

HOUSE No. 3798

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**INTERIM REPORT
OF THE
JOINT SPECIAL COMMITTEE
ESTABLISHED TO MAKE AN
INVESTIGATION AND STUDY OF A
NEW DIVISION OF THE COMMONWEALTH
INTO CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS,
FORTY SENATORIAL DISTRICTS
EIGHT COUNCILLOR DISTRICTS AND
ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTY
REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICTS.**

(Under Senate order No. 9 of 2011)

November 10, 2011.



COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
Special Joint Committee on Redistricting
MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL COURT

STATE HOUSE, BOSTON 02133-1053

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November 10, 2011

Fellow Legislators

We the undersigned members of the joint special committee established by the joint order, Senate 9, 2011 to study the division of this Commonwealth into nine congressional districts based on the results of the 2010 federal decennial census, hereby file this interim report, voted upon in the affirmative during an executive session of the full committee on November 10, 2011, containing our proposals and legislation necessary for the proper redistricting and reapportionment of Congressional Districts.

Respectfully submitted,

Senator Stanley Rosenberg
SENATE CHAIR
SPECIAL JOINT COMMITTEE ON REDISTRICTING

Representative Michael J. Moran
HOUSE CHAIR
SPECIAL JOINT COMMITTEE ON REDISTRICTING

Senator Karen E. Spilka

Senator James E. Timilty

Senator Daniel A. Wolf

Representative Byron Rushing

Representative Antonio F.D. Cabral



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Representative Joseph F. Wagner

Representative Vincent A. Pedone

Representative Stephen Kulik

Representative Demetrius J. Atsalis

Representative Garrett J. Bradley

Representative Patricia A. Haddad

Representative Alice Hanlon Peisch

Representative John D. Keenan

Representative Linda Dorcena Forry

Representative Sean Garballey

Representative Marcos A. Devers

REPORT OF THE JOINT SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON REDISTRICTING

The Joint Special Committee on Redistricting reports the attached bill, “An Act Establishing Congressional Districts.”

The Committee held thirteen public hearings across the Commonwealth attended by more than four thousand individuals. More than four hundred members of the public offered testimony, many others offered written submissions, and Committee members supplemented the public hearings with individual meetings with a wide array of civic organizations and elected officials throughout the Commonwealth. Moreover, for the first time, the Committee established a dedicated website for the benefit of all Massachusetts citizens. More than thirty-five thousand individuals have visited the site and were able to learn about the redistricting process, view video recordings of the proceedings of every public hearing, offer their suggestions to the Committee, and even draw their own maps. The Committee expresses its thanks to all citizens, members of the General Court, and organizations that provided information and views to the Committee.

In preparing the proposed Congressional redistricting plan, the Committee took care to comply with all constitutional and legal requirements and endeavored to balance numerous and often competing traditional redistricting principles, including population equality, equal electoral opportunity, compactness and contiguity, political continuity, maintaining the state’s influence in Congress, and the preservation of county and municipal boundaries and of other communities of interest.

The 2010 Census revealed substantial shifts within population of the United States. As a result of those changes, Massachusetts has lost a Congressional seat for the first time in twenty years, despite an increase in population of 198,532 residents since 2000. The Massachusetts delegation to the United States House of Representatives, which had fourteen members as recently as 1962, will now have nine members. In 2001, the ideal Congressional District size for Massachusetts was 634,910 residents; today, the ideal district size is 727,514 residents. Because each of the nine remaining Congressional Districts was required to expand by an average of 92,604 residents, changes were inevitable.

The Committee made changes to satisfy legal requirements and other compelling state interests, including preserving communities of interest, and minimizing the population deviation. The plan achieves perfect population equality.

The map which is being presented includes a southern coastal district, a western Massachusetts district, a central Massachusetts district, a district bordering the state of New Hampshire beginning in Haverhill and ending west of Gardner, a district primarily composed of Essex County, a district which includes inner northern and western suburban areas of Boston, a district which includes suburban areas to the south and west of Boston, a district which includes certain precincts in Boston and many communities on the south shore, and a majority-minority district which includes portions of Boston, Milton, and Cambridge, and the entireties of Chelsea, Somerville, Randolph, and Everett.

The Committee has sought to increase the electoral opportunities of the minority voters who live in the proposed new Seventh Congressional District in accordance with the principles articulated

by the United States Constitution, Massachusetts Constitution, the Voting Rights Act and the state and federal courts. These changes were the natural outgrowth of the demographic changes within the Commonwealth; the Committee did not unduly subordinate traditional redistricting principles for racial considerations, but rather gave due weight to all of the competing legitimate state interests.

The new districts reflect neighborhoods and communities of interest, they preserve compactness and contiguity, and they advance equal electoral opportunity for all residents. These positive developments are the direct result of the most extensive public outreach effort in the history of Massachusetts redistricting; that inclusiveness strengthened the resulting plan, which the Committee is now proud to offer for the consideration of the General Court.

For the Committee,

STANLEY C. ROSENBERG of Amherst,

Senate Chair,

and

MICHAEL J. MORAN of Boston,

House Chair,

Joint Special Committee on Redistricting.