

National Redistricting Overview

Pennsylvania Senate
State Government Committee
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What Does NCSL Do?

- Serves 7,383 legislators and 30,000 legislative staff
- Provides non-partisan research & analysis
- Links legislators with each other and experts
- Speaks on behalf of legislatures in D.C.



I will answer (in brief):

Who does redistricting?

How do redistricting processes vary?

What criteria are used?

What happens if a plan isn't passed?



Who Does Redistricting?

- **The legislature:**

- State Legislative Plans: 37 states

- Congressional Plans: 43 states

- **Commissions or Boards:**

- State Legislative Plans: 13 states

- Congressional Plans: 7 states



Legislatures Draw Maps



Legislative Variations

- 2 states wait until the "3" year
- 4 have odd-year elections
- A dozen redistrict in special sessions
- 4 adjust the "population base"
- 2 bypass the governor
- Some require more than a majority vote
- Various back-up systems

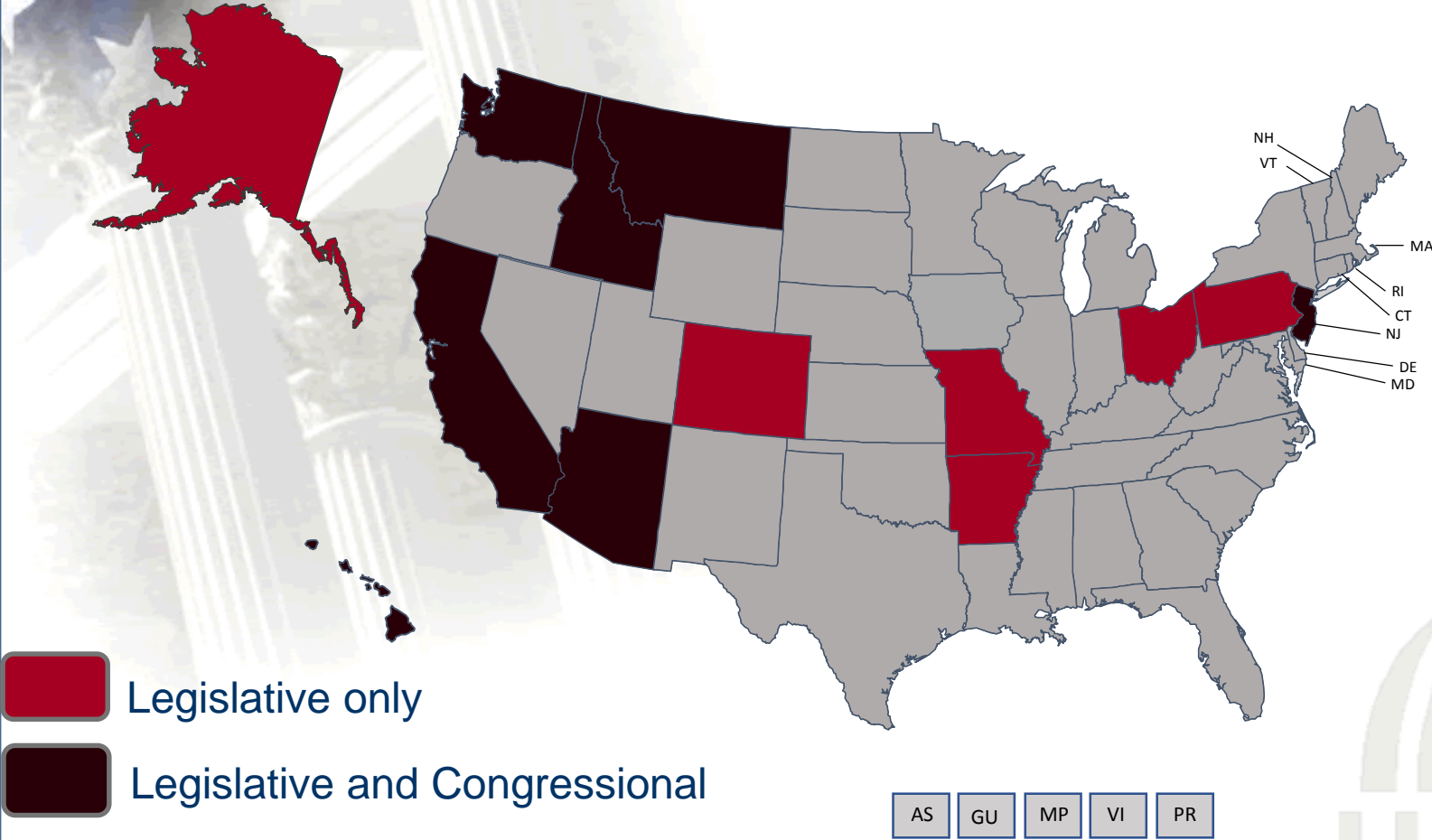
Iowa is Unique

- Nonpartisan staff draws maps
- Don't use political data such as party registration or addresses of candidates
- Legislature votes plan up or down
- Since 1970s, always voted for it

The background of the slide features a large, semi-transparent graphic of a classical building with several columns, overlaid with a stylized American flag. The flag's stars are in the upper left, and the stripes are in the lower right. The overall color palette is white and light blue, set against a dark blue border.

Commissions Draw Maps

Commission States



Commission Variations

- Size
- Who appoints members
- Qualifications for members
- Legislative, Congressional or both?
- What constitutes passage—majority?
Bipartisan support required?
- Primary responsibility, advisory or back-up?



Arizona's Independent Redistricting Commission

- 5 member commission
- Starts with a pool of 25 (10 Ds, 10 Rs, 5 of neither party)
- Legislative leaders appoint 4; those 4 choose chair from the nonpartisan group
- Has survived several court challenges

California

- Extensive eligibility requirements
- Complex selection process
- Must have a vote with support from Ds, Rs and independents
- Used for one cycle only so far

New Jersey's Congressional Redistricting Commission

- 13 members
- 2 appointed by each of 4 legislative leaders; 2 appointed by each major party
- 13th is an “independent member” chosen by members (or by Supreme Court)
- If commission fails, Supreme Court selects between two best plans

Ohio (the latest news)

- 2015 legislature proposed (and voters approved) a 7-member legislative redistricting commission
- 2018 legislature proposed “hybrid” plan for Congressional redistricting; vote is in May

The background of the slide features a faded, light-colored illustration of a classical building with several tall columns. In the top-left corner, there is a stylized American flag with stars and stripes. In the bottom-right corner, there is a stylized dome of a government building, also with an American flag motif. The text "Redistricting Criteria" is centered in a bold, dark blue font.

Redistricting Criteria



Federal (non-negotiable) requirements

- Equal Population (Art. 1, sec. 2 U.S. Constitution)
- Comply with the 14th Amendment
- Comply with Voting Rights Act of 1965

Traditional Districting Principles

- Contiguity (50 states)
- Compactness (39)
- Preservation of Political Subdivisions (44)
- Preservation of Communities of Interest (25)
- Preservation of Cores of Prior Districts (14)
- Avoid Pairing Incumbents (12)

Emerging Criteria

- Prohibit favoring/disfavoring parties, incumbents or candidates (14 states)
- Prohibit use of political data (5)
- Competitiveness (3)
- Districts should be proportional in partisanship to statewide vote (OH)

Plan B?

- Back-up Commissions
 - Congressional plans: CT and IN
 - Legislative plans: CT, IL, MS, OK, TX
- Courts are designated as the back-up: FL, ME, WA



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