

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 4125

To establish the total number of Representatives at a number that provides that the average number of constituents represented by a Member from any State is equal to 500,000 and to apportion Representatives among the States accordingly, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 25, 2025

Mr. CASTEN introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committees on House Administration, and Transportation and Infrastructure, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To establish the total number of Representatives at a number that provides that the average number of constituents represented by a Member from any State is equal to 500,000 and to apportion Representatives among the States accordingly, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; FINDINGS.**

4 (a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the
5 “Equal Voices Act”.

1 (b) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

2 (1) Our Nation’s founders intended the House
3 of Representatives to be the chamber closest to the
4 American people: “the People’s House”.

5 (2) The number of Representatives in Congress
6 has been 435 since 1911 when the U.S. population
7 was 92,228,531 (1910 U.S. Census). The U.S. pop-
8 ulation has grown to more than three times that size
9 to 331,449,281 in 2020 (2020 U.S. Census) while
10 the size of the House has remained the same.

11 (3) Our electorate has changed significantly
12 since the size of the House last grew in 1911. Prior
13 to the passage of the 19th Amendment in 1920, the
14 Civil Rights Act in 1957, and the Voting Rights Act
15 in 1965, women and people of color faced barriers
16 and in some cases, legal prohibitions, to voting.

17 (4) When the cap on the size of the House was
18 statutorily set in 1929, the average Member of the
19 House represented approximately 280,000 people,
20 compared to approximately 762,000 people in 2020.

21 (5) Based on the 2020 Census, individuals in
22 the State with the smallest population, Wyoming,
23 had 1.3x more relative representation compared to
24 the national average district size.

1 (6) Each Member of the House represents far
 2 more people on average than legislators in nearly all
 3 developed and developing democracies, and is an
 4 outlier among other member countries of the Orga-
 5 nization for Economic Cooperation and Development
 6 (OECD), with nearly 3 times the citizen to rep-
 7 resentative ratio as Japan, the country with next
 8 largest district size.

9 (7) Representatives who serve fewer people are
 10 more likely to have contact with their constituents,
 11 receive higher marks for their constituent service,
 12 and better reflect the views of their districts.

13 **SEC. 2. ESTABLISHMENT OF NUMBER OF MEMBERS OF THE**
 14 **HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.**

15 (a) METHOD FOR DETERMINATION OF NUMBER.—
 16 Section 22(a) of the Act entitled “An Act to provide for
 17 the fifteenth and subsequent decennial census and to pro-
 18 vide for apportionment of Representatives in Congress”,
 19 approved June 18, 1929 (2 U.S.C. 2a(a)), is amended—

20 (1) by striking “(a) On the first day” and in-
 21 serting “(a)(1) On the first day”;

22 (2) by striking “the then existing number of
 23 Representatives” and inserting “the number of Rep-
 24 resentatives determined under paragraph (2)”; and

1 (3) by adding at the end the following new
2 paragraph:

3 “(2) The number of Representatives determined
4 under this paragraph is, with respect to a regular decen-
5 nial census of the population of the United States, a num-
6 ber equal to—

7 “(A) the whole number of persons in all States
8 (as shown in the statement under paragraph (1));
9 divided by

10 “(B) 500,000,
11 rounded to the nearest whole odd number.”.

12 (b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The first section
13 and section 2 of the Act entitled “An Act For the appor-
14 tionment of Representatives in Congress among the sev-
15 eral States under the Thirteenth Census”, approved Au-
16 gust 8, 1911 (2 U.S.C. 2 note), are repealed.

17 (c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by
18 this section shall apply with respect to the first regular
19 decennial census conducted after the date of the enact-
20 ment of this Act and each subsequent decennial census.

21 **SEC. 3. OPTIONAL USE OF MULTI-MEMBER DISTRICTS.**

22 (a) OPTIONAL USE OF MULTI-MEMBER DIS-
23 TRICTS.—

24 (1) IN GENERAL.—At its option, a State may
25 establish a number of districts for the election of

1 Representatives in Congress in the State that is less
2 than the number of Representatives to which the
3 State is entitled, and may establish that Representa-
4 tives shall be elected only from districts so estab-
5 lished.

6 (2) EQUAL POPULATION PER REPRESENTA-
7 TIVE.—In establishing the number of districts under
8 paragraph (1), the State shall ensure that districts
9 shall each have equal population per Representative
10 as nearly as practicable, in accordance with the Con-
11 stitution of the United States.

12 (3) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The Act enti-
13 tled “An Act for the relief of Doctor Ricardo Vallejo
14 Samala and to provide for congressional redis-
15 tricting”, approved December 14, 1967 (2 U.S.C.
16 2c), is amended by striking “In each State” and in-
17 serting “Except as provided in section 2(b) of the
18 Equal Voices Act, in each State”.

19 (b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section and the amend-
20 ments made by this section shall apply with respect to the
21 first regular decennial census conducted after the date of
22 the enactment of this Act and each subsequent decennial
23 census.

1 **SEC. 4. OPTIONAL USE OF RANKED CHOICE VOTING BY**
2 **STATES OPTING TO USE MULTI-MEMBER DIS-**
3 **TRICTS.**

4 (a) OPTIONAL USE OF RANKED CHOICE VOTING.—
5 At its option, a State which establishes multi-Member dis-
6 tricts for the election of Representatives in Congress in
7 the State under section 3 may carry out such elections
8 in the State under ranked choice voting as described in
9 subsection (c).

10 (b) BALLOT DESIGN.—

11 (1) IN GENERAL.—Each State shall ensure that
12 the ballot used in an ranked choice voting election
13 under this section meets each of the following re-
14 quirements:

15 (A) The ballot shall allow voters to rank
16 candidates in order of choice.

17 (B) The number of candidates whom a
18 voter may rank in the election, as determined
19 under paragraph (2), shall be uniform for all
20 voters in the election within the State.

21 (C) The ballot shall include all qualified
22 candidates for the election and (to the extent
23 permitted under State law) options for voters to
24 select write-in candidates.

25 (D) The ballot shall include such instruc-
26 tions as the State considers necessary to enable

1 the voter to rank candidates and successfully
2 cast the ballot under the system.

3 (2) DETERMINATION OF NUMBER OF CAN-
4 DIDATES VOTER MAY RANK.—The number of can-
5 didates a voter may rank in a ranked choice voting
6 election shall be determined as follows:

7 (A) If feasible, the ballot shall permit vot-
8 ers to rank a number of candidates in the elec-
9 tion which is not fewer than the number of
10 seats in the election plus 4.

11 (B) If the number of candidates in the
12 election is less than the number of ranking pro-
13 vided under subparagraph (A), the ballot shall
14 permit voters to rank a number of candidates
15 which is not fewer than the number of can-
16 didates in the election, including write-in can-
17 didates.

18 (C) If it is not feasible for the ballot to
19 permit voters to rank as many candidates as re-
20 quired under subparagraph (A) or (B), the
21 State may limit the number of candidates who
22 may be ranked for each election on the ballot
23 to a maximum feasible number established by
24 the State, except that such number may not be
25 less than 5 for any election on the ballot.

1 (c) TABULATION.—

2 (1) PROCESS FOR TABULATION.—In a ranked
3 choice voting election under this section, each ballot
4 cast in the election shall count at its current trans-
5 fer value for the highest-ranked active candidate on
6 the ballot. Tabulation shall proceed as described in
7 paragraphs (2), (3), and (4).

8 (2) ELECTION OF CANDIDATES DURING TAB-
9 ULATION; SURPLUS-TRANSFER ROUND.—If any ac-
10 tive candidate has a number of votes greater than or
11 equal to the election threshold, that candidate shall
12 be designated as elected, and the surplus votes shall
13 be transferred to other candidates as follows:

14 (A) Unless paragraph (4) applies, each bal-
15 lot counting for an elected candidate shall be
16 assigned a new transfer value by multiplying
17 the ballot's current transfer value by the sur-
18 plus fraction for the elected candidate, trun-
19 cated after 4 decimal places.

20 (B) Each candidate elected under this
21 paragraph shall be deemed to have a number of
22 votes equal to the election threshold for the con-
23 test in all future rounds, each ballot counting
24 towards the elected candidate shall be trans-
25 ferred at its new transfer value to its next-

1 ranked active candidate, and a new round shall
2 begin.

3 (C) If two or more candidates have a num-
4 ber of votes greater than the election threshold,
5 the surpluses shall be distributed simulta-
6 neously in the same round.

7 (3) ELIMINATION OF CANDIDATES DURING TAB-
8 ULATION; ELIMINATION ROUND.—Unless paragraph
9 (2) or paragraph (4) applies, the active candidate
10 with the fewest votes is eliminated, each vote cast on
11 a ballot for the eliminated candidate shall be count-
12 ed for the next-ranked active candidate on the ballot,
13 and a new round shall begin.

14 (4) COMPLETION OF TABULATION.—Tabulation
15 in the election is complete if—

16 (A) the number of elected candidates is
17 equal to the number of seats to be filled and
18 any remaining votes in excess of the election
19 threshold have been counted for each ballot's
20 next-ranked active candidate; or

21 (B) the sum of the number of elected can-
22 didates and the number of active candidates is
23 less than or equal to the number of seats to be
24 filled at any time.

25 (d) TREATMENT OF CERTAIN BALLOTS.—

1 (1) TREATMENT OF UNDERVOTES.—A ballot
2 which is an undervote shall not be counted in any
3 round of tabulation of ballots in an election under
4 this section. For purposes of this paragraph, an
5 “undervote” is a ballot for which the voter does not
6 rank any of the candidates in the election.

7 (2) TREATMENT OF INACTIVE BALLOTS.—

8 (A) IN GENERAL.—A ballot which becomes
9 an inactive ballot shall no longer count for any
10 candidate for the remainder of the tabulation of
11 ballots in an election under this section after
12 the ballot becomes inactive.

13 (B) INACTIVE BALLOT DEFINED.—For
14 purposes of this paragraph, an “inactive ballot”
15 is a ballot on which—

16 (i) all of the ranked candidates on the
17 ballot have become inactive; or

18 (ii) the voter ranks more than one
19 candidate at the same ranking and all can-
20 didates at a higher ranking have become
21 inactive.

22 (3) TREATMENT OF SKIPPED OR REPEATED
23 RANKINGS.—

24 (A) IN GENERAL.—A ballot which includes
25 any skipped or repeated ranking shall remain

1 active and continue to be counted for the high-
2 est-ranked active candidate in an election under
3 this section.

4 (B) SKIPPED AND REPEATED RANKINGS
5 DEFINED.—For purposes of this paragraph—

6 (i) a “skipped ranking” is a ranking
7 a voter does not assign to any candidate
8 while assigning a subsequent ranking to a
9 candidate; and

10 (ii) a “repeated ranking” is a ranking
11 for which the voter has assigned the same
12 candidate that the voter assigned to an-
13 other ranking.

14 (e) TREATMENT OF TIES BETWEEN CANDIDATES.—

15 (1) RESOLUTION BY LOT.—If a tie occurs be-
16 tween candidates with the greatest number of votes
17 or the fewest number of votes at any point in the
18 tabulation of ballots under this part and the tabula-
19 tion cannot proceed until the tie is resolved, the tie
20 shall be resolved by lot or by such other method as
21 may be provided under State law.

22 (2) RESOLUTION PRIOR TO TABULATION.—
23 Prior to tabulation, the chief election official of the
24 State may resolve prospective ties between can-

1 didates by lot or according to the method provided
2 under State law, as described in subsection (a).

3 (3) USE DURING RECOUNT.—The result of the
4 resolution of any tie shall be recorded and reused for
5 purposes of any recount under State law.

6 (f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section, the following defi-
7 nitions apply:

8 (1) The term “active candidate” means, with
9 respect to any round of tabulation under this part,
10 a candidate who has not been elected or eliminated,
11 and who is not a withdrawn candidate.

12 (2) The term “election threshold” means the
13 number of votes sufficient for a candidate to be
14 elected in a multi-seat election. Such number is
15 equal to the total votes counted for active candidates
16 in the first round of tabulation, divided by the sum
17 of one plus the number of seats to be filled, then in-
18 creased by one, disregarding any fractions.

19 (3) The term “highest-ranked active candidate”
20 means the active candidate assigned to a higher
21 ranking than any other active candidate.

22 (4) The term “multi-seat election” means any
23 primary election in which more than one candidate
24 in the primary election will advance to the general
25 election, any special election for more than one seat,

1 and any general election in which more than one
2 Representative is elected at large or in a multi-mem-
3 ber district.

4 (5) The term “ranking” means the number
5 available to be assigned by a voter to a candidate to
6 express the voter’s choice for that candidate, with
7 “1” as the highest ranking and each succeeding
8 positive number as the next highest ranking.

9 (6) The term “surplus fraction” means, with
10 respect to an elected candidate as described in sub-
11 section (c), the number obtained by subtracting the
12 election threshold from the candidate’s vote total,
13 then dividing that number by the candidate’s vote
14 total, truncated after four decimal places.

15 (7) The term “transfer value” means the pro-
16 portion of a vote that a ballot will contribute to its
17 highest-ranked active candidate. Each ballot begins
18 with a transfer value of 1. If a ballot contributes to
19 the election of a candidate under subsection (c), the
20 transfer value shall be the new transfer value as-
21 signed under such subsection.

22 (8) The term “vote total” means, with respect
23 to a candidate in a round of counting, the total
24 transfer value of all ballots counting for the can-
25 didate in the round.

1 (9) The term “withdrawn candidate” means a
 2 candidate who, prior to the date of the election, files
 3 or has an authorized designee file a signed letter of
 4 withdrawal from the election, in accordance with
 5 such rules as the chief election official of the State
 6 may establish.

7 **SEC. 5. COMMISSION TO RECOMMEND NUMBER OF MEM-**
 8 **BERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**
 9 **IN EVENT OF SIGNIFICANT POPULATION**
 10 **CHANGE.**

11 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—If, with respect to a regular
 12 decennial census of the population of the United States,
 13 the number of Representatives determined under section
 14 22(a) of the Act entitled “An Act to provide for the fif-
 15 teenth and subsequent decennial census and to provide for
 16 apportionment of Representatives in Congress”, approved
 17 June 18, 1929 (2 U.S.C. 2a(a)), as amended by section
 18 2(a), is 15 percent greater or lesser than the number of
 19 Representatives determined under such section with re-
 20 spect to the previous regular decennial census, there shall
 21 be established in Congress a commission to carry out the
 22 duties described in subsection (d) with respect to the ap-
 23 portionment of Representatives resulting from that cen-
 24 sus.

25 (b) MEMBERSHIP.—

1 (1) APPOINTMENT.—A commission established
2 under this section shall consist of 15 members ap-
3 pointed as follows:

4 (A) 5 members appointed by the Speaker
5 of the House of Representatives.

6 (B) 5 members appointed by the minority
7 leader of the House of Representatives.

8 (C) 2 members appointed by the majority
9 leader of the Senate.

10 (D) 2 members appointed by the minority
11 leader of the Senate.

12 (E) One member who shall serve as the
13 Chair of the Commission, who shall be ap-
14 pointed by the vote of a majority of the other
15 members, of whom—

16 (i) at least 2 shall be members ap-
17 pointed by the Speaker of the House of
18 Representatives;

19 (ii) at least 2 shall be members ap-
20 pointed by the minority leader of the
21 House of Representatives;

22 (iii) at least one shall be one of the
23 members appointed by the majority leader
24 of the Senate; and

1 (iv) at least one shall be one of the
2 members appointed by the minority leader
3 of the Senate.

4 (2) DEADLINE FOR APPOINTMENT.—The ap-
5 pointing authorities under paragraph (1) shall ap-
6 point the members of the commission not later than
7 30 days after the President transmits to Congress
8 the statement showing the number of Representa-
9 tives to which each State is entitled under section
10 22(a) of the Act entitled “An Act to provide for the
11 fifteenth and subsequent decennial census and to
12 provide for apportionment of Representatives in
13 Congress”, approved June 18, 1929 (2 U.S.C.
14 2a(a)), as amended by section 2(a).

15 (3) QUALIFICATIONS.—In appointing members
16 of the commission, the appointing authorities under
17 paragraph (1) shall prioritize the appointment of in-
18 dividuals who are qualified to assess the appropriate
19 number of Members of the House of Representatives
20 because of their expertise or study of politics, gov-
21 ernment, and related fields, and their demonstrated
22 ability to work in a nonpartisan manner.

23 (4) VACANCY.—A vacancy in the commission
24 shall be filled in the same manner as the original ap-
25 pointment was made.

1 (5) COMPENSATION.—Members of the commis-
2 sion—

3 (A) shall be paid the daily equivalent of
4 the annual rate of basic pay payable for level V
5 of the Executive Schedule for each day (includ-
6 ing travel time) during which the member is en-
7 gaged in the actual performance of duties vest-
8 ed in the commission; and

9 (B) shall receive travel expenses, including
10 per diem in lieu of subsistence, in accordance
11 with applicable provisions under subchapter I of
12 chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code.

13 (c) STAFF.—

14 (1) AUTHORITY TO APPOINT STAFF.—The chair
15 of the commission may appoint, prescribe the duties
16 and responsibilities of, and fix the pay of such staff
17 as the chair considers appropriate to assist the com-
18 mission in carrying out its duties, without regard to
19 the provisions of title 5, United States Code, gov-
20 erning appointments in the competitive service, and
21 without regard to the provisions of chapter 51 and
22 subchapter III of chapter 53 of such title relating to
23 classification and General Schedule pay rates, except
24 that no rate of pay fixed under this paragraph may

1 exceed the rate of pay for a member of the commis-
2 sion.

3 (2) EXPERTS AND CONSULTANTS.—Section
4 202(i) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946
5 (2 U.S.C. 4301(i)) shall apply with respect to the
6 commission in the same manner as such section ap-
7 plies with respect to a standing committee of the
8 Senate.

9 (d) DUTIES.—With respect to a regular decennial
10 census, the commission shall carry out the following du-
11 ties:

12 (1) Analyzing the shifts in population among
13 the States.

14 (2) Analyzing how the application of section
15 22(a)(2) of the Act entitled “An Act to provide for
16 the fifteenth and subsequent decennial census and to
17 provide for apportionment of Representatives in
18 Congress”, approved June 18, 1929 (2 U.S.C.
19 2a(a)(2)), as added by section 2(a), will affect the
20 ability of the House of Representatives to carry out
21 its responsibilities in an effective manner.

22 (3) Recommending the optimal number of
23 Members of the House and the optimal apportion-
24 ment of Members among the States, taking into ac-
25 count—

1 (A) shifts in population among the States;

2 (B) the need to reduce disparities in the
3 size of congressional districts; and

4 (C) the need to ensure that historically
5 under represented populations are not
6 disenfranchised.

7 (e) POWERS.—

8 (1) HEARINGS AND OTHER ACTIVITIES.—For
9 the purpose of carrying out its duties, the commis-
10 sion may hold such hearings and undertake such
11 other activities as the commission determines to be
12 necessary to carry out its duties.

13 (2) AUTHORITY TO USE SUBPOENAS.—The
14 commission may require by subpoena the attendance
15 of such witnesses and the production of such books,
16 papers, and documents, as it considers appropriate.

17 (3) ACCESS TO LEGISLATIVE BRANCH SERV-
18 ICES.—The commission shall have access to the
19 services of the Architect of the Capitol, the Govern-
20 ment Accountability Office, the Congressional Budg-
21 et Office, and the Congressional Research Service in
22 the same manner and under the same terms and
23 conditions as any standing committee of the House
24 of Representatives or Senate.

1 (f) REPORT.—The commission shall submit a report
2 to Congress containing its recommendations under sub-
3 section (d)(3) not later than 6 months after the publica-
4 tion of the regular decennial census of the population of
5 the United States.

6 (g) TERMINATION.—A commission established under
7 this section shall terminate 30 days after submitting the
8 report under subsection (f).

9 (h) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall apply with
10 respect to the second regular decennial census conducted
11 after the date of the enactment of this Act and each subse-
12 quent decennial census.

13 **SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS FOR PROVI-**
14 **SION OF ADDITIONAL SPACE, FACILITIES,**
15 **PERSONNEL, AND RESOURCES.**

16 There are authorized to be appropriated to the House
17 of Representatives and the Architect of the Capitol for the
18 fiscal year in which this Act is enacted and each suc-
19 ceeding fiscal year such sums as may be necessary to pro-
20 vide for any additional space, facilities, personnel, and
21 other resources for the House which may be required as
22 the result of the enactment of this Act.

