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Fact Sheet on Redistricting and the Citizens Redistricting Commission

- California must redraw the boundaries of its Senate, Assembly, and State Board of Equalization districts every 10 years, to reflect the new federal census population data.
- In November 2008, California voters authorized the creation of the Citizens Redistricting Commission when they passed the Voters FIRST Act, which appeared as Proposition 11. Prior to 2008, California legislators drew the districts.
- The Act requires the California State Auditor to initiate an application process for selecting the members of the Citizens Redistricting Commission.
- The voters gave the California State Auditor's office the responsibility of initiating the commission application because they wanted a nonpartisan entity – without political ties or conflicts of interest and who understands how government works – to be in control of selecting the first eight members of the Commission that will ultimately redraw the boundaries.
- The Citizens Redistricting Commission must draw the district boundaries in conformity with strict, nonpartisan rules designed to create districts of relatively equal population that will provide fair representation for all Californians.
- Eleven other states currently utilize non-partisan or bi-partisan redistricting commissions composed of non-office-holding citizens. The states include: Alaska, Arizona, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Missouri, Montana, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Washington. Arkansas and Ohio use redistricting commissions that are wholly composed of elected officials.
- The commission will be comprised of 14 members - five members who are Democrats, five members who are Republicans, and four members who are neither Democrats nor Republicans.
- In California, registered voters are eligible to serve on the commission if they have been continuously registered in California with the same political party, or with no political party, for the five years immediately prior to being appointed to the commission; and they have voted in at least two of the last three statewide general elections.

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- A voter may not serve on the commission if the voter or a member of his or her immediate family has been appointed to, elected to, or been a candidate for a California congressional or state office; served as an officer, employee, or paid consultant of a California political party or of the campaign committee of a candidate for California congressional or elective state office; or has been a registered lobbyist.
- The commission will vote to approve the three maps—one for the Senate districts, one for the Assembly districts, and one for the Board of Equalization districts. Once the commission has approved the three final maps, the maps are certified to the Secretary of State with a report explaining the basis on which the commission made its decisions.

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