



4600 Valley Road
Suite 306
Lincoln, NE 68510
402-475-1411
www.lwv-ne.org

ALL MEMBERS-CALL TO ACTION!

LB 1207 REDISTRICTING REFORM BILL TO BE DEBATED SOON! WRITE/CALL/EMAIL YOUR STATE SENATORS

Hey, we need some help. As you may know, LWV-NE 's Redistricting Committee has been urging the Executive Committee to bring Senator John McCollister's redistricting bill, LB 1207, to the floor for debate. A couple of weeks ago, we learned that wasn't likely. Consequently, in an attempt to effect redistricting reform, we turned our attention to a petition drive to put a constitutional amendment on the ballot in November. The proposed amendment would support an independent commission of nine members to decide district lines.

All that said, things changed late in the week when several civic organizations formed a new coalition. On March 5, that coalition, Nebraskans for Independent Redistricting (NIR), announced the petition drive to eliminate political gerrymandering in Nebraska. www.omaha.com/news/state_and_regional/coalition-plans-petition-drive-for-independent-redistricting-board-in-nebraska/ Nebraska's constitution designates that the responsibility of drawing district lines is the duty of the legislature, so creating an independent commission would require an amendment to make that possible. (As this process goes forward, LWV-NE will be participating in meetings the week of March 9 to define our role in the petition process.)

Shortly after the NIR's announcement, an article appeared in the March 7th Lincoln Star Journal announcing that, surprisingly, Senator McCollister's LB 1207 would be debated on the floor of the legislature. This bill would give lawmakers a chance to achieve redistricting reform as well as maintain control over drawing district lines as the constitution specifies.

Voting to advance the bill with Sen. McCollister were Omaha Senators Ernie Chambers and Tony Vargas, Lincoln Sen. Kate Bolz and Sen. Mark Kolterman of Seward. Opposing the bill were Speaker Jim Scheer, Lincoln Sen. Mike Hilgers, and Sens. John Lowe of Kearney and Dan Hughes of Venango.

journalstar.com/legislature/redistricting-reform-bill-headed-for-full-debate/

So here we are – hoping to accomplish real reform one way or another. Please email, call or write your senator and urge support of LB 1207. Find your senator's phone no. and email address at https://nebraskalegislature.gov/senators/senator_list.php. Thanks!

Why Redistricting Reform?

Check out <http://fairmapsne.org> to learn more about redistricting and gerrymandering topics!

- Gerrymandering is undemocratic and goes against Nebraska's traditions of nonpartisanship and fair play.
- When districts are gerrymandered, our elected representatives have been allowed to choose their voters instead of the voters choosing them.
- When Nebraskans are included in the process of drawing new election district maps, their fundamental right to choose who represents them is preserved. Voters feel like their vote makes a difference.
- When maps are drawn without political bias they represent minority groups more fairly.