

SOUTH CAROLINA SENATE

2021 REDISTRICTING PUBLIC HEARING HANDOUT

What is the census?

A census is a government-sponsored periodic counting, or enumeration, of the total resident population (citizens and non-citizens).

Congress has established the United States Census Bureau to conduct the census. The Census Bureau defines “apportionment” as “the process of dividing the 435 memberships, or seats, in the U.S. House of Representatives among the 50 states.” Information from the Census Bureau may be found at <https://www.census.gov/>.

According to Census Bureau estimates, the total resident population for the United States is 331,449,281. The total resident population for South Carolina is 5,118,425.

What is reapportionment?

The U.S. Constitution provides that representatives be apportioned among the states based upon the population living in each state. (Article I, Section 2 of the U.S. Constitution.) Every 10 years, after the census is taken, an announcement is made concerning how many seats each state will have in the U.S. House of Representatives.

What is redistricting?

Redistricting is the process by which a state legislature or other government entity divides an area into new representative districts based upon the area’s population.

The South Carolina Senate is preparing to redraw the 7 Congressional and 46 State Senate Districts. The population for each Congressional District should be approximately 731,204. The population for each Senate District should be approximately 111,270.

What may be considered in drawing district lines?

In addition to federal and state law, courts have recognized that, to achieve legitimate state goals, states may use certain traditional redistricting principles as guidelines or criteria to follow in redrawing district lines.

What are traditional redistricting principles?

Examples of traditional redistricting principles include that: (1) districts are compact; (2) district boundaries follow natural, man-made, or political geographic boundaries (like mountain ridges, roads, or county or municipal lines); (3) split precincts are minimized so as to avoid voter confusion at the polls; (4) cores of existing districts are maintained; (5) constituent consistency is considered; and (6) communities of interest are kept together in the same district.

What are communities of interest?

Courts have recognized that legislators may consider communities of interest when drawing district boundaries. There is no single definition of a community of interest. A community of interest may be a neighborhood, town, political subdivision, or area where people share common concerns or economic, recreational, and social interests that cause them to identify with one another.

How can citizens participate in the redistricting process?

The Senate Redistricting Subcommittee is seeking information from members of the public concerning South Carolina's Congressional and State Senate districts.

While the subcommittee is charged with drawing districts that reflect new population totals and comply with federal law, it also wants to provide for districts that represent the people they include. In order to do this, the subcommittee needs first hand information from people all around the State about the areas in which they live.

At the public hearings, the subcommittee wants to hear about the communities of interest that exist throughout the State. If you cannot attend a public hearing, you may send information to the subcommittee by mail or email.

***S.C. Senate Judiciary Redistricting Subcommittee
P.O. Box 142, Columbia, SC 29202
Email: redistricting@scsenate.gov and Phone: (803) 212-6636
Website address: <http://redistricting.scsenate.gov>***