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**To:** [Senate Redistricting](#)  
**Subject:** INETMAIL: Redistricting Public Input  
**Date:** Thursday, October 14, 2021 12:05:04 AM  
**Attachments:** [Texas Congressional Special Committee on Redistricting virtual testimony 13oct21.docx](#)

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Date: 2021-10-14

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Title: Founder

Organization: Galveston Island Voter Education Resource & Services (G.I.V.E.R.S)/Push Democracy Forward

Address: [REDACTED]

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Affirm public info: I agree

Regarding: ALL

Message:

The travesty lies in the utter disrespect and exclusionary practices and tactics utilized by this body against constituents. The last minute notices for the hearings, the untenable hoops regular citizens must hurdle in order to provide testimony virtually, and the cherry picking of how far the digital opportunities extend as far as having the ability to switch devices due to technical difficulties incurred from extended wait times in queue, and the requirement to print the witness affirmation form to sign it and send it back. Why? If other institutions accept digital signatures as valid, why not this body? Being required to incur such expenses as printers, ink and paper should be considerations when making rules regarding digital work spaces and digital options for the citizenry to be allowed full involvement in all governmental processes and procedures necessary to ensure transparent, fair experiences in the development of this American experiment called democracy. I am thoroughly disappointed I was kicked off and not allowed to testify after waiting literally all day. ALL DAY! The Texas State House has the ability to do better, and as a citizen I plan to make sure this state becomes the beacon of progressive forward movement I want to be and see. Thank you! Please see the testimony attached.

[REDACTED]

Texas Senate Special Committee on Redistricting  
13 October 2021 – 10am – Virtual  
Congressional Redistricting Testimony

*‘The imperative is to define what is right and do it.’ – Barbara Jordan*

Thank you Redistricting Chair, committee members and fellow Texans for hearing my testimony today. My name is Roxy D. Hall Williamson, I represent myself and I am in **opposition** to **Senate Bill 6**.

I am passionate about the **nonpartisan** process of voting and the history of voting rights at home and globally. So, I speak to you this evening as founder of Galveston Island Voter Education Resource & Services (G.I.V.E.R.S) and as Field Organizer for Push Democracy Forward. I am currently an advocate for the Southern Coalition for Social Justice and I am a CROWD (Community Redistricting Organizations Working for Democracy) Redistricting Fellow.

The obstacles put in place to prevent the input of our citizenry who have **CONTRIBUTED** to the growth of the State is a flagrant foul on the proverbial play. I am a part of that growth spurt as I returned to my birthplace a little over 3 years ago. I am a resident of Galveston Island. Though not a direct constituent of The Illustrious Sheila Jackson Lee, it is her commitment to the history of Juneteenth and the Emancipation Trail that fuels my work to provide equitable opportunities for community based voter education and the preservation and expansion of the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act throughout the State of Texas. This proposed congressional map confirms **intentional discrimination** as it eliminates all hope for political legacy building, fair competitive seats, ignores the growth and influence of communities of color and further gerrymanders the map to shore up unfair manipulation of partisan influences that threaten Texas citizens’ voting power. The congressional map illustrates a blatant partisan power grab that fails to accurately reflect the 2020 Census data. The current data shows that the 95 percent of the State’s population growth came from people of color and is centered in urban and suburban communities. Not only do we deserve appropriate representation, we earned it! Your Texas pride should encourage you to do the same, **EARN** the respect and the votes of your constituents not this sham of a power grab that shields you from accountability and is not rooted in a desire to just do what’s right. This whole proceeding, the disrespect shown to those giving heartfelt testimony has been infuriating yet not surprising. Constituents deserve better. The State House deserves better.

After witnessing what happened in the wee hours of the morning this morning, it seems the amendment process will not yield any relief and clearly amplifies the need for the Texas Legislature to take this opportunity to undo current gerrymandering and draw a fair map that reflects the current census data as well as including community input. This map does not give Texas voters the fair representation and fair maps we deserve. To sit through all the testimonies, the pride I felt listening to the 91 year old Chinese citizen express his 1<sup>st</sup> amendment right, the horror of listening to yet another citizen spout talking points that continue to push false narratives and cause me pain however, it is her 1<sup>st</sup> amendment right also – that is the pride of

being an American. My heart goes out to those grandchildren of mixed heritage throughout the state who will miss out on the rich nuance their mixed race histories offer in building strong images of self-worth because their grandmothers refuse to uplift and celebrate the beauty in their race and build a legacy of cultural pride but instead give in to fear, misunderstanding and a sad understanding of how race works in America. Privileged white people problems that will devastate our community later and we are the repairers of those breaches created by those identity crises and issues. This is why identifying **intentional discrimination** in the creation of district maps, continuously standing firm to ensure fair maps in School districts, City Councils and other municipal positions while also developing culturally diverse curricula is essential to our quality of life across the state.

Texas Legislators failed to create a single competitive seat across 38 districts. Despite the State's growth almost entirely came from people of color, the map increases the number of majority-white districts. The votes of constituencies across the state are drastically diluted. This wrecks of **intentional discrimination**. These facts express why now, more than ever, Congress must pass the Freedom to Vote Act immediately! The insidious partisan efforts in Texas and around the nation to manipulate the voting power of American citizens is a direct threat to American democracy and quite simply our quality of life for decades to come. The Freedom to Vote Act will ban partisan gerrymandering, strengthen protections for communities of color, and place the power in the hands of the people – in the infamous words of President Abraham Lincoln, a government of the people, by the people, for the people – the way the American Constitution intended.

The environment on the Gulf Coast dictates that not only must we fight a confederacy that should have long been buried, but now with you attempting political apartheid you are blatantly attacking Representatives whose record of work threatens the hold of Jim Crow on our lives and for this they are punished. I humbly ask for the committee is to please consider the dignity of all Texas voters by including more public input, offer more inclusive advance notice of the hearings and provide Texans the opportunity to participate in the Redistricting process. I'm thoroughly disappointed with my representative Mayes Middleton and his behavior and lack of character throughout this entire 87<sup>th</sup> session, all three of these unnecessary tax payer funded sessions. What's the rush? Texans deserve better. Stop these intentional discriminatory tactics, fight fair and help the State of Texas be more equitable for all residents and help us continue to ***Push Democracy Forward – because We Won't Go One Step Back!*** Thank you so much for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted by  
Roxy D. Hall Williamson  
Push Democracy Forward Field Director  
SCSJ CROWD Redistricting Fellow 2021

*'A spirit of harmony can only survive if each of us remembers when bitterness and self-interest seem to prevail, that we share a common destiny' – Barbara Jordan*