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## **News Release**

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**11-004**

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### **“Do-It-Yourself” redistricting kit lets anyone map new district lines**

**Olympia** — Drawing new boundaries for Washington’s congressional and legislative districts isn’t an activity reserved for politicians alone. You can do it too. Today, the Washington State Redistricting Commission posted tools on its website that will allow anyone with a computer to decide what the new districts should look like. Those who don’t have a computer can ask the Commission to send them paper maps to do the job.

“The last time we adjusted district boundaries, in 2001, easy options for people to submit their own maps just didn’t exist,” said Executive Director Bonnie Bunning. “This time around, we’ve been emphasizing from the start our mandate to make this whole process as transparent and accessible to people as possible. And offering people a way to send us their own maps for commissioners to consider is an important part of that. Electronic maps make participation a reality.”

No matter how simple the tools, however, redistricting itself can’t be anything but a challenge. That’s due, in large part, to the criteria that must be followed to generate a map that stands up to the legal requirements for redistricting. The Washington State and U.S. Constitutions, as well as Washington State law set the rules that govern the shape and locations of new districts. Those planning to submit their own maps need to make sure their new lines comply with the law. The requirements are posted on the Commission’s website, [www.redistricting.wa.gov](http://www.redistricting.wa.gov).

Called the “Do-It-Yourself Redistricting Kit,” the maps, in either electronic or paper form, show the boundaries of current voting precincts and the number of people that live there. These two pieces of information are the building blocks for mapping district boundaries. To see the kit and decide whether you want to submit a map of your own, go to [www.redistricting.wa.gov](http://www.redistricting.wa.gov) and click on the button labeled “DIY maps” for instructions and tools. If you don’t have computer access, call the Commission office, at 360-786-0770 to ask for a print out of the map kit.

**“Do-It-Yourself” redistricting kit available now**

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All submissions must be either postmarked or emailed to the Commission no later than August 15, 2011, if they are to be considered by the commissioners. Meanwhile, the Commission is completing its final round of public forums, to listen to what people have to say about where district lines should be drawn. The tour of 17 cities around the state, begun in late May in Aberdeen, ends in Moses Lake on Thursday, July 14.

- Bremerton– Thursday, June 28.
- Tacoma– Monday, July 11.
- Spokane– Tuesday, July 12.
- Walla Walla – Wednesday, July 13.
- Moses Lake – Thursday, July 14.

The forums begin at 6 p.m. with an open house where people can look at maps that show the state’s population changes in each district and talk to map specialists about redistricting. An overview of the redistricting process begins at 6:30, and commissioners will hear public comment shortly after.

Those who are unable to join the forum in person can participate via interactive webcast. Go to the Commission’s website at [www.redistricting.wa.gov](http://www.redistricting.wa.gov) and click on the “Attend by webcast” link or the “Get Involved” tab. If you plan to attend a forum and need auxiliary aids or services, including language interpretation, contact Heather Boe at 360-786-0770, or e-mail [heather.boe@redistricting.wa.gov](mailto:heather.boe@redistricting.wa.gov).

Washington voters established the Washington State Redistricting Commission in 1983 to ensure voting boundaries are established through a fair and bi-partisan process. The Commission includes two Democrats and two Republicans as voting members and a non-voting, nonpartisan chair. Democratic appointees to the Commission are Tim Ceis, Seattle; and Dean Foster, Olympia. Republican members are former U.S. Sen. Slade Gorton, Bellevue; and Tom Huff, Gig Harbor. Lura Powell, from Richland, serves as the Commission chair.

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Redistricting Commission website: [www.redistricting.wa.gov](http://www.redistricting.wa.gov)  
Census Bureau: <http://2010.census.gov/2010census/data/>