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From: applications.administrator@capitol.local
Sent: Wednesday, February 10, 2021 10:48 AM
To: Senate Redistricting
Subject: INETMAIL: Redistricting Public Input
Attachments: 2020 Austin US Congressional Redistricting.docx

Date: 2021-02-10

First Name: Alan

Last Name: Halter

Title: N/A

Organization: Self

Address: [REDACTED]

City: Austin

State: TX

Zipcode: [REDACTED]

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Affirm public info: I agree

Regarding: Congressional

Message:

Respectfully to the Texas Senate Special Committee on Redistricting:

I submit my input concerning U.S. Congressional Districts in Austin, Texas in the attached document.

[REDACTED]

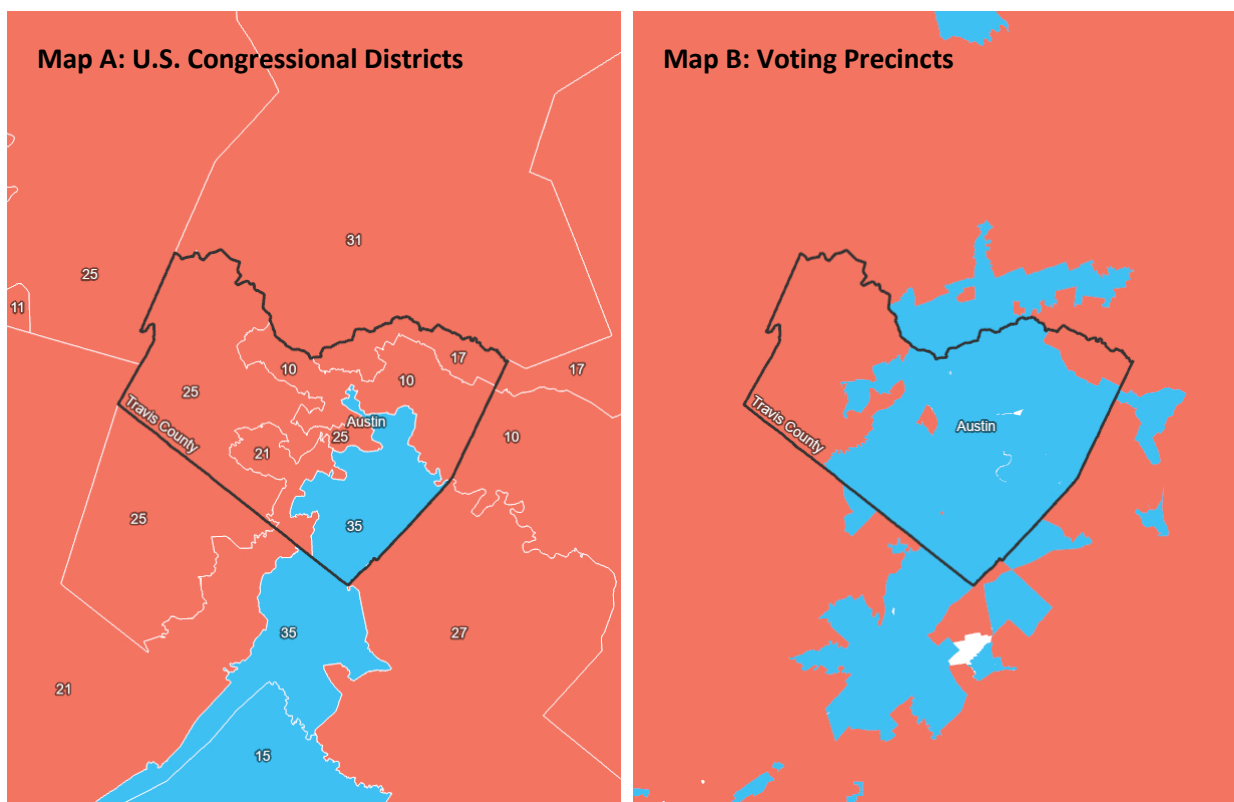
The following input concerns U.S. Congressional Districts in Austin, Texas. I use data to lay out three main arguments:

1. U.S. Congressional Districts “pack” and “crack” Austin’s democratic voters
2. Travis County’s democratic votes constitute a supermajority voting bloc and is the largest Texas county without representation of this voting bloc
3. Austin is the largest American city without an anchor Congressional District—one made up of majority Austin residents and located wholly within the city.

1. U.S. Congressional Districts “pack” and “crack” Austin’s democratic voters

Currently the 10th, 17th, 21st, 25th, 27th, 31st, and 35th Congressional Districts cover the City of Austin’s jurisdiction according to the 116th Congressional District boundaries obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau. Map A shows these Districts. Here I lay out how these seven Congressional Districts “pack” and “crack” Austin’s democratic voters using official government data.

Maps showing how Austin voted in 2018 U.S. Congressional election



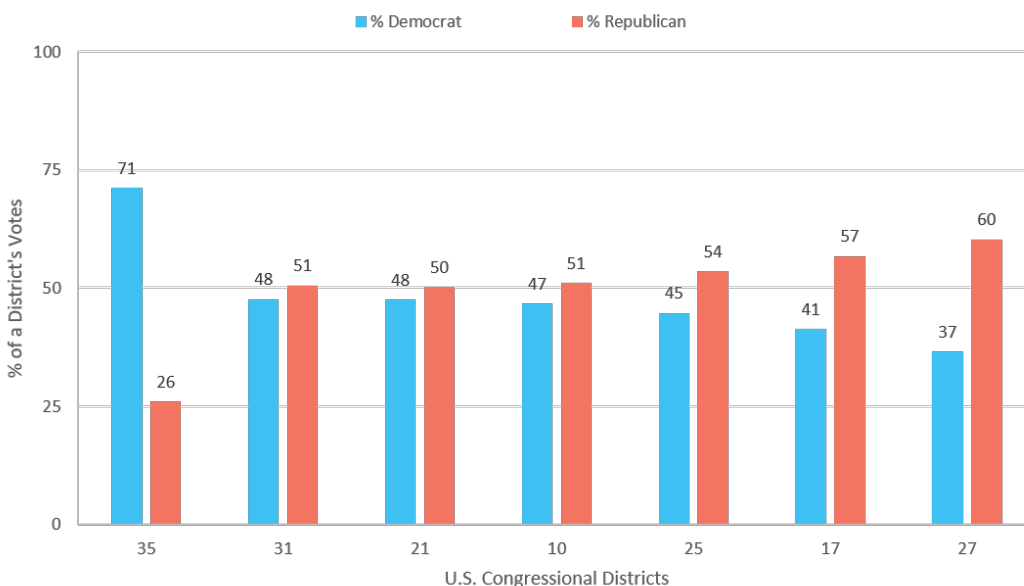
Map A: partisan vote share by U.S. Congressional Districts, red = republican victory, blue = democrat victory. Labels show Congressional Districts. Data Source: Clerk of the U.S. House of Representatives: Election Information, Official vote counts for each nominee for Representative to the 116th Congress from official sources compiled by the Office of the Clerk. Accessed https://clerk.house.gov/member_info/electionInfo/2018/statistics2018.pdf

Map B: partisan vote share by voting precincts, red = predominant votes for republican candidate, blue = predominant votes for democratic candidate. Data Source: Texas Legislative Council, 2018 General VTD Election Data, accessed from https://data.capitol.texas.gov/dataset/historical_elections

The maps above show which parties won Congressional Districts versus how precincts voted for their representative in the 2018 general election. At the precinct level, people voted predominantly for democratic candidates in Travis County. Predominance here means majority votes were cast for the democratic Congressional candidate. These votes are dispersed among Austin's seven Congressional Districts and blended with republican leaning suburbs and rural areas.

In the chart below, I show the Democratic and Republican partisan vote share by Congressional District for the seven Districts covering Austin using official vote counts from the Office of the Clerk of the U.S. House of Representatives. Data pertain to the 2018 election.

Vote Share in Austin's Congressional Districts



Data Source: Clerk of the U.S. House of Representatives: Election Information, Official vote counts for each nominee for Representative to the 116th Congress from official sources compiled by the Office of the Clerk. Accessed https://clerk.house.gov/member_info/electionInfo/2018/statistics2018.pdf

Note the super majority 35th District on the far left, with a huge share of Democratic voters, “packed” into a single District effectively minimizing the Democratic electorate’s effect elsewhere in the city. The following 31st, 21st, 10th, and 25th Districts retain a majority Republican partisan vote share, but only marginally so, with each District recording small margins of victory each under 10%. Some are barely over 2%. Here, Democratic votes are “cracked” or neutralized by dispersing Austin’s heavily democratic voters into multiple Districts each with slightly more republican voters.

2. Travis County’s democratic votes constitute a supermajority voting bloc and is the largest Texas county without representation of this voting bloc

In the last Congressional election, 71% of Travis County’s electorate voted for the Democratic candidate. This voting bloc clearly has the largest plurality of voters for the Capitol area, however these votes are dispersed amongst the seven Congressional Districts. The impact? Austin’s Democratic voters don’t determine victors in their Districts save for the 35th District.

2018 U.S. Congressional Partisan Vote Splits for 5 Largest Counties

Population Rank (2010)	County	Population, 2010 US Census	Votes for Democratic Candidate	Total Votes
1	Harris	4,092,459	675,409 (57%)	1,190,619
2	Dallas	2,367,298	460,076 (66%)	697,329
3	Tarrant	1,808,676	286,907 (46%)	622,076
4	Bexar	1,714,773	324,364 (65%)	500,690
5	Travis	1,024,266	340,346 (71%)	477,644

Data Source: Texas Legislative Council, 2018 General VTD Election Data, accessed from https://data.capitol.texas.gov/dataset/historical_elections

3. Austin is the largest American city without an anchor Congressional District—one made up of majority Austin residents and located wholly within the city.

Austin is the largest American city without an anchor Congressional District. The following table shows the largest U.S. cities, ranked by Census 2019 population estimates, and their respective anchor Districts. Austin, ranked 11th in population, does not currently have a Congressional District wholly contained to capture its democratic voting bloc.

Anchor Districts

Rank	City	2019 Population Estimate	2010 Population	Anchor District
1	New York, NY	8,336,817	8,175,133	CD-10+
2	Los Angeles, CA	3,979,576	3,792,621	CD-28, 29, 30, 37
3	Chicago, IL	2,693,976	2,695,598	CD-1
4	Houston, TX	2,320,268	2,100,263	CD-7, 9, 18, 29
5	Phoenix, AZ	1,680,992	1,445,632	CD-7
6	Philadelphia, PA	1,584,064	1,526,006	CD-1, 2
7	San Antonio, TX	1,547,253	1,327,407	CD-20
8	San Diego, CA	1,423,851	1,307,402	CD-52, 53
9	Dallas, TX	1,343,573	1,197,816	CD-30
10	San Jose, CA	1,021,795	945,942	CD-19
11	Austin, TX	978,908	790,390	N/A

Table adapted from Nate Walker accessed at <https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B0kkOiAWUCUGdTNUc1JFdHE3ZzA/edit>

Among this list are Houston, Dallas, and San Antonio each with at least one anchor district, respectively the 7th, 30th, and 20th Districts. The next page displays maps of those cities and their anchor districts (red = republican Representative, blue = democratic Representative voted into office in 2018). Viewing the remaining seven American cities in that list, you'll find each has its own anchor district except for Austin.

Anchor Districts in Other Texas Cities



Proposed here is an outline for an anchor Congressional District for Austin representing its democratic voting bloc:

- 1) The District should geographically anchor Austin either wholly made up of voting precincts within Austin's jurisdiction, or simply comprising all voting precincts within Travis County.
- 2) A majority of voters in the District should reside in Austin. Currently, of the nearly 4 million people residing in the 10th, 17th, 21st, 25th, 27th, 31st, and 35th Congressional Districts, 29% hail from Travis County, where residents don't make up a single majority in any of its Capitol Districts.