

What is Redistricting?

- It is the way we adjust district that determine who represents us in the Indiana Statehouse and U.S. Congress
- It happens every ten years, after the federal census. The purpose is to equalize the population of Congressional and legislative districts.
- In 44 of the 50 states, state legislatures are in charge of redistricting.
- In Indiana, the General Assembly draws the maps for Congress and the state legislature. Requirements are equal population, compliance with the Voting Rights Act and contiguity.

What is Gerrymandering?

- Drawing a district with boundaries that favor one or more groups of voters and/or some candidates or political parties over others.

Why is this an important issue in Indiana?

- A 2014 study by the University of Chicago found that Indiana's House districts are among the most gerrymandered or partisan.
- Indiana is one of the 44 states that put the state legislature in charge of redistricting. Since legislators draw the district maps, politicians have the opportunity to gerrymander districts to choose voters they already know will vote for them and exclude those who will vote against them.
- Communities of interest, including cities, counties, school districts, and neighborhoods are often divided by district lines, making it difficult for those citizens to be heard. This can lead to a community's interests being ignored or underserved.
- When districts are lopsided from a partisan perspective it creates polarization, with candidates appealing to the fringes instead of the middle. Compromise becomes a dirty word; there is no reward for consensus building.

What would make the process better?

- Map-drawing criteria should include equal population, respect for the Voting Rights Act, compactness, contiguity, and political competition.
- Give special consideration to identifying communities of interest and take care to assure that district lines do not divide communities or inhibit their ability to make their voices heard.
- Assure that the redistricting process is open and transparent, with opportunities for citizens to provide input into map-drawing before they are approved.

What can you do to help create a better system?

- Contact your representatives in the Indiana General Assembly to let them know that you oppose gerrymandering and support a non-partisan, transparent approach to redistricting that is fair and equitable for all Hoosiers.
- Ask local governmental officials (Mayors, Town Council members and members of the La Porte County Council and Board of Commissioners to enact resolutions of support for that approach to redistricting that can be sent to members of the Indiana General Assembly.
- Write letters of support and send them to local news media for publication or broadcast and posting on social media sites.
- Attend public educational sessions to learn more about redistricting and encourage others to do so.