

State of New Illinois

Grievance 8

Corrupt Redistricting Process

September 25, 2021

Declaration of Grievance

United States Constitution, Article IV Section 4 (the Guarantee Clause) states in part:

The United States shall guarantee to every state in this union a Republican Form of Government.

United States Constitution, Amendment XIV, Section 1 states in part:

No State shall... deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

Illinois Constitution Bill of Rights, Article I, Section 1 declares in part:

To secure these rights and the protection of property, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. (Emphasis added)

Illinois Constitution, Article IV, Section 3(b) states:

In the year following each Federal decennial census year, the General Assembly by law shall redistrict the Legislative Districts and the Representative Districts. If no redistricting plan becomes effective by June 30 of that year, a Legislative Redistricting Commission shall be constituted not later than July 10. The Commission shall consist of eight members, no more than four of whom shall be members of the same political party.

A Secretive and Politically Biased Redistricting Process Deprives the People of Representative Government and Equal Protection of the Laws.

The US Constitution is designed to PROTECT CITIZENS FROM THE GOVERNMENT. Our Founders put the census in the Constitution because they wanted it to be a tool to empower the people by determining their representation in Congress. Such empowerment marked a turning point in world history. Previously, countries had used their census for taxing, confiscating property, or for a military draft. Here, the Constitution utilizes the census to put power into the hands of the people.

New Illinois' Grievance 3 discusses how extreme and arbitrary gerrymandering in Illinois has deprived the people of representative government. A Republican form of Government is government of the People, by the People, and for the People. For decades, Illinois politicians have drawn districts, not to represent the people, but to consolidate their own power. The U.S. Constitution was designed TO PROTECT THE PEOPLE FROM THE GOVERNMENT; yet Illinois' redistricting process benefits politicians instead of the people. This means that Illinois politicians fail to follow the spirit of the Constitution they swore to uphold.

We must look at, not just the gerrymandered districts, but the process creating them. In 2021, brazen hypocrisy and unvarnished corruption defined the drawing and adoption of new maps.

The Illinois Constitution says that maps must be passed by June 30. This deadline does not mean that maps can't be created later. It only means that the mapmaking process will be taken from the legislature and given to a bipartisan commission.

Covid-19 delayed the release of the census data. Rather than wait and lose political advantage, the redistricting committee used data from the American Community Survey. The Census Bureau warns that the American Community Survey data is not accurate and not appropriate to use for drawing maps. State legislators on the redistricting committee claimed that they had obtained data from several sources, but this was a lie. The only other source the committee used was voting data revealing the districts' party preferences.

This charade resulted in blatantly partisan and geographically biased maps.

Fourteen minority party representatives were drawn into seven districts. This means they are forced to run against each other, and half of them will lose. It also means their old districts will have no incumbent, so the minority party will lose the advantage of incumbency. The majority party holds twice as many seats as the minority party, yet NONE of their representatives were drawn into districts where they would be running against each other.

More significantly, this face-off is grossly biased against Downstate. Illinois has 118 house districts. Forty-three are either entirely or almost entirely in Cook County. Fifteen other districts are split between Cook and one or more counties. This means that 58 districts, nearly half of the total, are wholly or partly in Cook County. Yet only ONE of the fourteen representatives affected is from a district entirely in Cook County (54th). One represents a district mostly in DuPage County (45th) that contains a sliver of Cook.

Last spring, the majority party stated that the maps would be accurate. When the U.S. Census was published in August, it became clear that they were not, and the maps were adjusted. The voting rights group Common Cause Illinois refused to participate in hearings on the adjusted maps. They did not want to add legitimacy to what they called "pure politics." With little notice given to the public, the maps were released less than a day before they were voted on.

Governor Pritzker's Failure: Candidate J.B. Pritzker, a resident of Chicago, pledged to veto any maps created by legislators, political party leaders, their staffs, or their allies. He campaigned

on the idea of a constitutional amendment to create an independent commission to draw legislative maps. He urged both parties to agree to such a commission.

Despite his campaign promises, in 2021 Gov. Pritzker *opposed* efforts to create the independent commission, while still claiming he would veto any unfair map. However, he REMOVED his opposition to a *politically drawn one*. Once again, the spirit of the Constitution to put the power into the hands of the people was being circumvented by our politicians.

Legislative Failure: In 2021, Speaker Welch, who represents Illinois' 7th District in Cook County, said that members of both parties need to “work together in an open and transparent manner.” The redistricting process, he claimed, needed to be “open for the world to see how it’s done.”

The opposite happened. Behind locked doors, Speaker Welch met with members of his party only. He showed them prospective maps and heard their input. EVEN THE MINORITY PARTY MEMBERS OF THE REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE WERE **LOCKED** OUT OF THE ROOM! The politicians hid the decision-making process from the People and, once again, the spirit of the Constitution was violated.

Gov Pritzker lied to We the People and refused to veto highly partisan maps. Speaker Welch lied to We the People and conducted a secretive process that shut them out.

Therefore, We the People publish this 8th Grievance to remind Illinois government bodies at all levels that government derives its just powers from the consent of the governed. The purpose of government is to secure our rights. The Government of Illinois has become destructive of these ends as demonstrated by the corrupt redistricting process. Accordingly, it is the Right and the Duty of the People to alter or abolish it and institute new government.

The People of New Illinois seek a constitutional remedy to the abuse of powers and declare that it is necessary for us to dissolve the political bands which have connected us to the State of Illinois. We are invoking the founding principles of the United States of America and reclaiming our liberty and our rights. More importantly, we are invoking the spirit upon which this country was founded: representatives that protect its citizens FROM THE GOVERNMENT; not ones that favor the government, and by extension, its representatives, over its people.

Enough! Now is the time for the 51st State of New Illinois!

This Concludes These Proceedings