

Overview: New Hampshire Advisory Commission (HB706)

HB706 is a bill that would create a fifteen-member advisory commission and establish redistricting criteria for drawing congressional, state legislative, executive council, and county commission districts.

The proposal has bipartisan sponsorship.

Overview of Key Features

Type of Commission

Advisory

What Maps the Commission Will Draw

Congressional, state legislature, executive council, and county commission

Commission Size

Fifteen members (5 Republican, 5 Democrats, 5 unaffiliated)

How Commissioners are Selected

Ten members are appointed by legislative leaders through the following process:

- Republican legislative leaders nominate ten eligible applicants, and Democratic legislative leaders nominate ten eligible applicants.
- Republican leaders select 5 commissioners from the 10 Democratic nominees, and Democratic leaders select 5 commissioners from the 10 Republican nominees.

Five members unaffiliated with either party are selected by the ten appointed commissioners.

Who is Eligible to Be a Commissioner

Registered voters of New Hampshire who do not currently hold office in the U.S. House of Representatives, state legislature, executive council, or a county commission.

How a Map Gets Approved

A plan must receive support from at least nine out of the fifteen commissioners. The plan may then be submitted to the state legislature for approval.

The Rules That Must Be Followed in Drawing a Map

Unranked or ranked criteria: *ranked*

Criteria	Yes	No
Protections for communities of color	✓	
Preservation of communities of interest	✓	
Ban on partisan gerrymandering	✓	
Respect political subdivisions	✓	
Compactness requirement	✓	
Contiguity requirement	✓	

Public Input and Transparency

The commissioner application must include whether applicants have registered as lobbyists or held elective office in the preceding ten years and, if applicants have voted in state or presidential primary elections in the preceding six years, which political party’s ballots applicants have taken.

The commission must hold at least one public hearing in each county before and after proposing a map.

The commission must create a website to provide notice of public hearings, a forum for public comment and map submissions, as well as proposed maps and accompanying data.

All commission meetings are open to the public, and all commission communications and documents are public record. Commissioners and staff may not communicate with outside persons about the redistricting process outside of public meetings.

Along with a proposed map, the commission must release a report that measures the maps against external metrics, including the established redistricting criteria.

Timing

- February 1 of each year ending in one: Deadline to submit commissioner applications
- July 1 of each year ending in one: Deadline for the commission to convene
- December 20 of each year ending in one: Deadline for the commission to approve final plans
- 45 days after adoption of a final map: Deadline for any registered voter to challenge a plan under federal or state law

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