



North Carolina Spirits Association

Legislative Report
November 5, 2021

North Carolina now has new political maps for the next decade. The Republican-led state legislature passed new maps Thursday for their own districts as well as for the state's 14 seats in the U.S. House of Representatives. Republican leaders have not commented on the partisan breakdown in the maps, saying they have not looked at any political data, and instead focusing on the process itself — which was done with a level of transparency unseen in nearly every other redistricting process in state history. “This redistricting process has provided the public with an unprecedented view into the process,” said House Speaker Tim Moore.

Immediately after the maps passed Thursday, new critiques began from state and national Democrats and anti-gerrymandering groups. Various outside organizations have criticized the maps, saying that all the new maps would give Republicans a sizable advantage in future elections even if the two parties roughly split the statewide vote 50-50. They say the following:

- **Congress:** The new map would have eight safe Republican seats, three safe Democratic seats and three competitive seats, of which two would lean right and one would lean left. That means Republicans would be expected to win a 10-4 advantage if voters again split the statewide vote more or less evenly. It could increase to an 11-3 GOP advantage if Republicans have a strong year, and Republicans would still expect to hold an 8-6 advantage even in a strong year for Democrats.
- **N.C. Senate:** The new map would give Republicans 24 safe seats in the 50-member Senate, two short of a 26-member majority. There would be nine competitive seats out of the 50 total, of which five would lean Republican and four would lean Democratic. So Republicans would be expected to likely win a majority and could also win a veto-proof supermajority by holding all of the right-leaning competitive districts and flipping one of the left-leaning ones. Democrats have 17 safe seats and would have to win every competitive district to win the majority.
- **N.C. House:** The new map would give Republicans 55 safe seats in the 120-member House, six short of a 61-member majority. There would be 24 competitive seats, 13 of which lean Republican. So Republicans could expect to keep their majority even if they lost most of the competitive districts. Getting to a 72-member supermajority would require Republicans to win 17 of those 24 competitive seats. Democrats would have 41 safe seats, so they would have to win 20 of the 24 competitive districts to win a majority.

The new political maps could unseat several politicians whose homes would now be in the same district as one of their fellow officials. Some might choose to retire, others to run against a fellow incumbent. Still others could decide to move to a district that does not have an incumbent or is more politically favorable. Members of Congress do not have to live in their district, which

for some might make the decision easier. They just have to live somewhere in the state. But state legislators must be residents of their districts.

The rules that lawmakers adopted for the redistricting process specifically say that the maps should try to avoid double-bunkings — that is, placing two incumbents in the same district — whenever possible. But in some cases, it was unavoidable. Those cases mostly affect Republican state legislators from rural parts of the state, which have shrunk so much in the last decade that they lost seats because the districts had to get geographically bigger to pick up enough population. Other cases of double-bunking were avoidable. Republican lawmakers did agree to fix several of them as the process went along — but could not address all instances of double-bunking.

The new map for the state's 14 congressional seats, three districts would now be home to six incumbents:

- Republican Rep. Dan Bishop's Charlotte home is now in a district that leans considerably left and is currently represented by Democratic Rep. Alma Adams, who lives a few miles to the north of Bishop.
- Democratic Rep. Kathy Manning's Greensboro home is in a district that leans right and is currently represented by Republican Rep. Virginia Foxx, who lives in Watauga County.
- Two Republicans, Rep. Ted Budd and Rep. Richard Hudson, would also be in the same district. But Budd is planning to run for the U.S. Senate instead of seeking reelection to the House.

Regarding state legislative districts, the following lawmakers are in a double bunking situations:

- NC Senate District 2: Norm Sanderson (R) and Bob Steinburg (R)
- NC Senate District 24: Ben Clark (D) and Danny Britt (R)
- NC Senate District 29: Tom McInnis (R) and David Craven (R)
- NC Senate District 37: Vickie Sawyer (R) and Natasha Marcus (D)
- NC Senate District 47: Ralph Hise (R) and Deanna Ballard (R)
- NC House District 1: Ed Goodwin (R) and Bobby Hanig (R)
- NC House District 10: John Bell (R) and Raymond Smith (D)
- NC House District 59: Jamie Boles (R) and Ben Griffin (R)
- NC House District 84: Julia Howard (R) and Lee Zachary (R)
- NC House District 113: Jake Johnson (R) and David Rogers (R)

Regarding the McInnis/Craven double-bunking, it has been reported that Senator McInnis has changed his legal residency to Moore County, so he and Senator Craven will run for reelection in separate senate districts.

There is still no agreement between Governor Cooper, Speaker Moore and President Pro Tem Berger regarding the state budget bill. Now that the redistricting maps are approved, the legislature will turn their attention back to the state budget. Legislative leaders will continue to attempt to reach a compromise budget with Governor Cooper, but if an agreement is not reached

in the next week or so, the legislature is expected to pass their version of the budget, and the Governor will either have to sign it, veto it, or it could become law without his signature after the bill has been pending for ten days.

A bill that would allow online betting on sports passed out of the House Commerce Committee Thursday, even as its sponsors suggested that work remains to be done on the bill. Sports gambling is legal in North Carolina, but only at physical casinos. Senate Bill 688 would allow for up to 12 sports wagering operators to take wagers electronically from bettors in North Carolina. The bill was approved and referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee on a 12-4 vote. The Senate passed the bill in August with support and opposition from both parties. It is not clear whether the bill sponsor plans to request the bill move forward this session, or whether this hearing was a precursor to building additional support for the issue so the bill can move forward during the 2022 legislative session.

The House and Senate adjourned on Thursday and will reconvene on Monday November 8.

For more information about legislation described in the legislative reports, feel free to contact us at mfrazier@nexsenpruet.com or dferrell@nexsenpruet.com, or at (919) 573-7421. Information is also available on the General Assembly's website: www.ncleg.gov.

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