

# Redistricting will have to wait for more census data

By Tim Richard  
staff writer

Don't be in a rush to see the new congressional and legislative district maps. They'll take a few months.

"Some 100,000 people were not counted (by the census) in this state — maybe more," said Rep. Maxine Berman, D-Southfield, who chairs the House committee handling legislative districting. "Four hundred cities challenge their figures."

"The secretary of commerce is to decide in July if there will be a census recount," added Rep. Willis Bullard, R-Highland, minority vice chair of the panel. If the federal government decides there was an undercount in 1990, a new total will be fed into the government computer, which will adjust those numbers by census tracts, he said.

Only then can lawmakers start redrawing maps.

committee will work on apportionment during the summer and fall.

Four new district maps — one from the Senate panel, one from the House, one from Republicans, one from Democrats — are likely to emerge.

A lawsuit — if any — will come about December in the state Supreme Court.

"It's not totally out of the question to agree," said Berman. Bullard is less optimistic. "Conventional wisdom is that we will not have a plan approved by everyone," the Republican spokesman said. "In two of the previous three reapportionments, the filing deadline was postponed" because the parties failed to agree.

In 1983 the state Supreme Court threw out the method of reapportionment devised in the 1963 Michigan Constitution — a four-member, bipartisan panel. The high court said it violated the U.S. Constitution.

**'Most people snore their way through it, but apportionment is critically important.'**

— Rep. Maxine Berman  
D-Southfield

At that time, the Supreme Court appointed an expert, former elections director Bernard Apol, to draw up a new plan.

This time the Legislature is supposed to do the job.

"Republicans are raising money. I presume Democrats are raising money," said Bullard. The money will be used for computers and legal fees.

"Democrats have no war chest I know of," said Berman. "We're in debt."

Republicans contended Democrats were able to control the State Capitol in the 1960s and '70s largely through gerrymandering. Their unashed goal is to take control of the House in 1992.

(A separate pair of committees is handling apportionment of congressional seats. Its job will be particularly difficult because Michigan, due to population stagnancy, will lose two of its 16 congressional seats. Any judicial review is likely to be in federal court.)

It's widely expected Detroit will lose one of its five state Senate seats. Probable gainer: an area on the Oakland-Macomb border.

BERMAN HAS held two hearings so far — in Detroit and Grand Rapids. In July she will hold three more — in Flint, Traverse City and Marquette.

So far, minority groups have asked that redistricting not dissipate their political influence.

The Supreme Court has given lawmakers no guidelines on what will satisfy their constitutional minds.

"We don't have any definitive guidelines," said Bullard. In 1982 the court said districts couldn't vary more than 16 percent plus or minus in population; districts were to be maintained within county lines so

far as possible; and there were to be a minimum of breaks in city and township lines.

Bullard said Republicans asked the justices to reopen the case, but the court declined. Six of today's seven justices weren't on the court in 1982.

"We'd like to narrow the gap to 8 percent," said Berman. "We'd like not to split cities and townships, but in metro Detroit, you'll see more splits."

## ARC hosts new head of state mental health

James K. Haveman Jr., director of the Michigan Department of Mental Health, will speak at the annual meeting of the Oakland County chapter of the Association for Retarded Citizens 7:30 p.m. Monday, June 24.

The chapter will also hold its annual election for the board of directors. Candidates include: President, Gary VanHorn; 1st vice president,

Vince Morganter; 2nd vice president, Carolyn Flynn; secretary, Mark Wiedelman; treasurer, Leon Wyden; and delegates at large, George Godard, Diane Fulgeni, Pete Ebbing, Kathy Johns, Mary T. Schmitt Smith, and Torrance Elberidge.

The meeting will be the Bloomfield Township Library, 1099 Lone Pine Road, east of Telegraph Road.

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