OFFICE OF THE CHAMPAIGN COUNTY EXECUTIVE
1776 East Washington Street, Urbana, Illinois 61802-4581

Darlene A. Kloeppel, County Executive

## MEMORANDUM

## TO: COUNTY BOARD MEMBERS <br> FROM: DARLENE KLOEPPEL, COUNTY EXECUTIVE

DATE: MAY 11, 2021
RE: RECOMMENDATION FOR 2021 COUNTY BOARD REAPPORTIONMENT PLAN

Pursuant to the Illinois Counties Code ( 55 ILCS 5/2-3), the County Executive may develop and present to the Board an apportionment plan for its consideration by the third Wednesday in May following the decennial census. After some initial confusion, it was confirmed that the state legislature would not be announcing any delays in the deadlines for filing reapportionment plans, despite delays in Census 2020 data reporting.

Accordingly, a 13-member Redistricting Advisory Group met with me 11 times from January through May to develop a recommendation to the County Board for a 2021 Reapportionment Plan. The group was selected with efforts to reflect the county's diversity of gender, age, race, residence, political leaning, and professional background, with the express goal of providing robust discussion and a map that would offer each county resident equal representation. The group discussed mapping tools and data, prioritized criteria to evaluate plans and reviewed plans submitted. All group discussions and resources were recorded and posted on the county's website under the "redistricting" tab.

ESRI's redistricting tool was used to draw the maps for group analysis. Dave's Redistricting $A p p$, an open source mapping tool, also allowed the public to submit suggestions for communities of interest, comments on drawn maps and even complete maps for consideration. Submitted maps were accepted through Tuesday, May 4th and transferred into the ESRI mapping tool for comparative analysis with other maps generated internally by the group.

A total of 12 plans were compared by the group at its last meeting on May 6th. A summary comparison of all 12 plans is attached.

## PLAN REQUIREMENTS

## Contiguity

Statute requires that all districts be comprised of contiguous areas. All plans submitted for consideration had contiguous districts, and the Executive's recommendation meets this criterion.

## Population

Statute requires districts of substantially equal population, with case law reflecting a maximum permissible overall range variance of no more than $10 \%$ between the lowest and highest population districts.

ESRI Demographics was chosen for population estimates, because this product has a reputation for providing good estimates of population at the block group level, using interim American Community Survey estimates adjusted with additional recent tax, residential and business data. Although local Census 2020 data are not yet available, for comparison, the state level Census 2020 reported an Illinois population of $12,822,739$, while ESRI Demographics estimates $12,862,980$, a difference of only 40,241 or $.3 \%$.

Using ESRI estimates, the 2020 Champaign County population is 212,833 , slightly over a $10 \%$ increase from the 2010 Census. The University of Illinois reported that campus group housing normally houses 12,821 students and that during the COVID-19 pandemic all 51,344 students were asked to complete Census 2020 responses for the location where they normally would live while attending college. ESRI estimates $72,502(34.1 \%)$ of Champaign County's residents are a racial minority, with the largest minority of 28,358 (13.3\%) Black/African Americans.

The County Board's decision to maintain 11 districts results in an ideal district population of 19,353. Since we used estimates, the advisory group prioritized having a low $2-3 \%$ variance from this ideal in all districts as a strategy to address potentially larger variances when final Census numbers are released. The maximum allowed overall variance generally allowed by case law is $10 \%$. The Executive's recommendation meets this criterion.

## Communities of Interest

Pursuant to the Voting Rights Act of 1965, efforts were made to preserve voting power of communities with common racial, geographic or socioeconomic interests, with specific emphasis to assure that rights of minority populations are not diluted or concentrated. Communities of Interest (COI) with significant populations in Champaign County that are prioritized in the County Executive's recommendation are:

- a high concentration of Black residents in north Champaign and Urbana (approximately $1 / 3$ of total in Champaign County)
- the rural area outside of the urban donut-hole of Champaign, Urbana and Savoy
- a high concentration of University of Illinois students, using campus housing to define an area of known students (approximately $1 / 3$ of total)
- Rantoul city limits on both sides of I-57

The advisory group was divided on the advisability of considering political affiliation as a factor, however, was very interested in maintaining at least some competitive districts where there might be a close split of voter preference rather than having all "pre-determined" districts. Dave's Redistricting App summary data (not individual voting records) over several election seasons was used to determine competitiveness of districts after other priorities were incorporated into the maps. Districts were considered closely competitive within a $45 \%-55 \%$ split range for the two major political parties. The County Executive's recommendation has 2 competitive districts, maintaining the status quo.

## Compactness

Concerns about gerrymandering result in a desire for compactness of districts. While the group reviewed statistical measures as somewhat helpful, preference for visually simple shapes was the primary consideration for compactness. Polsby-Popper Index scores, Roeck Test scores and Ehrenburg Test scores approaching 1.00 for each district reflect the most compact shapes. The County Executive's recommendation falls within the .44 to .51 range when averaging all districts on these three scores.

## Few splits of municipalities, townships, precincts

Statute requires that districts divide boundaries of townships/municipalities only to meet the population requirement and districts do not divide precincts more than twice. In Champaign County, the cities of Champaign and Urbana are the only municipalities that must be divided into more than one district due to size. In order to equalize population between districts, Savoy was the only other municipality that was divided and no more than 10 townships were divided in the County Executive's recommendation.

Because the County Clerk redistricts precincts following determination of the county board districts, the County Executive's recommendation did not consider current precinct boundaries.

## RECOMMENDATION TO THE BOARD

There is no "perfect" plan. I am pleased to say that based on our analysis, my advisory group came to consensus on preference for three of the plans from the 12 submitted.

## I recommend that the County Board adopt one of these three plans as the 2021 Reapportionment Plan for Champaign County: Plan 1, Plan 3 or Plan 5A.

Plan 1 - This is the current 2011 map, adjusted for 2021 estimates and anticipated continued population growth in SW Champaign. This map maintains the dividing line between Champaign \& Urbana, which splits the Black and university student communities of interest. This map keeps the current board member seats relatively intact and maintains 2 competitive districts. The average district compactness score is .44 (fair).

Plan 3 - This is Plan 1F recommended in 2011, adjusted to 2021 population estimates. It creates a district with $42.4 \%$ Black residents and 6 districts with over $20 \%$ minority residents. The compactness average score for districts is 48 , and this plan maintains 2 competitive districts.

Plan 5A - This plan incorporates all the prioritized communities of interest with intent to create some likely seats on the County Board for these significant sub-populations. It minimizes the "bite" into the urban footprint from the rural districts and anticipates continued urban growth in SW Champaign. This plan maintains 2 competitive districts and has a compactness average for districts of .54 .

Thanks go to the members of my Redistricting Advisory Group for their help in providing information, technical skills and insight as we reviewed map submissions: Emily Bluhm, Leanne Brehob-Riley, Trisha Crowley, Nicole Darby, Brian Gaines, Mariel Huasanga, Charles Lansford, Gabriel Lewis, Shandra Summerville, Debbra Sweat, Shree Thaker, and Lin Warfel.

## Plan Submissions and Analysis

Highlights of each plan:
Plan 1 - The current 2011 map, adjusted for 2021 population estimates; least change; continues to split Black and student communities of interest

Plan 2 - The current 2011 map, adjusted for 2021 population estimates; combines Black and student communities of interest for Blacks; District \#3 becomes too big

Plan 3 - Plan 1F recommended in 2011, adjusted to 2021 population estimates; combines Black community of interest; more compact than Plan 2

Plan 4 - Plan 3D recommended in 2011, adjusted to 2021 population estimates; splits Black community of interest; District \#5 wraps around city

Plan 5 - Plan incorporating as closely as possible all prioritized communities of interest; District \#3 is too big

Plan 5A - Adjustment to Plan 5 to make Districts 2 \& 3 more compact
Plan 5B - Adjustment to Plan 5; withdrawn
Plan 6 - Districts drawn from the center of the county outward; separates all communities of interest without gain to other measures; every district overwhelmed by urban population

Plan 7 - Plan to increase \% of Blacks in 2 districts; expense to compactness
Plan 8 - Plan to increase number of competitive districts; expense to compactness
Plan 9 - Plan to separate communities of interest into multiple districts to gain more districts with some influence; significant expense to compactness; splits Mahomet \& Rantoul

Plan 10 - Plan to separate communities of interest into multiple districts to gain more districts with some influence; significant expense to compactness; splits Mahomet \& Rantoul

Plan 11 - Plan to create 2 minority majority districts and proportional representation of the 4 urban townships in C-U; proportional student population outside campus is unknown; compactness within city boundaries is very low

## 2021 Map Analysis
















