

## Two legislative redistrictings - one in 2012 and perhaps another in 2014

Alaska could go through two legislative reapportionments after the 2010 census. The first would be the result of our own state districting process. Inclusive within this process will be contentious litigation that always results. And in Alaska, it has not been infrequent that the Court has taken control and redrawn the plan by appointed court masters.

Now comes the test! Any Alaska plan, or even election laws must be pre-cleared by the U.S. Justice Department civil rights division to ensure it complies with the requirements of the federal U.S. Voters Rights Act of 1965, and subsequent revisions. Alaska is in a special category with nine others states (*all in the Old South*). There were a number of reasons why we earned inclusion, but one was an "English language" test for voting in our state constitution. This was never implemented, and subsequently repealed. **Note:** In fact, Alaska did not even implement voter registration until the election of 1968.

Nevertheless, getting tangled up with U.S. Justice preclearance on the state 2012 plan could cause delay preventing resolution and implementation prior to the 2012 elections. The result of delay would be some kind of interim plan for 2012, i.e. use of the existing plan, the state proposed plan, or temporary court imposed plan.

### **The problem been with us since before statehood, and is built into the small size of our House and Senate**

Alaska's increasingly skewered districting map is a natural result of a very small but fixed number of our 20 member Senate and 40 member House (*smallest in the nation*). The size of the House and Senate is fixed. However, the state's population has grown much faster in the urban areas, along the railbelt, and in coastal cities like Juneau, than in the smaller communities scattered along the extensive Alaska coastline and in the vast rural Interior of the state. This means districts in urban centers become more numerous and compact, but rural districts become fewer and must become huge and ungainly to gather sufficient population for a district, taking in regions completely unrelated and separated from each other.

For example, Sen. Johnny Ellis, D-Anchorage, can walk his downtown Anchorage district North and South, East and West, in just a few hours. Sen. Al Kookesh, D-Angoon, must catch a plane to Juneau (or ferry), catch Alaska Airlines to Anchorage, and then fly to Aniak of the Lower Kuskokwim or Holy Cross on the Lower Yukon. This district is half the size of Alaska.

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We started with an enlarged hour of 40 districts that fit the Alaska socio-economic map perfectly

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At statehood our first district plan for the House fit the "constitutional socio-economics criteria" almost perfectly. We wonder whether constitutional crafters of this first plan (*done at the 1955 Constitutional Convention*) knew that an increase in the House from 24 members to 40 members would fit the existing socio-political map so well, making most happy. Nevertheless, it did just that "political job. It kept everyone happy, and that may have been especially important during the time of Congressional review and creation of the Statehood Act (*as well as our own Alaska local vote on statehood*).

**Note:** *The constitutional committee charged with drafting the scheme was not without its bit of controversy and regional politics, i.e. Anchorage against everyone else, the latter reportedly wanting a plan, at least partially, radiating out from turban centers.*

*So, to avoid the "others," meaning Anchorage delegates, reportedly Fairbanks Delegate George Cooper and Nenana/Yukon Delegate Jack Coghill, put together a little mid-night caucus in Delegate George Cooper's basement. Meanwhile, one of their faith kept the Anchorage delegation busy at the Fairbanks Second Avenue Mecca Bar.*

**Note:** *As most states did at this time Alaska had a Senate based on regional geography.*

This 1955 plan by "population count" was out-of-date by statehood, but another census was just around the corner. Further, everyone probably understood this, because the 1960 reapportionment plan had to do some serious revising, and yet produced little acrimony. *It was the only plan that has escaped court review and litigation.*

The point is that the first statehood districts fit the socio-economic map perfectly. However, from that day on every decennial redistricting forced the outlying and coastal districts into contortions, struggling to fit constitutional criteria and then the mandates of the ethnic criteria imposed by the 1965 U.S. Voters Right Act and subsequent revisions. Further, almost simultaneously the U.S. Supreme Court Tennessee case brought down the traditional regional Senates across the country. This was a political shock in itself

With a 20 member Senate and 40-member House, and a landmass that imposes huge barriers, we are now about out-of-gas in being able to meet the mandates of the U.S. Voters Rights Act. The issue is! Might the U.S. Justice Department question the size of our legislative bodies, and due to their small fixed size, our ability to provide ethnic representation required under the U.S. Voters Rights Act.

*- Ongoing series of back grounders*

Population trend for Election Districts in 2010

Election District	Pop. 2000	DOL 2008 Est.	2010 Extrapolation	Diff. From Average
1 Ket.	15,031	13,832	13,532	-3,777
2 Sit-Wran-Pet	14,991	14,104	13,882	-3,427
3-Jun	15,203	15,207	15,208	-2,101
4-Jun	15,508	15,220	15,148	-2,161
5 SE islands	15,048	13,368	12,948	-4,361
6 Interior Bush	14,906	14,564	14,479	-2,830
7 Fbks	15,494	16,725	17,033	-276
8 Fbks	15,552	16,597	16,858	-451
9 Fbks	15,723	17,323	17,723	414
10 Fbks	15,599	17,017	17,372	63
11 N. Pole	15,904	17,129	17,435	126
12 Valdez-Hwys	16,303	17,465	17,756	447
13 Mat-Su	16,231	22,529	24,104	6,795
14 Mat-Su	16,119	22,384	23,950	6,641
15 Mat-Su	16,137	22,477	24,062	6,753
16 Mat-Su	16,104	20,015	20,993	3,684
17 Anch	15,819	17,171	17,509	200
18 Anch	15,639	17,032	17,380	71
19 Anch	15,841	17,394	17,782	473
20 Anch	15,837	17,330	17,703	394
21 Anch	15,850	17,321	17,689	380
22 Anch	15,831	17,353	17,734	425
23 Anch	15,847	17,671	18,127	818
24 Anch	15,812	17,415	17,816	507
25 Anch	15,836	17,464	17,871	562
26 Anch	15,823	17,443	17,848	539
27 Anch	15,820	17,261	17,621	312
28 Anch	15,839	17,279	17,639	330
29 Anch	15,846	17,322	17,691	382
30 Anch	15,839	17,229	17,577	268
31 Anch	15,811	17,216	17,567	258
32 Anch	15,839	16,717	16,937	-372
33 Kenai	16,466	17,488	17,744	435
34 Kenai	16,409	17,477	17,744	435
35 Kenai	16,436	17,613	17,907	598
36 Kodiak	14,928	14,240	14,068	-3,241
37 Bristol B- Chain	15,150	13,623	13,241	-4,068
38 Bethel-YK	14,921	15,793	16,011	-1,298
39 Nome	14,966	15,862	16,086	-1,223
40 Kotz-Barrow	15,155	14,693	14,578	-2,731
TOTAL	627,413	679,363	692,351	
Average Population	15,673	16,993	17,309	

Table 3.4 Alaska Population by House and Senate District 2000, 2008

			July 1, 2008 Population by Age Group								April 1, 2000			
Area Name	Representative	Senator	House District Total	% of Total	Under 5	5-17	18+	% of Total	18-64	65+	House District Total	% of Total	18+	% of Total
Total			679,720	100.00	56,242	140,642	482,836	100.00	433,384	49,452	626,932	100.00	436,215	100.00
Average Population			16,993		1,406	3,516	12,071		10,835	1,236	15,673		10,305	
HD 1 SD A	Kyle Johansen (R)	Bert Stedman (R)	13,832	2.03	967	2,561	10,304	2.13	8,899	1,405	15,031	2.40	10,817	2.48
HD 2 SD A	Peggy Wilson (R)		14,104	2.07	880	2,559	10,665	2.21	8,974	1,691	14,991	2.39	10,809	2.48
HD 3 SD B	Beth Kerttula (D)	Dennis Eagan (D) 2	15,207	2.24	936	2,424	11,847	2.45	10,206	1,641	15,203	2.42	11,459	2.63
HD 4 SD B	Cathy Engstrom Munoz (R)		15,220	2.24	1,143	3,051	11,026	2.28	10,174	852	15,508	2.47	10,835	2.48
HD 5 SD C	Bill Thomas (R)	Albert Kookesh (D)	13,368	1.97	819	2,516	10,033	2.08	8,584	1,449	15,048	2.40	10,669	2.45
HD 6 SD C	Woodie Salmon (D)		14,564	2.14	1,236	3,364	9,964	2.06	8,621	1,343	14,905	2.38	9,774	2.24
HD 7 SD D	Mike Kelly (R)	Joe Thomas (D)	16,725	2.46	1,143	3,542	12,040	2.49	11,059	981	15,494	2.47	10,899	2.50
HD 8 SD D	David Guttentberg (D)		16,597	2.44	1,055	2,974	12,568	2.60	11,773	795	15,552	2.48	11,572	2.65
HD 9 SD E	Scott Kawasaki (D)	Joe Paskvan (D)	17,323	2.55	1,554	3,086	12,683	2.63	10,687	1,996	15,723	2.51	11,261	2.58
HD 10 SD E	Jay Ramras (R)		17,017	2.50	2,100	2,935	11,982	2.48	11,010	972	15,599	2.49	10,847	2.49
HD 11 SD F	John Coghill (R)	Gene Thernault (R)	17,129	2.52	1,449	3,769	11,911	2.47	11,134	777	15,904	2.54	10,826	2.48
HD 12 SD F	John Harris (R)		17,792	2.62	1,700	3,883	12,209	2.53	11,314	895	16,303	2.60	10,861	2.49
HD 13 SD G	Carl Gatto (R)	Linda Menard (R)	22,559	3.32	1,843	5,101	15,615	3.23	13,859	1,756	16,231	2.59	10,835	2.48
HD 14 SD G	Wes Ketter (R)		22,384	3.29	2,123	5,081	15,180	3.14	13,745	1,435	16,119	2.57	10,567	2.42
HD 15 SD H	Mark Neuman (R)	Charlie Huggins (R)	22,477	3.31	1,632	4,668	16,177	3.35	14,455	1,722	16,137	2.57	11,235	2.58
HD 16 SD H	Bill Stoltze (R)		20,015	2.94	1,493	4,416	14,106	2.92	12,743	1,363	16,104	2.57	11,082	2.54
HD 17 SD I	Anna Fairclough (R)	Fred Dyson (R)	17,171	2.53	1,242	4,239	11,690	2.42	11,035	655	15,819	2.52	10,642	2.44
HD 18 SD I	Nancy Dahlstrom (R)		17,032	2.51	2,376	3,428	11,690	2.42	11,035	655	15,819	2.52	10,642	2.44
HD 19 SD J	Pete Petersen (D)	Bill Wielechowski (D)	17,394	2.56	1,455	3,682	12,257	2.54	10,796	1,461	15,841	2.53	11,020	2.53
HD 20 SD J	Max Gruenberg (D)		17,330	2.55	1,971	3,860	11,499	2.38	10,454	1,045	15,837	2.53	10,397	2.38
HD 21 SD K	Harry Crawford (D)	Bettye Davis (D)	17,321	2.55	1,330	3,735	12,256	2.54	11,179	1,077	15,850	2.53	11,086	2.54
HD 22 SD K	Sharon Cissna (D)		17,353	2.55	1,393	3,324	12,636	2.62	11,419	1,217	15,831	2.53	11,413	2.62
HD 23 SD L	Les Gara (D)	Johnny Ellis (D)	17,671	2.60	1,075	2,289	14,307	2.96	11,700	2,607	15,847	2.53	12,703	2.91
HD 24 SD L	Berta Gardner (D)		17,415	2.56	1,375	3,028	13,012	2.69	11,447	1,565	15,812	2.52	11,696	2.68
HD 25 SD M	Mike Doogan (D)	Hollis French (D)	17,464	2.57	1,317	2,656	13,491	2.79	11,874	1,617	15,836	2.53	12,129	2.78
HD 26 SD M	Lindsey Holmes (D)		17,443	2.57	1,178	3,028	13,237	2.74	11,521	1,716	15,823	2.52	11,877	2.72
HD 27 SD N	Robert L. "Bob" Buch (D)	Leslie McGuire (R)	17,261	2.54	1,395	3,682	12,184	2.52	11,286	898	15,820	2.52	11,053	2.53
HD 28 SD N	Craig Johnson (R)		17,279	2.54	1,349	3,907	12,023	2.49	11,053	970	15,839	2.53	10,893	2.50
HD 29 SD O	Chris Tuck (D)	Kevin Meyer (R)	17,322	2.55	1,588	3,311	12,423	2.57	11,506	917	15,846	2.53	11,271	2.58
HD 30 SD O	Charisse Millett (R)		17,229	2.53	1,484	4,014	11,731	2.43	11,033	698	15,839	2.53	10,673	2.45
HD 31 SD P	Bob Lynn (R)	Con Bunde (R)	17,216	2.53	1,135	4,078	12,003	2.49	11,115	888	15,811	2.52	10,886	2.50
HD 32 SD P	Mike Hawker (R)		16,717	2.46	966	3,435	12,316	2.55	11,262	1,054	15,329	2.45	11,161	2.56
HD 33 SD Q	Kurt Olson (R)	Thomas Wagoner (R)	17,488	2.57	1,275	3,588	12,625	2.61	10,913	1,712	16,466	2.63	11,220	2.57
HD 34 SD Q	Mike Chenault (R)		17,477	2.57	1,048	3,458	12,971	2.69	11,209	1,762	16,409	2.62	11,524	2.64
HD 35 SD R	Paul Seaton (R)	Gary Stevens (R)	17,613	2.59	1,145	3,141	13,327	2.76	11,423	1,904	16,436	2.62	11,815	2.71
HD 36 SD R	Alan Austerman (R)		14,240	2.09	1,252	3,264	9,724	2.01	8,784	940	14,928	2.38	10,019	2.30
HD 37 SD S	Bryce Edgmon (D)	Lyman Hoffman (D)	13,623	2.00	854	2,365	10,404	2.15	9,733	671	15,150	2.42	11,192	2.57
HD 38 SD S	Bob Herron (D)		15,793	2.32	2,018	4,517	9,258	1.92	8,356	902	14,921	2.38	8,970	2.06
HD 39 SD T	Richard Foster (D)	Donald Olson (D)	15,862	2.33	2,079	4,666	9,117	1.89	8,192	925	14,996	2.39	8,845	2.03
HD 40 SD T	Reggie Joubert (D)		14,693	2.16	1,869	4,017	8,807	1.82	7,999	808	15,155	2.42	9,116	2.09

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section, Demographics Unit, August 5, 2009

1 Official Returns, November 2008 General Election, State of Alaska Division of Elections

2 Dennis Eagan appointed to fill the unexpired term of Kim Elton



# NCSL Changes in the Sizes of Legislatures 1960-2006

State	Size in 1960	Size in 2006	Year(s) of Change(s)*
Alabama	141	140	1974
Alaska	60	60	No change
Arizona	108	90	1966
Arkansas	135	135	No change
California	120	120	No change
Colorado	100	100	No change
Connecticut	330	187	1966, 1972
Delaware	52	62	1964, 1968, 1972
Florida	133	160	1962, 1964, 1966, 1972
Georgia	259	236	1968, 1972
Hawaii	76	76	No change
Idaho	103	105	1962, 1964, 1966, 1984, 1992
Illinois	235	177	1972, 1982
Indiana	150	150	No change
Iowa	158	150	1964, 1966, 1970
Kansas	165	165	No change
Kentucky	138	138	No change
Louisiana	144	144	No change
Maine	184	186	1962, 1968, 1972, 1984
Maryland	152	188	1962, 1966, 1974
Massachusetts	280	200	1978
Michigan	144	148	1964
Minnesota	202	201	1972
Mississippi	189	174	1962
Missouri	191	197	1962
Montana	150	150	1966, 1972
Nebraska	43	49	1964
Nevada	64	63	1962, 1966, 1982
New Hampshire	424	424	No change
New Jersey	81	120	1966, 1968
New Mexico	98	112	1964, 1966
New York	208	212	1964, 1966, 1972, 1982, 2004
North Carolina	170	170	No change
North Dakota	164	141	1962, 1964, 1966, 1972, 1976, 1982, 1992, 2004
Ohio	177	132	1962, 1964, 1966
Oklahoma	165	149	1964, 1972
Oregon	90	90	No change
Pennsylvania	260	253	1964, 1966
Rhode Island	144	113	1962, 1966, 2004
South Carolina	170	170	No change
South Dakota	110	105	1972
Tennessee	132	132	No change
Texas	181	181	No change
Utah	89	104	1964, 1966, 1972
Vermont	276	180	1966
Virginia	140	140	No change
Washington	148	147	1972
West Virginia	132	134	1964
Wisconsin	133	132	1972
Wyoming	83	90	1964, 1966, 1972, 1982, 1992

\* The year is the election year in which a change took effect, not necessarily the year that the change was adopted.