

LWVIL Issues Briefing 2016: Redistricting

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The 1970 Illinois Constitution under Article IV, Section 3 details procedures to be followed in legislative redistricting. Five rounds of redistricting have taken place using these rules. In 1981, 1991, and 2001, because there was no agreement on the proposed maps in either the legislature or the Legislative Redistricting Commission, it was necessary to select a tiebreaker member for the Legislative Redistricting Commission. The selected maps reflected the partisanship of the tiebreaker member's vote. Suits were filed each time and the new legislative districts were determined based on court rulings. In 2011 the governor and both chambers of the General Assembly were controlled by the same party. The maps drawn with little input from the public favored the party in control.

Activity in Illinois

The LWVIL Redistricting Position is based on a LWVIL Task Force report that was adopted by concurrence of delegates at the 1993 Convention. The position enabled the League to comment on the proposed maps when state legislative districts were drawn in 2001 following the 2000 census. LWVIL has subsequently used the Redistricting Position to work for Citizens' Initiatives to amend Article IV, Section 3 of the Illinois Constitution, Legislative Redistricting. The 2010 *Illinois Fair Map Amendment* Ballot Initiative initiated by the League did not collect enough signatures to qualify the amendment for the November 2010 ballot. A second ballot initiative *Yes for Independent Maps* in 2014 providing for an independent commission to draw legislative maps had a broader based coalition than the first initiative. It failed because of a lack of sufficient valid signatures and a ruling in the Circuit Court of Cook County that while Legislative Redistricting appears to be a valid subject for a citizen initiative, the proposed amendment was not limited to structural and procedural subjects as required by the Illinois constitution.

LWVIL is currently supporting the *Independent Map Amendment* ballot initiative. This petition campaign to establish a non-partisan, independent commission to draw legislative maps was formally announced on April 28, 2015. Mary Kubasak, LWVIL President, is a member of the Board of Directors for the *Independent Map Amendment* ballot initiative. The ballot initiative campaign kickoff for LWVIL took place at convention in June. There was a speaker at the Plenary Session and Caucuses on the initiative. Local Leagues members are holding meetings to educate their members and the public about the initiative and circulating petitions to obtain signatures to get the *Independent Map Amendment* on the November 2016 ballot.

Independent Maps in its 2015 Year-End Report stated that more than 483,000 Illinoisans have signed petitions to place the *Independent Map Amendment* on the November 2016 ballot. The goal is to have 600,000 signatures by April 30, 2016 to ensure having the 291,000 valid signatures needed for ballot placement. The support for an Independent Map Amendment has grown over the three campaigns. This campaign is led by a bipartisan, diverse board of civic, community and business leaders; has built a solid campaign team; has a large base of volunteers; and has developed social media platforms and broad based newspaper editorial board support. More than 375 people have contributed and pledged close to \$3 million to the campaign.

Continuing and Future Activities to promote the Independent Map Amendment

League members are encouraged to continue collecting signatures on independent maps petitions through April 30, 2016 and to send them into the LWVIL office, 332 S. Michigan, Suite 525, Chicago, IL 60604. There will likely be court challenges to the amendment from entrenched Illinois politicians.

Additionally, a robust campaign will be needed to educate voters. Those who would like to help fund these activities may donate at www.mapamendment.org.

A workshop on the 2016 Redistricting Amendment, *Persuading the Public that it will make a difference*, is being conducted at the 2016 Issues Briefing. Those who would like to participate in working with the League on public education may contact issues@lwvil.org.