

Wilmington, Delaware
June 16, 2022

#xxxx

Sponsor:
Council
President
Congo

WHEREAS, City Charter Section 2-102 requires City Council to redistrict the City's eight (8) Councilmanic districts within six (6) months after the publication by the United States Census Bureau of the population of the City at each federal decennial census; and

WHEREAS, City Code Section 2-32 sets forth the procedures in which the Council is required to fulfill the requirements of City Charter Section 2-102; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to City Charter Section 2-102 and City Code Section 2-32, a redistricting committee comprised of the President of Council and six members of Council appointed by the President must be established to formulate the City's redistricting plan; and

WHEREAS, a redistricting committee consisting solely of members of Council (i.e., politicians) makes the redistricting process vulnerable to gerrymandering and political influence; and

WHEREAS, a redistricting committee composed of a majority of the members of Council is overly burdensome and distracts Council from their core legislative duties and from serving their constituents; and

WHEREAS, numerous jurisdictions across the country establish independent citizens redistricting commissions in order to keep the redistricting process politically neutral and, ultimately, to strengthen the citizenry's faith in the election and redistricting process; and

WHEREAS, Council deems it appropriate to amend the Wilmington City Charter to require an independent commission to formulate the City's redistricting plan instead of a redistricting committee consisting solely of seven members of Council.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE WILMINGTON CITY COUNCIL, that pursuant to Title 22, Section 811 of the Delaware Code, this Council proposes to amend Section 2-102 of the Wilmington City Charter by adding the underlined language and deleting the stricken language to read as follows:

Sec. 2-102. – Councilmanic districts.

There shall be eight (8) councilmanic districts, each encompassing as nearly as possible a contiguous area in which is included as nearly as practicable an equal population distribution. For the purposes of this section, all boundaries shall be considered as passing along the middle of streets. The boundaries of the eight (8) councilmanic districts shall be as presently constituted.

It shall be the mandatory duty of ~~the council~~ an independent redistricting commission to redistrict the city within six (6) months after the publication by the United States Census Bureau of the population of the city at each decennial census. Each councilmanic district shall consist as nearly as possible of contiguous areas containing as nearly as practicable a population derived by dividing the population of the city by a factor of eight (8). ~~Should council fail to redistrict the city within six (6) months following the publication of the census as herein required, the council shall not receive any further salaries until council shall have passed and the mayor shall have approved a redistricting ordinance as herein required or until such ordinance shall have become law without the mayor's approval.~~

Passed by City Council,

ATTEST: _____
City Clerk

SYNOPSIS: This Resolution initiates a proposed amendment to the Wilmington City Charter Section 2-102 to require an independent redistricting commission to redistrict the City's eight (8) Councilmanic districts within six (6) months after the publication by the United States Census Bureau of the population of the City at each federal decennial census.

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