

Senate Election Law and Municipal Affairs Committee

Jessica Bourque 271-2104

SB 587, creating criteria for redistricting of congressional districts, state senate districts, state house of representatives districts, and executive councilor districts.

Hearing Date: February 3, 2026

Time Opened: 9:30 a.m.

Time Closed: 9:34 a.m.

Members of the Committee Present: Senators Gray, Lang, Rochefort, Perkins Kwoka and Long

Members of the Committee Absent: None

Bill Analysis: This bill creates criteria for redistricting congressional districts, state senate districts, state house of representatives districts, and executive councilor districts.

Sponsors:

Sen. Perkins Kwoka
Sen. Watters
Sen. Altschiller

Sen. Fenton
Sen. Long
Rep. Telerski

Sen. Rosenwald
Sen. Prentiss
Rep. Simpson

Who supports the bill: 63 people signed in to support the bill. For a complete list of names, please contact committee aide, Jessica Bourque at jessica.bourque@gc.nh.gov

Who opposes the bill: 2 people signed in opposed to the bill. For a complete list of names, please contact committee aide, Jessica Bourque at jessica.bourque@gc.nh.gov

Summary of testimony presented:

Senator Perkins Kwoka, Prime Sponsor, District 21

- There is an ongoing discussion about redistricting nationwide.
- As a member of the redistricting committee five years ago, Senator Perkins Kwoka believes there are some improvements that could be made to the process, and this bill aims to initiate that conversation and believes this is a good time to do it before NH redistricts again.
- This would improve aspects of the process, such as the schedule for public hearings, the comment collection process, and the timing of map releases.
- The timing of maps often comes up in public hearings, so it would be helpful if the maps were available when the committee travels across the state seeking input.

- This is a thoughtful first draft based on what other states have done.

Senator Gray asked which criterion is the most important when considering redistricting.

Senator Perkins Kwoka said, "One person, one vote."

Senator Gray followed up and said so, the population. Keeping the difference between the people who are above the median and those below the median as small as possible.

Senator Perkins Kwoka said yes.

Senator Lang asked about the +/- 5% standard deviation established by a Supreme Court decision and whether our latest redistricting maps met that criterion.

Senator Perkins Kwoka said she remembers when the redistricting committee traveled around the state; maps weren't available at that time, so this aims to help citizens contribute to the process and ensure the fairest maps possible.