

Koy Kunkel_SC

From: applications.administrator@capitol.local
Sent: Tuesday, December 15, 2020 3:20 PM
To: Senate Redistricting
Subject: INETMAIL: Redistricting Public Input
Attachments: University_of_Texas_at_Austin_Students.pdf

Date: 2020-12-15
First Name: Leland
Last Name: Murphy
Title: Academic Policy Committee Co-Chair
Organization: UT Austin Senate of College Councils
Address: [REDACTED]
City: Austin
State: Texas
Zipcode: [REDACTED]
Phone: [REDACTED]

Affirm public info: I agree

Regarding: Senate

Message:

Hello everyone. My name is Leland Murphy, and I'm a student at the University of Texas at Austin, and I'm here representing myself as well as the UT Senate of College Councils. So firstly, I would just like to start by saying the most important thing for this committee to do is to respect federal and state law, including the Voting Rights Act. None of my testimony today should be used by the legislature to justify diminishing the ability of a minority group to elect the candidate of their choice or artificially distorting maps for racial or partisan purposes. Now, we need fair redistricting for 2021. Every Texan deserves equal and equitable representation in our government. Texas' 25th congressional district, which is the current district I live in when I'm attending UT Austin, is extremely gerrymandered. This district currently spans from Travis County all the way up to Tarrant County, so from Austin all the way up to the DFW area, which is a length of approximately 190 to 200 miles. It is absurd that a congressional district can span this far and break up so many different communities. This gerrymander has weakened student representation and our representation in government. The area around UT Austin, including the main campus where I live, West campus, which is where most of the private apartments for students are, and North campus, which has mainly houses filled with UT students, all contain the majority of the undergraduate population. Yet students in main campus, West campus, and some areas of North campus, do not even share the same congressional district. I can literally walk less than a block down from my on-campus dormitory into West campus, and I will be in a completely different congressional district. The UT Austin student body is definitely a community of interest, yet current congressional maps don't represent this by dispersing students between multiple different districts. Students have many shared legislative concerns, especially relating to college affordability, funding for education, public transportation, fair wages for student employees, and so much more. Therefore, the students at UT Austin, and in general students throughout the state of Texas, need to be kept together when drawing these new districts. Our voice as students is being diluted and we were being left out of representation in the halls of power in the state and federal government. My fellow UT students and myself, as well as other Texans across our great state who have been locked out of government, demand fair, equal, and equitable representation and demand there be more transparency in this upcoming redistricting process. Thank you all for your time.

University of Texas at Austin Students

Leland Murphy

Austin, Texas

View this community at: <https://representable.org/submission/thanks/8f55521e-34a8-42be-bdac-e523>



Community Information

Cultural Interests

Most of us are students at the University of Texas at Austin and share common values because of that!