

From: applications.administrator@capitol.local
To: [Senate Redistricting](#)
Subject: INETMAIL: Redistricting Public Input
Date: Friday, March 24, 2023 11:07:24 AM

Date: 2023-03-24
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Affirm public info: I agree

Regarding: Senate

Message:

To the Senate Special Committee on Redistricting:
My name is Palwasha Sharwani and I am the interim Executive Director of the Texas chapter of Emgage, a non-profit community organization that seeks to civically engage, educate, and empower American Muslims. I currently live in Harris County in Texas Senate District 15, and prior to that I lived in Senate District 18 for years. I am testifying about both the redistricting process and the substance of the Senate map currently under discussion, Plan S2168. First, this committee's redistricting process has not provided the public a real opportunity or enough time to provide input on the map. Texans need more than only a few days of hearings to have a meaningful opportunity to give feedback on the proposed map. Furthermore, this committee's chairwoman has already authored a proposal to pass the Senate map already in place, Plan S2168. This has led me and many other Texans to conclude that these hearings are being held only to give the illusion that this committee is accepting public input. If this committee is going to rubber stamp Plan S2168 – which itself was pushed through in a special session in a process that lacks transparency – then this committee will have engaged in a sham process without true public engagement. This is unfortunate because S2168 fails as a representative map of Texas. Less than 40 percent of Texans are white; yet, when you look at the voting-age populations of the 31 Senate districts, a comfortable majority are majority- white. This points to manipulation of the maps on the basis of race to dilute the voting power of minorities like myself and my family. For example, the AAPI community I

identify with has a high concentration in Fort Bend County, where I lived for several years. That county has been split among Senate Districts 17 and 18 so that the AAPI population hovers around 13 percent; the Fort Bend AAPI population is over 22 percent. Splitting up the AAPI community in this way makes it more difficult for community members to viably work to elect candidates of their choice. This is unacceptable for a state that is supposed to be part of a democratic system of representation in a racially diverse country. Texans need more opportunities to provide input, and we need a better map than S2168. I request that this committee extend the public input process by at least a month, and alter the proposed map so that it does not divide communities on racial lines. Thank you.

[REDACTED]