



THE FLORIDA SENATE COMMITTEE ON REAPPORTIONMENT

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MEMORANDUM

To: All Senators
From: Ray Rodrigues
Subject: Reapportionment Update – Reminders, Scheduling and Process Information
Date: December 15, 2021

As we prepare to celebrate the holiday season with loved ones, I wanted to provide an update on the work of the Senate Committee on Reapportionment and its select subcommittees and outline the process and schedule as we head towards the beginning of the 2022 Legislative Session in January.

Timeline

In advance of the January 11 bill filing deadline, I will file two placeholder bills, which will ultimately be the vehicles by which the State Senate and Congressional maps approved by the Committee on Reapportionment advance to the Senate floor.

As reflected in the block schedule, attached here and released earlier today by the Senate Committee on Rules, we will have multiple reapportionment meetings during the first week of the 2022 Legislative Session.

Early in the week, the select subcommittees will have the opportunity to further review staff-produced maps, public submissions or comments sponsored by a Senator, and to hear additional public testimony before finalizing their recommendations. Following these meetings, in consultation with counsel, I will review the recommendations of the select subcommittees and offer amendments to the two placeholder bills for review, discussion, and consideration by the full committee on Thursday, January 13, 2022.

Amendments

Now is the time for Senators to finalize and submit any maps they wish to offer. Likewise, staff have been directed to consider the feedback and guidance Senators have given at prior meetings

and consider it through the lens of the overall directives as well as all applicable federal and state legal standards, and to spend time looking for improvements and consistency in the application of the various trade-offs presented in the maps.

Any alterations that are proposed, whether as guidance and feedback to the staff or as an amendment offered by a Senator, should adhere to the constitutional principles and apply them consistently throughout the state. Therefore, amendments must be drafted and presented as a complete map.

As a reminder, in September, you were each provided with an account that enables you to draw and review maps using the Legislature's joint redistricting software. Should you require any assistance, professional staff are available to help with drafting maps that reflect any amendments you would like to make. Due to the highly technical nature and complex legal requirements, drafting maps can take a considerable amount of time. As such, I am requesting that any Senators in need of assistance reach out to staff as soon as possible to ensure ample time for staff to address your request, draft your map, and post it to the website for review prior to the next committee meeting. I would respectfully ask Senators to follow the example set by committee staff in preparing and publishing their proposed amendments well before the notice deadline to ensure that our colleagues and the public have ample time to review them before the committee meets.

Public Submissions, Testimony, and Comments

Members of the public have been and continue to submit plans and comments to floridaredistricting.gov. If you are interested in reviewing public submissions and comments, these plans can be viewed on the "Submitted Plans" and "Get Involved" pages of the website.

As previously communicated, if you have solicited virtual public testimony from your constituents and wish all or portions of such testimony to be considered by the committee, you must submit the recording of the virtual testimony and the required appearance forms to the committee.

Insulation from Partisan Interests

As you are all aware, Florida's Constitution includes strict guidelines for what information the Legislature can and cannot consider when drawing new state legislative and congressional districts. Regardless of the forum or format, we can only consider thoughts and feedback in keeping with constitutional standards.

Once again I remind you that in prior redistricting cycles, significant litigation has followed passage of new maps. Sitting legislators may be compelled to produce records or be subject to questioning under oath about conversations with colleagues, with legislative staff, or with outside parties who may attempt to persuade the Legislature to pass maps that favor or disfavor a political party or incumbent.

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Senators should continue to insulate themselves from partisan-funded organizations and other interests that may intentionally or unintentionally attempt to inappropriately influence the redistricting process.

Record Retention

Senators should continue to adhere to the records retention policy as directed by Art. I, s. 24 of the Florida Constitution, s. 11.0431, F.S., and Senate Rule 1.48. Senators and staff should also be mindful that correspondence, emails, texts, and other electronic communications related to the enactment of new districts, whether sent or received on official Senate accounts or devices or personal email accounts or devices, may be of permanent or archival value and those records should be preserved accordingly.

Thank you for your attention to these important updates. I wish you and your families a blessed holiday season and look forward to seeing you in January.