

Election Data Service

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Four States Affected by New Census Bureau Estimates

An analysis of new state population estimates for 1998 released today by the Census Bureau shows that four state's allocation of Congressional seats would be changed from last year's estimates. The states of **Arizona** and **Illinois** would each gain a seat compared to the 1997 population estimates, with Arizona's additional seat actually being the second seat they are anticipated to gain since the 1990 Census. The states of **New York** and **Pennsylvania** are now showing that they would each be losing a second congressional seat if the Congress were reapportioned on the basis of these new estimates.

When compared to the reapportionment that followed the 1990 Census, 14 states would have the size of their congressional delegations changed based on the new 1998 estimates as nine congressional seats shift around the nation. States that would gain a congressional seat would be **Arizona (+2), California, Florida, Georgia, Montana, Nevada,** and **Texas (+2)**. States that would loose a seat under the new estimates are **Connecticut, Mississippi, New York (-2), Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania (-2),** and **Wisconsin.**

The Census Bureau's new state populations (called "estimates") reflect the number of persons in each state as of July 1, 1998, **not** the number of persons that is anticipated on Census day in 2000 (called "projections"). The last time the Census Bureau released state projections for 2000 was in October, 1996. Earlier plans to produce new projections in 1999 have apparently been put on hold by the Census Bureau.

Illinois's ability to stay even in the apportionment process is probably the most startling find in the new 1998 study. It reverses previous studies, i.e., last year's study showed the state scheduled to loose a district. The new 1998 numbers show the state actually received the last district to be handed out under the apportionment process (number 435), with just 33,368 people to spare. "This is not a guarantee that the state can

avoid losing a seat,” said Election Data Services, Inc. President Kimball Brace. “But it indicates a heightened need for all states to seek a full and complete count in the 2000 census process, especially if your state is like Illinois and on the border of gaining or losing a congressional district,” he said.

The loss of an additional seat by both **New York** and **Pennsylvania** is another shocker in the new study. The 1997 study had indicated that both states were holding onto their last seats with more than 115,000 people to spare. The stagnant growth or actual population loss (as in the case of Pennsylvania) shown in the 1998 population estimates placed these two states at the wrong side of the finish line. **New York** would have received seat number 436, while **Pennsylvania** came in with seat number 437 in this new study, each state missing their last seat by less than 50,000 people.

California’s hold onto an additional congressional seat appears to be cemented with the new population data from the Census Bureau. The new district is allocated seat number 433 in the new study, an improvement from the 1997 study that had placed it at the very end of the line, the state being allocated the 435th and last seat distributed in the apportionment process. The gain of a congressional seat by **California** reverses a trend noted earlier in the decade of stagnant population growth in the state. Earlier Election Data Services, Inc. studies of Census numbers indicated that California might have been held to no increases in their delegation for the first time since 1850.

The Election Data Services, Inc study using the 1998 Census estimates also reveals that **Montana’s** regaining of their second congressional seat that was lost following the 1990 Census is becoming more and more tenuous. The state’s second seat was received with only 9,014 people to spare according to the new study (compared to 15,382 people to spare in the 1997 study), and it dropped from seat number 427 in 1996 to seat number 430 in 1997 and finally to seat number 432 in 1998 (out of a possible 435 seats).

The new 1998 study also indicated that a number of states had just missed the mark. Besides **New York** and **Pennsylvania**, the states of **Wisconsin**, **Mississippi**, **Colorado**, **Georgia** and **Oklahoma** just missed gaining an additional seat or lost their last seat by less than 75,000 people each. In the case of **Mississippi**, just 11,295 more people would have prevented the state from losing one of their existing congressional seats. All of these states are close enough to the last seat given out in the apportionment process that their actions to promote a full count in the remaining two years before the actual Census will determine their fate.

The 1998 data shows that the Census Bureau’s last state population projections for the year 2000 (released in October of 1996) are already out of date. Studies performed by Election Data Services, Inc. at the time on those data indicated that, for example, California was not projected to gain an additional seat by the year 2000. The 2000 projections had predicted that **Arizona**, **Georgia**, and **Texas** would each gain two seats by the end of the decade, while **Colorado**, **Florida**, **Montana**, **Nevada**, and **Utah** would each gain one seat. The losses in that study were concentrated in **New York** and

Pennsylvania (two seats from each state), and single seat losses in **Connecticut, Illinois, Michigan, Mississippi, Ohio, Oklahoma,** and **Wisconsin**.

The new 1998 study indicates that **Georgia** is not quite at the stage of gaining their anticipated second new seat, but that they missed the opportunity by only 75,514 people. They currently hold seat number 441 in the new study, a jump from seat number 447 in the 1996 study. **Utah** missed gaining an additional seat in the 1998 study by just 40,753 people, although it was slotted as seat number 447.

Colorado is in a similar situation to **Georgia** and **Utah**, in that the “Centennial State” missed gaining its anticipated new seat by just 33,558 people (down from the 90,429 people it was short in the 1997 study. **Colorado** also jumped in the ordering of seats, moving from 444 in the 1997 study to number 440 in the new study.

The Census Bureau’s new 1998 study noted that population growth in the western states has slowed in the last year as not as many people were leaving California for other western states. That could harbor a warning for these other western states that the apportionment process could change by the time the final Census is taken in 2000.

The Election Data Services, Inc. new 1998 study also harbors a warning for the state of **Indiana**. While that state still retains 10 congressional seats in the new study, their last seat was received with only 53,405 people to spare and is seat number 434 (the second to last seat apportioned in the process). The 1997 study showed the state holding its last seat with a margin of just over 70,000 people at position 431.

The new 1998 Census data poses a challenge to the state of **Michigan** in their attempt to avoid loss of a congressional seat. Michigan’s 16th and last congressional seat was gained in the new study with 271,106 people to spare, down from the 313,538 margin noted in the 1997 study. A continued population slide in the last two years of the decade was anticipated in the Census Bureau’s projection study in 1996. Whether that comes true will determine the final size of the Michigan delegation.

The apportionment analysis by Election Data Services, Inc. is based on the new state-level population estimates released today by the U.S. Census Bureau. These data are two years short of when the Census will be actually taken, do not include federal employees abroad (e.g., military personnel) and are not adjusted for any known census undercount or sampling process. The U.S. Supreme Court is currently considering the appropriateness of using sampling procedures in the upcoming 2000 census, and a decision is anticipated before the end of their term. The U.S. Congress will again debate the issue in late spring of 1999, because the Census Bureau’s appropriations only continue to June 15, 1999

Election Data Services, Inc. is a Washington, D.C.-based consulting firm that specializes in redistricting, election administration, and the analysis of census and political data. A copy of the current apportionment analysis is attached. A full copy of

the study can be found on our web site (www.electiondataservices.com) or by calling (202) 789-2004.

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