

2020 Citizens Redistricting Commission  
Presentation by League of Women Voters of Michigan  
Script prepared by LWVMI  
Courtesy of the LWV Education Foundation

Good Evening.

Welcome to this presentation on the Citizens Redistricting Commission.

My name is \_\_\_\_\_. I'm from the League of Women Voters of \_\_\_\_\_.

The League's Mission is to "Empower Voters and Defend Democracy". We are a non-partisan organization. We do not support or oppose parties or candidates. We do support or oppose ballot proposals if we have studied the issue. In 2018, we supported Proposal Two which amended the Michigan Constitution in order to create a Citizens Redistricting Commission.

As many of you know, in the past, the Michigan Legislature was responsible for drawing the district maps for the U.S. Congress and the state Legislature. As a result, Michigan's maps were drawn to ensure that the party in power, stayed in power. Last spring, Michigan's maps were declared unconstitutional by the Eastern Michigan Federal Trial court. However, in June 2019 the U.S. Supreme Court determined that partisan gerrymandering was not the business of the federal courts.

With the passage of Proposal Two, which created a Citizens Redistricting Commission, redistricting was taken out of the hands of the Legislature and given to the Redistricting Commission. Since Prop Two was an amendment to the Michigan Constitution, it cannot be changed by the Legislature. The Commission remains in place unless there is a court order to change it.

The League is conducting Educational Town Halls in communities across the state to encourage registered voters to apply to be on the Commission. This effort is supported by funds from the League of Women Voters Education Fund.

In this presentation, I am going to do three things.

- I've provided:
  - Two handouts from the SOS office: A Citizens' Guide to the CRC; and a Timeline of the application and selection process
  - A list of Criteria which must be used by the CRC to draw the maps
- Second, I'm going to show you a power point created by the Brennan Center that explains how the Commission will be formed and what rules will govern its work. It was developed in 2017 after Proposal Two was filed with the Secretary of State. The content is consistent with the Proposal Two that Michigan voters passed in 2018.
- Third, I will show you a few slides created by Voters Not Politicians that explains why voters should apply to be on the Commission and answers a few questions that people have asked.

-Notes for Brennan Center slides

Slide 1: The Brennan Center for Justice at NYU School of Law is a non-partisan law and policy institute. They prepared these slides in October 2017 for educational presentations on the ballot proposal before it was passed in November 2018.

Slide 2: I'll describe the structure of the Commission

Slide 3: This shows the makeup of the 13 member commission—13, to ensure no tie votes. Note: Applicants will self-identify as Republicans,

Democrats or Independents. The “Independents” or “Other” are voters who do not self-identify as Republicans or Democrats. Therefore, the category could include members of minor parties, as well as those who don’t identify with any party.

Slide 4: Qualifications: Registered voter who applies. Note that this is the entry level of qualifications. There are important EXCLUSIONS on the next two slides.

Slide 5: Who is excluded from being on the Commission? The reason for these exclusions is to avoid the appearance of a conflict of interest, and to avoid the appearance of partisanship. This slide shows four categories of people who are excluded from eligibility.

Slide 6: Shows two more exclusions, and one consequence of serving on the CRC: cannot hold partisan elective office for five years after serving on the CRC.

Slide 7: Selection Process; (See also the two handouts from SOS)

In late 2019, registered voters may apply in one of two ways:

1. Secretary of State (SOS) must mail applications to 10,000 persons chosen randomly from the state’s qualified voter file; eligible voters may return the application to the SOS’s office or,
2. Eligible voters may apply to the SOS office, using the **RedistrictingMichigan.org** website. Applications will be available the end of 2019.

Application deadline is June 1, 2020

After June 1, 2020, a random process is used to reduce the size of the pools to 60 self-identified Democrats, 60 self-identified Republicans and 80 self-identified Independents. Half of the pool must be made up of applicants who received the random mailing.

Note: The pool of “80 self-identified Independents” is made up of those who do not self-identify as Democrats or Republicans. Therefore, it could include members of minor parties, as well as those who don’t identify with any party.

The Majority and Minority Leaders of the House and Senate each get to strike 5 applicants from the pool, for a total of 20 strikes; further random reductions in the pools must be weighted to reflect the geographic and demographic makeup of the state.

Eventually, there will be four Democrats, four Republicans and five Independents, for a total of 13 Commissioners

Slide 8: Title slide for Map Approval Process

Slide 9: Two requirements for map to be approved. First, the districts must meet specific criteria (covered in a minute). Second, the plan must be adopted by a majority vote, at least 2D, 2R and 2 Other. What if there is a deadlock?

Slide 10: If a deadlock, use ranked choice voting; if still a tie, then Secretary of State decides.

Slide 11: District map criteria and rules title slide

Slide 12: Criteria for electoral districts (7 criteria). These criteria are listed in order of priority. That’s important because sometimes in following one criteria it becomes impossible to follow a different criteria. (See Criteria handout)

Slide 13: Criteria for public participation: It is required, in the form of public hearings, open meetings, access via TV or online; and also by

public providing input, and commission publishing plans in time for public comment.

Slide 14: Budget:

Legislature is required (it is in the Constitution) to fund the Secretary of State to compensate commissioners and enable commission to do its work, including hiring experts, conducting meetings, and maintaining records.

The term “Census year” refers to the year in which the census is taken, 2020, 2030, etc.

The Commissioners must begin their work by October 15, 2020 and must adopt a redistricting plan for U.S. Congressional and state Legislative Districts (maps) by November 1, 2021.

For this work, they will be compensated at least 25% of the Governor’s salary (about \$40,000 in 2021). They will not continue to serve after November 1, 2021, even if there are legal challenges.

Slide 15: This shows the timeline, also on the Timeline Handout from Secretary of State.

Slide 16: This is where you can find more information, in addition to the Secretary of State site.

Notes for Voters Not Politicians Slides: 17-20

Slide 17: Why you should apply title

Slide 18: Photos for why you should apply

Slide 19: Text to go with each photo

Unique job opportunity; Represent Michigan; Listen to public, work with expert map makers and consultants; you can shape

Michigan's future, replacing the politicians, lobbyists, and special interests who used to rig the process.

Slide 20: Answers to commonly asked questions

Slide 21: Map Michigan's Future

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