

Leagues of Women Voters of Illinois  
Testimony for House Redistricting Committee Hearing  
October 26, 2021, 10 a.m.

To: Chair Elizabeth Hernandez and Committee Members

The League of Women Voters of Illinois has worked for reforms to the state redistricting process since the 1990s. Our recent efforts have focused on an amendment to the Illinois constitution to provide for a more transparent map drawing process and community input through an independent commission.

There are standards upon which a redistricting plan should be based. Plans should require equal population, geographic contiguity, and effective representation of racial and linguistic minorities. They should also provide for promotion of partisan fairness and respect for boundaries of municipalities and counties. Compactness and competitiveness may also be considered. Preferential treatment for a political party should be rejected.

The Congressional Maps as proposed on Oct. 23, 2021 do add a Latino influence district but they do not meet many of the standards that a redistricting plan should have.

According to the Princeton Gerrymandering Project report card the map gets an F for partisan advantage. There are zero competitive districts. The map has a 14-3 advantage in the Democrats favor. A fairer split in Illinois according to actual voting patterns would be 10-7 or 11-6 in favor of Democrats.

The Congressional Districts as composed are not compact. The proposed 17<sup>th</sup> Congressional District is particularly offensive. It hovers the western edge of Illinois with fingers into Rockford, Peoria, and Bloomington. There are still 32 counties that are split.

Illinois should have a fairer more open and accountable redistricting process. Illinois must adopt a redistricting process that is more accessible, equitable, and transparent and accountable to the people. Responsibility for redistricting should be vested in an independent special commission.

Thank you for the opportunity for the League of Women Voters of IL to express its views on the process of redistricting in Illinois.

Sincerely,

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