**What Does HJR9: Independent Redistricting Commission Do?**

House Joint Resolution 9 if passed by both chambers of the New Mexico Legislature would put the question of creation of an independent redistricting commission on the ballot in the next general election. The Governor does not need to sign it. If approved by the voters it would:

1. Establish a seven person independent redistricting commission (IRC) to be responsible for determining new districts for Congress, state legislative districts and the districts of other state districted offices for the decennial census.
2. The State Ethics Commission will solicit applications from the public and from that list would select a pool of 38 applicants, of whom no more than twelve will be from the same political party, to send to the legislative leadership. The Senate President Pro Tem, the Speaker of the House and the minority leader of each chamber will be allowed to strike three applicants each.
3. From the remaining pool of 26 the State Ethics Commission will select the seven person commission with the Chair being a retired district or appellate court judge or a retired supreme court judge. No more than three can be from the same political party. The selection must reflect geographic, racial and gender balance. The commission will consist of two members from each of the two major political parties, two from another political party or who are unaffiliated. The Chair will be a retired district or appellate court judge or a retired supreme court judge.
4. With the exception of the Chair, no commissioner shall be a present or former federal, state or local elected official. There is a ten year prohibition for former candidates for public offices and their direct relatives and employees, paid lobbyists and other various other paid political personnel.
5. The redistricting commission shall develop district plans for congressional districts, state legislative districts and other districted state offices following each federal decennial census. The commission shall develop district plans in accordance with the following provisions:
                (a) congressional districts shall be as equal in population as practicable;
                (b) legislative districts and other state office districts shall be substantially equal in population. The commission shall not consider district plans for the legislature and other state offices that have a total deviation of more than ten percent;
                (c) the commission shall use the most recent federal decennial census data generated by the United States census bureau and may use other reliable sources of demographic data as determined by majority vote of the commission;
                (d) district plans shall comport with the provisions of federal law and shall not dilute a protected minority's voting strength. Race may be considered in developing district plans but shall not be the predominant consideration, and traditional race-neutral redistricting principles shall not be subordinated to racial considerations;
                (e) district plans shall use only single-member districts and shall not split precincts;

                (f) districts shall be drawn consistent with traditional redistricting principles;
                 (g) districts shall be composed of contiguous precincts and shall be reasonably compact;

                (h) to the extent feasible, districts shall be drawn in an attempt to preserve communities of interest and shall take into consideration political and geographic boundaries, including the boundaries of Indian nations, tribes and pueblos and their political subdivisions; and

                (i) to the extent feasible, the commission may seek to preserve the core of existing districts.
6. The redistricting commission may incorporate suggested changes to its proposed district plans in accordance with public comments and testimonies it receives, but shall not subordinate the requirements of Paragraphs (1) through (9) of Subsection H of this section in doing so.

7. When proposing or adopting district plans, the redistricting commission shall not:

      (a) use, rely upon or reference partisan data, such as voting history or party registration data;
 provided that voting history in elections may be considered to ensure that the district plan
 complies with applicable federal law; or

       (b) consider the voting address of incumbents.

8. The Commission shall submit their districts maps to the Secretary of State by October 1 of the year ending in one. The districts will be used in the next election.