

Implementing the ban on prison gerrymandering



Support HB1496
Rep. Ford - Sen. Peters

In 2021, Illinois took a big step forward in the fight to restore representation to those who are incarcerated by enacting the No Representation Without Population Act. Illinois joined a growing number of states that have banned the practice of prison gerrymandering. For redistricting purposes, the law restored representation back to the communities where people live, rather than where they are temporarily incarcerated at the time of the census.

In order for the law to work as intended and truly restore representation, the state must be able to determine last-known addresses of those incarcerated. At the moment, the data on last-known addresses available to the state is woefully inadequate to accomplish restoring representation successfully.

HB1496 helps fix this critical issue by:

- Ensuring that any last-known addresses collected at the local level are transmitted to the Illinois Department of Corrections
- Expanding the types of addresses allowed from last known and legal residents, to also include addresses collected for post-release programs
- Ensuring that people who are in custody of the Illinois Department of Corrections have access to and the ability to update/submit their last-known addresses with the department

These changes will remove barriers that currently exist in how last-known addresses are collected; prioritize information flow from different levels of government, utilize existing data, and provide an opportunity for self-reported data from those directly affected by the law.

It is extremely important that Illinois take the necessary steps to fix the law and ensure its successful implementation prior to it taking effect in 2025.