

Humphrey School of Public Affairs

The Big Secret: How Redistricting Can Remake Minnesota Politics

The most important political event of the next year may be nearly imperceptible to most Minnesotans — the drawing of legislative districts. Democracy rests on voters choosing their representatives. However in 2011, as the system currently exists, Minnesota's state legislators will be selecting their voters by determining the boundaries of the state and congressional districts. These decisions can tilt districts to favor one political party or faction; they can disrupt established communities; and they can favor sitting incumbents. In addition, Minnesota may lose one of its congressional seats once the new U.S. Census population numbers are released, further complicating the task of redrawing federal legislative districts. Who will have the advantage, why, and how can we influence the process to be more open and transparent?

Leading national, state, and city experts explained the stakes in redistricting and identified key benchmarks for determining its fairness. Among the speakers was one of the country's preeminent political commentators, Norm Ornstein, as well as leading legislative experts State Sen. Ann Rest, and State Rep. Laura Brod, as well as Minnesota state demographer Tom Gillaspy, who is tracking the implications of the new U.S. Census. This extraordinary forum also dug into the Minneapolis ballot question to reform the City's redistricting process.

PROGRAM

8:00-8:30a.m. Registration (*continental breakfast*)

8:30-9:30 a.m. A national look at redistricting reform

Presenter: Norm Ornstein, Resident Scholar, American Enterprise Institute

Moderator: Larry Jacobs, Director, Center for the Study of Politics and Governance

9:30-10:45 a.m. The consequences of redistricting as usual in MN

Presenters: Laura Brod, Member, Minnesota House; Tom Gillaspy, State Demographer, MN Department of Administration; Ann Rest, Member, Minnesota Senate

Moderator: Keesha Gaskins, Executive Director, League of Women Voters Minnesota

10:45-11:00 a.m. Break

11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. What's happening in Minneapolis?

Presenters: Barry Clegg, Commissioner, Minneapolis Charter Commission; Mike Dean, Executive Director, Common Cause Minnesota; Elizabeth Glidden, Member, Minneapolis City Council (*invited*)

Moderator: Larry Jacobs, Director, Center for the Study of Politics and Governance

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More Information

For more information and disability accommodations, please call (612) 625-5340 or e-mail cspg@umn.edu (<mailto:cspg@umn.edu>).



October 4, 2010

8:00 AM to 12:00 PM

Cowles Auditorium, Humphrey School of Public Affairs

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