

RESOLUTION

Citizens commission to prepare Wyoming Legislature redistricting

Whereas the Wyoming Constitution (Article 3, Section 48) requires the Legislature to reapportion itself during the first budget session following the federal decennial U.S. Census using those census numbers;

Whereas the interim work in 2021 and the rewriting during the 2022 budget session consumed several months and involved dozens of plans to accommodate competing local scenarios and legislators' preferences and then ended up resolved at the last hour of the session with districts still outside the constitutionally mandated 10 percent deviation;

Whereas the League of Women Voters of Wyoming considers equal representation—one person, one vote—to be the highest priority of a redistricting plan and to be compromised only by the most exigent needs;

Whereas LWVWY agrees with the 2021 principles adopted by the most recent legislative redistricting effort and believes reasons to depart from them DO NOT include familiarity with an existing constituency, preserving a legislator's seat, considering a common shopping location as a "community of interest," or discomfiture with a district of diverse interests;

Whereas a nonpartisan citizens' redistricting commission, such as that used by Utah and other states, would draw up and submit to the Legislature a plan that complies with the Constitution and legislative guiding principles, free of self-interest, using expert and professional services of the Legislative Service Office and Wyoming County Clerks Association and considering input from the public and elected officials; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that the League of Women Voters of Wyoming advocate for the Wyoming Legislature's use of a citizens commission to prepare a legislative redistricting plan, using new decennial U.S. Census data, and submit it for review and approval by the following legislative budget session, as required by the Wyoming Constitution, and

Further be it resolved, that LWVWY use its resources to ensure the widest possible engagement of the public in the work of the proposed commission.

Approved by Cheyenne League of Women Voters, March 24, 2022
Approved by the Wyoming League of Women Voters, May 1, 2022

[Note: The governor's letter, next, explains his decision not to sign the redistricting bill.]



March 25, 2022

The Honorable Edward Buchanan
Secretary of State
Herschler Building East
122 W. 25th Street, Suite 100
Cheyenne, Wyoming 82002

Re: No signature of HEA0062/HB0100 - Redistricting of the Legislature

Dear Secretary Buchanan:

The Legislature's Joint Corporations, Elections and Political Subdivision Committee put in an immense amount of work this past year to develop proposed legislation for reapportioning legislative districts – a constitutional task required of this Legislature following the decennial census. The Committee and staff held 20 meetings and listening sessions across the state from Fort Laramie to Worland. Hundreds of Wyoming citizens got involved and county clerks dedicated countless hours to crafting a draft bill to help elections run smoothly. The final legislation was amended in the waning hours of the legislative session to a version that apparently establishes some districts that appear to exceed presumptively acceptable deviation limits. Redistricting is an inherently legislative process and, therefore, I must assume this final product represents the “best effort” of this Legislature. Thus, for this reason as well as a desire to see our elections have their best chance to proceed in an orderly and proper way, I am allowing HEA 62 to become law without my signature.

Sincerely,

Mark Gordon
Governor

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cc: The Honorable Dan Dockstader, President of the Senate
The Honorable Eric Barlow, Speaker of the House
Chief Clerk, Wyoming Senate
Chief Clerk, Wyoming House of Representatives