

Bill's Seat – A Report from the North Carolina Legislature – July 10, 2011

By Representative Bill Faison

Every ten years there is a national census. N.C. Congressional, Senate and House Districts are redrawn based on where people live. There are 13 Congressional, 50 Senate and 120 House Districts. Each must have the same number of people. Almost 1.5 million more people live in N.C. than ten years ago. Most are located in urban areas, which mean that small towns and rural areas lose representatives to the urban areas.

The Congressional maps are published. The maps for the N.C. House and Senate were due weeks ago. The most recent missed self-imposed deadline of the Republican led Redistricting Committee for publishing House and Senate District maps was Monday of this week. By the time this article is printed the maps should be public. I have a good idea what is happening to our House District.

Our Congressional District: Northern Orange and Caswell have had different Congressmen. David Price has represented Orange for many years and Brad Miller has represented Caswell. Under the new proposed Congressional Districts Price could still represent Chapel Hill and Carrboro, but Northern Orange, Caswell, Northern Alamance, Northern Durham, Rockingham, Person, most of Granville, and some of Vance, Franklin and Wake would be in a new District that would not include where Miller now lives. A number of commentators have said the new district was created for the Senate's President Pro Tem's son. I am hoping someone from Orange or Caswell will step up and run for the seat.

A New House District For Caswell: Northern Orange and Caswell are currently paired. They are very similar with good solid folks who I enjoy representing. The plan is to separate them. Caswell would be clustered with part of Rockingham. The population for the new District would be about two thirds from Rockingham. Until the last redistricting Caswell and part of Rockingham shared a representative, so maybe this change is not too surprising even if disappointing.

Northern Orange House District: Northern Orange would remain the centerpiece of our House District. White Cross precinct in Orange would become a part of our District and Northern Durham would join us, replacing Caswell. Otherwise our District remains the same.

Surrounding Districts: The rest of Orange County would form a House District centered in Chapel Hill and Carrboro. Alamance County would still have two House seats although the lines may be adjusted within the County. Person County would be put in with the Southern half of Granville County to form a new District. The southern two-thirds of Durham County, which includes all of the City, would make up three House Districts.

What Next: The Redistricting Plan still has to pass the Legislature. The Legislature reconvenes this Thursday to take up the bill. I am told it will be put off until the end of the month.

Contact Me: I would really like to know what you think. Call me at 919-715-3019 or email me Bill.Faison@ncleg.net to share your thoughts.