Local Redistricting Criteria: Processes and Practical Considerations

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Overview

- **Redistricting Process**
  - Developing Iterative Processes and Timelines
  - Using Public Input as Building Blocks for Multiple Criteria

- **Focus on Criteria: FVRA and Communities of Interest**
  - Federal Mandates and Ranked Criteria
  - Legal, Historical, and Demographic Analyses
  - Intersection of FVRA and Neighborhoods/Communities of Interest

- **Special Considerations for Commissions**
Redistricting Process

- **FAIR MAPS Act**
  - Baseline Requirements and Timelines for Public Inputs
  - Draft Maps and Iterative Processes

- **Securing Adequate Resources**
  - Line Drawing Consultant
  - Software Tools for Public Input
  - Legal Counsel
  - Specialized Expertise: FVRA Compliance/Racially Polarized Voting
Redistricting Criteria: General Considerations

- Relationship Between Federal and State Criteria
- Importance of Rankings for Line-Drawers and General Public
- Using Public Input as Building Blocks
  - Consider Developing Pre-Draft Maps of Neighborhoods and Communities of Interest
- Tendencies to Reorder Criteria
  - Elevating Community of Interests Above Federal Requirements
  - Elevating Compactness and District Aesthetics
Redistricting Criteria: Federal Voting Rights Act

- Section 2 Litigation Framework: Regulatory vs. Risk Analysis
- Analyses:
  - Legal/Historical (Previous Section 5 Coverage, CVRA Litigation)
  - Demographic
    - Potential Majority-Minority Districts
      - Risks of Packing
      - Multiple Minority Populations and Coalitional Voting
    - Additional Resources: State CRC, County-Level
  - Electoral
    - Racially Polarized Voting
“A ‘community of interest’ is a population that shares common social or economic interests that should be included within a single . . . district for purposes of its effective and fair representation. Communities of interest do not include relationships with political parties, incumbents, or political candidates.”

Communities of Interest can include:

- Racial and Ethnic Populations
- Populations with Similar Living Standards
- Urban, Suburban, Rural Concentrations
- Economic Concentrations (e.g., industrial, agricultural)
Redistricting Criteria: FVRA and Communities of Interest

- **Racial and Ethnic Communities of Interest**
  - Smaller Populations
  - Limited Evidence of Racially Polarized Voting
  - Ethnic Populations Not Clearly Covered by VRA
- However, race or ethnicity should be considered *in tandem with other dimensions* (e.g., income levels, neighborhood characteristics) to prevent constitutional problems.

- **Potential Conflicts Between VRA Districts and Communities of Interest**
  - Multiple racial and ethnic communities of interest
Redistricting Commissions

- Assess Commissioner Skill Sets and Expertise
  - Complementarity Among Commissioners and Staff/Consultants
- Balancing Tasks and Timelines
  - Education/Outreach – Public Input -- Line Drawing
  - Input as an End vs. Input as Information for Mapping
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