

From: applications.administrator@capitol.local
To: [Senate Redistricting](#)
Subject: INETMAIL: Redistricting Public Input
Date: Thursday, March 23, 2023 12:43:05 PM

Date: 2023-03-23
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Affirm public info: I agree

Regarding: Senate

Message:

TO: Senator Joan Huffman, Chair, and Committee Members, Texas Senate Special Committee on Redistricting FROM: Suzi Greenman and Julie Lowenberg, Legislative Affairs Committee Members, National Council of Jewish Women, Greater Dallas Section RE: Decennial Redistricting Date: January 27, 2023 To Senator Huffman and Distinguished Committee Members: Greater Dallas Section of National Council of Jewish Women appreciates this opportunity to submit testimony as you continue your work on redistricting in Texas. We are an organization of volunteers who work to improve the lives of women, children and families through community service and advocacy. Our 1100 members live in many neighborhoods with distinct flavors and needs, both in Dallas and Collin Counties. Moreover, our volunteer efforts are located in some of Dallas' and the North Texas region's most economically disadvantaged locales. Our purpose in filing this testimony is to request that, as you resume the important task of redistricting, you respect both the spirit and the letter of federal and state law by ensuring that the remainder of the process be fair and open. We fear that although you are gathering public input, you do not intend to heed citizens' voices, but rather to submit the same unfair maps that you did during the last legislative session and that were used in the recent election. At the time of our testimony to this Committee in 2021, our state had only recently come out of over eight (we repeat eight!) years of litigation at a cost to Texas taxpayers of over \$8 million --- litigation in which the state was ultimately found guilty of intentional racial discrimination. As we expressed during our testimony at that time, we had a deep (and subsequently justified) concern that you were on a path to repeating the mistakes of the past. We urged you then and we urge you now: Make the following critically needed changes to the redistricting rules and procedures:

- Increase the amount of time given to citizens to review maps to at least 7 days.
- Provide at least two weeks' notice in advance of any public hearing to allow adequate time for the public to review the maps, prepare testimony and propose alternatives.
- Continue with virtually accessible committee hearings throughout the entire legislative session to ensure the health and safety of both the public and legislators and their staff.
- Provide an explanation of how district lines are made. An analysis of how the new maps impact historically disenfranchised communities of color should also be provided.

In regard to criteria for drawing of the maps, we believe that:

- Maps should be drawn that focus on communities of interest, not racial or partisan data. Manipulating maps to artificially distort political power undermines the principle of a representative government. The government should represent a fair cross-section of society, and racial and/or partisan manipulation makes that

impossible. • Retention of incumbents should not be a consideration, nor should political party. As citizens of this great state, we look to you, the elected officials charged with this important task, to break the cycle of discriminatory and unconstitutional redistricting. The right to fair representation is at the heart of our democracy. This right should be your only consideration.

