

Koy Kunkel_SC

From: applications.administrator@capitol.local
Sent: Thursday, March 11, 2021 10:59 AM
To: Senate Redistricting
Subject: INETMAIL: Redistricting Public Input

Date: 2021-03-11
First Name: Eric
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State: Texas
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Affirm public info: I agree

Regarding: Senate

Message:

I live in Austin in a neighborhood near ACC Highland. In the last redistricting, my neighborhood would not have been called "Central Austin" or "Downtown" but I have heard it called that now.

I am writing today about two things. The first is the impact this year's task has on me. The second is a longer-term vision and the opportunity you have to improve the process.

For the first item – my congressman also represents northwest Houston and all points in between. My neighborhood voted 90% for his Democratic opponent. It would take me pages to list all the ways he fails to represent me. He is utterly contemptuous of me.

My community is very urban. I want representation that more closely matches my values and interests. But, I don't want to be packed in a bubble. Drawing safe districts has fed the extremes we have today. The events of January 6th and the fear representatives at all levels of government have of their constituents is a result of past redistricting. Two years ago, I spoke before the House Redistricting Committee and expressed my fears about exactly this kind of extremism. I also advocated for a solution now used by many states, counties and cities – Non-Partisan Redistricting Commissions.

This is my second item – a request for you to create a Non-Partisan Redistricting Commission. Two years ago, Chair King said it was the wrong time to discuss it. I know there isn't time to set one up for this redistricting, but now is the time to prepare for 2030. I believe a Non-Partisan Redistricting Commission will be a big help in cooling the dangerous rhetoric.

I have a final ask of this committee – keep making the process public. The pandemic will be under control before the census data you need comes in. Get state-wide public input on your maps. Explain how they were drawn and why county and neighborhood splits were made.

I hate not trusting my government. This kind of transparency will go a long way toward me having respect and trust in you, showing you care about me and my neighborhood. We are, still, in unsettling times. Please choose a better path, one that will make our state and the republic healthier and saner.

