

## **Redistricting with Endogenous Candidates**

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*Abstract :*

I study partisan gerrymandering when district composition affects candidates' policy positions and voters' behavior. In the U.S., primary elections determine competing candidates, with districts' ideological composition shaping nominee selection. Thus redistricting affects not only which party wins but also candidates' ideologies. I find that classical gerrymandering strategies backfire when candidates emerge endogenously, particularly where extreme voters may select non-viable candidates. However, when properly designed to account for voter affiliation and preference intensity, gerrymandering becomes more powerful than traditional approaches. Using optimal transport theory, I characterize the optimal redistricting plan, which maximizes ideological distance between competing candidates. I analyze implications for Congressional polarization and minority representation