

Overview and History of Redistricting in Idaho

(and a few other things)

Idaho Commission on Reapportionment
(it's really Redistricting)

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Idaho State Capitol, WW17

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Topics to cover

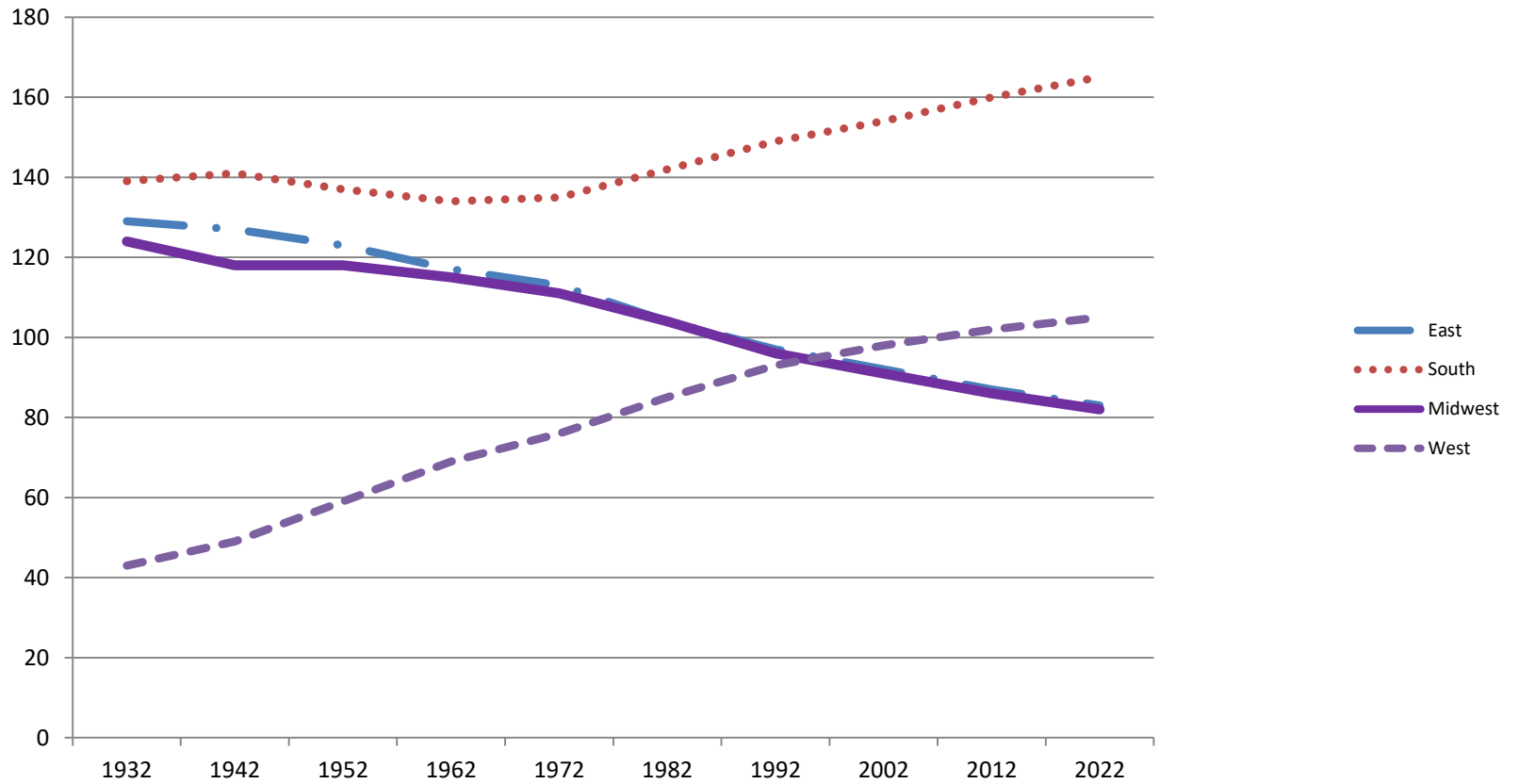
- I. Reapportionment, redistricting, and the definition of equipopulous
- II. Redistricting before the Commission
- III. Redistricting and the Commission
- IV. A Note about Independent Commissions
- V. Redistricting in the Western U.S.
- VI. Concerns Particular to Idaho

I. Reapportionment v. Redistricting

- Reapportionment: Allocating seats among a group of political entities (435 seats allocated among the 50 states)
- Redistricting: redrawing the actual boundary lines to reflect population shifts

Speaking of reapportionment

Seats in U.S. House by Region over time



“The Reapportionment Revolution”

- Gomillion v. Lightfoot (1960)
- Baker v. Carr (1962)
- Gray v. Sanders (1963)
- Wesberry v. Sanders (1964)
- Reynolds v. Sims (1964)

Key issues

- **State Districting is justiciable**
- **Concern with vote discrimination against minorities**
- **“one person, one vote” = equipopulus districts**
- **No ‘federal analogy’: states cannot apportion a chamber on any basis other than population**
- **Standards for equipopulous districts are different for congressional and state legislative districts**

WHAT CONSTITUTES EQUIPOPULOUS DISTRICTS?

- CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS WITHIN A STATE MUST HAVE VIRTUALLY THE SAME NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN EACH DISTRICT
- HISTORICALLY, STATES ARE AFFORDED SOME LEEWAY (UP TO 10% VARIATION) IN POPULATION BETWEEN STATE LEGISLATIVE DISTRICTS

II. Redistricting in Idaho Before the Commission

- See handout notes

Senate District Disparity, 1960

source: Ansolabehere and Snyder, *ibid.*

State	Smallest	Largest	average
CALIFORNIA	14,294	6,038,771	392,928
COLORADO	17,481	127,520	50,113
HAWAII	8,518	63,602	25,306
IDAHO	915	93,460	15,163
IOWA	17,756	266,315	55,149
MONTANA	894	79,016	12,049
NEW MEXICO	1,874	262,199	29,719
TEXAS	131,970	1,243,158	309,015
UTAH	9,408	64,760	35,629
WASHINGTON	20,023	145,180	57,636
WISCONSIN	74,293	208,343	119,690

House District Disparity in 1960

source: Ansolabahere and Snyder, *The End of Inequality*, pp. 26-7

state	Smallest	Largest	Average
CALIFORNIA	72,105	443,892	195,478
COLORADO	7,867	63,760	26,982
HAWAI'I	5,030	23,780	12,407
IDAHO	915	23,453	11,308
IOWA	7,468	133,158	25,533
MONTANA	894	12,537	7,178
NEW MEXICO	1,874	29,133	14,394
TEXAS	23,062	155,393	63,956
UTAH	1,164	32,380	13,900
WASHINGTON	12,399	57,648	28,527
WISCONSIN	19,651	87,486	39,518

Minimum Percent of Population to elect a legislative majority in 1960

SOURCE: Ansolabehere and Snyder, pp. 50-51

State	House/Assembly	Senate
CALIFORNIA	35%	10%
COLORADO	32	29
HAWAII	37	18
IDAHO	27	17
IOWA	27	31
MONTANA	34	16
NEW MEXICO	29	15
TEXAS	33	30
UTAH	33	21
WASHINGTON	37	34
WISCONSIN	40	42
US CONGRESS	38	17

II. Redistricting And the Commission

- See handout notes

IV. INDEPENDENT COMMISSIONS

- Currently there are 14 states that use independent commissions as the primary instrument for LEGISLATIVE redistricting
- 8 of these are western states (AK, AZ, CA, CO, HI, ID, MT, WA)
- OH, MO and MI recently adopted

V. SIX FACTORS MAKE REDISTRICTING DIFFERENT IN THE WEST

- **1. SUBSTANTIAL POPULATION GROWTH**
 - Four fastest growing states are all in the west (NV,AZ,UT,ID)
 - Every western state but MT exceeded national growth rate of 9.7%
- **2. SMALL LEGISLATIVE CHAMBERS**
 - While 29 states have lower chambers with at least 100 seats, only Montana is in the west.
 - 9 of the 10 smallest house chambers are in the west (e.g., 40, 42, 51,60,60,60,65,70,70)
- **3. LARGE GEOGRAPHIC AREA**
 - 11 of the 13 largest states (square miles) are in the west
 - Small chambers, large geographic area=very large rural districts

6 factors (continued)

- **4. Direct Democracy**
 - Especially the initiative process (only 24 states permit; 11 are western states)
- **5. Legislatures are less likely to control process**
 - over 3/5 of the western states have commissions; only 6 other states in the nation use commissions as primary institution for redistricting (although most of the recent examples are non-western)
- **6. Demographics**
 - Larger and growing Hispanic populations
 - Generally speaking, larger Native American, smaller African-American populations than in other regions

Concerns Particular to Idaho

- Oddly shaped state (The L Shaped Room)
- Very uneven population *growth*
- Very uneven population *distribution*
- The Court and The County
- Locked into 35
- House Districts are the same as Senate Districts