

SB 587 - AS INTRODUCED

2026 SESSION

26-2242

08/06

SENATE BILL **587**

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

SPONSORS: Sen. Perkins Kwoka, Dist 21; Sen. Fenton, Dist 10; Sen. Rosenwald, Dist 13; Sen. Watters, Dist 4; Sen. Long, Dist 20; Sen. Prentiss, Dist 5; Sen. Altschiller, Dist 24; Rep. Telerski, Hills. 11; Rep. Simpson, Rock. 33

COMMITTEE: Election Law and Municipal Affairs

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ANALYSIS

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

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Explanation: Matter added to current law appears in ***bold italics***.  
Matter removed from current law appears ~~[in brackets and struckthrough.]~~  
Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

*In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty-Six*

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

*Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:*

1            1 Short Title. This act shall be known as the "Fair Maps Act."

2            2 Findings.

3            I. The number of senate seats each party holds should be roughly proportional to the  
4 statewide vote percentage for each party.

5            II. In 2024, the statewide vote percentage for Democratic state senate candidates was 48.64  
6 percent, yet Democrats only won 33 percent of the state senate seats. In 2022, Democratic state  
7 senate candidates won a majority of votes statewide, 50.6 percent, yet only won 41.66 percent of  
8 seats. And once again in 2020, Democratic State Senate candidates earned 49.81 percent of votes  
9 statewide, yet only won 41.66 percent of seats.

10           III. If state senate districts are to be drawn to accurately represent the makeup of New  
11 Hampshire voters across 24 seats, then the overall seat allocation should track closely with the  
12 overall statewide vote breakdown.

13           3 New Section; Criteria for Redistricting Electoral Districts for Federal and State Offices.  
14 Amend RSA 14 by inserting after section 14-c the following new section:

15           14:14-d Criteria for Redistricting Electoral Districts for Federal and State Offices.

16           I. When apportioning the state in congressional districts, state house of representative, state  
17 senate legislative districts, and executive council districts, the general court shall hold at least 10  
18 public hearings at locations throughout the state prior to proposing any reapportionment plan to  
19 gather information from the public about communities of interest and other matters relevant to the  
20 development of proposed reapportionment plans by the general court.

21           II. In addition to the hearings required under paragraph I, the general court shall:

22           (a) Hold at least 3 public hearings after a reapportionment plan is proposed, but before  
23 the first vote of the general court or a committee of the general court is held in order to solicit public  
24 feedback on the proposed plan.

25           (b) Subject to subparagraph III(d), conduct the hearings required under this section  
26 either in different state senate districts of this state or with the use of video conferencing  
27 technologies that permit active citizen participation throughout the state.

28           III. In holding the hearings required under paragraphs I and II, the general court shall:

1 (a) Schedule hearings at times and locations that are broadly convenient to members of  
2 the public and that facilitate maximum meaningful public participation in the reapportionment  
3 process. To the extent possible, hearings shall be held outside of regular business hours.

4 (b) Provide at least 5 business days' public notice of the time and location of each  
5 hearing;

6 (c) Hold at least one hearing required under paragraph I in each county of this state;

7 (d) Hold at least one hearing required under paragraph I and one hearing required  
8 under paragraph II in areas that have experienced the largest shifts in population since the previous  
9 reapportionment, and prioritize holding public hearings in these areas; and

10 (e) Permit and make provision for individuals at remote sites throughout the state to  
11 provide public testimony at hearings through the use of video equipment.

12 IV.(a) In addition to the public hearings required by paragraphs I and II, the public shall  
13 have the right to comment at any hearing of a committee of the general court held to discuss  
14 reapportionment matters. The general court may request that persons register in advance of the  
15 hearing, but shall not require pre-registration as a condition of participating in the public comment  
16 period. The committee may impose reasonable time limits for each speaker, provided such time  
17 limits are equal for all speakers. Nothing in this section shall restrict the general court from  
18 establishing other reasonable standards for the public comment period. The general court may  
19 reasonably restrict public comments that disclose personally identifiable information, or other  
20 confidential or privileged information.

21 (b) The requirement that a committee of the general court considering reapportionment  
22 matters provide the opportunity for public comment shall not apply when the sole purpose of the  
23 meeting is to enter non-public session under RSA 91-A:3.

24 (c) For reapportionment plans considered by a committee of the general court, a period  
25 of at least 5 business days after the hearing shall be provided for the submission of materials in  
26 writing or in electronic format, unless a shorter period is specified in the notice.

27 (d) Every non-oral public comment on a proposed reapportionment plan that the general  
28 court receives shall be promptly uploaded to the public Internet site required by paragraph VI. Each  
29 proposed reapportionment plan shall have a separate location for all public comments received for  
30 that map. Duplicative comments may be consolidated at the general court's discretion. Vulgar or  
31 inappropriate testimony may not be published.

32 (e) Public comments received via regular mail shall be scanned and added to the web  
33 page as electric documents.

34 (f) All comments received as video, audio, or geographic files shall be available to the  
35 public in that format.

36 V.(a) All timely comments received by the general court from a member of the public on a  
37 proposed reapportionment plan shall be addressed by the general court.

1 (b) Such comments may be addressed by either incorporation into the proposed  
2 reapportionment plan or via a written report to be issued at least 2 weeks prior to any executive  
3 session or vote concerning such reapportionment plan, either in committee or before a vote of the  
4 legislative body. In addition to responding to public comments, such report shall set out for the  
5 public the reasons for the boundary choices made by proponents of the plan under consideration and  
6 provide an evaluation of the plan using relevant metrics.

7 VI.(a) The general court shall maintain a free public Internet site for reapportionment  
8 related matters on which members of the public can access:

9 (1) All reapportionment plans proposed by a member of the general court or a  
10 member of the public.

11 (2) All written comments received by the general court about a reapportionment  
12 plan.

13 (3) The census, election, and demographic data necessary for the members of the  
14 public to easily review and analyze a reapportionment plan.

15 (4) Any report or other analysis provided to members of the general court or a  
16 committee of the general court prior to a vote on a reapportionment plan.

17 (5) A portal for members of the public to submit:

18 (A) Comments on a reapportionment plan;

19 (B) Community of interest mapping;

20 (C) Alternative reapportionment plans; or

21 (D) Other information relevant to the reapportionment process.

22 VI. The general court shall maintain a means by which members of the public can watch live  
23 or archival footage of proceedings of the general court or of a committee of the general court at which  
24 a reapportionment plan is considered by the general court or committee, as the case may be.

25 VII.(a) Any materials received by or reviewed by the committee or its members, in  
26 connection with the construction of the reapportionment plan, shall be available to the public.

27 (b) Such availability shall include any draft maps, statistics, reports, community of  
28 interest categorization, correspondence with any third party regarding the contents or design of a  
29 reapportionment plan, or other relevant information.

30 (c) No member of the general court, any employee or consultant of the general court or  
31 one of its members, or any other third party shall assert any legislative or other privilege to prevent  
32 disclosure of written or electronic information relevant to the reapportionment process. The  
33 foregoing shall not apply to the substance of oral discussions regarding a reapportionment plan that  
34 occurs solely between members of the general court.

35 4 Effective Date. This act shall take effect 60 days after its passage.