
SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 8210

State of Washington

64th Legislature

2016 Regular Session

By Senators Schoesler and Nelson

Read first time 01/12/16. Referred to Committee on Government Operations & Security.

1 BE IT RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
2 STATE OF WASHINGTON, IN LEGISLATIVE SESSION ASSEMBLED:

3 THAT, At the next general election to be held in this state the
4 secretary of state shall submit to the qualified voters of the state
5 for their approval and ratification, or rejection, an amendment to
6 Article II, section 43 of the Constitution of the state of Washington
7 to read as follows:

8 Article II, section 43. (1) In January of each year ending in
9 one, a commission shall be established to provide for the
10 redistricting of state legislative and congressional districts.

11 (2) The commission shall be composed of five members to be
12 selected as follows: The legislative leader of the two largest
13 political parties in each house of the legislature shall appoint one
14 voting member to the commission by January 15th of each year ending
15 in one. By January 31st of each year ending in one, the four
16 appointed members, by an affirmative vote of at least three, shall
17 appoint the remaining member. The fifth member of the commission, who
18 shall be nonvoting, shall act as its chairperson. If any appointing
19 authority fails to make the required appointment by the date
20 established by this subsection, within five days after that date the
21 supreme court shall make the required appointment.

22 (3) No elected official and no person elected to legislative
23 district, county, or state political party office may serve on the

1 commission. A commission member shall not have been an elected
2 official and shall not have been an elected legislative district,
3 county, or state political party officer within two years of his or
4 her appointment to the commission. The provisions of this subsection
5 do not apply to the office of precinct committee person.

6 (4) The legislature shall enact laws providing for the
7 implementation of this section, to include additional qualifications
8 for commissioners and additional standards to govern the commission.
9 The legislature shall appropriate funds to enable the commission to
10 carry out its duties.

11 (5) Each district shall contain a population, excluding
12 nonresident military personnel, as nearly equal as practicable to the
13 population of any other district. To the extent reasonable, each
14 district shall contain contiguous territory, shall be compact and
15 convenient, and shall be separated from adjoining districts by
16 natural geographic barriers, artificial barriers, or political
17 subdivision boundaries. The commission's plan shall not provide for a
18 number of legislative districts different than that established by
19 the legislature. The commission's plan shall not be drawn purposely
20 to favor or discriminate against any political party or group.

21 (6) The commission shall complete redistricting as soon as
22 possible following the federal decennial census, but no later than
23 (~~January 1st~~) November 15th of each year ending in (~~two~~) one. At
24 least three of the voting members shall approve such a redistricting
25 plan. If three of the voting members of the commission fail to
26 approve a plan within the time limitations provided in this
27 subsection, the supreme court shall adopt a plan by April 30th of the
28 year ending in two in conformance with the standards set forth in
29 subsection (5) of this section.

30 (7) The legislature may amend the redistricting plan but must do
31 so by a two-thirds vote of the legislators elected or appointed to
32 each house of the legislature. Any amendment must have passed both
33 houses by the end of the thirtieth day of the first session convened
34 after the commission has submitted its plan to the legislature. After
35 that day, the plan, with any legislative amendments, constitutes the
36 state districting law.

37 (8) The legislature shall enact laws providing for the
38 reconvening of a commission for the purpose of modifying a
39 districting law adopted under this section. Such reconvening requires
40 a two-thirds vote of the legislators elected or appointed to each

1 house of the legislature. The commission shall conform to the
2 standards prescribed under subsection (5) of this section and any
3 other standards or procedures that the legislature may provide by
4 law. At least three of the voting members shall approve such a
5 modification. Any modification adopted by the commission may be
6 amended by a two-thirds vote of the legislators elected and appointed
7 to each house of the legislature. The state districting law shall
8 include the modifications with amendments, if any.

9 (9) The legislature shall prescribe by law the terms of
10 commission members and the method of filling vacancies on the
11 commission.

12 (10) The supreme court has original jurisdiction to hear and
13 decide all cases involving congressional and legislative
14 redistricting.

15 (11) Legislative and congressional districts may not be changed
16 or established except pursuant to this section. A districting plan
17 and any legislative amendments to the plan are not subject to Article
18 III, section 12 of this Constitution.

19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the secretary of state shall cause
20 notice of this constitutional amendment to be published at least four
21 times during the four weeks next preceding the election in every
22 legal newspaper in the state.

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