

# Redistricting Illinois

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January 8, 2022

## Introduction

This memorandum details two redistricting plans from Illinois. After months of analyzing the relevant state and federal law, the Stanford Public Interest Redistricting Project drafted (1) an Illinois Least Change Plan and (2) an Illinois Hybrid Plan (Good Government and Proportional Representation Plan).

These redistricting plans promote traditional redistricting principles, such as compactness and contiguity, while also complying with federal law and respective state law. This report also offers an explanation behind certain redistricting choices and offers a comparison between these drafted plan and the existing plan, as well as a comparison with the plans proposed by the state.

# Illinois

## Population Changes and the 2020 Apportionment

According to the [U.S. Census](#), Illinois declined in population from 2010 to 2020. Its population went from 12,820,632 to 12,812,508 over the last decade. This loss in population is the [second highest](#) in the country, just behind West Virginia. Because of its loss in population, the U.S. Census apportioned just 17 Congressional Districts to Illinois, a 1 seat loss from the 2010 apportionment process.

## State Law

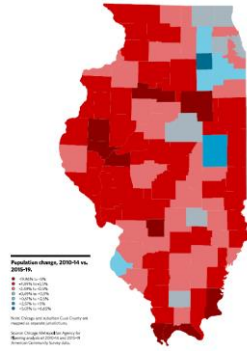
For Congressional Districts, the [Illinois state legislature](#) draws the districts, subject to a Governor's veto. There are no additional standards applied to federal districts under Illinois state law, absent federal constitutional and statutory limitations.

# Plan 1: Least Change



## Plan Summary

The Illinois Least Change Plan seeks to keep the current district boundaries intact while adjusting for population changes. This process was made slightly more difficult because Illinois lost a seat in the 2020 apportionment process. As such, we had to decide which district would be eliminated in the updated Illinois Least Change Plan. Based on demographic data, as seen below, the areas of Illinois that suffered the highest losses in population were in the rural south and rural west of Illinois. In contrast, [Chicago](#) held relatively steady with only a 3,000 person loss from 2010 to 2020. Therefore, we chose to remove District 18 because it resided in southwest Illinois and suffered among the largest declines in population.



This map represents Illinois' population changes since 2010. The redder the area, the larger the loss.

This plan also splits a large number of counties. While 73 counties are not split, 29 counties are. That is a fairly sizable number of county splits, especially for a state with only 17 districts. While this is not too far off from the 2010 map, this Illinois Least Change Plan splits too many political subdivisions.

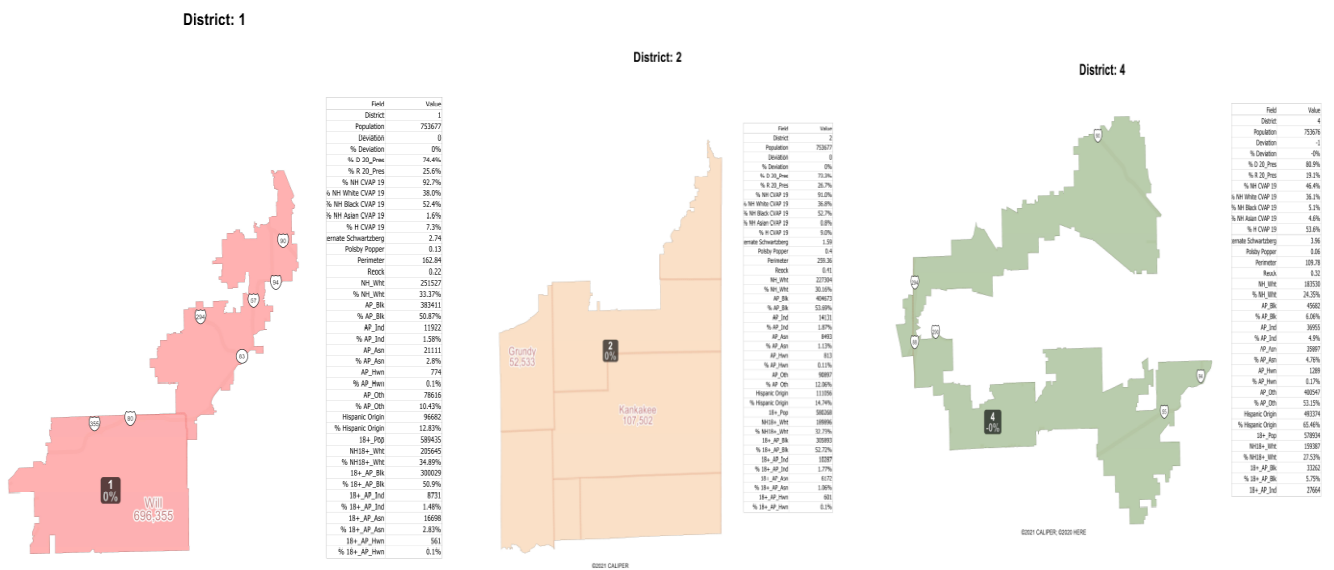
While partisan data was not considered in the creation of the Illinois Least Change Plan, the plan is fairly balanced based on partisan lines. PlanScore, a nonpartisan redistricting tool, found that the Illinois Least Change Plan only has a .7% efficiency gap and is very balanced. This plan should lead to 8 solidly Democratic seats, 6 solidly Republican seats, and 3 lean Democratic seats. In a state that [elected](#) Biden in 2020 with 57.5% of the vote and voted for Trump with 40.6% of the vote, these numbers are very close to proportionality.

### Efficiency Gap: 0.7%



## Demographics

According to the [U.S. Census](#), Illinois is 61.4% white, 14.1% Black, 5.9% Asian, and 18.2% Hispanic or Latino. Based on these demographic characteristics, Illinois is required under the Voting Rights Act to create two majority-minority Black districts and, depending on citizen voting age population (CVAP) data, one majority Hispanic or Latino district.



The Illinois Least Change Plan satisfies the requirements established by the Voting Rights Act.

Districts 1 and 2 are both majority Black (52.4% and 52.7% respectively) and District 4 is majority Hispanic (53.6%). Furthermore, District 7 is a Black opportunity to elect district by having a Black plurality in the district (47.7%).

## Legal Compliance

### Federal Law

The Illinois Least Change Plan complies with the principle of One Person One Vote. Every district in this plan is no more than 1 person off from perfect population (753,677 people with plus or minus 1 person).

The Illinois Least Change Plan also complies with Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act. Under Section 2, as interpreted by the Supreme Court in *Gingles*, one must draw a majority-minority district when: (1) a minority group is large enough to constitute a majority in a potential district, (2) the minority group is politically cohesive, and (3) the majority group sufficiently votes as a block to prevent the majority group from electing their candidate of choice. Assuming that racial polarization exists in Illinois, Illinois is required to have two majority Black districts, which this plan has, and about one majority Hispanic district, which this plan also has. Districts 1 and 2 have a majority Black voter population and would be able to elect their candidate of choice, and District 8 has a majority Hispanic voter population so they can elect their candidate of choice.

This plan does not violate *Shaw* by considering race as a predominant factor while redistricting. While demographic data concerning race was used in the creation of legislative districts, this data was only used to create two majority Black districts in order to comply with the Voting Rights Act. As such, race was not used as a factor beyond necessary considerations to comply with current federal law.

## District-by-District Breakdown

District 1: This district begins in Chicago, Cook County, by Lake Michigan, and snakes southwest in Will County.

District 2: This district also begins in Chicago, Cook County, on the southwest side of Lake Michigan and moves south to include most of Will County, all of Kankakee County, and parts of Grundy, Livingston, Ford, and Iroquois County.

District 3: This district begins in Cook County before heading southwest to include DuPage County and Will County.

District 4: This district is the notorious “earmuff” district that is mostly Cook County, with some of the district going into DuPage County.

District 5: This district begins on the west side of Lake Michigan, in Cook County, and goes west into DuPage County.

District 6: This district begins in DuPage County and then heads northwest into both Kane County and McHenry County.

District 7: This district is wholly in Cook County and runs up onto Lake Michigan.

District 8: This district gets most of its voters from northern Cook County, before moving into DuPage County and Kane County

District 9: This district is wholly in Cook County and runs up onto Lake Michigan.

District 10: This district is mostly in Lake County, north of Cook County and west of Lake Michigan, and does also have some voters in Cook County.

District 11: This district sits southwest of Chicago in DuPage, Kane, and Kendall County.

District 12: This district is in the southwest corner of Illinois and goes from Alexander County to Washington County to Madison County.

District 13: This district begins where District 12 ends, and includes Calhoun County to Adams County all the way east to Tazewell County and DeWitt County.

District 14: This district begins in northern Illinois, around Rockford, in Boone County and McHenry County, before heading south to DeKalb County and Livingston County.

District 15: This district begins in southeast Illinois in Massac County and spreads out all the way north to Champaign County and Vermilion County.

District 16: This district begins in eastern Illinois, where District 15 ended, and heads northwest to include Lee County, Winnebago County, and the rest of Rockford.

District 17: This district sits on the northwestern side of Illinois in Jo Daviess County and snakes along the Iowa border to Rock Island County and Hancock County.



# Plan 2: Hybrid



## Plan Summary

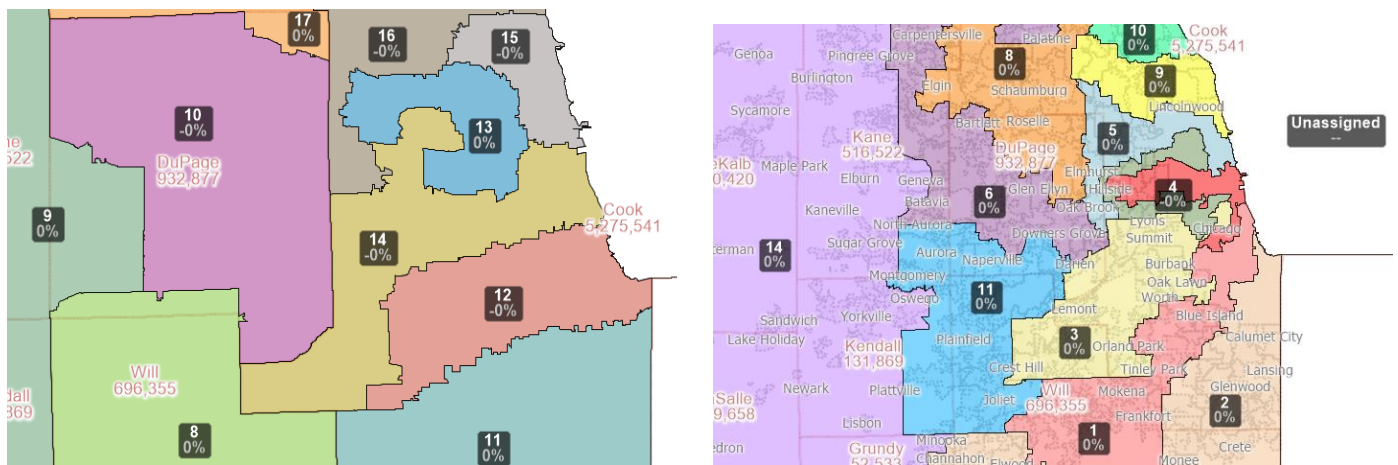
The Illinois Hybrid Plan seeks to achieve proportional representation while also abiding by good government principles, such as minimizing county splits. The plan achieves both of its objectives by creating 8 solidly Democratic seats, 3 solidly Republican seats, 3 lean Democratic seats, and 3 lean Republican seats, while also splitting only 7 counties in total. Considering current partisan trends in Illinois, an 11 to 6 district split (where Democrats reasonably control 64% of the seats (11/17)) is roughly proportional to party composition (Biden won Illinois with 57% of the vote in 2020).

A more proportional map coupled with a decline in county splits is an advantage the Illinois Hybrid Plan has over the Illinois Least Change Plan. This plan more accurately represents the voices of the

state while also splitting less than one quarter of the counties split under the Illinois Least Change Plan.

## Good Governance Elements

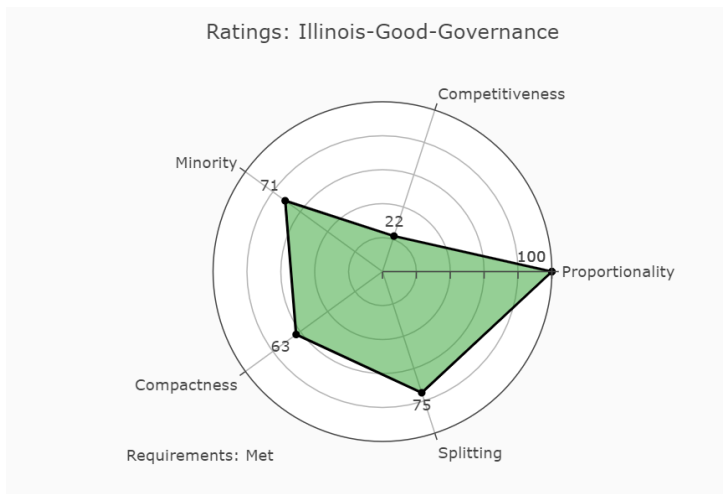
The Illinois Hybrid Plan solves a lot of the problems with the Illinois Least Change Plan, namely the large number of county splits. The Illinois Hybrid Plan solves this problem by keeping as many districts contained in Cook County, by far the largest county in Illinois. Unlike the Illinois Least Change Plan, which has many districts beginning in Cook County and extending outward to neighboring counties, the Illinois Hybrid Plan sought to contain as many districts as possible within county lines. This also has the added benefit of having more compact districts, as fewer districts sprawl across county lines to carve up neighborhoods. So, under both the Reock and Ehrenburg methods for measuring compactness, the Illinois Hybrid Plan has a .04 average increase in compactness when compared to the Illinois Least Change Plan.



Chicago Comparison from Hybrid (left) and Least Change (right). Left plan has far fewer county splits and is more compact.

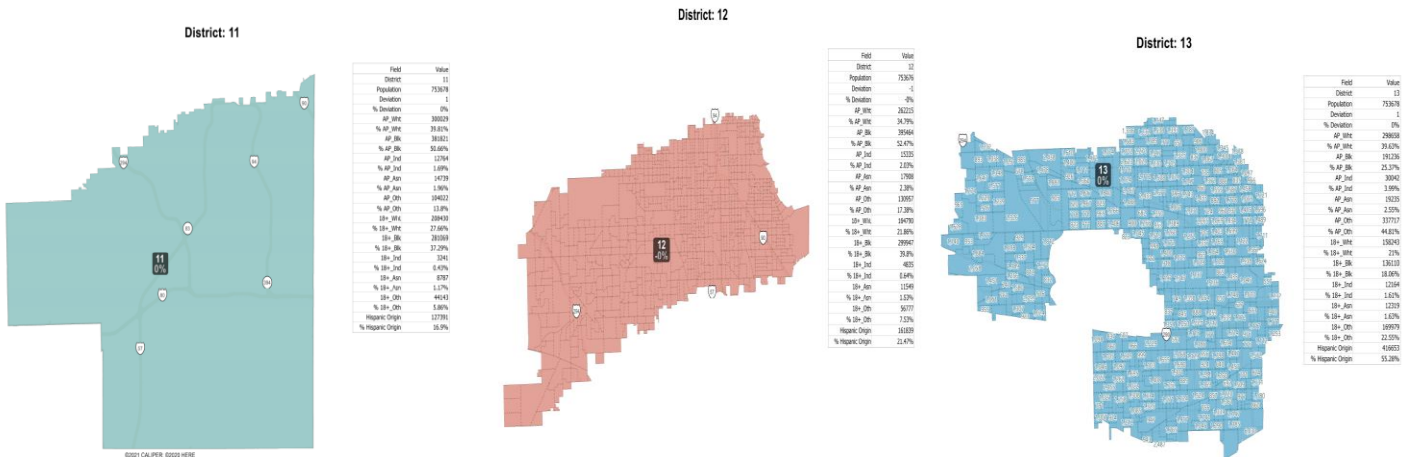
## Proportional Representation Elements

The Illinois Hybrid Plan explicitly looked at partisan data when drawing districts. This allowed us to draw districts that not only increased proportional representation across the whole plan, but it also allowed us to create more competitive districts. 3 of the more solidly Republican seats from the Illinois Least Change Plan are now lean Republican, which allows for a more accurate reading of Illinois' voter preferences. According to Dave's Redistricting, a website that judges redistricting map quality, gave the Illinois Hybrid Plan a 100/100 in proportional representation. This proportionality rating from Dave's means that the Illinois Hybrid Plan achieved a very small deviation between the share of Democratic districts and Democratic vote share statewide.



## Demographics

Like the Illinois Least Change Plan, the Illinois Hybrid Plan is required to have 2 majority-minority Black districts and 1 majority Hispanic district. District 11 (the equivalent of District 1 in the Illinois Least Change Plan) and District 12 (District 2 of the Illinois Least Change Plan) both have a majority Black CVAP. Further, District 13 (District 4 in the Illinois Least Change Plan) is majority Hispanic. No other majority-minority districts are required under the Voting Rights Act based on current Illinois demographic data.



## Legal Compliance

### Federal Law

The Illinois Least Change Plan complies with the principle of One Person One Vote. Every district in this plan is no more than 1 person off from perfect population (753,677 people with plus or minus 1 person).

The Illinois Least Change Plan also complies with Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act. Under Section 2, as interpreted by the Supreme Court in *Gingles*, one must draw a majority-minority district when: (1) a minority group is large enough to constitute a majority in a potential district, (2) the minority group is politically cohesive, and (3) the majority group sufficiently votes as a block to prevent the majority group from electing their candidate of choice. Once again, assuming racial polarization exists in Illinois to such a degree that minority voters cannot elect their candidate of choice, Illinois is required to have two majority Black districts, which this plan has, and about one majority Hispanic district, which this plan also has. Districts 11 and 12 have a majority Black voter population and would be able to elect their candidate of choice, and District 13 has a majority Hispanic voter population so they can elect their candidate of choice.

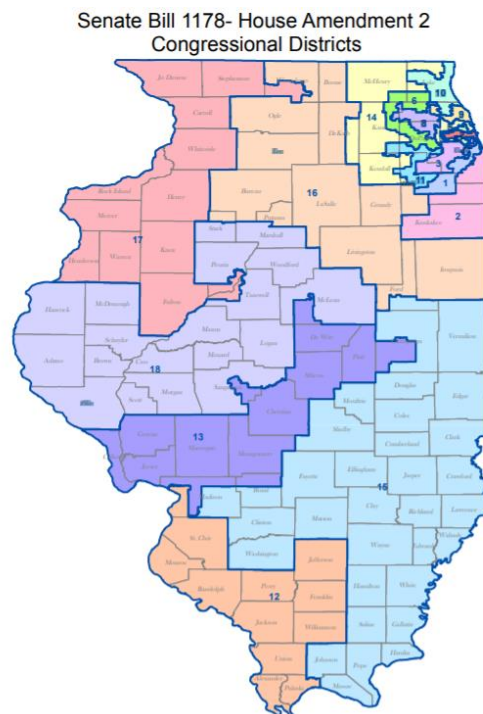
This plan does not violate *Shaw* by considering race as a predominant factor while redistricting. While demographic data concerning race was used in the creation of legislative districts, this data was only used to create two majority Black districts in order to comply with the Voting Rights Act. As such, race was not used as a factor beyond necessary considerations to comply with current federal law.

## State Law

This plan most likely would survive a state law challenge as Illinois has yet to enact a statute that creates more requirements than those already imposed by federal law. With that in mind, these districts are all contiguous, respect political boundaries and communities of interest, and are all fairly compact.

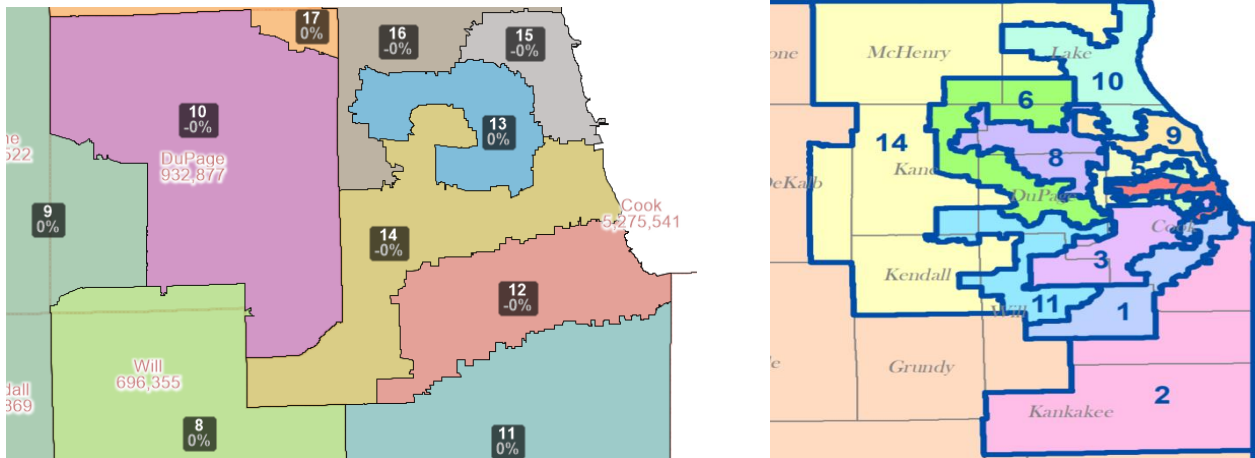
## Comparison to State Proposed Plans

Back in October, the Illinois state legislature [released](#) their new Congressional District Plan (“Legislature Plan”). This map is seen, by [Five-Thirty-Eight](#) and [Politico](#), as being an extremely partisan map.



Proposed Congressional Map

While the Legislature Plan appears to be similar to the Illinois Least Change Plan, with its more sprawling districts than the Illinois Hybrid Plan, it is more overtly partisan. According to Politico, the new configuration would likely give the Democrats 14 seats. This is in stark contrast to the Illinois Hybrid Plan which only has 8 solidly Democratic seats. Furthermore, the Legislature Plan suffers from a similar problem of the Illinois Least Change Plan - it splits too many counties. Many of the Cook County districts begin around Lake Michigan and snake westward to neighboring counties. This plan is not only a flagrant partisan gerrymander, but it also undermines good government principles related to county splits and compactness.



Comparison of Chicago from Hybrid (left) with proposed Legislature Plan (right)

## Hybrid Plan District-by-District Breakdown

District 1: This district is located in the southernmost point of Illinois, spanning west to east from St. Clair County to Wabash County and north to south from Jefferson County to Alexander County.

District 2: This district begins where District 1 ended, and goes north to Macon county and touches the border between Illinois and Indiana.

District 3: This district is in western Illinois, along both the Missouri and Iowa border, and contains Jersey County all the way up to Rock Island County.

District 4: This district begins on the border of Iowa and continues southeast to McLean County.

District 5: This district is part of northwest Illinois, alongside the Iowa and Wisconsin border, and includes Jo Daviess County, all of Rockford, and heads all the way eastward to McHenry County.

District 6: This district sits in northeast Illinois, along the western side of Lake Michigan, and includes all of Lake County, some of McHenry County, and some of Cook County.

District 7: This district begins in central Illinois and goes southeast to Kankakee County and Iroquois County.

District 8: This district sits south of Chicago, in Will County, and includes a small portion of DuPage County.



District 9: This district is west of Chicago and includes Kane and Kendall County, as well as some of DuPage County.

District 10: This district is wholly encapsulated by DuPage County.

District 11: This district sits in the southeastern portion of Cook County, and includes some of the southeastern part of Chicago.

District 12: This district is in Chicago, Cook County, and runs all the way to Lake Michigan.

District 13: This district sits wholly in Cook County, north of Chicago proper.

District 14: This district begins in Lake Michigan and runs westward until the Cook County and DuPage County line.

District 15: This district is on the west side of Lake Michigan in Cook County.

District 16: This district is in north Cook County, alongside Lake Michigan, and continues south to the Cook County and DuPage County line.

District 17: This district includes the northwest portion of Cook County and some of DuPage County.

## Conclusion

Illinois is at a crossroads. In our current political moment of intense polarization, will the state legislature choose to create partisan maps for political advantage, or will they seek to elevate the voices

of the entire state rather than a select few? Illinois appears to be hurtling towards political gamesmanship at the expense of genuine representation. And, based on an overall lack of state redistricting standards, the legislature will have a lot of power and discretion in shaping representation in Washington for the next decade.