

Desired Team

Members with interest, skills and experience in one or more of the following:

- Research
- Data Analysis (including GIS)
- Political Process
- Public Outreach
- Graphic and Web Design

Objectives

- Engage volunteer sector in solving complex multi-faceted issues with a technological element.
- Create a momentum for reform of Illinois' redistricting process.
- Recommend a process that provides transparency and media and public awareness and review.
- Engage in political process to achieve reasonable adoption.

Background

Since the US Supreme Court "One Person-One Vote" rulings in the early 1960's, after each decennial census, Illinois adjusts congressional and legislative districts so that equal representation is maintained as different areas of the state grow, maintain or decline. Similarly, many local governments have apportioned districts or wards and must adjust those boundaries.

In Illinois, redistricting has been a politicized process of balancing the interests of political parties and officeholders. Similar to legislation, a redistricting is passed by both houses and approved by the governor. When the process is dominated by one political party, that is with control of the Governor's office, Senate and House; districts are designed for the party's advantage. When the Governor's Office, Senate and House are not controlled by one party, redistricting can be accomplished through compromise. If compromise fails, the 1970 Illinois constitution requires a random drawing of the deciding vote on a commission. This occurred in 1981 and 2001 and the winning party created a map that ensured the party's dominance.

A coalition of advocacy groups is promoting the concept of an electoral commission that is in use in other states. Designed to be neutral, the electoral commission adopts the new districts for Congress and State Senate and House. The following proposal is conceived to improve redistricting under both structures by creating transparency with competing independent redistricting proposals.

Starting Proposal

Redistricting with Transparency introduces steps that allow scrutiny by the public and in particular the media, at key points throughout. The adopted redistricting results from a map and analysis that is unchanged after the last round of scrutiny. A version of this procedure can be applied wherever there are districts or wards in counties, municipalities, or other political units of the state.

The process is as follows:

1. Through an open solicitation, a designated authority invites institutions, organizations and individuals to submit proposals to become independent redistricting analysts and create redistricting maps with supporting measurements and documentation.
2. The designated authority selects at least two (2) but not more than five (5) qualified independent redistricting analysts and contracts with them to complete the work in an exemplary and timely fashion.
3. At a set time after the release of the appropriate Census data, each of the independent redistricting analysts publishes and publicizes, online and in print, a redistricting map for the U.S House of Representatives and the Illinois Senate and House. Each map is supported by measures of equality and representation and other documentation as agreed to in the proposal acceptance.
4. The public, the media and public officials perform a comparative review and evaluation of the redistricting proposals, with public meetings near the end of the review period.
5. The independent redistricting analyst may revise its redistricting proposals based upon input, which would be then subject to additional public review.
6. The analysts submit their scrutinized redistricting proposals to the designated authority or authorities.
7. The designated authority or authorities adopt one proposal, which must be unchanged from last public review.

Research

- Review research and identify and review Federal, Illinois, and other state constitutional, statutory, court decisions and case law on redistricting with particular emphasis on fairness, representativeness, including minority populations.
- Summarize the range of parameters of a quality redistricting process.
- Identify outreach methods and options to engage the political structure.
- Identify tools and measures that are, could be or should be utilized in a redistricting process.
- Consider those that may be incorporated in data and mapping systems such as a geographic information system.
- Identify sources of data from US Census and elsewhere and create usable tables.
- Determine types of measures and data that should not be utilized in creation of districts. (Does not preclude use by reviewers, media and public in commenting upon or comparing competing proposals.)
- Develop and test reapportionment or redistricting procedures utilizing Census and other data from prior redistricting's (e.g. 2010 and 2000 or earlier) and best estimates for the 2020 cycle.
- Prepare example maps, data tables and evaluations with respect to developed criteria.

Analyst Qualifications

- Create a process for determining organizations and/or individuals who can qualify to participate as independent redistricting analysts.
 - Minimum Qualifications of Organization and of Key Personnel
 - Minimum Technical Qualifications and Capabilities
 - Conflict of Interest
 - Integrity Commitment

Scope of Work

- Prepare a scope of work to guide potential independent redistricting analysts in preparation of proposals. (Proposals may expand upon minimum requirements.)
 - Schedule and expected work flow and timing with respect to US Census data releases.
 - Outreach requirements for public scrutiny of redistricting proposal
 - Minimal criteria for description of proposed redistricting; including maps, data tables, evaluations and comparisons
 - Cost estimate procedures and forms
 - Proposal evaluation criteria