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**From:** applications.administrator@capitol.local  
**Sent:** Friday, March 12, 2021 1:29 PM  
**To:** Senate Redistricting  
**Subject:** INETMAIL: Redistricting Public Input

Date: 2021-03-12  
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Affirm public info: I agree

Regarding: Senate

Message:  
Testimony AGAINST GERRYMANDERING 2021

Good Afternoon Committee Members. My name is Maria Castro Calzada, and I'm here on behalf of Jolt Action and the Texas Latino Redistricting Task Force. Jolt Action is nonpartisan, and the largest Latino civic engagement organization in Texas focused on promoting and preserving the political power of young Latinos. I thank the Senate Special Committee on Redistricting for allowing me to speak and the people of El Paso for allowing this Houstonian to use some of your time today. I am many things. Yes, I am a Volunteer at Jolt Action. But, I am also a Volunteer Deputy Voter Registrar with Harris County. I am a Girl Scout Leader, a PTO Board Member, a UT Austin Texas Ex, a small business owner, a wife, a mother of 2, a full-time Infectious Disease PA. But, before I was anything else, I was a 1st generation American. My parents immigrated from Argentina and Chile in the early '70s. As the 1st person in my family born in the United States, I feel a special responsibility for my civic duty. I live in Houston, Texas, in Texas House District 134, and my Representative is Ann Johnson, and my Senator is John Whitmire in Texas Senate District 15. I also live in U.S. Congressional District 2. I need only say "U.S. Congressional District 2" to bring to mind the poster child for gerrymandering and the problem we have to address this time around. I live in North Montrose. My Congressman does not represent me, my neighbors, our businesses, nor does he even have a local office anywhere close to where we live. For those that know Houston, his offices are in Kingwood, Spring, and Washington DC. He spends more time on social media attacking people who disagree with him than listening to his constituents, like me, who are stuck with him. My husband and I met at Spring High School 30 years ago. We very thoughtfully and purposely moved away from there, bought our home away from there, started our businesses, and raise our children away from there. Is it too much to ask that people from our chosen community represent us?

As has already been discussed, the Latino community has grown and will continue to grow. Families like mine came to Texas and helped it grow and earned Texas those additional congressional seats. We deserve representation that looks and sounds like us. When legislators fail to be open and transparent in drawing redistricting

maps, they can fall prey to the political pressures and ignore the reality that Texas's demographics have been changing for a long time. We must wait until we have accurate census data to guide our decisions.

What we want:

1. Fair and open dialogue
2. Adequate time to obtain analysis back from the Census that is complete and accurate.
3. Use of non-partisan, academic resources for analysis and recommendations
4. Simple "layperson" language of any proposed maps that show what they will mean for marginalized populations & communities of color.
5. Access to all documents (written and digital), all communications, maps & drafts throughout this process, available to the public. In a word: TRANSPARENCY.

- I stand before you today to urge the Committee to draw lines in the communities' best interests and not to protect the interests of elected officials.

- Thank you for your time and for allowing me to testify today.

