyer Michael Kasper to block an amendment to allow independent redistricting. Furthermore, Hooker went to great lengths to suggest that ending gerrymandering would somehow diminish the creation of Black and Brown districts. In fact, as it should, federal and state law already prioritizes and protects the creation of minority districts, no matter who draws them.

The Better Government Association recently [published maps](#), produced independently, using 2019 population figures and nonpartisan redistricting principles, and the mapmakers were able to keep the same number of districts expected to elect Black officials as currently exist. Those mapmakers also were able to draw a majority Latino congressional district and a second congressional district with enough Latino voters to strongly influence the outcome of elections.

Time and again, Illinoisans have made clear they want independent redistricting, not a process tainted by insider politics. Earlier this year, CHANGE Illinois commissioned a scientific survey conducted by Fako & Associates that found 75 percent of Illinois voters want an end to gerrymandering. Even more significant, 82 percent of Democrats surveyed statewide said they wanted an end to gerrymandering.

The ongoing corruption investigation reaching Madigan's inner circle and the indictment of Hooker emphasize the need for ethical, transparent redistricting next year. Any approval of tainted, partisan maps likely will prompt costly and lengthy lawsuits.

CHANGE Illinois asks all those serving in both the Illinois House and Senate to support ethical, transparent redistricting to start to restore Illinoisans' trust in their state government.