

## Minnesota Redistricting

By [John A. Knapp](#) on February 21, 2012

The speculation and conjecture surrounding the state's legislative redistricting plan is coming to an end and the new district boundaries will undoubtedly have a large impact on the remainder of the 2012 Legislative Session. The new political plans for Minnesota will be released by a state judicial panel (appointed by Minnesota Supreme Court Chief Justice Lorie S. Gildea) this afternoon at 1:00 p.m.

New political borders are drawn after each decennial census to reflect population shifts within Congressional and legislative districts. The maps pose potential problems for members of the same party placed in the same district or in districts with exceptionally different constituencies. Overall, the 2010 Census showed Minnesota with an 8% population growth and much of that can be attributed to the suburban, predominantly Republican, regions of the state. Representatives Mary Kiffmeyer (R-Big Lake) and Pat Garofalo (R-Farmington) represent districts with more than 50,000 constituents (nearly 15,000 above the determined State ideal) and were elected with more than 65% of the votes in their respective districts. By contrast, Minneapolis, Saint Paul, Bloomington, and Duluth—DFL strongholds—saw a population decrease.

The makeup of state government was dramatically changed in 2002, the last time legislative boundaries were redrawn in Minnesota. Fifty-two legislators were put in districts with at least one other current member and 47 members chose not to run for re-election. The result was the highest turnover rate in nearly 30 years: 21 new state Senators and 43 new House members. Senator Gen Olson (R-Minnetrista) and Representative Mindy Greiling (DFL-Roseville) both announced earlier this year that they would not be seeking re-election. Many other announcements are rumored or expected.