



Drawing the Voting Maps: National Trends and Best Practices

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+ National Trends



- Few examples of successful legislative change
 - Iowa
 - Rhode Island
 - New Jersey
 - New York – local

- Ballot initiatives: 16 Attempts – 7 Successes
 - Arizona – Success: 1936, 2000
 - California – Failure: 1982, 1984, 1990, 2005; Success: 2008, 2010
 - Colorado – Success: 1974
 - Florida – Success: 2010
 - North Dakota – Failure: 1973
 - Ohio – Failure: 1981, 2005, 2012
 - Oklahoma – Failure: 1960; Success: 1962



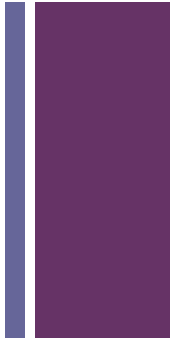
Structure for Drawing Maps



Who Draws	Description
Legislative Body	Legislative Body Draws Lines
Advisory Commission	Advisory Commission creates draft; legislative body - may edit and does approve
Impartial Body	LRB-type organization draws maps, legislative body approves
Partisan Commission	Named elected officials draw map
Impartial Commission	Impartial panel draws maps (retired judges)
Independent Partisan Commission	Citizen selected body draws maps



National Trends: Ballot Initiatives



- California: 14 Member Partisan Citizen Commission from population as a whole
 - Equal population, compliance with Voting Rights Act (VRA), geographical continuity, respect for communities of interest, compactness, nesting
 - 2008 – State Legislature (51–49%); 2010 – Congressional (61-38%)
- Florida: Ban purposeful gerrymandering
 - No intent to favor or disfavor political party or an incumbent, compliance with VRA, contiguous and compact districts, utilize existing political boundaries
 - 2010 – Separate State Legislature & Congressional initiatives – both received 63-37%
- Ohio: Citizen Partisan Commission
 - No intent to favor or disfavor political party, incumbent or new candidate, respect for communities of interest, compactness, competitiveness, representational fairness,
 - 2012 37-63%

+ The Voters Perspective on Commissions

- Commissions receive soft support
- Describing the commission as impartial works better than describing the commission as independent.
- Three in five Democrats support a proposal to establish a commission.
- Commissions are not panaceas to the problems of redistricting—they are vulnerable to attacks, and advocates are divided over their utility, purpose, and their mechanics

NOTE: Poll and focus groups in Florida, Michigan, North Carolina, and Virginia. Conducted for Bauman Foundation by Lake Research, July 2013



Best Practices: Begin with the End in Mind – Why are you doing this?



Some Possibilities

- A fair, accountable, responsive, efficient and effective system that serves the common good.
- Representation that reflects the people.
- Democratizing the system so that it builds civic engagement
- Increase transparency
- Reduced cost



Best Practices: Educate the Public



- Redistricting is the structure that contains our democracy.
- The creation of district lines is a complex topic, a human endeavor, and rarely gets significant public attention.
- Citizens lack awareness and knowledge of the redistricting process; many are unfamiliar the terms *redistricting* nor *gerrymandering*.

Therefore, when we talk publicly we need to use language that people can understand and understand how it relates to them



Best Practices: Demystify the Issue



- Use language voters understand “**Drawing the Voting Lines**”
- Voters respond to principles and values
 - **Transparency**
 - **Fair Elections**
 - **Impartiality**
- Voters are not interested in the specific policy or process until they understand **how it impacts them**



Best Practices: Talking About Drawing the Voting Lines



The Will of the People

Elections are to represent the **will of the people**. We need to reform the rules and make the process of drawing districts impartial, so that our government is **of, by, and for the people**.



Best Practices: Talking About Drawing the Voting Lines



Impact on Your Daily Life

*“Because politics affect our **everyday life** even though we might not realize it, things that go on in our state legislature and our local government trickles down to us eventually in some form and be it less **taxes** for our city, lack of **road repair**, less money for our **students**, just you know services in the government you know fire, police department, you know our **city services** as well; it affects us.” –African American man, Detroit*



Best Practices: Talking About Drawing the Voting Lines



Your Voice Counts/Your Vote Counts

When you take the **responsibility** to do your civic duty and vote, you want your vote to count. Election Day is when we get to have our say, and we need to reform the rules so **every vote matters.**