

Senate Bill 87

By: Senators Parent of the 42nd, Butler of the 55th, Merritt of the 9th, Jackson of the 41st, Islam of the 7th and others

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT

1 To amend Chapter 1 of Title 28 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to  
2 general provisions regarding the General Assembly, so as to provide certain procedures for  
3 redistricting of the General Assembly and congressional districts in this state; to provide for  
4 certain hearings, information availability, procedures, and notifications; to provide for related  
5 matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

7 style="text-align:center">**SECTION 1.**

8 Chapter 1 of Title 28 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to general  
9 provisions regarding the General Assembly, is amended by adding a new Code section to  
10 read as follows:

11 "28-1-18.

12 In redistricting the General Assembly and the congressional districts in Georgia, the  
13 General Assembly shall follow the following procedures:

14 (1) There shall be a minimum of two public hearings in each judicial district of this state  
15 during the redistricting process. There shall be one public hearing in each judicial district  
16 of this state prior to the development of the redistricting plans. There shall be one public  
17 hearing in each judicial district of this state after the introduction of the proposed plan or

18 plans in the General Assembly which shall be held not later than one week prior to the  
19 final vote on such proposed plan or plans;

20 (2) At least one public hearing shall be held in the municipality with the highest  
21 population in each judicial district of this state, and at least one public hearing shall be  
22 held in the municipality with the second highest population in each judicial district of this  
23 state. Such hearings shall be open to the general public, and at least two members of the  
24 General Assembly from each house of the General Assembly shall attend such public  
25 hearings. One member from each house shall represent the majority party in such house,  
26 and one member from each house shall represent the minority party in such house. Such  
27 members shall come from the committee of each house that considers proposed  
28 redistricting plans;

29 (3) The public hearings shall be recorded and made available both live as they occur and  
30 as archived files for public viewing on the internet. During each public hearing, the  
31 General Assembly members representing each house of the General Assembly shall  
32 present the initial proposed plan or plans, explain the procedure or process used to create  
33 such plan or plans, and hear public comments and suggestions. Public notice of such  
34 public hearings shall be published on the website of the General Assembly and once a  
35 week for two consecutive weeks in the legal organ of each county, not later than seven  
36 days prior to the date of the public hearing. Visual representations of the proposed plan  
37 or plans shall be prominently displayed at each public hearing, and the plan or plans shall  
38 be presented visually in sufficient detail so that the public may visually inspect all district  
39 boundaries down to the residence level. The plan or plans shall be presented in a manner  
40 that will allow any member of the public to immediately inspect the proposed district in  
41 which such member lives as well as all neighboring districts;

42 (4) The proposed plan or plans shall be published on the website of the General  
43 Assembly not later than 48 hours after the proposed plan or plans have been assigned to  
44 committee. The plan or plans shall be presented visually in sufficient detail so that the

45 public may visually inspect all district boundaries down to the residence level, and the  
46 plan or plans shall also include all data necessary for a third party to recreate an accurate  
47 visual representation of such proposed plan or plans. The plan or plans shall be presented  
48 in a manner that will allow any member of the public to immediately visually inspect the  
49 proposed district in which such member lives as well as all neighboring districts. Any  
50 initially proposed plan or plans published on the website of the General Assembly shall  
51 also include a detailed explanation of the procedure or process used to create such plan  
52 or plans, including, but not limited to, all inputs, variables, factors, or other bases used  
53 to create such plan or plans, draft maps, formulae or algorithms, and any hardware or  
54 software relied upon to create such plan or plans. This paragraph shall be construed to  
55 defeat any legal claim or defense that is brought or raised by any party to prevent the  
56 disclosure of such procedure or process, including, but not limited to, a claim or defense  
57 that such disclosure would constitute unlawful disclosure of a trade secret or other  
58 confidential or proprietary information;

59 (5) All meetings, discussions, and deliberations concerning reapportionment upon the  
60 assignment of a plan or plans to committee shall be conducted in public, and public notice  
61 of such meetings, discussions, and deliberations shall be published on the website of the  
62 General Assembly at least seven days in advance;

63 (6) No committee vote shall be taken on a plan unless the plan has been posted on the  
64 website of the General Assembly and released to the public at least two weeks before  
65 such vote with the plan or plans presented visually in sufficient detail so that the public  
66 may visually inspect all district boundaries down to the residence level, and the plan or  
67 plans shall also include all data necessary for a third party to recreate an accurate visual  
68 representation of such proposed plan or plans. The plan or plans shall be presented in a  
69 manner that will allow any member of the public to immediately visually inspect the  
70 proposed district in which such member lives as well as all neighboring districts. The  
71 plan shall also include all relevant statistics concerning the plan;

72 (7) All communications sent to or from any government official or employee involved  
73 in the reapportionment process, including electronic communications, shall be released  
74 to the public for inspection and copying; and  
75 (8) All communications with any party not hired or contracted to perform or not  
76 responsible for performing the duties set forth in this Code section are strictly prohibited.  
77 Such prohibition shall not apply to any public communications explicitly authorized by  
78 this Code section. Nothing in this paragraph shall be construed as limiting any  
79 obligations set forth in the law relating to disclosure of public records and open meetings  
80 which shall apply to this Code section or any other applicable laws."

81

**SECTION 2.**

82 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.