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Redistricting Web Page Survey

We searched all states and found 36 with active redistricting websites. The sites can be reached from the National Conference of State Legislature's (NCSL) website <http://www.ncsl.org/default.aspx?tabid=22500>.

The most common features on redistricting websites are: background information and FAQs (26), 2001 Redistricting Plan maps (21), and population information, (19). Other common features include:

1. committee members, often with links to brief biographies (17);
2. contacts (17);
3. links to outside sources (17);
4. legal considerations (16);
5. committee and public hearing schedules, along with minutes, transcripts, and occasionally streaming audio or video (14);
6. press releases (13);
7. redistricting criteria (13);
8. political data (most via links to census data) (11); and
9. draft plans (8).

The following briefly describes materials that states include under each information feature category.

Background Information and FAQs

This feature is the most difficult to characterize, as states have taken significantly different approaches. Some use this feature to detail the history of redistricting in their particular state. Others use it to generally describe the redistricting process and legal principles. Most FAQs address questions like “What is redistricting?”

Redistricting Maps from the 2000 Census

The main variable here is the detail presented in the maps. Most states present information down to the county level, but a few show local towns, districts, and wards. Many states provide links to the 2000 Census site (see below) and a handful link to historical data such as their 1990 plans (that they could, instead, include in “Background”).

Population Data

Again, the states went into different levels of detail. Some link to the relevant census page, while others developed their own tables and maps. Many of the sites that include population data display the Census Bureau’s interactive Census 2000 map showing population changes between 2000 and 2010. Others list historical population changes for earlier redistricting cycles.

Contacts

This feature consists primarily of (a) redistricting staff telephone and fax numbers and email addresses or (b) dedicated redistricting email, fax, and telephone contact information. However, there appears to be a trend towards offering electronic forms that allow the public to submit comments and proposed plans. Most warn correspondents that their comments will become part of the public record.

Legal Considerations

States use this feature to present statutes, constitutions, and caselaw as an alternative to including it in “Background” or “Links”.

Links

Many states link to the Census Bureau, primarily to its redistricting information main page <http://www.census.gov/rdo/> and state data page (<http://2010.census.gov/2010census/data/>). The Census 2010 page contains an interactive map that states commonly link to. It contains maps and charts showing population malapportionment at the national, state, and county levels.

Some link to the Census Bureau’s American FactFinder, <http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>, which provides geographic and population information, including racial and Hispanic/Latino data. Other popular links include NCSL’s main redistricting page that contains reports, PowerPoint slides, papers, and presentations made at all NCSL redistricting seminars (http://www.ncsl.org/Home/SearchResults/tabid/702/Default.aspx?zoom_query=redistricting) and its free Red Book, particularly the glossary of terms <http://www.ncsl.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=syapSBuBXMg%3d&tabid=19225>. A few also link to

the Brennan Center for Justice's Citizen's Guide to Redistricting
(http://brennan.3cdn.net/7182a7e7624ed5265d_6im622teh.pdf)

Many states link to their local census organizations and GIS websites. In Connecticut, this is UConn's MAGIC site (http://magic.lib.uconn.edu/connecticut_data.html#census).

Press Releases

The most popular press releases highlight public hearing announcements and locations, committee meeting schedules, and "What's New"-type entries. Some cover national as well as local developments.

Redistricting Criteria

Almost half of the states have links to "criteria". In some cases, this consists of state-adopted redistricting guidelines that set forth the state's redistricting standards. A few other states have links to common law (i.e., non-statutory) redistricting criteria. In others, the site links to state and controlling federal cases that establish statewide standards and considerations.

Political Data

This category significantly overlaps political data (boundaries, household characteristics, and other demographic information) that is available through other links. It appears to reflect individual state decisions about how to organize information on their sites.

Draft Plans

By and large, and possibly because many states are in the early stages of redistricting, only a few have links to current draft plans. When they do, these are generally submissions from legislators who are not directly involved in the legislative redistricting process and members of the public.

State Website Contents

Table 1 below categorizes and compares website contents.

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	<i>Background/FAQ</i>	<i>Members</i>	<i>Criteria</i>	<i>2001 Maps</i>	<i>Hearing/Mtg. Schedules & Minutes</i>	<i>Proposed Districts</i>	<i>Legal</i>	<i>Population Data</i>	<i>Political Data</i>	<i>Links to Outside Sources</i>	<i>Press Releases</i>	<i>Contacts</i>
AK	X	X		X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
AZ	X	X		X	X					X		
AR	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
CA	X										X	
CO	X	X		X				X			X	X
FL	X	X		X			X	X	X	X	X	X
GA	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X		
HI	X	X	X	X	X		X					X
ID	X		X	X			X	X				X
IL	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X		X
IN				X		X	X	X	X	X	X	
IA		X	X				X			X		X
KS	X	X	X	X	X			X	X		X	X
MA					X							
MI		X			X							X
MN	X					X	X	X		X		
MS		X		X			X			X		
MO	X					X		X	X		X	X
MT	X				X					X	X	X
NE	X		X				X	X			X	
NV	X		X	X				X	X	X		X
NJ	X	X	X	X			X					
NM	X			X				X				X
NY	X	X		X	X			X				
NC	X			X	X			X		X		
OH	X						X					
OK	X		X				X	X		X		
OR	X	X	X				X	X		X	X	
PA		X										
SC	X		X	X	X						X	X
SD												
TX	X	X		X	X	X	X		X			
VA			X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	
WA	X	X		X	X			X	X	X		X
WI	X			X				X	X	X		X
WY												