

# SUPPORT: The Fair Maps Amendment

[SJRCA4/HJRCA15]

*Constitutional Amendment to ensure a non-partisan, transparent process to draw state legislative and congressional district maps.*

Sponsored by: Sen. Julie Morrison (D-Deerfield), Rep. Ryan Spain (R-Peoria),

District boundaries are redrawn every 10 years to ensure that Congress and state legislatures reflect population changes after each census. An independent, transparent redistricting process that ensures communities are fully and fairly represented would protect the integrity of the democratic process and restore citizens' faith that their votes – and voices – matter.

The Fair Maps Amendment is modeled after former-Rep. Jack Franks' 2016 proposal (HJRCA58) which received 105 "YES" votes in the House. It is also modeled after California's independent redistricting language. Additions to the amendment were made to strengthen transparency and public accountability language, as well as explicitly protect the constitutional rights of communities of color.

## **This amendment would:**

1. Remove politicians and sitting legislators from drawing their own districts.
2. Establish an independent redistricting commission to draw maps that is comprised of citizens who demographically, politically, and geographically represent of our state.
3. Protect the constitutional rights of communities of color to elect a representative of their choosing.
4. Add sunshine and transparency by requiring the release of all communications made by the commission as well as any data used to create and propose any and all maps.
5. Give the public the opportunity to participate in the process by requiring at least 30 public hearings on the maps before a final vote is taken. Members of the public will have the ability to comment on proposed maps and submit their own.

## **Make-up of the independent redistricting commission:**

- 16-member citizen commission appointed by the two most-senior Illinois Supreme Court justices who were elected from opposite parties.
- Demographic requirements: "The commission must reflect the ethnic, gender, and racial demographics of the state."
- Geographic requirements: Minimum of 2 commissioners from each judicial district.
- Political party requirements: 7 Democrats, 7 Republicans, and 2 Independents (tiebreaker commissioner would also have to be an Independent).

- **Ineligibility:** To keep the commission truly independent and remove conflicts of interest, several parameters have added to prevent a possible manipulation of the process. Applicants (or members of their immediate family) cannot have been appointed/elected to a position in state, federal, or local government; cannot be a lobbyist or government contractor; or have a position within a specific political party.

**Criteria for drawing congressional, legislative, & representative districts in order of priority:**

1. Must fully comply with the U.S. Constitution and federal laws, such as the federal Voting Rights Act.
2. Must be substantially equal in population.
3. Must provide racial and language minorities with the equal opportunity to participate and elect candidates of their choosing.
4. Must provide racial and language minorities who constitute less than a voting-age majority of a district with an opportunity to substantially influence the outcome of an election.
5. Must be contiguous.
6. Must be compact.
7. Must respect geographic integrity of units of local government to the extent practical.
8. Must respect communities sharing common social or economic interests to the extent practical.
9. Must not discriminate against or in favor of any political party or individual.

**Key dates:**

- Deadline to appear on the next general election ballot: May 3, 2020
- Next general election: November 3, 2020
- New maps in effect: Fall 2021

**Proponents of The Fair Maps Amendment:**

Asian-Americans Advancing Justice – Chicago  
 Better Government Association  
 Business and Professional People for the Public Interest  
 Campaign Legal Center  
 CHANGE Illinois  
 Citizen Advocacy Center  
 Common Cause Illinois

Illinois Campaign for Political Reform  
 Illinois Chamber of Commerce  
 Illinois Farm Bureau  
 League of Women Voters Illinois  
 NAACP Chicago – South Side Branch  
 Small Business Advocacy Council  
 Union League Club of Chicago  
 Unite America - Chicago chapter