

## Koy Kunkel\_SC

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**From:** applications.administrator@capitol.local  
**Sent:** Friday, February 26, 2021 8:39 AM  
**To:** Senate Redistricting  
**Subject:** INETMAIL: Redistricting Public Input  
**Attachments:** Redistricting Testimony.pdf

Date: 2021-02-26  
First Name: Tom  
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Affirm public info: I agree

Regarding: Senate

Message:

I was scheduled to give testimony at the public hearing today (February 26) but since it was cancelled I am submitting it in writing to the committee. Thank you.

[REDACTED]

## Testimony on Redistricting

Thank you for the opportunity to present relevant testimony that the legislature may consider when redrawing district lines.

My name is Tom Kendall. I am a realtor and have not held public office or held any position in government.

My interest here is simply as a citizen of Texas who loves our State. My family has lived in Texas for many generations. My great-great Grandfather led the left wing of attack at the Battle of San Jacinto, carried the San Jacinto flag into the battle which he brought with him from Lexington Kentucky along with 52 men, and is credited with the cry "Remember the Alamo, Remember Goliad". My Grandparents donated the San Jacinto Flag to the state of Texas in 1936, the 100 year anniversary of the battle which is now encased behind the speakers stand at the Texas house of Representatives.

While I live in Hays County, my comments today are both state wide in nature and local to Travis County in which I work and where my Daughter and her family live. Also, my comments today are limited to US Congressional redistricting.

With respect to state wide issues, I want to briefly comment on the opportunity for lawmakers to save taxpayer dollars, and on the more local level an opportunity to give the voters of Travis County a voice in Washington.

Let me first speak to the opportunity to save taxpayer dollars. During the last redistricting process, 12 lawsuits raged for seven years costing Texas taxpayers millions of dollars. Those lawsuits were brought about because of real or perceived injustices to minority groups, denying or abridging the right to vote on the basis of race, color, or language group.

You don't need to be a data scientist to see how those real or perceived injustices manifested. There are two broad metrics that tell the story.

On average, approximately 52% of Texan's have voted republican in recent senate and presidential elections. So logically, if all things were equal, about 19 of the 36 congressional districts should primarily vote Republican. But Republican's control 26 of Texas congressional districts. That's seven more districts than what would otherwise be the case, if all things were equal. This is a brightly flashing metric that highlights the amount of partisan cracking and packing that has gone on in Texas redistricting for many years.

Looked at another way, the Voting Rights Act defines Opportunity Districts as districts in which Hispanics and non Anglos would have a high probability of electing the candidate of their choice. In 2010, 72% of districts had Anglos in the majority leaving 28% (or 10 out of 36) as Opportunity Districts. But, according to 2010 US Census Bureau estimates for the Texas population, 47% were Non-Hispanic White (including 5% other), while 53% were Hispanic or black. Based on this data, 19 districts would potentially qualify as Opportunity Districts in Texas versus the 10 determined by the redistricting plan. Again, this is a brightly flashing metric that highlights the amount of partisan cracking and packing that has gone on in Texas redistricting for many years.

I'm not naive. I know who is in charge here and that this is a political process. The map drawers have access to voting data at the micro level that they will marry with the 2020 census data to draw districts that will be most beneficial to the party in charge. But please don't lose sight of the big picture. Let us move more toward reasonableness to avoid lawsuits that cost Texas taxpayers. Hold up your redrawn districts to these broader metrics.

At the local level, please give Travis County, and Austin, a say in the US Congress. Pack Travis County into one district instead of leaving it Cracked into four. This will give Austin voters their own voice in Washington.

Thank you for your time and consideration.