

# Proposal for a Local Citizens' Redistricting Commission

Stephen Volan, Member, District VI, Common Council, City of Bloomington, 02/02/2020

*Based on the Indiana Coalition for Independent Redistricting's Recommendation to the Indiana General Assembly's Special Interim Committee on Redistricting*

~~Indiana~~The city should establish, every ten years after the decennial census, a citizens' redistricting commission with the duty of drawing ~~congressional and state~~ local legislative districts.

The commission should consist of nine members. Three of the members will be affiliated with the Republican Party, three will be affiliated with the Democratic Party and three will not be affiliated with either of the two major political parties in the state.

All registered voters of ~~Indiana~~the city not otherwise disqualified may apply to serve on the commission.

~~The Legislative Services Agency~~City Clerk will establish and maintain an on-line process for Indiana voters to apply for commission service. All materials and applications submitted to the ~~LSA~~Clerk for this process will be public records and easily accessible via the website established by ~~LSA~~the Clerk.

~~The Legislative~~Common Council's executive committee, made up of the president, vice-president and parliamentarian, shall review all of the applications that are submitted and in a public meeting choose the ~~eighteen~~**thirty applicants** who they believe are the most qualified to serve. ~~Ten~~Six of those chosen must be affiliated with the Republican Party, ~~ten~~six must be affiliated with the Democratic Party and ~~ten~~six must not be affiliated with either of the two major political parties in the state. The pool of ~~thirty~~**thirtyeighteen** should reasonably reflect the racial, ethnic, gender, age, and geographic diversity of the ~~state~~city.

A random or lottery selection should be used to select nine members from the ~~thirty~~**thirtyeighteen**, three from each pool, to create an overall commission of nine.

The full commission should then select one of its members as chair, who must be one of the members not affiliated with either of the two major political parties.

## Limitations on Service

Certain individuals are not eligible to serve on the redistricting commission. These include:

- *Anyone who is currently an office holder in the state of Indiana or who has held public office within the past ten years.*
- *Anyone who has been a candidate for public office within the past ten years*
- *Anyone who is a staff member for a public official or has been a staff member for a public official within the past ten years.*
- *Anyone who is currently an official with any political party or has been an official with a political party within the past ten years. (This would not include people serving as precinct committee persons)*

- *Anyone who has contributed more than \$2000 to any political candidate within the past five years*
- *Registered lobbyists*
- *Immediate family members of any excluded person*

## **Commission Process**

All commission meetings and materials will be subject to the Indiana Open Door Law and the Access to Public Records Act.

The commission will establish a website that the public can use to draw their own maps and submit to the commission for consideration. The website will also be used for the public to submit comments on proposed maps.

The commission must hold at least three public hearings in different geographic regions of the state/city both before and after draft maps are drawn.

For each ~~h-Congressional and state city~~ legislative district drawn, a narrative description will be provided that provides the rationale used for drawing the district.

Approval of a redistricting plan requires an affirmative vote from at least six of the nine commission members.

## **Redistricting Criteria**

- *Districts must be substantially equal in population.*
- *Districts must comply with the U.S. Voting Rights Act and other applicable federal law.*
- *Districts must be contiguous.*
- *The home addresses of incumbent elected officials or anyone else shall not be considered.*
- *Whenever possible, communities of interest should not be split into multiple districts. These communities include but are not limited to political subdivisions, neighborhoods, school districts, historic districts and other areas where residents share common traits and concerns.*
- *Where it does not negatively impact the above criteria, districts shall be drawn to encourage political competition.*
- *Where it does not negatively impact the above criteria, districts shall be drawn to be geographically compact.*

## **Legislative Approval**

The ~~General Assembly~~Council will be given the option of making slight adjustments to the maps submitted to them by the commission. Changes are limited to moving no more than 2% of the population of any district and must include a narrative description of why such changes are in the public interest.

Adoption of the maps by the ~~General Assembly~~Council will require a two-thirds majority.

If the ~~General Assembly~~Council rejects the maps submitted by the commission, they go back to the commission with recommendations by the ~~legislature~~Council.

If the ~~General Assembly~~Council rejects a second round of maps from the commission, the responsibility for redistricting will fall to the ~~Indiana Supreme Court~~Monroe County Commissioners?.