

Initiatives 241 and 242: Congressional Redistricting

Placed on the ballot by citizen initiative • Passes with a majority vote

Initiatives 241 and 242 must both pass for either to take effect. Together, they propose amending the Colorado Constitution and Colorado statutes to:

- move the Colorado Independent Congressional Redistricting Commission from the Colorado Constitution to the state statutes without changing the role, process, or duties of the current commission; and
- establish temporary congressional districts for the 2028 and 2030 General Elections, with the intent of making more districts favorable for Democrats.

What Your Vote Means

YES

A “yes” vote on Initiatives 241 and 242 creates temporary congressional districts to be used for the 2028 and 2030 elections and moves the Colorado Independent Congressional Redistricting Commission from the Colorado Constitution to the state statutes.

NO

A “no” vote on either Initiative 241 or 242 keeps the state’s existing congressional districts in place through 2030 and keeps the Colorado Independent Congressional Redistricting Commission in the Colorado Constitution. If either measure does not pass, neither becomes law.

Summary and Analysis of Initiatives 241 and 242

What are congressional districts?

Colorado currently has eight congressional districts, which are regions of the state divided to be equal in population and meet other criteria. One person is elected from each of the eight districts to represent Colorado in the U.S. House of Representatives.

What is congressional redistricting?

Congressional redistricting is the process of dividing the state into voting districts of equal population. It usually occurs after a census, which is when all the people in the U.S. are counted every ten years. Using the state’s population of 5.8 million as of the 2020 census, the current required congressional district population size is 721,714 people.

How is redistricting done in Colorado?

In 2018, Colorado voters amended the Colorado Constitution to create the Colorado Independent Congressional Redistricting Commission (commission). Every ten years, a new commission is formed and is charged with using the population figures from the U.S. Census, specific legal criteria, and public input from around the state to draw eight congressional districts. The last commission met in 2021, and the next commission will meet and draw new districts in 2031.

What factors does the commission consider when drawing congressional districts?

The commission creates districts of equal population while attempting to meet certain criteria, including keeping districts compact and avoiding splitting counties, cities, or communities of interest. Once these criteria are met, the commission is also charged with creating politically competitive districts.

What does Initiative 241 do?

Initiative 241 removes the commission from the Colorado Constitution and reestablishes it in state statutes. The reestablished commission will have the same role, process, and duties as the current commission. Currently, changes to the commission require voter approval through a constitutional amendment. Moving the commission to state statutes allows changes to be made more easily by the state legislature or a citizen-initiated measure.

This measure also changes the judicial review of congressional district maps from the Colorado Supreme Court to the Denver District Court. Denver District Court decisions can be appealed to the Colorado Court of Appeals and the Colorado Supreme Court.

What does Initiative 242 do?

Initiative 242 establishes new congressional districts to be used for the 2028 and 2030 General Elections. Under this measure, the new districts would not need to be approved by the commission. The commission will create the districts to be used for the 2032 election and after, based on new population data from the 2030 U.S. Census.

The new districts proposed in Initiative 242 will take effect only if both this measure and Initiative 241 pass.

How does Initiative 242 change the current congressional district boundaries?

Initiative 242 modifies the existing congressional district boundaries. As a result, some parts of counties and cities are in a different district under Initiative 242. Relative to the current districts, the districts proposed in Initiative 242 divide more cities and counties. The total 2020 population of the eight districts remains equal.

Figure 1 shows a map of the state's current congressional districts. Figure 2 shows a map of the congressional districts proposed under Initiative 242.

Figure 1
Map of Current Congressional Districts

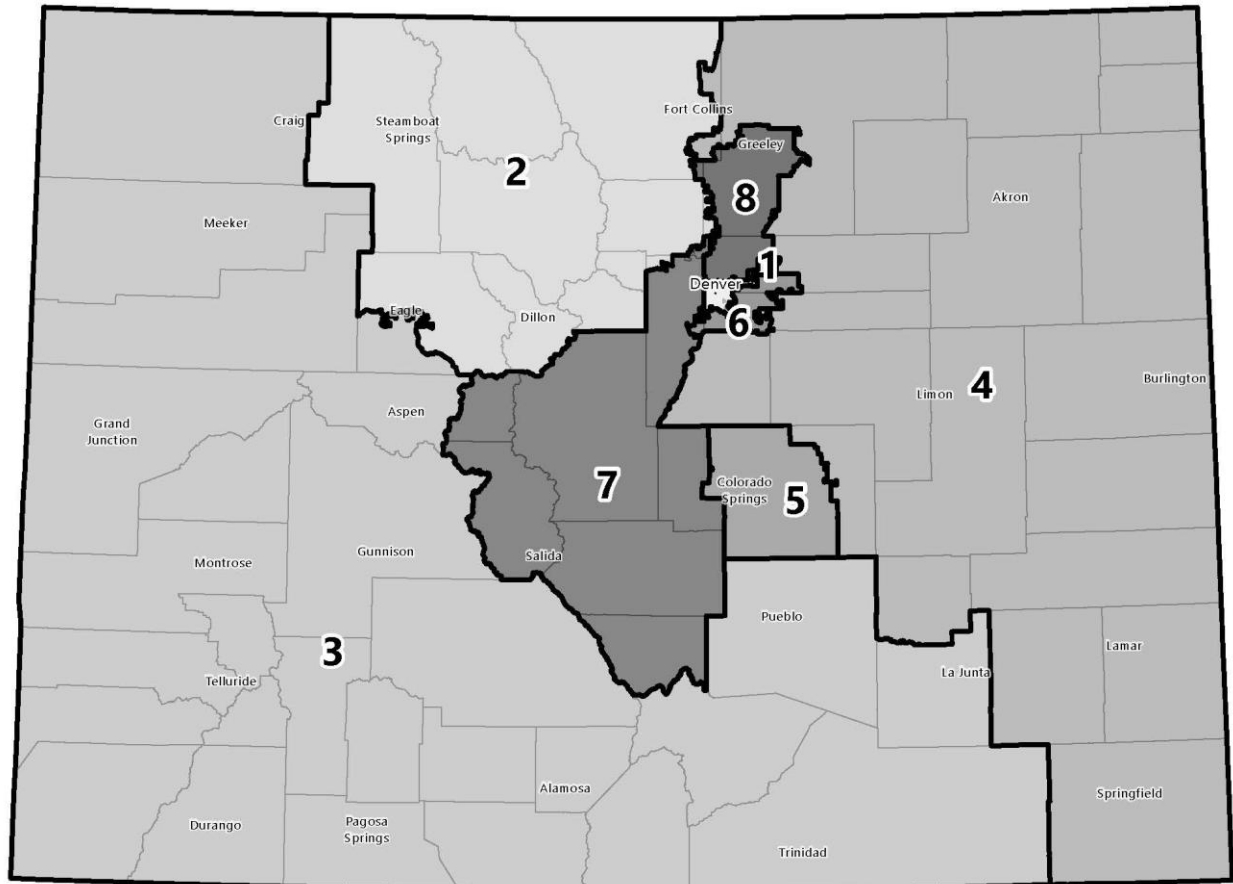
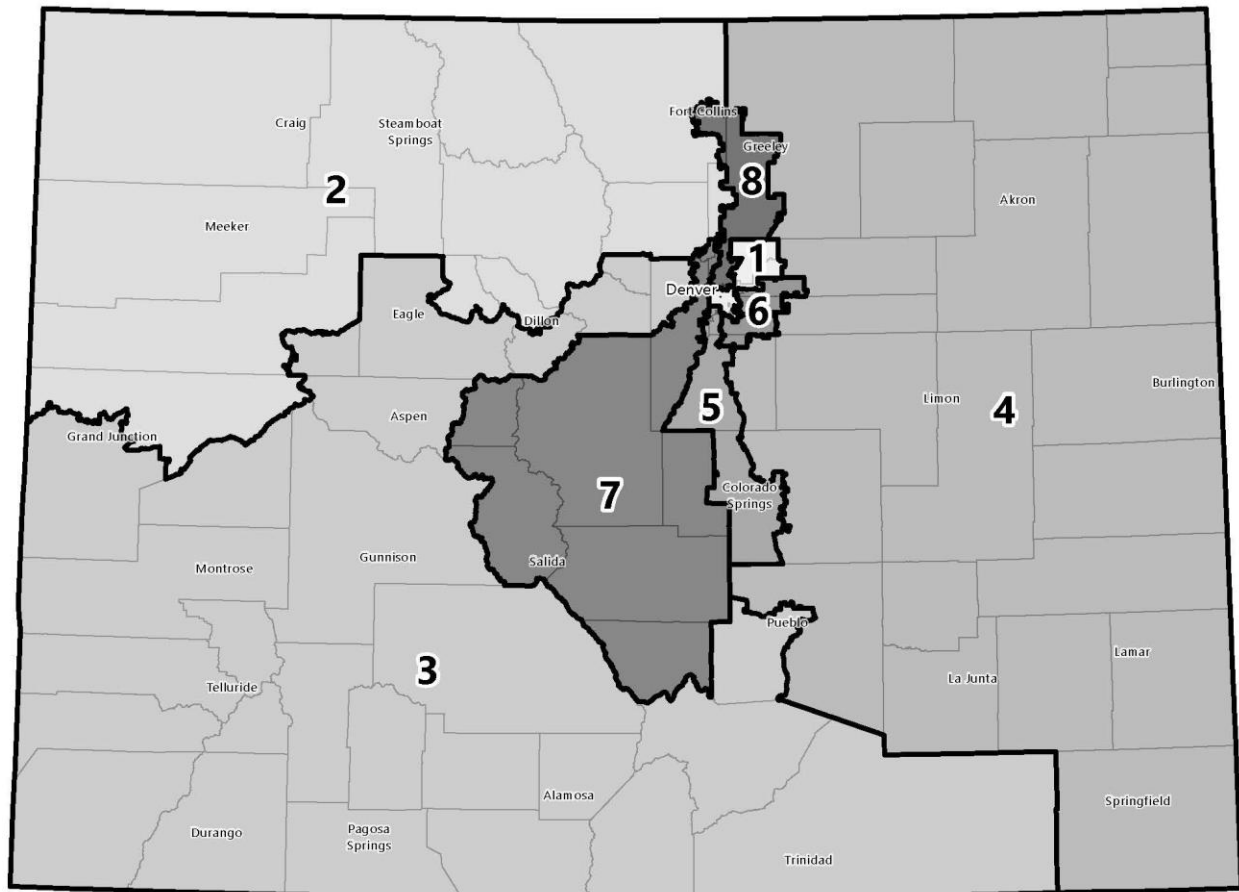


Figure 2
Map of Initiative 242 Congressional Districts



More detailed information about the district boundaries will be available online and included in a later draft.

How does Initiative 242 change the political lean of the congressional districts?

Political lean is based on a comparison between the number of votes for Democratic candidates and the number of votes for Republican candidates in past statewide elections. The political lean numbers in this analysis come from the average vote difference across statewide races since 2020, including the 2020 and 2024 U.S. Presidential elections, 2020 and 2022 U.S. Senate races, and the 2022 Colorado Governor, Secretary of State, Attorney General, and State Treasurer elections. For example, if the Democrats in an area got an average of 55% of votes and the Republicans got an average of 45%, the lean of that area is D+10%.

Table 1 shows the political lean of the current congressional districts and the proposed new congressional districts under Initiative 242.

Table 1
Political Lean of Current and Initiative 242 Congressional Districts

District	Political Lean of Current Districts	Political Lean of Initiative 242 Districts
1	Solid Democrat (D+57%)	Solid Democrat (D+51%)
2	Solid Democrat (D+34%)	Solid Democrat (D+17%)
3	Lean Republican (R+9%)	Competitive (D+3%)
4	Solid Republican (R+27%)	Solid Republican (R+38%)
5	Solid Republican (R+20%)	Competitive (Even)
6	Solid Democrat (D+15%)	Solid Democrat (D+15%)
7	Lean Democrat (D+7%)	Lean Democrat (D+7%)
8	Competitive (D+1%)	Solid Democrat (D+10%)

How do Initiatives 241 and 242 interact with Initiative 256?

Initiatives 241 and 242 only go into effect if they both pass. Neither measure will become law if only one of them passes. Initiative 256 reauthorizes the commission in the Colorado Constitution and adds a requirement for the commission to approve any congressional maps adopted outside of a redistricting year.

If all three measures pass, they may create overlapping or conflicting requirements and provisions of law. This may lead to uncertainty about which map is in effect for 2028 and 2030 and how various provisions in the measures will be implemented. The exact outcome is unclear and may ultimately be resolved in the courts.

Arguments For Initiatives 241 and 242

- 1) In a national effort to keep Democrats out of Congress, several states have recently changed their congressional districts outside the usual schedule. Colorado needs to ensure the state's values and voters are fairly represented in Congress. These measures achieve that with temporary districts that directly respond to the immediate problem and improve flexibility for the state to respond if similar issues arise in the future.
- 2) The Colorado legislature and all statewide offices are currently overwhelmingly controlled by Democrats. Despite that, the existing congressional districts have an equal number of Republicans and Democrats in the U.S. House of Representatives. The temporary districts in these measures help ensure that Colorado's congressional delegation accurately represents the state's current political climate.

Arguments Against Initiatives 241 and 242

- 1) Colorado has a voter-approved redistricting process that has been nationally recognized for creating districts that avoid unjust partisan bias, preserve voter trust, and ensure meaningful representation for communities throughout the state. That process is protected in the state

1 constitution so politicians cannot arbitrarily change it, which is exactly what these measures
2 would do.

- 3 2) This initiative creates biased districts that are clearly designed to limit Republican voices in
4 Colorado politics. Voters can choose the candidates they want to elect, and they should
5 reject partisan attempts to shape district maps. Coloradans were clear in 2018 that they do
6 not want partisan redistricting, and these measures are an effort to reintroduce that to the
7 state.

8 Information about the organizations supporting and opposing this measure is
9 available on the Colorado Secretary of State's website:

10 www.coloradosos.gov/pubs/elections/Initiatives/ballot/contacts/2026.html

11 **Fiscal Impact of Initiatives 241 and 242**

12 The fiscal impact will be included in the second draft.