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'Contentious' redistricting session of Louisiana Legislature likely to begin in March

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The **Legislature** has tentatively blocked off a three-week period near the end of March for a special session to redraw the state's congressional, legislative and judicial district boundaries.



House Speaker Jim Tucker

House Speaker Jim Tucker, R-Algiers, said he informed Gov. **Bobby Jindal** last week that lawmakers plan to take the rare step of calling themselves into session, rather than waiting for the governor to do so. Earlier plans had called for a two-week session, but Tucker said he wants to set aside three weeks for a task that few around the Capitol are looking forward to.

"This is going to be an extraordinarily contentious deal," Tucker said. "We want to give ourselves plenty of time so we're not playing against the clock." While **official census data** won't be available until February, Louisiana is almost certain to lose one of its seven seats in the U.S. House of Representatives, and the New Orleans delegation in the state Legislature will likely shrink as a result

of Katrina-related population loss. The House and Senate redistricting committees has planned a series of public meetings across the state that kicks off Feb. 17 with a 10 a.m. meeting in St. Tammany Parish and a 6 p.m. meeting in New Orleans.

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