

SENATE BILL 3

By Yarbro

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 3,
Chapter 1, relative to redistricting.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 3, Chapter 1, Part 1, is amended by adding the following as a new section:

(a) This section is known and may be cited as the "Fair Maps Act".

(b) The purpose of a redistricting plan is to ensure fair and effective representation for all Tennesseans, to provide an opportunity for equal participation by all citizens, and to promote the election of officials, who are collectively responsive to the popular will. The drawing of electoral districts to benefit or disadvantage certain political factions, parties, or interests denies individuals fair, effective, and accountable representation. Such partisan gerrymandering is not an appropriate purpose or effect of a redistricting plan.

(c) A redistricting plan must create single-member districts that are created using the following criteria, organized in order of priority, the most important being first:

(1) Comply with the United States Constitution, including the requirement of substantially equal populations, the "one (1) person, one (1) vote" principle, and the fourteenth and fifteenth amendments;

(2) Comply with the Tennessee Constitution;

(3) Comply with the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C. 10301 et seq.) and all other applicable federal laws;

(4) Maintain to the extent practicable communities of interest, neighborhoods, and political subdivisions; and

(5) Maintain contiguous and compact districts, with contiguity by water being sufficient.

(d) The redistricting plan must not, when considered on a statewide basis, unduly favor or disfavor any political party;

(e) Except as may necessary to meet the requirements in subdivisions (c)(1)-(3) and subsection (d), the following criteria must not be used to develop a redistricting plan:

(1) The location of the residence of a member of the United States Congress, the Tennessee house of representatives, or the Tennessee senate; or

(2) The political party affiliation or voting history of the population of a district.

(f)

(1) At least thirty (30) days prior to taking action on a redistricting plan, the general assembly shall make the redistricting plan available for public review and comment on its website.

(2) In providing public access, the general assembly shall ensure that the redistricting plans are in an easily useable format and include:

(A) The redistricting plans, including any proposed maps and the demographic and other data used to develop and analyze the proposed redistricting plans; and

(B) Any draft redistricting plans, any reports analyzing and evaluating any such maps, and disclosures of any vendors, consultants, or advocates whose views or advice were considered in the development of the proposed redistricting plan.

(3) The general assembly shall provide a reasonable opportunity for the public to submit comments on the proposed redistricting plans. The public

comment period ends seven (7) days prior to any meeting taking action on the proposed redistricting plan.

(4) Meetings in which members of the general assembly will be considering and deliberating on the redistricting plans must be held publicly after a notice has been provided at least fourteen (14) days in advance of the meeting.

SECTION 2. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 3-1-10, is amended by deleting subsection (b).

SECTION 3. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.