



**\*\* Action Alert \*\***  
**April 12, 2011**

**Contact Your Legislators and Local Newspaper to Say:  
Make Redistricting Open to the Public**

Redistricting is officially underway, following the State's receipt of 2010 Census data last week. The Michigan Redistricting Collaborative has sent a letter to all legislators and has been meeting with editorial boards to gain their support for a more open redistricting process that includes public access to draft maps and opportunities for citizen involvement. The Detroit Free Press published an editorial last week saying that lawmakers should allow the public to give feedback about proposed districts and explain how and why decisions about redistricting are made. [www.freep.com/article/20110331/OPINION01/](http://www.freep.com/article/20110331/OPINION01/)

We need you to add your voice to the call for a transparent redistricting process. We're asking you to contact your legislators and write a letter to the editor of the local newspaper this week. If you can only take one action, that will be helpful too. Then, as a last step, let us know who you've contacted.

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**1. Contact Your State Legislators:**

While legislators are in their home districts, and less immersed in budget concerns, this is a good time to call your Representative and Senator and let them know that you want them to make redistricting an open and participatory process. The Legislature is out of session until Tuesday, April 12th.

**Message**

I am a voter in your district and a member of [the League of Women Voters or other organization supporting transparent redistricting]. As the Legislature begins to draw new state and congressional legislative districts, I urge you to call for transparency and public involvement in the redistricting process.

Redistricting will determine how Michigan voters will be represented for the next ten years. We should be able to be able to see the maps for our community and have the

opportunity to comment before they are passed into law. The process should include more public hearings, access to the maps, and opportunities for the public to provide input.

Will you be a voice for an open redistricting process?

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## **2. Send a Letter to Your Local Newspaper:**

A letter to the editor can be submitted by email to your local newspaper. Check their website for the email address, word limit, and other policies.

### **Sample Letter to the Editor**

Right now, the Michigan Legislature is drawing new political district lines. This process happens only once every 10 years. That's why we need to be sure that it's done in a way that accurately reflects our communities.

Unfortunately, that's usually not the case. Instead, the political party in power draws districts that will benefit them the most. This is not a Republican or Democratic issue – both parties do it all the time.

This year, let's make a stand against political redistricting. Contact your state legislator and tell them that you want a transparent redistricting process – that means plenty of opportunity to understand the proposed districts, ask questions, and provide input.

If you want to learn more about how redistricting works, visit the website of the Michigan Redistricting Collaborative (MRC) at [www.drawthelinemichigan.org](http://www.drawthelinemichigan.org). The MRC is a coalition of organizations dedicated to cleaning up the redistricting process in our state.

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**3. Send an email to [redistricting@lwvmi.org](mailto:redistricting@lwvmi.org)** to let us know which legislators and newspapers you've contacted.

**Thanks for being a voice for an open and participatory redistricting process!**

League of Women Voters of Michigan  
200 Museum Drive, Suite 104  
Lansing, MI 48933