



Office of
Representative Hannah E. Kane
Commonwealth of Massachusetts

For Immediate Release

Contact: Anna Darrow, 617-722-2810, Anna.Darrow@mahouse.gov

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House approves new redistricting maps for 2022 elections

BOSTON – State Representative Hannah Kane (R-Shrewsbury) recently joined with her colleagues to support the establishment of new district maps for the House of Representatives that will take effect for the 2022 state elections.

House Bill 4210, *An Act relative to establishing representative districts in the General Court*, was given initial approval on a vote of 158-1 in the House of Representatives on October 21. The bill now requires Senate approval and enactment in both branches before it can be sent to Governor Charlie Baker for his review and signature.

Representative Kane noted that the new legislative districts outlined in House Bill 4210 reflect the population changes identified by the 2020 U.S. Census. Legislators are required to redraw the districts every 10 years based on the Census results to ensure a roughly equal number of people reside in each district. With Massachusetts' population increasing to 7,029,917, the size of each Representative's district has grown to 43,937 compared to 40,923 in 2011, the last year the maps were redrawn.

Representative Kane currently represents the 11th Worcester District, which is comprised of Shrewsbury and Westborough Precincts 4 and 5. Beginning in 2022, her district will be comprised of Shrewsbury and Westborough Precinct 4. She will lose Precinct 5. The population Representative Kane represents as part of the 11th Worcester District would have been over the max limit allowed if she had kept both Precincts 4 and 5 in Westborough come 2022. Unfortunately, this means Representative Kane will no longer represent Precinct 5 in 2022. She worked hard over the past month to make sure she was still able to represent part of Westborough in the House come 2022 and is thrilled it came to fruition by keeping Precinct 4.

Representative Kane said the new district boundaries for the House of Representatives are being set now in advance of a November 8 deadline because House candidates must reside in their district for one year prior to their election. New district maps for the Massachusetts Senate, Governor's Council, and Congress will be finalized in the coming weeks, as candidates for these offices are not subject to the same one-year residency requirement.

Members of the Joint Special Committee on Redistricting held 20 hearings and created a website to solicit input from the public on the new House district maps. The committee took those comments into consideration when filing its final recommendations on October 19, noting that it worked to ensure that

the new districts “comply with all constitutional and legal requirements,” including prior federal decisions and rulings issued by the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court.

According to Representative Kane, cities and towns traditionally redraw their local voting precincts by June of the year following the Census, but the challenges posed by COVID-19 resulted in final Census figures not being released until September. As a result of this delay, the process has been reversed this year, with the state taking the first steps to redraw the maps and cities and towns expected to revise their precinct boundaries based off of the state maps.

The new House maps expand the number of majority-minority districts across the state from 20 to 33, reflecting increases in the state’s Black, Asian and Hispanic populations. According to the committee, “The new districts reflect neighborhoods and communities of interest. They preserve compactness and contiguity. And they advance equal electoral opportunity for all residents.”

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