

Koy Kunkel_SC

From: applications.administrator@capitol.local
Sent: Saturday, February 27, 2021 2:02 PM
To: Senate Redistricting
Subject: INETMAIL: Redistricting Public Input
Attachments: EndTexasGerrymandering.docx

Date: 2021-02-27
First Name: Mary
Last Name: Mansell
Title: N/A
Organization: self
Address: [REDACTED]
City: Lakeway
State: TX
Zipcode: [REDACTED]
Phone: [REDACTED]

Affirm public info: I agree

Regarding: Senate

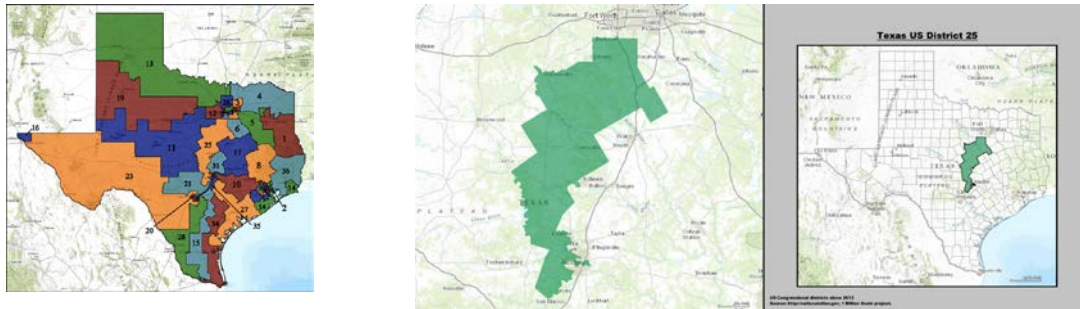
[REDACTED]

I am writing to request that you call for an independent commission to redraw legislative districts in Texas in a fair bipartisan way.

In the 1960s, the Supreme Court first ruled that states must revise their legislative maps after every census to ensure they met the “one person, one vote” standard. For the benefit of all Texas voters, an independent and nonpartisan redistricting commission should draw new maps to reflect changes in our population. Boundaries are supposed to make sure that each district has about the same number of people, is compact, includes people with common interests and gives voters an equal say. Districts should respect political boundaries such as counties or municipalities. Instead of making districts tilt towards one party or another, the maps should focus on preserving the bond between an elected official and a community of citizens.

My district is Texas's 25th congressional district. For the 2004 elections, the district had an elongated shape stretching from deep south Texas at the U.S.-Mexico border to Austin as a result of a mid-decade 2003 gerrymandering of Texas congressional districts. The district was redrawn again for the 2006 elections as the result of a lawsuit. In July 2011, a redistricting plan was approved which gave the 25th district a completely different geography for the 2012 elections. It included parts of Travis County, and stretched north as far as southern Tarrant County near Fort Worth and includes Waco. This redistricting split Travis County into five districts, four of which were heavily Republican. As a result, my representative, Roger Williams, is far removed from Central Texas. His office is in Cleburne, Texas outside of Fort Worth. He is not a member of my community and does not share or reflect the values of my neighborhood. His voting record does not align with my community values so we I have no representation in Congress.

Here are current Maps that represent the disconnect my representative has from my community.



Unfortunately, partisan redistricting usually starts with lawmakers drawing maps, ensuring that districts are drawn in a way that protects incumbents. Boundaries then are manipulated to maximize the number of districts favorable to one party while herding as many of the other party as possible into the remaining districts. Both political parties have been guilty of this. Political parties and incumbents drawing the lines are usually the beneficiaries of this system and unfortunately it's the voters who lose their voice. Please make this a fair redistricting so all Texans can have their voices heard.

Thank you in advance for seriously considering appointing an independent commission to insure fair, bipartisan redistricting.