
Executive Summary

At 9:55 p.m. on Sunday, January 1, 2012, the four voting members of the Washington State Redistricting Commission approved the final version of the Washington State Redistricting Plan (files, C-JOINTSUB_2-1 and L-JOINTSUB_3-2). The plan was transmitted to Legislative leadership at 10:35 p.m. that same day. This is the final report to the Legislature, published on Monday, January 9, 2012.

This report was prepared by the Washington State Redistricting Commission in accordance with the requirements of RCW 44.05.080 (7.) It includes a map of each congressional and legislative district; tables showing the population and percentage deviation from the average district population for each district; the criteria used in developing the plan; estimated costs incurred by counties for adjusting precinct boundaries; and copies of the final signed resolution of the Commission.

2010 Census

According to the 2010 Census, the population in Washington State grew by 14.1 percent to 6,724,540 persons over the past decade. Washington's population growth relative to the other states' population changes made the state eligible for a tenth congressional district.

The median age of Washington's population in 2010 was 37.3 years and the ratio of males to females overall was near equal at 99.3 percent. Twenty-three and one half percent of the population was under 18 years of age. People 18 to 44 years of age were the largest group measured and comprise 37.1 percent of the population. Twelve and three-tenths percent of Washington's population was 65 years old and over, an increase from 11.2 percent in 2000.

Washington's total minority population, defined as all non-white races plus persons of Hispanic or Latino origin, now comprises 27.5 percent of the state's population, compared with 21.1 percent ten years ago.

Washington's Hispanic or Latino population was the fastest growing minority group, increasing 71.2 percent from a decade ago to a population of 755,790 in 2010. Persons of Hispanic or Latino origin (of any race) now represent 11.2 percent of the state's total population, and comprise more than 50% of the populations in Franklin and Adams Counties.

The racial breakdown for Washington State includes 77.3 percent "White", 7.8 percent "Asian and Pacific Islanders", 3.6 percent "Black" or "African Americans", 1.5 percent "American Indian and Alaska Natives." The categories "multiracial" (two or more races) and "some other race" combined, make up the remaining 9.9 percent.

Commission background and process

The 2011 decennial redistricting is just the third time in Washington's history that redistricting has been done by an independent commission. The redistricting commission was created by a voter-approved constitutional amendment in 1983. Const. art. II § 43 assigns the responsibility for rebalancing legislative and congressional district boundaries to an independent, five-member bipartisan commission, whose voting members are appointed by the legislative leadership every ten years.

Washington is unique among states in that the commission-appointed chair does not vote on the plan. Rather, the four legislatively-appointed Commissioners must come to a bipartisan agreement to pass a plan. If they fail to pass a plan by January 1 of the year ending in "2", the job of redistricting is assigned to the State Supreme Court.



Early in 2011 following the 2010 federal decennial census, a new commission was appointed by the majority and minority leaders in the Legislature. Former U.S. Senator Slade Gorton and Tim Ceis were appointed by the Senate Republican and Democratic leadership, respectively; Dean Foster and former State Representative Tom Huff were correspondingly appointed by the House Democratic and Republican leadership. Lura Powell, of Richland, WA, was appointed by the four commissioners to serve as chair. An executive director was appointed and staff was hired to support the Commission's work.

The 2011 redistricting process began with a series of 18 public forums held around the state to learn what mattered most to the citizens of Washington regarding their district boundaries. At these forums, more than 250 people spoke to the commission about their shared interests and affiliation with neighboring regions, and made recommendations about their preferred district boundaries. Many more citizens submitted comments electronically or by mail and twenty groups and individuals submitted full or partial third-party plans for the Commission's consideration.

In mid-September each Commissioner introduced their first draft plan, consisting of both a legislative and congressional proposal. The four draft legislative plans were narrowed down to two by October, one from the Democratic commissioners, and one from the Republican commissioners. The Commissioners decided that the best way to approach the next phase of discussions on the legislative plan was to divide into bipartisan working groups. The purpose of the working groups was to develop proposals and make recommendations to the full Commission. One working group represented the House appointees and the other the Senate. The Senate team (Commissioners Ceis and Gorton) began working south from the northern part of Western Washington, while the House team (Commissioners Huff and Foster) began working north from the southern part of Western Washington. On December 13, following the release of their original assignment proposals, the Commission assigned the remainder of the state legislative districts to Commissioners Huff and Foster, and the congressional districts to Commissioners Ceis and Gorton.

The first two proposals for Western Washington's legislative districts were revealed to the opposite team and the public on December 16, 2011. The Commission then traded ideas and proposals for completing the legislative and congressional parts of the plan throughout the remainder of the month of December. Consideration was given to recommendations from county auditors and the public on how to correct boundary issues and balance the populations within the two proposals. The Final Redistricting Plan (C-JOINTSUB_2-1 and L-JOINTSUB_3-2) was adopted at 9:55 p.m. on January 1, 2012, and submitted to the legislature at 10:35 p.m. that same evening.

Public Involvement

The Commission provided many opportunities and methods to involve the public in the redistricting process. Much of the outreach effort initially focused on traveling statewide to host public "town-hall style" forums. After finishing the initial 18 forums, there was a clear shift toward utilizing technology to expand access and cut costs. Throughout the process, the Commission used live webcast and interactive blogging technology to ensure that people who were unable to attend meetings and forums in person were still able to ask questions and provide comments. In an attempt to reach out to a larger audience, the Commission utilized social media (Facebook, Twitter, Google+) tools. Social media was very helpful in distributing important information quickly and to a wide audience.

With the growth in minority populations, the Commission provided interpretation services as needed in Spanish, Korean, Mandarin Chinese, Tagalog, Oromo, Amharic, Somali, Tigrinya, and Vietnamese. These



services were utilized at nearly half of the Commission's meetings and forums. The Commission's brochure was translated into Spanish, Korean, Chinese, and Tagalog. The Commission also focused on more traditional methods of receiving input and ideas from the public. Our GIS analysts put together a third-party plan "Do-It-Yourself" kit, which enabled anyone to draw their own district boundaries and submit them to the Commission. We also received comments and ideas over the phone, in person, through the mail and through email.

Report requirements

Districting criteria

The 2011 redistricting plan was drawn in accordance with Const. art. II, § 43, RCW 44.05.090, and the federal Voting Rights Act. Those criteria are detailed below.

- (1) Districts shall have a population as nearly equal as practicable, excluding nonresident military personnel, based on the population reported in the federal decennial census.
- (2) To the extent consistent with the preceding criterion, the plan should, insofar as practical, accomplish the following:
 - a. Districts lines should be drawn so as to coincide with the boundaries of local political subdivisions and areas recognized as communities of interest. The number of counties and municipalities divided among more than one district should be as small as possible;
 - b. Districts should be composed of convenient, contiguous, and compact territory. Land areas may be deemed contiguous if they share a common land border or are connected by a ferry, highway, bridge, or tunnel. Areas separated by geographical boundaries or artificial barriers that prevent transportation within a district should not be deemed contiguous; and
 - c. Whenever practicable, a precinct shall be wholly within a single legislative district.
- (3) The commission's plan and any plan adopted by the Supreme Court under RCW 44.05.100 (4) shall provide for forty-nine districts.
- (4) The House of Representatives shall consist of ninety-eight members, two of whom shall be elected from and run at large within each legislative district. The Senate shall consist of forty-nine members, one of whom shall be elected from each legislative district.
- (5) The commission shall exercise its powers to provide fair and effective representation and to encourage electoral competition. The commission's plan shall not be drawn purposely to favor or discriminate against any political party or group.

Population and percentage deviation

Attached to this report (attachments A & B) are summary reports that provide statistical information, including population and percentage deviation from the average district population, as well as racial and ethnic information for the legislative and congressional districts adopted by the Commission. The attachments indicate that the population range (the total difference between the most and least populous



districts) for the legislative districts is 101, with an absolute (per district) average deviation from the ideal district population of 21.47 persons. For congressional districts, the population range is 15, with an absolute average deviation from the ideal district population of 4.4 persons.

New features of the 2011 redistricting plan include the addition of a tenth Congressional district and the creation of two Congressional districts that include population from both eastern and western Washington. The new tenth district was merited by Washington's population growth relative to other states over the past ten years. It is located in the South Puget Sound area, centered on Olympia, and includes most of Thurston county, and parts of Mason and Pierce Counties. Because the population has grown significantly in Eastern Washington over the past ten years and Congressional districts are required to have very low population deviations, one or more of the Congressional districts must be comprised of population from both sides of the Cascade Mountains. The 2011 redistricting plan crosses that line in the 8th and 3rd Congressional districts. The 3rd District includes all of Clark, Cowlitz, Lewis, Pacific, Wahkiakum, Skamania and Klickitat Counties. The 8th District now includes the East Wenatchee area in Douglas County, and all of Chelan and Kittitas Counties, along with the eastern portion of Pierce County and part of King County.

Plan resolution

As required by the State Constitution, the Commission adopted the final plan for legislative and Congressional districts on January 1, 2012. The decision was memorialized in a resolution signed by the Commissioners and submitted to the Legislature on that same day. Copies were also provided to the Governor, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, and the Secretary of State. The resolution, which is included in this report, contains instructions to the county auditors for correcting minor errors that may occur should blocks be inadvertently counted in more than one district, or left out of a specific district assignment.

Estimated cost of adjusting precinct boundaries

Following final adoption of the redistricting plan, and any amendments made by the legislature, Washington's county elections officials must realign any of their precincts that are split by the new redistricting plan in preparation for the 2012 election cycle. The cost to each county for adjusting precinct boundaries is shown in the table below. These costs are estimates based on assumptions made by county officials of the staff time and number of precincts likely to need adjustment under the new redistricting plan.

District maps

This report contains maps of the new Congressional and legislative boundaries for the entire state including inset enlargements where more detail is necessary. Also included are individual district maps and population tables by district.

District and county tables

To assist candidates, incumbents, and election officials in the implementation of the plan, tables showing the districts by county, and county by district for both legislative and Congressional district boundaries are included for reference. Please see Congressional Demographics and Legislative Demographics tabs.

