

A bill for an act

relating to redistricting; establishing districting principles for legislative and congressional plans; proposing coding for new law in Minnesota Statutes, chapter 2.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

Section 1. **[2.92] DISTRICTING PRINCIPLES.**

Subdivision 1. **Applicability.** The principles in this section apply to legislative and congressional districts.

Subd. 2. **Nesting.** A representative district may not be divided in the formation of a senate district.

Subd. 3. **Equal population.** (a) Legislative districts must be substantially equal in population. The population of a legislative district must not deviate from the ideal by more than one percent, plus or minus.

(b) Congressional districts must be as nearly equal in population as practicable.

Subd. 4. **Contiguity; compactness.** The districts must be composed of convenient contiguous territory. To the extent consistent with the other principles in this section, districts should be compact. Contiguity by water is sufficient if the water is not a serious obstacle to travel within the district. Point contiguity is not sufficient.

Subd. 5. **Numbering.** (a) Legislative districts must be numbered in a regular series, beginning with house district 1A in the northwest corner of the state and proceeding across the state from west to east, north to south, but bypassing the 11 county metropolitan area until the southeast corner has been reached; then to the 11 county metropolitan area outside the cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul; then in Minneapolis and St. Paul.

(b) Congressional district numbers must begin with district one in the southeast corner of the state and end with district eight in the northeast corner of the state.

Subd. 6. **Minority representation.** (a) The dilution of racial or ethnic minority voting strength is contrary to the laws of the United States and the state of Minnesota. These principles must not be construed to supersede any provision of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, as amended.

(b) A redistricting plan must not have the intent or effect of dispersing or concentrating minority population in a manner that prevents minority communities from electing their candidates of choice.

Subd. 7. **Minor civil divisions.** (a) A county, city, or town must not be unduly divided unless required to meet equal population requirements or to form districts composed of convenient, contiguous territory.

(b) A county, city, or town is not unduly divided in the formation of a legislative or congressional district if:

(1) the division occurs because a portion of a city or town is noncontiguous with another portion of the same city or town; or

(2) despite the division, the known population of any affected county, city, or town remains wholly located within a single district.

Subd. 8. **Preserving communities of interest.** (a) Districts should attempt to preserve identifiable communities of interest where that can be done in compliance with the preceding principles.

(b) For purposes of this subdivision, "communities of interest" means recognizable areas with similarities of interests, including but not limited to racial, ethnic, geographic, social, or cultural interests.

Subd. 9. **Data to be used.** The geographic areas and population counts used in maps, tables, and legal descriptions of the districts must be those used by the Geographic Information Systems Office of the Legislative Coordinating Commission. The population counts will be the 2010 block population counts provided to the state under Public Law Number 94-171, subject to correction of any errors acknowledged by the United States Census Bureau.

Subd. 10. **Consideration of plans.** A redistricting plan must not be considered for adoption by the senate or house of representatives until a block equivalency file showing the district to which each census block has been assigned, in a form prescribed by the director of the Geographic Information Systems Office, has been filed with the director.

Subd. 11. **Priority of principles.** Where it is not possible to fully comply with the principles contained in subdivisions 1 to 8, a redistricting plan must give priority to those

3.1 principles in the order in which they are listed in this section, except to the extent that
3.2 doing so would violate federal or state law.

3.3 **EFFECTIVE DATE; EXPIRATION.** This section is effective the day following
3.4 final enactment and applies to any plan for districts enacted or established for use at the
3.5 state primary in 2012 and thereafter. This section expires June 1, 2012.