

From: applications.administrator@capitol.local
To: [Senate Redistricting](#)
Subject: INETMAIL: Redistricting Public Input
Date: Wednesday, September 22, 2021 6:16:55 PM

Date: 2021-09-22

First Name: Joyce

Last Name: Statz

Title: NA

Organization: self

Address: [REDACTED]

City: Austin

State: TX

Zipcode: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

Affirm public info: I agree

Regarding: Senate

Message:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide my testimony regarding the 2021 redistricting maps for the Texas Senate. My name is Joyce Statz, and I'm representing myself in this testimony.

I live in northwest Austin, an area that is on the wildland urban interface. Thus, we share wildfire concerns with most of Travis County as well as Bastrop County. We need representation in the Texas Senate that understands wildfire issues and can support us in getting legislation passed to allow counties to have Wildland Urban Interface Codes that govern development. Having a Senate District that encompasses all of Austin and as much of Bastrop County as possible would be most helpful.

Throughout your deliberations, please pay attention to the makeup of the communities that fit into the Senate district boundaries. Where Texas has gained the greatest number of residents who are people of color, the district lines must give them an opportunity to elect senators who will represent their needs. The Latino community was responsible for about half the growth in the last ten years, but the districts currently drawn don't accommodate them. For example, as currently drawn (as of 9/21/21), residents of North Dallas and residents of the northern areas around Houston are being cheated out of having a voice in who represents them.

Texas really needs an independent redistricting entity to draw our district maps, so that we can avoid the political and racial gerrymandering that happens every ten years. This is a problem for both Republicans and Democrats; whoever is in power puts incumbency over the needs of the citizens. This results in elected officials who are not representative of the population of the State of Texas. We saw this very clearly during the last regular legislative session, as well as in special sessions. In areas where the majority of Texas were in agreement, our elected officials were not representing that majority. Thus, we didn't get Medicaid Expansion, we got inequitable voting laws, we got abortion prohibitions that Texans did not support, we didn't get adequate resolution of the problems with the February power outages, and we continue to see pursuit of unfair laws regarding who can play on what sports teams. This type of representation needs to change, and it's your responsibility to create district boundaries that allow Texans to have an equitable voice in our governance.

Absent the independent redistricting entity, this legislature needs to hold additional hearings to be able to get input from the public, and that input needs to be considered in redrawing the maps, so that we have a Senate map that really reflects community input and census data.

[REDACTED]