

FAIR DISTRICTS PA

REFORM THE RULES VIRTUAL TOWN HALL December 2, 2020

Dysfunction by Design: How State House Rules Game the System, Silence Debate and Damage Democracy

Do you find it frustrating to work on the same legislation year after year with no progress? You are not imagining it. 93% of bills in Pennsylvania go nowhere. One of the major causes of this dysfunction is the rules which will be voted on in January when the new session begins. The PA House Rules game the System, silence debate and damage democracy. The Rules, HR 1, are presented on the first day of the session and voted on in the same day. No amendments are allowed to HR 1. They are written by the majority party and give party leaders control. (For example, on the House web site, one can find the 1019-20 House Rules. The 78 rules take up 76 pages. Some of the rules have multiple parts.). House members are expected vote for it with little or no review.

The best source of research for anyone interested in this very unfair situation is to go to the Fair Districts PA web site. Also, the entire presentation of the Reform the Rules Virtual Town Hall can be found on the Fair Districts PA you tube channel.

AAUW has been advocating for bills in various important areas: Pay equity, Paid Leave, and the Minimum Wage for many years and we just can't seem to get anywhere. We have also supported Fair District PA's gerrymandering proposals and Education Voter of Pennsylvania's positions regarding school funding and cyber schools funding. It seems that AAUW must now look into the effect of the House Rules (The Senate has rules too) in order to get anywhere with the issues we support.

You can follow up at the [Fair Districts PA website](#) to learn more about the Reform the Rules Town Hall. There are several suggestions as to what people can do to help. The more that is known about this unfair and undemocratic situation, the better. Not all states suffer from this lack of transparency and power imbalance that we suffer from in Pennsylvania.