

April 4, 2018

Dear Candidate,

We, the undersigned, are writing you today as select members of the Illinois Redistricting Collaborative. Guided by a set of eight shared principles, our non-partisan collaborative represents hundreds of thousands of Illinoisans from all across the state who want to see gerrymandering to come to an end.

Gerrymandering has historically protected incumbents of both parties. In 2016, more than 60 percent of the General Assembly seats up for elections were uncompetitive – where the winning candidate won by more than 55% of the vote. Dozens of races weren't even contested. Increased partisanship in Springfield has contributed to government gridlock, budget stalemates, and school funding standoffs.

Our state has the opportunity to be a national leader by instituting a more democratic redistricting process to ensure that elected officials vote in the interests of their constituents rather than party leaders. Voters should be the ones electing their leaders; elected officials should not be selecting their voters. The public is clearly on the side of reform – a recent Paul Simon Institute poll found that 72 percent of Illinoisans support a constitutional amendment for an independent redistricting commission.

On behalf of the voters of our great state and members of the Illinois Redistricting Collaborative, we would like to know your position on gerrymandering and, if elected, how you will use your role in the General Assembly to enact reforms that add necessary measures of public transparency and accountability to depoliticize the map-drawing process.

We have attached the following survey to provide you with a platform to share your views and to demonstrate your commitment to this critical issue. We have sent this survey to all candidates and current officeholders. We will share all responses with the press, the public, and the Illinois voters our organizations represent.

This survey and your response will be used for public education purposes only and will not be used to endorse, electioneer, or contribute financially to any candidate for public office.

We request that all questionnaires be returned **no later than 11:59pm on Wednesday, May 9, 2018.**

This is an opportunity for you to demonstrate your commitment to the voters of Illinois and support redistricting reform.

Support for redistricting reform in Illinois is growing every day and our Collaborative expects to bring on several more partner organizations in the coming weeks.

Each of our organizations stand ready to offer additional guidance on fixing gerrymandering through Election Day, November 6, 2018. Should you have any questions about the survey or

our Collaborative, please reach out to Jeff Raines at CHANGE Illinois at 312-265-9067 or via email: jeff@changeil.org. We look forward to seeing your responses to the survey questions **by May 9th**.

Survey responses should be emailed to Jeff Raines at jeff@changeil.org or mailed to:
CHANGE Illinois
c/o Jeff Raines
205 W. Randolph St. Suite 510
Chicago, IL 60606

Sincerely,

Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Chicago

Better Government Association

Business and Professional People for the Public Interest

CHANGE Illinois

Citizen Advocacy Center

Common Cause Illinois

Illinois Campaign for Political Reform

Illinois Chamber of Commerce

Illinois Farm Bureau

League of Women Voters Illinois

Small Business Advocacy Council

Union League Club of Chicago

Unite America – Chicago Chapter

Illinois Redistricting Collaborative 2018 General Assembly Gerrymandering Survey

Please return this survey response no later than 11:59pm on:
Wednesday, May 9, 2018.

Candidate Name:	
Full Name of Campaign Committee:	Citizens for Ann Gillespie
Office Sought/District:	Illinois State Senate, District 27
Party Affiliation:	Democratic
Candidate Current Occupation:	Retired
Previous Elected Positions Held:	None
Campaign Contact Person:	Mark Michaels
Campaign Address:	P.O. Box 94, Mount Prospect, IL 60056
Campaign Phone:	847-745-9929
Website:	AnnForIllinois.org
Campaign Email:	Mark@annforillinois.org
Campaign Facebook:	/AnnGillespieforIllinoisSenate
Campaign Twitter:	@Ann4ILSenate

2018 Gerrymandering Survey Questions:

1. Do you believe we need to end gerrymandering and change the way Illinois draws its legislative and Congressional maps?

Yes Please explain: Whether practiced by Democrats or Republicans, I believe that gerrymandering represents one of the primary reasons our politics, nationally and in Illinois, have become so fractured. When practiced, it disenfranchises voters in the party that is currently in the minority in a gerrymandered district and removes accountability for elected legislators to all citizens of their district.

2. Do you support an amendment to the Illinois Constitution to end gerrymandering by changing the redistricting process to create an independent commission tasked with drawing Illinois legislative and Congressional maps?

Yes Please explain: I support a constitutional amendment that would end gerrymandering because legislative approaches are too easily altered by a party gaining power. However, I also believe that, given recent U.S. Supreme Court decisions, and potentially other cases currently pending, are recognizing that gerrymandering violates the principle of one person one vote. If that continues to be upheld in the current court, then we do not have to wait for a constitutional amendment to affect change in Illinois. Current constitutional language can be used to end gerrymandering through both legislative and court action and I would promote immediate legislative action to conform to the decisions and then follow-up with a constitutional amendment to protect the state's position in case a later U.S. court reverses the current decisions.

3. As a member of the Illinois General Assembly, would you cosponsor a constitutional amendment for redistricting reform (HJRCA43/SJRCA26) to establish an independent commission to draw the lines? As a member, would you vote for HJRCA43/SJRCA26?

Yes Please explain: I would provide such support based on my answers above. Independent commissions are proving effective in other states, especially when their work is enhanced by factual, statistical analysis.

4. Do you support changes to the current redistricting process that would allow more time for citizens to provide feedback on proposed legislative maps?

Yes Please explain: While statistical analysis can provide effective strategies for redistricting, it is not perfect. Citizen input serves as a form of accountability for the commission. This will be most true in the early years of the commission, when underrepresented communities will have the least trust in its efforts. Therefore, sufficient time must be allowed for public and citizen input into the process

5. Do you support changes to the current redistricting process that would provide resources for citizens and community organizations to analyze proposed legislative maps? And submit their own?

Yes Please explain: I support a structured process for public comment and discussion. I also support public access to all quantitative analyses and all deliberations in as close to real time as possible through a web site and other appropriate means. This transparency will enable citizens and groups to best hold the Commission accountable for its decision making

6. Do you support prison gerrymandering reform bill HB205, which requires the Secretary of State to prepare redistricting data to reflect the incarcerated persons at their residential address, rather than the address of the facility in which the person is incarcerated?

Yes Please explain: Redistricting data needs to reflect the residential address of incarcerated individuals, particularly given the disproportionate number of people of color in incarcerated populations. Not doing so disenfranchises the individuals because while incarcerated they are housed in communities in which they become the minority and also disenfranchises their communities by removing votes from their residential district that could change majority representation to minority representation. Current methods of absentee and early voting strategies removes prior technical problems of enabling voting for incarcerated individuals, but do not go far enough to prevent impacts to districting.

7. Would you support additional redistricting reform measures for county, municipal, and special units of government?

Yes Please explain: I am open to changes at any level of government that make districting fairer.

8. Do you support instituting the following principles to guide Illinois' next redistricting process? Please circle your position and explain the principles you don't agree with:

I. COMPLY WITH THE U.S. CONSTITUTION

The process must be in accordance with the requirements of the U.S. Constitution. All persons -- regardless of age, citizenship, immigration status, ability, or eligibility to vote – should be accurately counted through the Census. In accordance with the U.S. Constitution, districts should be populated equally, as nearly as is practicable.

Yes Please explain: I support this approach generally and believe more clarification around the phrase “populated equally” should be provided to give direction and guard against unintended consequences.

II. COMPLY WITH FEDERAL AND STATE VOTING RIGHTS ACT

The process must emphasize representation and be fully compliant with both the federal Voting Rights Act (VRA) and all state voting rights laws, including the Illinois Voting Rights Act. The letter and the spirit of the VRA should be reflected in redistricting to protect the rights of voters of color. To advance these foundational goals, redistricting decision-makers should exercise their latitude under the law to create majority-minority, coalition, and influence districts.

Yes Please explain: I strongly agree that redistricting should support the letter and spirit of the VRA and related state laws to protect the rights of voters of color.

III. COMPRISE AND UPHOLD A NON-PARTISANSHIP PROCESS

The process should be independent of partisan political considerations. Mapmaking must include provisions and resources ensuring independence from political parties and legislative leaders. The process must include diverse decision-makers who reflect a broad range of viewpoints and who prioritize people and communities. Mapping consultants and software contracts, paid for with public resources, should be awarded on merit rather than partisan affiliation.

Yes Please explain: All aspects described in the question need to be included in the process.

IV. MAXIMIZE VOTER CHOICE, ELECTORAL CANDIDACY AND COMPETITIVENESS

The process should result in maximizing voter choice, encouraging electoral candidacy, and enhancing electoral competitiveness.

Yes Please explain: Current legislative districting in Illinois works contrary to maximizing voter choice. The majority of districts in Illinois are either Democrat or Republican, resulting in a limited number of competitive districts each election. This removes accountability of legislators. However, increasing competitiveness will likely also have the effect of requiring more money being put into the election process because competitive elections will require funds to promote the candidates. Currently, one election for a legislative district that is competitive can require over a million dollars while a non-competitive district may only require a couple of hundred thousand dollars to win the district. If all districts are competitive, without changing to financial aspects of elections, all districts will require higher funding. Efforts regarding campaign financing reform should be taken simultaneously to assure that redistricting does not put the cost of running for office out of the realm of possibility for all citizens.

V. RECOGNIZE AND PRESERVE COMMUNITIES OF INTEREST

The process should give consideration to true communities of interest. To the extent possible, but secondary to the protection of voting rights, populations with common social, ethnic or economic interests, and/or shared political and geographic boundaries should have unified representation.

Yes Please explain: Historically, gerrymandering has been used to disenfranchise minority groups by splitting their votes into majority white districts. This works contrary to the needs of a pluralistic society such as the U.S. and our state. Computerized statistical analysis now makes it possible to consider both party distribution and communities of interest to protect minority rights along with party interests

VI. ACCURATELY INCLUDE PERMANENT RESIDENCE OF ALL ILLINOISANS

The process must accurately represent the permanent residence of all Illinoisans. All persons residing away from their permanent residence, such as students, incarcerated individuals, and missionaries, should be counted at their home address regardless of Census counting rules. The Census should be encouraged to expand its exceptions to the usual residence rule to include incarcerated individuals, as well as students, missionaries, and overseas Americans.

Yes Please explain: My response is reflected in my comments concerning incarcerated individuals. College students provide another example of the same problems which arise for incarcerated individuals voting. Early and absentee voting now removes any technical problems related to individuals voting when living away from their permanent residences.

VII. COMPRISE AND UPHOLD A TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE PROCESS

The process must be transparent and accountable. Meetings of decision-makers and their legal, political, and mapping consultants must be open and accessible to the public to the greatest extent possible. The criteria used to draw maps must be objective, clear and justifiable, and districts must be drawn to offer voter choice. Communications related to the redistricting process should be subject to the Open Meetings Act and the Freedom of Information Act. Clear conflict-of-interest rules must be adopted and applied.

Yes Please explain: Not only should the process be subject to FOIA and the Open Meetings Act, the commission should maintain a website on which all materials, deliberative and statistical, are available to the public. Since redistricting happens only once every decade, it will be difficult for the Commission to create trust with the public without such actions.

VIII. PROVIDE FOR OPEN, FULL, AND MEANINGFUL PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The process must allow for meaningful public participation and have the confidence of the public. Opportunities for public education and engagement must be provided, including opportunities to offer comment and amend draft maps. Redistricting bodies must provide data, tools, and ways for the public to have direct input into and impact on the specific plans under consideration.

Yes Please explain: Building trust in the Commission's deliberations will require transparency and participatory action. Failure to build such trust will negate the Commission's efforts to provide for fair maps. Accordingly, they must promote an open process.

Any final thoughts or points you would like to make on the subjects of gerrymandering and redistricting reform?

Gerrymandering has been a key driver of the disfunction we see today across levels of government and across the country. For government to succeed it is critical to restore trust in government. Having a fair districting process is essential to restoring that trust.

Please return this survey response no later than 11:59pm on: Wednesday, May 9, 2018 to Jeff Raines at CHANGE Illinois via email: jeff@changeil.org or mail to:

CHANGE Illinois
c/o Jeff Raines
205 W. Randolph St. Suite 510
Chicago, IL 60606