

Decoding Utah's Redistricting Process



| They say... | The Facts... |
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| <p>The Utah Independent Redistricting Commission (UIRC) is only made up of members who live along the Wasatch Front.</p> | <p>The UIRC was originally made up of seven members, two of whom lived in rural Utah. This represented a roughly 80%-20% split between Wasatch Front and rural representation. The makeup of the UIRC accurately reflects the makeup of the state of Utah, with 80% of people living along the Wasatch Front and 20% of people living in rural Utah.</p> |
| <p>The Legislative Redistricting Committee (LRC) can adopt UIRC maps and make changes to them and still claim to be following the redistricting process and goals established by the UIRC.</p> | <p>The UIRC did not use any political/partisan information or standards when creating their maps. The LRC *did* take incumbent addresses into consideration when crafting their maps. By adopting UIRC maps without changes, the LRC could bring legitimacy to the process by ensuring that maps are nonpartisan and meet the people's needs, not the needs of incumbents.</p> |
| <p>The UIRC maps are "partisan" and "not neutral."</p> | <p>The Independent Commission, through their legal counsel, has secured nationally recognized mathematicians to measure their maps for partisan bias. According to their expert analysis, all maps being recommended do not have partisan bias, and instead reflect the actual political leanings of our state.</p> |
| <p>The UIRC did not meet the criteria established by the redistricting statute.</p> | <p>The UIRC did in fact meet the criteria. Every map they created incorporated each mapping standard set out in the statute. Unlike the LRC, the UIRC used "communities of interest" as a mapping standard. This means that the UIRC allowed the public to submit maps that reflected their own individual communities rather than requiring them to submit complete maps of the entire state as the LRC did. The prioritization of mapping standards is vested in the authority and discretion of the UIRC. The</p> |

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| | <p>UIRC respected the will of the people by creating maps that prioritize communities of interest after members of the public consistently asked the UIRC to prioritize that community of interest standard. Additionally, the commission analyzed each map by taking each piece of criteria into consideration upon their review — for example, population deviation, county splits, city splits, etc.</p> |
| <p>The recent resignation of former Rep. Rob Bishop proves the UIRC didn't work</p> | <p>Former Rep. Rob Bishop resigned because of his discontent with the lack of support for a specific Congressional map he favored. Bishop made it clear that he could not vote for a map that did not ensure that every congressional district had a rural/urban combination. His belief is that every congressperson who represents Utah should represent both urban and rural districts. When the commissioners were asked to pick their top three maps at a UIRC public hearing prior to his resignation, he repeatedly stated that he did not like any map other than the green congressional map. Following Bishop's resignation, the remaining six members of the UIRC unanimously voted on a set of twelve maps. One of these twelve maps included a congressional map submitted by Stuart Hepworth, a member of the public. Stuart's map fulfilled Rob Bishop's requirement of a congressional map that included a mix of rural and urban communities in all four districts. The UIRC is not required by statute to present a map(s) that combine rural and urban communities in the same district. Additionally, the UIRC is not required by statute to choose a final set of maps that are intended to please the Utah Legislature. The statute states that the UIRC has the authority to use their own discretion when choosing the final set of maps that they will present to the LRC.</p> |

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| <p>New maps need to keep the “cores” of prior districts.</p> | <p>This is a criterion that was incorporated into the UIRC approach and has been considered and measured for UIRC recommended maps.</p> |
| <p>The Utah Legislature is the only responsible entity able to select new maps because it is the only group accountable to the voters.</p> | <p>In November 2018, 512,000 Utahns voted to establish an independent commission on redistricting that became the UIRC. The UIRC is responsible to these voters and all voters in Utah.</p> |
| <p>Congressional districts in Utah need to contain a mix of rural and urban areas because Utah is mostly a rural state.</p> | <p>According to the U.S. Constitution, people vote, not land. Approximately 90% of Utahns live in urban settings.</p> |
| <p>The 20 elected officials who are members of the LRC are best suited to understand the demographics and the geography of creating new maps.</p> | <p>The people of Utah are best suited to defining their own communities of interest. The UIRC received more than 1,000 maps and 2,000 comments from the people of Utah focused on defining the communities of interest that matter to them and their communities.</p> |