

Part Two of this three-part series explains **how the redistricting process worked** in Tennessee during the 2011-2012 cycle. With the process yet to be publicly announced for 2021-2022, we look to the past to anticipate the future.

Every ten years, the Tennessee state legislature draws congressional and state legislative district maps. The Tennessee House and Senate each draw their own district maps, and the two collaborate to draw the congressional district map. All three maps are presented and passed in both chambers and are then signed into law by the governor.

### Redistricting committees oversaw the process.

In 2011, the House and Senate appointed members to **redistricting committees** to oversee the drawing of their respective maps. Each included **only members of the majority party** (Republicans).

#### House Ad Hoc Committee on Redistricting

The Speaker of the House appointed **six majority-party members** to oversee the process. Additionally, **seven majority-party "area leaders"** (with some overlap with committee members) served as regional coordinators for Rural East, Rural Middle, Rural West and Davidson, Hamilton, Knox and Shelby counties.

#### Senate Working Group on Redistricting

The Lieutenant Governor appointed a **four-person working group**, which included himself and three majority-party coordinators, each charged with overseeing one of the three Grand Divisions.

Both committees worked with legislative staff and outside consultants to draft the new district maps.

### Maps were approved about one week after the public saw them for the first time.

Committee members received census data in April 2011 and worked throughout the year to draft district maps. These draft maps, also known as "concepts," were presented to House and Senate committees in early January 2012 for approval. They moved through the legislative process quickly; **each was introduced and passed in about a week.**(i)

#### 2011-2012 Tennessee Redistricting Timeline

##### 2011

**June 16:** House Ad Hoc Committee on Redistricting's Initial Meeting  
Committee members and guidelines announced.

**November 1:** Deadline for Publicly Submitted Maps

Members of the public could submit draft congressional, House or Senate maps through their representative.

**June – December:** Maps Drafted by Legislators and Staff

Meetings discussing and designing district maps were not open to the public.

##### 2012

**January 4:** House Ad Hoc Committee on Redistricting and the House State and Local Subcommittee Meetings  
Draft House concept (map) introduced for first time.

**January 10:** House State and Local Committee and Senate Judiciary Committee Meetings

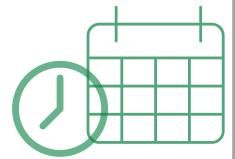
Draft congressional, Senate and House concepts introduced and passed in full House and Senate committees.

**January 12:** House Floor Vote

Final House vote approving the House and congressional district maps.

**January 13:** Senate Floor Vote

Final Senate vote approving the Senate, House and congressional district map.(ii)



## Opportunities for public engagement were limited.

Public participation in the 2011-2012 redistricting process included opportunities to (1) **provide input to legislators** and redistricting committee members as they would on any other topic; (2) **submit draft maps** for consideration and (3) attend limited committee hearings.

### Contact Legislators

Both chambers shared the **names and contact information** for redistricting committee members on a **redistricting website**. The House also provided a phone number for public comment. After the draft maps were submitted to the committees in January 2012 -- about a week before final passage -- they were made available online, although **public comment was not actively sought**. (iii)

### Submit Public Maps

Both chambers invited members of the public to **submit maps for consideration**. Draft maps were required to encompass the whole state, rather than just individual districts. They had to be submitted through a legislator and received by November 1, 2011. Only **four maps** were submitted.(iv) It is not clear how they were reviewed or whether they factored into the committees' decisions.

### Attend a Committee Meeting

The public could **attend legislative committee meetings** where draft maps were presented and discussed, but **participation was limited**. There were two opportunities to view conversations about the House process and draft map and one opportunity for both the Senate and congressional drafts.

## Tennessee House Map: Two Opportunities to Engage

The **House Ad Hoc Committee** met publicly in **June 2011** to announce committee members and share the guidelines it would use to draw districts, as well as those for public submissions of redistricting plans. Its **next public meeting** was in **January 2012**, where the draft map was presented to the committee for approval. Meetings involving the development of the map **were not made public**.

During the January 2012 meeting, which was livestreamed, members of the public had two opportunities to participate:

- Those who had submitted draft district maps were invited to present their plans to the committee. Four maps were presented.
- The chair opened the floor for audience and non-committee member questions or comments. One member of the public and two minority-party (Democratic) representatives commented.(v)

## Tennessee Senate Map: One Limited Opportunity to Engage

The **Senate Working Group** appears to have held **no public meetings** prior to the January 2012 Senate Judiciary Committee meeting where it presented its draft map.

Members of the public were able to watch the meeting in person or online. While the committee chair **did not open the floor** for public comments as in the House, the committee **did hear pre-arranged comments** from one senator and two community members who anticipated being placed into different districts.(vi)

## **Congressional Map: One Limited Opportunity to Engage**

The House and Senate redistricting committees were also responsible for drawing the **congressional map**, but neither announced details about its process or how the public could engage.

The House State and Local Committee did not discuss the map because it was not ready when the committee met. The Senate Judiciary Committee heard details about the population size of congressional districts, and it appears that the draft map was visible to those in attendance but not to those viewing the meeting online.(xvii) This hearing was the **only opportunity for the public to engage** with the draft map, but those present were only allowed to comment if they had arranged it in advance.

Floor discussions about the map primarily involved proposed amendments -- alternative maps -- rather than detailed discussion of the districts themselves.(viii)

## Notes and References

- (i) Tennessee General Assembly. (2012). Legislation Archives. HB1555/SB1513. See <https://wapp.capitol.tn.gov/apps/Billinfo/default.aspx?BillNumber=HB1555&ga=107>. HB1557/SB 1514. See <https://wapp.capitol.tn.gov/apps/Billinfo/default.aspx?BillNumber=HB1557&ga=107>. HB1558/SB1515. See <https://wapp.capitol.tn.gov/apps/Billinfo/default.aspx?BillNumber=HB1558&ga=107>.
- (ii) Though initially passed on January 13, 2012, the Senate withdrew the Senate map bill (HB1557) due to an administrative oversight leaving out Tipton County from the text of the legislation. Both chambers re-voted on the corrected bill and passed it again on January 18, 2012 in the House and January 19, 2012 in the Senate.
- (iii) Tennessee General Assembly. (2012). Senate Redistricting. See <http://www.capitol.tn.gov/senate/redist/redistricting.html>. House Ad Hoc Committee on Redistricting. See <https://www.capitol.tn.gov/house/archives/107GA/committees/redistricting.html>.
- (iv) Tennessee General Assembly. (January 4, 2012). House Ad Hoc Committee on Redistricting Hearing. See [http://tnga.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view\\_id=129&clip\\_id=19326](http://tnga.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=129&clip_id=19326).
- (v) Ibid.
- (vi) Tennessee General Assembly. (January 10, 2012). Senate Judiciary Committee Hearing. See [http://tnga.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view\\_id=196&clip\\_id=4639](http://tnga.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=196&clip_id=4639).
- (vii) Ibid.
- (viii) Tennessee General Assembly. (January 12, 2012). House Session - 41st Legislative Day. See [http://tnga.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view\\_id=196&clip\\_id=4661](http://tnga.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=196&clip_id=4661). and Tennessee General Assembly. (January 13, 2012). Senate Session - 42nd Legislative Day. See [http://tnga.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view\\_id=196&clip\\_id=4667](http://tnga.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=196&clip_id=4667).