

From: applications.administrator@capitol.local
To: [Senate Redistricting](#)
Subject: INETMAIL: Redistricting Public Input
Date: Thursday, September 30, 2021 4:04:13 PM

Date: 2021-09-30
First Name: Julie
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Affirm public info: I agree

Regarding: Senate

Message:

My name is Julie. I'm in Senator Bettencourt's district. I oppose the drawing of electoral district maps that do not reflect the record growth in population of people of color in Texas' most populous counties. The goal of redistricting should be to accomplish what the Bill of Rights guarantees: equal justice under the law. Texas is an enormous state with a wide variety of people, cultures, and needs.

Racially discriminatory gerrymandering results in voter suppression and disenfranchisement and under-representation of constituents. No groups have been harmed more by map manipulation and voter suppression than Black, Latino, disadvantaged, and disability communities. Their voices have been minimized in the ballot box and in Congress. This is blatantly unfair. The only way to achieve equal justice is to, as much as possible, create politically neutral districts that reflect the needs of protected communities so they have the representation they deserve through the creation of opportunity districts.

What the citizens of Texas deserve is to have fair representation. The current maps do not provide any fair representation. The Princeton Gerrymandering Project reviewed the proposed map and gave it a grade of F in fairness and geographic features and a borderline grade of F in competitiveness.

FiveThirtyEight analyzed the map and said, "As expected, it's significantly biased toward the GOP. FiveThirtyEight suggests the map would create 24 solid-likely Republican seats, 13 solid-likely Democratic seats, and one swing seat in the Rio Grande Valley. As was also the case with the GOP's proposed Senate map, the congressional map would restrict political power for people of color. The new map would add one majority-white district while taking away one majority-Hispanic district and the state's only majority-Black congressional district. That means in total, Texas would have 23 majority-white congressional districts, seven majority-Hispanic, and 0 majority-Black." This is not what providing the foundation for free and fair elections is about. The citizens of Texas deserve to choose their representatives instead of the other way around. Redistricting should be done in a non partisan fashion.

The Texas Tribune reported the following, "In the 2020 Presidential race in TX Trump got 52% of the vote, and Biden got 46.5%. Multiplying 31 Senators by 52% produces 16.1, and multiplying 31 Senators by 46.5% produces 14.41. So by this metric of how Texans voted by party in 2020, the GOP should get 16 or 17 Senate seats and the Dems should get 13 or 14.

Due to gerrymandering so that 29 or the 31 districts are not competitive, the GOP will get 18 for sure and maybe 19."

In my own words, Senate District 7, in the proposed map, goes outside of Harris county boundaries. In fact, it goes practically into the center of Montgomery county and almost reaches into the city of Conroe. This can't be due to a lack of population because the Harris county region has approximately 6 million people. What it does do is to dilute democratic votes, which was the goal of the redistricting committee. It will also cross into eight different watersheds - buffalo bayou, addicks reservoir, cypress creek, little cypress creek, white oak bayou, willow creek, spring creek, and greens bayou, all of which are competing for too little federal and state funds. As you can imagine, not all of those will have the same needs, and by stretching a representative across this wide area, the representative cannot successfully represent all needs. Those same areas will all have needs for hospitals, police, parks, schools, fire departments, roads, etc. Again, a representative that is focused on communities with diverse needs will not be as effective as one who is focused on a more consolidated area.

A map that was generated by a member of the public was formally submitted. It is referred to as the "compact" map. This map focuses districts on a more compact area. Coincidentally, it has a better distribution of which party gets to fill a seat, including several more competitive districts. I strongly urge you to look at what an ordinary citizen has done to help democracy survive. I urge you to heed his call and follow suit.

