



# Remove Local Redistricting Commission Requirement from HJ615

## At-A-Glance

**House Legislation:**  
HJ615 (Cole)

**Senate Legislation:**  
SJ306 (Barker)

**Issue:**  
Redistricting commissions for state and local elections

**Cities and Towns Potentially Impacted:**  
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**Current GA Committee:**  
Senate Privileges and Elections

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## Issue Brief

**HJ615 (Cole): Constitutional amendment; apportionment, state and local redistricting commissions**

The House and Senate have each introduced resolutions to establish bipartisan redistricting commissions. The Senate version, SJ306 (Barker) addresses the State only. The House version, HJ615 (Cole) would require localities with district-based elections to establish commissions, adhering to the same requirements as that of the State.

## Concerns

HJ615 would introduce partisanship into otherwise nonpartisan local electoral processes and would undermine systems already in place that protect the rights of local voters. Most district-based electoral systems have been established in response to either Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act or the Department of Justice. This resolution also imposes timelines that could conflict with local election schedules.

Potentially Impacted Cities and Towns		
Alexandria*	Halifax*	Poquoson*
Berryville*	Hillsville*	Richmond*
Blackstone*	Hopewell*	South Hill*
Courtland*	Lawrenceville*	Suffolk*
Covington*	Lynchburg	Virginia Beach*
Emporia	Newport News*	Warrenton*
Farmville*	Norfolk*	Waynesboro*
Franklin*	Petersburg*	Winchester
Fredericksburg*		

*\*Indicates locality holds only nonpartisan elections.*

## Key Points

- The vast majority of cities and towns across Virginia have nonpartisan local government. Virginia is not unique in this regard: Nationwide, approximately 75 percent of municipalities have nonpartisan elections.
- There is not a partisan way of responding to public safety, street improvements, enforcing the codes, or taxation required for the various services that the state requires localities to offer (and pay for).
- HJ615 will unnaturally introduce partisanship into nonpartisan local activities.
- **VML opposes the imposition of partisanship and procedural mandates onto local elections by the State.**