

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

SESSION 1999

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HOUSE BILL 1181

Short Title: Redistricting Criteria.

(Public)

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Sponsors: Representatives Ellis; and Pope (Primary Sponsors).

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Referred to: Election Law and Campaign Finance Reform.

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April 15, 1999

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO ESTABLISH CRITERIA FOR REDISTRICTING.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

Section 1. Article 1 of Chapter 120 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

**"§ 120-2.3. Redistricting criteria.**

In preparing redistricting plans for the State House of Representatives, the State Senate, and the North Carolina members of the United States House of Representatives, the General Assembly shall adhere to the following criteria in the order of priority in which they appear below:

- (1) There shall be substantial equality of population among Senators in each Senatorial district. State Senate and State House districts shall be drawn so as to contain approximately the ideal number of residents for each member. In no event shall the overall range of deviation in the State House and State Senate plans exceed ten percent (10%). In congressional districts, the districts shall be drawn as nearly equal in population as practicable.
- (2) The voting rights of racial minorities shall not be abridged or denied in the formation of districts.
- (3) All districts shall consist of contiguous territory.

- 1           (4)    Census blocks shall not be divided in the drawing of districts.  
2           (5)    It is desirable to maintain the integrity of precincts in the drawing of  
3           districts.  
4           (6)    All congressional and legislative districts shall be single-member  
5           districts.  
6           (7)    Legislative districts shall be drawn so as to avoid the unnecessary  
7           division of counties, cities, and other political subdivisions. No city  
8           smaller than the size of a district shall contain subdivisions of more than  
9           two districts.  
10          (8)    Districts shall be compact in form. In drawing such districts, populous  
11          adjacent territory shall not be bypassed to reach distant populous areas.  
12          (9)    Congressional and legislative districts shall be drawn so as to preserve  
13          existing communities of interest where that can be done in compliance  
14          with the standards listed above. For purposes of this subdivision,  
15          'community of interest' means a recognizable area with similarities of  
16          interests, including, but not limited to, racial, ethnic, geographic, social,  
17          cultural, or historic interests, as well as commonality of  
18          communications.  
19          (10) Districts shall not be established with the intent and effect of diluting  
20          the voting strength of any person, group of persons, or members of any  
21          political party. Legislative districts shall not be drawn for the purpose of  
22          favoring any incumbent."

23          Section 2. This act is effective when it becomes law.