

# House Research Act Summary

**CHAPTER:** 36

**SESSION:** 2011 Regular Session

**TOPIC:** Redistricting: Congressional Plan

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## Overview

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

### Section

- 1 Congressional districts.** Provides that plan C1101-0, on file with the Geographic Information Systems Office of the Legislative Coordinating Commission, is the redistricting plan for congressional 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/cong10.php?name=C1101\\_0](http://www.gis.leg.mn/redist2010/cong10.php?name=C1101_0)

The features of plan C1101-0 include:

**Population deviation.** The ideal population of a congressional district is 662,991. Five of the proposed districts have zero deviation; three districts deviate below the ideal by one person.

**Political subdivision splits.** Seven counties and seven cities are split into more than one congressional district. No townships are split.

**Contiguity and compactness.** All districts consist of one contiguous area. The mean compactness score using the Reock test is 0.37 and using the Polsby-Popper test is 0.30 (using either of these measures, a score of 0 is the least compact and a score of 1 is most compact).

**Minority districts.** Based on voting-age population statistics, one minority-

opportunity district is created (total voting-age minority population greater than 30 percent). The total voting-age minority population in proposed district 5 is 30.5 percent. No majority-minority districts are created.

- 2**      **Distribution.** Requires the Revisor of Statutes to code a metes and bounds description of each district in Minnesota Statutes, no later than the date of the state primary in the year ending in two. A "metes and bounds" description is a written description (rather than a visual depiction as on a map) that uses roads, geographic features, and other similar landmarks to delineate the exact boundaries of a district.

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 are effective the day following final enactment and expire June 1, 2012.

- 4**      **Repealer.** Repeals a subdivision of statute that will be obsolete upon enactment of new district boundaries.
- 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.