

STATE AND LOCAL

Census shows population trends

Texas may get more seats in Congress

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Texas could get from two to five new seats in Congress after the 1990 census, possibly surpassing New York, according to projections of reapportionment based on population trends.

The American Federal of State, County and Municipal Employees used U.S. Census Bureau data and a system of "equal proportions" to project how the 435 seats in the U.S. House of Representatives would be divided in 1991.

Congressional seats are reapportioned every 10 years after the census.

"The AFSCME calculations show that the big gainers will be California, Texas and Florida; the chief losers — New York and Michigan," the group said.

Another study by the Congressional Research Service at the Library of Congress also predicted that population would continue shifting from the Northeast and Midwest to the South and West.

Using data from the Census Bureau, Bureau of Economic Analysis and the National Planning Association, CRS predicted Texas would gain two to four seats in Congress.

AFSCME predicted that Texas would get five more seats for 32 while New York and Michigan would lose three each.

That would put Texas ahead of New York and in second place in the number of House seats. California would remain first by also gaining five seats for a total of 50.

CRS, which gave ranges for most states, said New York could lose two to five seats and California could gain two to four.

States that would gain seats under either of the projections were Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, Oregon, Texas, Utah, Virginia and Washington.

Those that would lose seats were Connecticut, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania and West Virginia. CRS analyst David C. Huckabee issued a caution with his figures.

"The apportionment formula is sensitive to minute population shifts," he said. "Adding or subtracting a small number of people from a state's population can make a difference in whether or

Projected changes

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Here is a list of states projected to gain or lose seats in the U.S. House of Representatives after the 1990 census, according to two separate studies, one by the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, and the other by the Congressional Research Service. The AFSCME figure is listed first, followed by the CRS projection. The number of seats the state currently holds is in parentheses.

Gain seats:

Alabama — 0; 1 (7).
Arizona — 1; 1 (5).
Arkansas — 0; 1 (4).
California — 5; 2-4 (45).
Colorado — 0; 1 (6).

Florida — 3; 1 (19).
Georgia — 1; 1 (10).
North Carolina — 0; 1 (11).
Oregon — 0; 1 (5).
Texas — 5; 2-4 (27).
Utah — 0; 1 (3).
Virginia — 1; 0 (10).
Washington — 0; 1 (8).

Lose seats:

Connecticut — 0; 1 (6).
Illinois — 2; 1-2 (22).
Iowa — 0; 1 (6).
Kansas — 1; 1 (5).
Massachusetts — 1; 1 (11).
Michigan — 3; 1-2 (18).
New Jersey — 0; 1 (14).
New York — 3; 2-5 (34).
Ohio — 2; 1-2 (21).
Pennsylvania — 2; 1-3 (23).
West Virginia — 1; 1 (4).

not a seat is assigned to that state."

The GOP says it would benefit from increased population in the more conservative Sunbelt, but Democrats say many voters who move to the Sunbelt may take their Democratic preferences with them.

It is difficult to project where

any new seats would be located within the state, because the Legislature draws the new boundaries, a process that has been fraught with allegations of partisan fanagling.

Dispute over Texas' 1980 reapportionment plan had to be settled by a panel of federal judges.

Public asking for seats in plane's rear

Associated Press

DALLAS — Increasing numbers of non-smokers are taking a deep breath and asking for seats in the back of the plane in the aftermath of two commercial airline crashes, travel agents say.

Travel agents said that since the Delta Air Lines Flight 191 crash Aug. 2 at Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport, requests for smoking section seating in the rear of the plane have jumped as much as 50 percent.

"Some people . . . are changing to the smoking" section in the rear, said Linda Harrison, manager of Gardner Travel Service in Fort Worth.

She said smoking section requests are up 10 percent to 20 percent.

But some agents predict the rear-seat requests may be shortlived.

Experts differ on whether seats in the rear of a plane are safer in a crash. The Federal Aviation Administration keeps no statistics on safe seat locations.

Some places on airplanes are stronger than others, Packman said. Seats over the wings and seats behind galleys or partitions may offer extra protection, he said.

Other seats provide quicker escape. Packman said he chooses an aisle seat because he wants immediate access to exits. But seat selection is rarely a sure bet, he said.

Rescue workers react to ordeal

Psychologist Al Somodevilla says many of the rescue workers who worked at the crash in Dallas are suffering from nightmares, flashbacks, sleepless nights and a lack of concentration because they had to remove the bodies of those who did not manage to escape.

Psychologist Somodevilla says he has talked to about 125 people about their experiences since the Aug. 2 crash.

Somodevilla, who conducted a debriefing session for Dallas County sheriff's office employees Tuesday,

said the officers have not been able to shrug off their experiences.

Somodevilla said the experience was so frustrating for many of the paramedics and volunteers because they are used to saving lives, not collecting the dead.

In an attempt to explain the futility of some of the efforts, he described what one officer told him:

"There was the mangled, badly burned body of a woman. She was obviously dead. But her hair was intact and was entangled in this piece of metal (part of the plane). This guy was untangling her hairs one by one. One guy pulled out a knife and said, 'Let's cut it.' And (the other guy) said, 'No, you might hurt her.'"

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