House Research
Act Summary

CHAPTER: 35

SESSION: 2011 Regular Session

TOPIC: Redistricting: State Legislative Plan

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Overview

This act adopts new state legislative district boundaries, for use at the 2012 state primary and thereafter, and provides certain districting principles for use in creating redistricting plans.

Section

1   **Legislative districts.** Provides that plan L1101-1, on file with the Geographic Information Systems Office of the Legislative Coordinating Commission, is the redistricting plan for state legislative districts, effective beginning at the 2012 state primary.

A full copy of the plan's statistical reports is available on the GIS Office Website: http://www.gis.leg.mn/redist2010/plans.php?plname=L1101_1

The features of plan L1101-1 include:

Population Deviation

House districts: The ideal population of a House district is 39,582. The total population deviation range is 1.98 percent. The largest deviation above the ideal population is 390 persons (0.99%). The largest deviation below the ideal population is 392 persons (-0.99%). The average (mean) deviation is 216.38 persons (0.55%).

Senate districts: The ideal population of a Senate district is 79,163. The total population deviation range is 1.81%. The largest deviation above the ideal population is 775 persons (0.98%). The largest deviation below the ideal population is 661 persons (-0.83%). The average (mean) deviation is 325.88 persons (0.41%).

Political Subdivision Splits

House Districts: A total of 44 counties, 41 cities and one township are split into more than one House district. One split, in the city of Staples, does not divide any known population.

Senate districts: A total of 32 counties and 32 cities are split into more than one Senate district. No townships are split into multiple districts. One split, in the city of Staples, does not divide any known population.

Contiguity and Compactness

House districts: All areas are contiguous. The mean compactness score using the Reock test is 0.44 and using the Polsby-Popper test is 0.44 (using either of these measures, a score of 0 is least compact, a score of 1 is most compact).

Senate districts: All areas are contiguous. The mean compactness score using the Reock test is 0.42 and using the Polsby-Popper test is 0.40 (using either of these measures, a score of 0 is least compact, a score of 1 is most compact).

Minority Districts

House districts: Based on voting-age population statistics, 12 minority-opportunity House districts (total voting-age minority population greater than 30 percent) are established. Of these 12, five districts are majority-minority districts (total voting-age minority population greater than 50 percent).

Senate districts: Based on voting-age population statistics, six minority-opportunity Senate districts (total voting-age minority population greater than 30 percent) are established. Of these six, three districts are majority-minority districts (total voting-age minority population greater than 50 percent).

2 **Distribution.** Requires the Revisor of Statutes to code a metes and bounds description of each legislative district in the Minnesota Statutes, no later than the date of the state primary in the year ending in two.

A metes and bounds description is required whether a plan is implemented through legislative enactment or by court order.

3 **Districting principles.** Establishes a number of principles for use in developing legislative and congressional district boundaries.

Subd. 2. Nesting. Prohibits a representative district from being divided to form a Senate district (House districts must "nest" within Senate districts).

Subd. 3. Equal population. Requires legislative districts to be substantially equal in population. A deviation of +/- 1 percent is permissible. Congressional districts must be as equal in population as practicable.

Subd. 4. Contiguity and compactness. Requires districts to be formed of convenient, contiguous territory that is compact, to extent consistent with other districting principles. Standards for determining contiguity are provided.

Subd. 5. Numbering. Specifies the method for assigning a number to each district.

Subd. 6. Minority representation. Requires compliance with the federal Voting Rights Act of 1965, as amended, and prohibits districts from being created with an intent or effect of dispersing or concentrating minority population in a manner that prevents minority communities from electing a candidate of their choice.

Subd. 7. Minor civil divisions. Prohibits minor civil divisions (counties, cities, and townships) from being unduly divided. Certain exceptions are provided.

Subd. 8. Preserving communities of interest. Provides that districts should attempt to preserve identifiable communities of interest where possible consistent with other principles in this section. Examples of types of common interests that may form a community of interest are provided.

Subd. 9. Data to be used. Specifies that the data to be used in redistricting is the data provided to the state by the U.S. Census Bureau.

Subd. 10. Consideration of plans. Provides standards for submission and consideration of redistricting plans by the legislature.

Subd. 11. Priority of principles. Provides that the principles listed in this section are listed in order of priority for application.

The principles contained in this section expire June 1, 2012.

4   **Repealer.** Repeals several provisions of statute related to existing districts that were modified by the legislature in 2004.

5   **Effective date.** Provides that, with the exception of section 3, the contents of this act are effective at the state primary in 2012 and thereafter.