

Date of Hearing: August 19, 2025

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON ELECTIONS

Gail Pellerin, Chair

AB 604 (Aguiar-Curry and Lena Gonzalez) – As Amended August 18, 2025

INFORMATIONAL HEARING – NO VOTE TO BE TAKEN

SUBJECT: Redistricting: congressional districts.

SUMMARY: Specifies the boundaries for California’s congressional districts, to take effect only if the voters approve ACA 8 (Rivas and McGuire), and if another state voluntarily engages in mid-decade congressional redistricting, as specified. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Contains legal descriptions of the boundaries of 52 congressional districts.
- 2) Provides that the district boundaries in this bill become operative only if ACA 8 (Rivas and McGuire) is approved by the voters, takes effect, and becomes operative because another state voluntarily puts a new congressional map into effect.
- 3) Provides that if any ambiguity or dispute arises regarding the location of a boundary line for the districts contained in this bill, the Secretary of State (SOS) and the elections official of each county shall rely on the detailed maps of the congressional districts prepared by this committee and the Senate Committee on Elections and Constitutional Amendments.
- 4) Sunsets the provisions of this bill once a new congressional map is certified by the Citizens Redistricting Commission (CRC) pursuant to the California Constitution.
- 5) Contains a severability clause, and contains an urgency clause, allowing this bill to take effect immediately upon enactment.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Establishes the CRC, and requires it to adjust the boundary lines of the congressional, State Senatorial, Assembly, and Board of Equalization (BOE) districts in the year following the year in which the national census is taken under the direction of Congress at the beginning of each decade, as specified. (California Constitution, Article XXI, §§1 & 2)
- 2) Permits the Legislature to propose an amendment or revision of the Constitution by a two-thirds vote of each house of the Legislature. Provides that a proposed amendment or revision shall be submitted to the electors and takes effect if approved by a majority of votes cast thereon, as specified. (California Constitution, Article XVIII, §§1 & 4)

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown

COMMENTS:

- 1) **Informational Hearing:** The committee is discussing the subject matter of this bill today as an informational item, as the bill is currently pending in the Senate Elections and

Constitutional Amendments Committee, and is not in the possession of this committee. No vote will be taken on this bill at this committee hearing.

2) **Purpose of the Bill:** According to the author:

AB 604 will protect Californians' interests in the national democratic process by presenting the voters with a temporary congressional district map to use if Texas or other states decide to conduct mid-decade, partisan gerrymandering of their congressional district maps.

The temporary congressional district boundaries laid out in AB 604 follow the principles that California voters value most in establishing legislative districts. The proposed map maintains the geographic integrity of even more cities than the current map adopted by the Citizens Redistricting Commission. Importantly, the temporary map in AB 604 will also ensure that communities of interest remain intact — a key principle of the constitutional amendment establishing the Citizens Redistricting Commission — to exercise their collective voice and vote to elect officials who truly represent them. AB 604 does all of this without diluting or favoring the voting power of any one voter over another. And, unlike any other congressional maps in use across the country today, the district map in AB 604 will go directly to California voters for their approval.

AB 604 not only appropriately responds to the mid-cycle redistricting attempts by President Trump and Republicans in Texas and other states, but also adheres to redistricting principles that Californians hold dear — from protecting the many types of communities of interest in our state, to not favoring incumbents, to maintaining the geographic integrity of neighborhoods. The temporary congressional district lines proposed in AB 604 provide an effective response to the partisan gerrymander attempted by Texas and other states without eroding fair representation for all California voters and communities.

- 3) **Redistricting Overview:** “Redistricting” is the process by which the boundaries of districts of a governmental body are adjusted. Redistricting generally occurs at the beginning of each decade following the decennial federal census, when new district lines are adopted based on the census data so that the populations of each district of a governmental body are roughly equal. Over the course of the decade, districts can become significantly unequal in population due to differential growth rates in various locations of a jurisdiction. Redistricting is the way this inequality is corrected.
- 4) **California Redistricting and the Citizens Redistricting Commission:** The California Legislature last redrew the boundary lines of the congressional, State Senatorial, Assembly, and BOE districts in 2001 based on the results of the 2000 census. Those district lines were finalized and approved in September 2001.

In 2008, California voters approved Proposition 11, which created the CRC, and gave it the responsibility for drawing district lines for the state Senate, Assembly, and the BOE. It also changed the criteria used when drawing those lines. In 2010, voters approved Proposition 20,

which expanded the CRC's duties to include drawing California's congressional districts, and made additional changes to the procedures and criteria to be used by the CRC. The passage of Propositions 11 and 20 meant that the California Legislature did not play a direct role in adopting district boundaries for congressional, legislative, and BOE districts following the 2010 and 2020 federal censuses.

Under current law, the districts drawn by the CRC after the 2020 census are scheduled to remain in place until the CRC adopts new maps following the 2030 census. Those new districts would take effect for regularly-scheduled elections in 2032 and beyond.

However, if ACA 8 (Rivas and McGuire) of the current legislative session is approved by voters and becomes operative because another state voluntarily engages in mid-decade congressional redistricting, the congressional district boundaries in this bill could be used for congressional elections in California as soon as the 2026 statewide elections.

More detailed information about the congressional districts proposed by this bill, including demographic details for each of the 52 proposed districts, an interactive map of the proposed district boundaries, and downloadable computer files (shapefiles and a block equivalency file) with geographic details about the proposed districts are available on the committee's website at <https://aelc.assembly.ca.gov/proposed-congressional-map>.

- 5) **District Boundary Disputes:** This bill contains a provision that specifies that if an ambiguity or dispute arises regarding the location of a boundary line in this bill, the SOS and county elections officials may rely on detailed maps prepared by this committee and the Senate Committee on Elections and Constitutional Amendments to resolve that ambiguity or dispute. This language is similar to language that was included in legislation (AB 632 (Cedillo), Chapter 348, Statutes of 2001 and SB 802 (Elections and Reapportionment Committee), Chapter 349, Statutes of 2001) when the California Legislature last redrew district boundary lines in 2001. As noted above, this committee's website already includes detailed information about the proposed districts, including an interactive map of the district boundaries.
- 6) **Support and Opposition:** At the time this analysis was prepared, the committee had not received position letters specifically addressing this bill. However, the committee has received significant public input through a Redistricting Public Comment portal that was made available on the committee's website on August 13, 2025. Those public comments generally were focused on the proposal for California to use new congressional district maps for elections through 2030 if Texas, Florida, or other states voluntarily implement new congressional maps. For a discussion of the comments received through the portal, please see this committee's analysis of ACA 8 (Rivas and McGuire).
- 7) **Related Legislation:** ACA 8 (Rivas and McGuire), which is being heard in this committee today, provides for the use of new congressional district maps for elections held through 2030 if Texas, Florida, or other states voluntarily put a new congressional map into effect, as specified.

SB 280 (Cervantes and Pellerin), which is being heard in this committee today, calls a special

statewide election to be held on November 4, 2025, provides for the administration of that election, and provides for ACA 8 to be submitted to voters at that election, among other provisions.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

See comment #6 above for an explanation about support for and opposition to this bill.

Analysis Prepared by: Ethan Jones / ELECTIONS / (916) 319-2094