

Schwarzenegger says he's 'pumped up' for nationwide redistricting reform

By Christopher Ingraham June 6



Arnold Schwarzenegger attends "The Expendables 3" photocall during the Cannes Film Festival on May 18, 2014. (Andreas Rentz/Getty Images)

Hasta la vista, gerrymandering.

Yesterday, Arnold Schwarzenegger dropped into [a Reddit discussion](#) about [a recent Wonkblog post on redistricting reform](#). The Governor said he was "pumped up" to see the issue getting some national traction. Schwarzenegger was [a champion](#) of California's redistricting reform measures - as Rep. Alan Lowenthal [told me last week](#), his support was the key to getting those measures passed by a reluctant legislature.

Here's the full text of Schwarzenegger's comments:

Redistricting reform isn't a sexy issue, so it is wonderful to see this here. I LOVE to see all of these upvotes for this issue. Thank you, reddit!

I can't tell you how important this is to me, and the most important thing is making sure everybody knows about it - which you are all doing. Anytime you see the things that poll higher than Congress - like lice or hemorrhoids - you have to wonder how we re-elect over 90% of our representatives every two years. It's because the system is rigged to benefit the politicians instead of the voters.

After California's reform, we saw real turnover in our congressional delegation for the first time in 2012. Incumbents actually lost - to members of their own party and to the other party. It doesn't matter what party you vote for, as long as we keep sending the most extreme politicians to Washington, the gridlock will continue. Stopping gerrymandering helps to prevent safe districts that often encourage extremism.

I hope this is just the start of some serious momentum for reform all over the country. Thanks again for sharing it.

After reddit user "triceratopses" responded "I don't think any normal person out there really supports gerrymandering," Schwarzenegger replied:

You're right. The key is selling reform to people (which is why I was so pumped up to see it here). It isn't easy - both parties fight you, so you have to be persistent. We failed to get it passed over and over and over before we finally won.

I still remember hearing from the Senate leaders from both parties about redistricting reform. They were always fighting each other tooth and nail, so to hear them laughing and getting along with each other was a little shocking - and it was to tell me this was a lost cause.

Schwarzenegger's especially right about one thing: momentum for any sort of redistricting reform at the national level is not going to come from Congress itself. Most members don't think it's in their own interest to legislate themselves out of the redistricting process. As in California, change at the national level would require a combination of widespread popular pressure and strong support from the executive branch.

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