

The Redistricting Transparency and Accountability Act: Section-by-Section

Reps. Ross, Nickel, Manning, Jackson, Foushee, Adams, Davis

Section 1: short title and finding of constitutional authority.

Section 2: requiring redistricting to be conducted under procedures providing opportunity for public participation. This section details that redistricting entities must establish and operate a website, provide opportunities for public participation in the initial development of the plan, and provide opportunities for the public to respond to a proposed plan.

Section 3: public internet site for state redistricting entity. This section lays out requirements for redistricting entities' websites, establishing that each site must provide: general information about the redistricting process as well as the principles and policies that the redistricting entity will use in creating or evaluating congressional redistricting plans; timely advance notice of meetings held by the entity; access to all congressional redistricting plans submitted by any person or entity as part of the process; easily accessible digital files containing demographic and election data on proposed plans; opportunities for individuals to submit, search, view, and comment on redistricting plans; and live and archived video feeds of hearings or meetings of the redistricting entity. The site must also provide this information in all languages in which the state is required to provide election materials under section 203 of the VRA.

Section 4: public hearings and other opportunities for public participation in initial development of congressional redistricting plans. This section establishes that redistricting entities must hold hearings before and after the development of redistricting plans and requires that such hearings be held in different regions across the state with opportunities for virtual participation and be sufficient in number, time, and place to allow reasonable participation of racial, ethnic, and language minorities protected under the VRA. The redistricting entity must publish its proposed schedule of hearings, allow members of the public ten days to comment on the hearing schedule, and consider public comments before adopting any schedule.

Section 5: notification of congressional redistricting plan proposed to be adopted by redistricting entity; opportunities for public to respond. This section requires the redistricting entity to post information about a final redistricting plan at least ten days prior to any vote on adoption of the plan. This information must include: a map of each congressional district; a statement of total, voting age, and citizen population of each district broken down into race and membership in language minority groups; a statement of the number of registered voters in each district, broken down by party affiliation; a statement of the results in each district for all statewide elections conducted in the past six years; an analysis of the plan's compliance with the VRA and other applicable laws; an assessment of the partisan fairness of the plan; a statement identifying all individuals and entities who were consulted in the drafting of the plan or helped draft the plan; a statement describing any changes to the plan in response to public input; a statement for why the final plan will best serve the public, as opposed to alternative plans, and an assessment of how the plan is consistent with the principles and policies described in section 3; and any dissenting statements from members who did not approve of the plan. This section also requires that hearings must be held, as laid out in section 4, at least seven days prior to the final vote on adoption of the plan.

Section 6: effective date' application to redistricting conducted pursuant to 2020 census for certain states. This section states that this act will apply to redistricting that occurs after the 2030 census and in any cases in which a state has not enacted a redistricting plan or has been ordered to revise such plan.