

ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

FIRST SESSION

**LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION 134**

Introduced by Redistricting Committee Blood, 3; Briese, 41; Lathrop, 12; Morfeld, 46; Wayne, 13; Linehan, 39; Lowe, 37; Geist, 25; Sanders, 45.

WHEREAS, redistricting of the various election districts will be considered as required by the Constitution of Nebraska and the Constitution of the United States; and

WHEREAS, the redistricting process is under the control of the Legislature and its rules; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature created the Redistricting Committee to administer the 2021 redistricting process; and

WHEREAS, the Redistricting Committee adopted proposed substantive guidelines for consideration by the Legislature.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MEMBERS OF THE ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA, FIRST SESSION:

That the following criteria are adopted to guide the Legislature during the 2021 redistricting process. The criteria are designed to help ensure that the redistricting plans developed are constitutionally acceptable:

1. Population data from the 2020 United States Census will be used for purposes of redistricting.

2. District boundaries established by the Legislature during the 2021 redistricting process shall be based on census geography.

3. District boundaries shall follow county lines whenever practicable and shall define districts that are compact and contiguous as these terms have been articulated by the United States Supreme Court. If adherence to county lines causes a redistricting plan, or any aspect thereof, to be in violation of principles set forth by the United States Supreme Court in interpreting the United States Constitution, that requirement may be waived to the extent necessary to bring the plan or aspect of the plan into compliance with such

principles.

4. Insofar as possible, and within the context of principles set forth by the United States Supreme Court, district boundaries shall define districts that are easily identifiable and understandable to voters, preserve communities of interest, and allow for the preservation of the cores of prior districts. When feasible, district boundary lines shall coincide with the boundaries of cities and villages. If a county, city, or village must be divided, the division shall be made along clearly recognizable boundaries, as described by census geography.

5. District boundaries shall not be established with the intention of favoring a political party or any other group or person.

6. In drawing district boundaries, no consideration shall be given to the political affiliations of registered voters, demographic information other than population figures, or the results of previous elections, except as may be required by the laws and Constitution of the United States.

7. District boundaries which would result in the unlawful dilution of the voting strength of any minority population shall not be established.

8. The general goal of the redistricting process shall be the creation of districts that are substantially equal in population. The specific criteria under which redistricting plans shall be judged with regard to the issue of population equality are described in Guideline 9.

9. The following criteria shall be specifically applicable to the public bodies for which the Legislature will create new district boundaries in 2021:

UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

(a) Three single-member districts.

(b) Population among districts shall be as nearly equal as practicable, that is, with an overall range of deviation at or approaching 0%.

(c) No plan will be considered which results in an overall range of deviation in excess of 1% or a relative deviation in excess of plus or minus 0.5%, based on the ideal district population. Any deviation from absolute equality of population must be necessary to the achievement of a "legitimate

state objective" as that concept has been articulated by the United States Supreme Court. To the extent that such objectives are relied on, they shall be applied consistently and shall include, but not be limited to, the creation of compact districts, the preservation of municipal boundaries, the preservation of communities of interest, and allowance for the preservation of the cores of prior districts. Whenever there is presented to the Legislature more than one plan that will substantially vindicate the above objectives, preference will be given to the plan that provides the greatest degree of population equality.

LEGISLATURE

(a) Forty-nine single-member districts.

(b) In establishing new legislative district boundaries, the Legislature shall create districts that are as nearly equal in population as may be. No plan will be considered which results in an overall range of deviation in excess of 10% or a relative deviation in excess of plus or minus 5%, based on the ideal district population.

(c) Any deviation in excess of the above must be justifiable as necessary for the realization of a "rational state policy" as that concept has been articulated by the United States Supreme Court.

(d) If the population of any county falls within the relative deviation set forth in these guidelines, the boundaries of that county shall define a legislative district.

NEBRASKA SUPREME COURT

(a) Six single-member districts.

(b) Equality of population shall be achieved in accordance with the standards established above for redistricting the Legislature.

BOARD OF REGENTS

(a) Eight single-member districts.

(b) Equality of population shall be achieved in accordance with the standards established above for redistricting the Legislature.

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

(a) Five single-member districts.

(b) Equality of population shall be achieved in accordance with the standards established above for redistricting the Legislature.

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

(a) Eight single-member districts.

(b) Equality of population shall be achieved in accordance with the standards established above for redistricting the Legislature.