



Office of the City Clerk

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Legislation Text

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Committee on Committees and Rules

January 27, 2021

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Every ten years, in conjunction with the US Census, the City Council is tasked with redrawing ward boundaries to separate the City into 50 compact and contiguous wards, each with roughly the same number of residents; and

WHEREAS, The Illinois Municipal Code requires that: "On or before the first day of December, of the year following the year in which the national census is taken, ... the city council shall by ordinance redistrict the city on the basis of the national census of the preceding year"; and

WHEREAS, Historically, the City Council's methods of redistricting the 50 wards have lacked appropriate transparency and community input; now, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the Mayor and members of the City Council of the City of Chicago, gathered here this 27th day of January, 2021, do hereby call upon the Committee on Committees and Rules to convene a hearing concerning possible reforms to make the redistricting process more transparent and equitable for all; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That such hearing shall include discussion of various proposals for redistricting reform, including:

- i) establishing criteria that a redistricting ordinance must meet in order to be considered by the City Council, including standards to incorporate considerations of compactness, contiguity, representativeness, competitiveness; and preservation of identifiable communities of interest, such as community areas, police districts, and areas with similarities in racial, social, cultural, ethnic, and economic interests;
- ii) possible proposed amendments to state law creating an Independent Redistricting Commission with the authority to adopt new ward boundaries, or a City ordinance establishing an Independent Redistricting Commission to prepare and publish maps and written ward boundaries for City Council to consider adopting by ordinance;
- iii) requiring more community engagement during the decision-making process of redistricting; and
- iv) requiring public posting of all iterations of proposed ward boundaries before City Council

adopts any redistricting ordinance; and
BRIAN HOPKINS Alderman, 2nd Ward

ANDRE VASQUEZ Alderman, 40th Ward

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we call upon the Executive Director of the Chicago Board of Election Commissioners; representatives from the City Law Department; representatives from the Illinois State Board of Elections; individuals with knowledge of gerrymandering and redistricting reform, including redistricting scholar and professor at Loyola Law School, Los Angeles, Justin Levitt, University of Wisconsin professor, Kenneth Mayer, or former Stanford professor, Simon Jackman; individuals with significant experience in or knowledge of computer-assisted redistricting, including Peter Creticos; and any other experts in redistricting reform that the Chair deems appropriate, to attend such hearing.