



OCTOBER 5, 2021

## MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK IN SC: HOUSE MAP SUBMISSIONS AND MORE

Statewide public hearings have ended and redistricting moves on – very slowly.

### LWVSC REDISTRICTING PRESENTATION ON-LINE

The League's September 29 presentation introducing our proposed legislative district maps and explaining the process we used to draw them is now available on-line at <https://youtu.be/OyCKXZnLfm8>. The presentation is an opportunity to better understand the process and to see what South Carolina's legislative maps would look like if drawn without protecting either parties or incumbents. Our maps can be examined and evaluated in detail at Dave's Redistricting website: House at <https://tinyurl.com/3j2nykc>, Senate at <https://tinyurl.com/fydbbfzz>, and Congress at <https://tinyurl.com/crkamfz4>.

### SUBMITTING PROPOSED MAPS

The House Redistricting Committee is now accepting maps from the public. After multiple written requests to the House (Aug 9, Aug 30, Sep 27) from the League and other concerned organizations produced no information on when the House would accept maps from third parties, the League of Women Voters of SC submitted our maps to the committee by email on the afternoon of Oct 4.

At the close of the final House public hearing that evening, House Chair Jordan acknowledged that they had received maps and said that the House is now accepting proposed maps from third parties. No further instructions were given and so it can be presumed that map data files submitted via email to [redistricting@schouse.gov](mailto:redistricting@schouse.gov) will be accepted. The most common and useful submission format is a comma delimited ASCII text file in two columns, the first including the fifteen digit census block numbers and the second the district to which the block is assigned, with headers. Detailed Senate submission guidelines are available at <https://redistricting.scsenate.gov/plansubmission.html>.

Anyone submitting map files should do so as soon as possible. The Senate is accepting files until Oct 8. The House has announced that it plans to schedule members in the map room from Oct 4 until “at least Nov 5” to work on the plans for their districts. The committee will meet soon thereafter to adopt recommended maps. Following that, maps will go to the full House Judiciary Committee for consideration, and from there to the full House.

The extended time allocated for member consultation is said to be needed for legislators to talk to map drawers about the interests of their constituents. The interest of constituents would be far better served by legislators not being involved in the map drawing process at all. The “safe” districts that legislators usually prefer for themselves serve the interests of incumbents, not their constituents. Their safe districts deprive our November votes of all meaning.

## A SLOW WALK THROUGH REDISTRICTING

Many of us have been concerned about the slow pace of redistricting. Delays have come as a surprise even to Senate President Peeler, who was forced to walk back his announced October 12 return of the Senate to take up redistricting. The Senate had moved forward promptly with public hearings and other provisions for public input. However, the House schedule has been far slower and the House Majority Leader has indicated that they will not return until December.

The potentially negative impact of delayed redistricting on voters is very well summarized by the Post & Courier editorial “How delay in redrawing SC election districts protects incumbents, and how to stop it.”

([https://www.postandcourier.com/opinion/editorials/editorial-how-delay-in-redrawing-sc-election-districts-protects-incumbents-and-how-to-stop-it/article\\_b3a34ac6-252f-11ec-8ce3-37a07c0c5f06.html](https://www.postandcourier.com/opinion/editorials/editorial-how-delay-in-redrawing-sc-election-districts-protects-incumbents-and-how-to-stop-it/article_b3a34ac6-252f-11ec-8ce3-37a07c0c5f06.html))

The editorial accurately observes that delays serve the interests of incumbents who don’t want challengers and of those who don’t want time for litigation to go forward and be resolved before the next election cycle begins. This does not serve the interests of the people of South Carolina.

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