



Washington State  
Redistricting Commission

# **Your Voice. Your Vote. Redistricting 2011**

Redrawing congressional and legislative  
districts in Washington State

# What is redistricting?

- Revising the boundaries of voting districts
  - So that,
    - Citizens have equal representation
    - Based on 2010 Census data



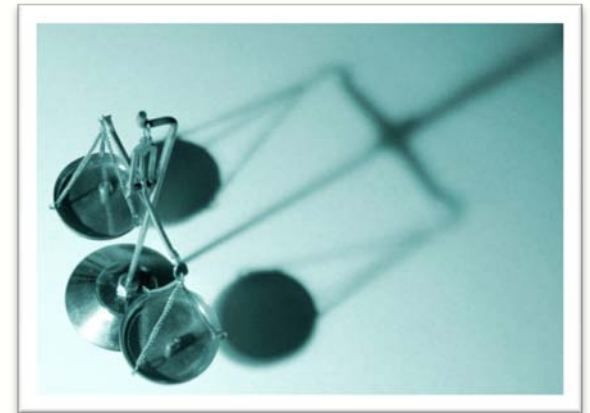
# Who does the redistricting?

- Washington State Redistricting Commission
- County legislative authorities



# What laws address redistricting?

- U.S. Constitution – Article I, Section 2
- U.S. Voting Rights Law
- Washington State Constitution – Article II, Section 43
  - Amendment to State Constitution
  - Adopted by voters in 1983
- State Legislation
  - 44.05 RCW and Implementing Rules 417 WAC



# How has redistricting changed over the years?

**1889**  
The state Constitution requires that the Legislature redistrict based on "the number of inhabitants" after each U.S. Census.

Pre-1950s

**1931**  
Citizens complain that representation is badly apportioned and debate using an initiative to redraw district boundaries.

**1954**  
The League of Women Voters proposes its own redistricting initiative—Initiative 199—after legislators battle along party lines to redraw voting boundaries.

1950s

**1956**  
Initiative 199 passes, linking redistricting to population trends in the state. But in the next session, the Legislature amends the resulting redistricting plan significantly.

**1958**  
The League of Women Voters proposes an amendment to the state Constitution that would establish a commission to take over redistricting if the Legislature failed to quickly adopt a redistricting plan. Voters reject the amendment.

**1960s**  
The League of Women Voters proposes another initiative to improve redistricting. The federal court gets involved after finding that the districts drawn in 1957 were discriminatory. The Legislature takes three years to pass compromise legislation that satisfies federal justices.

1960s

**1970s**  
The U.S. District Court finds that the 1965 redistricting legislation is unconstitutional. The state is restricted from holding further elections under the existing law. The court gives the state until February 25, 1972, to create a fair redistricting plan. The Legislature fails to meet the deadline, and the court draws the redistricting plan for the state.

1970s

**1980s**  
In 1982, growing weary of the constant battles, the Legislature proposes a bill to create an independent, bipartisan redistricting committee to begin work in 1991. But facing another court imposed 90-day mandate, it appoints a temporary five-commissioner panel, which successfully meets the 1983 redistricting deadline.

1980s

**1983**  
Voters approve a ballot measure to amend the state Constitution and institute the commission. Washington becomes the third state in the U.S. to redistrict by commission.

1990s

**1991**  
The first Redistricting Commission meets and successfully creates a redistricting plan by the constitutional deadline.

2000s

**2001**  
The second Redistricting Commission generates a redistricting plan by the constitutional deadline.

**2011**  
The third Redistricting Commission convenes.

2011



# How does the Commission work?

- New commission appointed every year ending in 1
- Four members appointed by two largest political parties in House and Senate
- The non-voting Chair is appointed by the four commissioners
- Listen to people and gather ideas and input
- Work with map specialists to draft plans
- Agrees on a redistricting plan by Jan 1, 2012
- Must disband by June 2012

# What makes Washington's process work?

- Bipartisan
- Public can participate, and submit plans
- There are guidelines for drawing the boundaries
- Firm deadline
- One of only 11 states with a commission
- Commissioners cannot be a legislator or lobbyist or seek public office for two years following completion

# What if the deadlines are missed?

- If deadlines are missed or an agreement isn't reached in time, the State Supreme Court steps in and must adopt a plan by March 1, 2012





# What is the Role of the Supreme Court

- ✓ Keeps the process moving if appointment deadlines are missed.
- ✓ Adopts a plan if the Commission can't agree by the deadline.
- ✓ Hears challenges to the approved plan
- ✓ -----challenges to Redistricting plan takes precedence over all court matters

# What about Commission staff?

- Collect, format, and provide public access to census data, electoral data, and precinct and other official geographic data
- Respond to public, media, governmental inquiries and requests
- Provide support for Commission meetings
- Ensure public comments reach commissioners
- Prepare and publish a report with the plan

# How can I make my voice heard?

- Attend a forum in person or via the webcast
- Tell us what you think is most important about your community—in person, over the web, fax, email
- Follow us on the Internet:
  - Website
  - Facebook
  - Twitter
  - Listserv

# How do I submit my ideas about boundaries?

- Draw a map and send it to us by **August 15, 2011**
- All districts or any part of any district—you draw the line
- Create a plan using commission software – available in Olympia
- Submit a plan electronically (map or table).
- Submit plan on maps provided by commission
- Questions about plan submission?  
360-786-0770 or [www.redistricting.wa.gov](http://www.redistricting.wa.gov)

# Questions?

