



WYOMING LEGISLATIVE SERVICE OFFICE

RESEARCH MEMORANDUM

2012 REDISTRICTING PROCESS

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by

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ASSIGNMENT AS AN INTERIM TOPIC:

Following the release of the 2010 Census data, Management Council charged the Interim Joint Corporations, Elections and Political Subdivisions Interim Committee (Committee) with oversight of redistricting at its March 2011 meeting as an interim topic. In assigning the topic, Management Council provided the following general redistricting guidelines to the Committee:¹

- Provide periodic summaries on interim redistricting activities to Management Council.
- Seek active and informed public participation in redistricting activities, meeting as often as necessary and holding public hearings in various locations across the State.
- Adopt Redistricting Principles that conform with established legal principles.

In addition to the general committee guidelines, Management Council also established guidelines for the processing of redistricting plans, including directions for Legislative Service Office (LSO) redistricting staff.²

TIMELINE:

The Committee met four times during the 2011 interim to oversee the redistricting process and conduct its regular business. During its first interim meeting held April 12th, the Committee received information from LSO staff on legal requirements for redistricting, 2010 Census data, and how this data impacted the 2002 districts. The Committee adopted redistricting principles³ and scheduled public hearing locations to be held throughout the State (See Table 1). The Committee

¹ See **Attachment A** for Management Council's 'Guidelines/Goals for Redistricting 2012'

² *Supra*, note 1.

³ See **Attachment B** for 2011 Redistricting Principles

also created regions within the State from which legislators were to engage with local stakeholders on developing and presenting district plans at the various public hearings.

Table 1. Regional public hearings held by the Committee.

Date	Location
May 25, 2011	<i>Rock Springs and Pinedale</i>
June 14, 2011	<i>Casper and Wright</i>
June 28, 2011	<i>Laramie and Cheyenne</i>
July 12, 2011	<i>Powell and Worland</i>
July 13, 2011	<i>Lander and Rawlins</i>
August 15, 2011	<i>Torrington and Cheyenne</i>
September 19, 2011	<i>Douglas and Sheridan</i>

Source: 2011 Joint Corporations, Elections and Political Subdivisions Interim Committee meeting minutes.

During the second interim meeting held August 15th and 16th in Cheyenne, the Committee heard testimony and proposals from the public. Following the third interim meeting held October 20th and 21st in Casper, the Committee reviewed public comments from each public hearing, as well as various plans from LSO staff, legislators, and members of the public. The Committee discussed incorporating each plan and directed LSO staff to provide two proposed maps at the December meeting. During its fourth and final interim meeting, held December 5th in Cheyenne, the Committee finalized districts to be reported to the Legislature.

REDISTRICTING BILLS:

The Committee sponsored 2012 HB0032,⁴ which created House of Representative districts, and 2012 SF0007, which created Senate districts.⁵ The Legislature passed these bills in 2012 and codified them as Wyoming Statutes §§ 28-2-118 and 28-2-119. The Legislature also codified Wyoming Statute § 28-2-117 which allowed senators elected in 2010 to retain their seats for the remainder of their term if removed from their district as the result of a 2012 district boundary change.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact LSO Research at 777-7881.

⁴ <https://www.wyoleg.gov/Legislation/2012/HB0032>

⁵ <https://www.wyoleg.gov/Legislation/2012/SF0007>

Guidelines/Goals for Redistricting 2012¹

General Committee Guidelines.

- The Joint Corporations, Elections and Political Subdivisions Interim Committee is charged with oversight of the redistricting effort of the Wyoming Legislature in preparation for the 2012 session.
- The Committee will provide summaries of its redistricting interim activities to Management Council on a periodic basis.
- The Committee will seek active and informed public participation in its redistricting activities. To this end, the Committee shall meet as often as necessary to carry out its obligations and will hold public hearings in various locations around the state to maximize public participation.
- The Committee shall adopt Redistricting Principles in conformance with established legal principles.

Committee Goals:

- The Committee will develop a library of alternative plans.
- Ensure that the public and election officials will have ample opportunity to review and comment upon the library of redistricting plans.

Operations of LSO Redistricting Staff:

- LSO Redistricting Staff shall be managed in accordance with Management Council policies and guidelines. LSO Redistricting Staff shall serve as the focal point for the redistricting effort.
- Unless otherwise provided by Council, the Redistricting Staff will develop redistricting plans under the direction of the Redistricting Committee.
- Redistricting Staff shall maintain a website to keep the public apprised of developments and provide public access to redistricting plans and information.
- Census population data and census maps will be made available to the public at cost.

¹ Adopted by Management Council, March 1, 2011.

- Maps prepared by the Redistricting Staff under the direction of the Committee will be made available for review by the public.

Committee Processing of Redistricting Plans.

Proposals for Redistricting Plans:

- Proposals requesting Redistricting Staff to develop plans will be made through the Committee.
- The Committee will not unreasonably delay the request of any Legislator for the development of a redistricting plan but will be responsible for prioritizing the work of the redistricting staff and will seek to minimize the development of duplicative plans.
- Subject to Committee prioritization of workload, Redistricting Staff will assist individual legislators in developing proposed redistricting plans.
- Public input on proposed plans will be solicited throughout the course of the Committee's work, however, proposals for development of new plans by members of the public will be considered by the Committee only at the request of a Committee member or other Legislative sponsor.
- Unless specifically requested by a Legislative sponsor, a draft plan will not be treated as confidential by the Committee or the Redistricting Staff.

Initial Committee Review:

- Following development of a draft plan by the Redistricting Staff, the plan will be submitted for initial Committee review and comment. The Committee's review will include an analysis of plan criteria including target population variances and practical considerations in the administration of the election process.
- If the Committee determines a draft plan does not, or cannot with reasonable modification, meet plan criteria such as target population variances or presents significant issues affecting the administration of elections, it shall so notify the Legislative sponsor and provide opportunity for the sponsor to develop proposed modifications.

Submission to Election Officials for Review and Comment:

- A draft plan meeting plan criteria will be made available by the Committee to County election officials for review and recommendation regarding election

administration issues (e.g., the proposed plan as drawn inappropriately identifies a household; a proposed voter precinct is split by a significant barrier, etc.).

Final Report from the Committee and Bill for Introduction:

- On or before December 20, 2012, the Committee will present a final report to the Legislature recommending legislative consideration of a primary redistricting plan. The report may identify one or more primary alternatives. Minority reports may be attached at the request of any Committee member.
- The Committee will prepare and sponsor, or present to Management Council for sponsorship, a single redistricting bill for introduction in the 2012 legislative session which will be in a format that will facilitate adoption by amendment of an alternative redistricting plan.



STATE of WYOMING LEGISLATURE

Memorandum

DATE April 13, 2011
TO Joint Corporations, Elections and Political Subdivisions Interim Committee

Redistricting Principles - 2011¹

1. Election districts should be contiguous, compact, and reflect a community of interest;
2. Population of election districts should be substantially equal, with the range of deviation not to exceed 10%;
3. To the greatest extent possible, in establishing election districts:
 - a. County boundaries should be followed;
 - b. The majority of the population of each county should be in one district;
 - c. Census blocks should be followed.
4. The plan should avoid diluting voting power of minorities in violation of the Voting Rights Act;
5. The House shall have 60 seats and the Senate shall have 30 seats;
6. Consideration should be given to two (2) contiguous House districts in each Senate district; and
7. Significant geographical features should be considered in establishing districts.

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¹ These Redistricting Principles were adopted by the Joint Corporations, Elections and Political Subdivisions Interim Committee of the 61st Legislature of the State of Wyoming on April 12, 2011.