



Date: 2025-07-31

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Affirm public info: I agree

Regarding: Congressional

Message:

Redistricting is a huge distraction which takes away momentum to sort out issues that are important to and affect many citizens.

I have attached an example (pdf) from the 18th District in Texas where there was an opportunity to address rail freight in the Houston area as a whole.

Not only will citizens be moved into different districts, but key parts of an infrastructure (in this case the Tower 26 rail junction) will also be moved into different districts. This can only hamper work that should be carried out to improve infrastructure.



An Example of the damage that Redistricting can do

Redistricting is a huge distraction which takes away momentum to sort out issues that are important to and affect many citizens.

I live in District 18. As you may recall, we have been without any representation in the US Congress since March 5th 2025 when Congressman Sylvester Turner unfortunately passed away.

We also have a major problem here in Houston with respect to freight trains. They run slowly and often park, waiting for their opportunity to get to their destination. There are too many level grade street crossings and too many places where a stopped train may entice a teenager (or someone else) to cross through the train rather than wait 30 minutes or so for the train to move. This unfortunately has cost lives.

The rail lines were laid out in the 1850's.

Below is a map of the system as it is today.

What is needed is a complete review of freight train operations within the Houston region. This cannot be addressed at city level or at state level for that matter. It really does need to be at Federal level and with a congressman with deep local knowledge of the issue, and with enthusiastic local input.

The goals would be

1. To simplify the rail line system
2. To enhance train efficiency with state-of-the-art control/signaling
3. Implement grade separation where possible at both rail and road crossings
4. Speed up overall train speed, given better separation, protection of fewer lines etc.

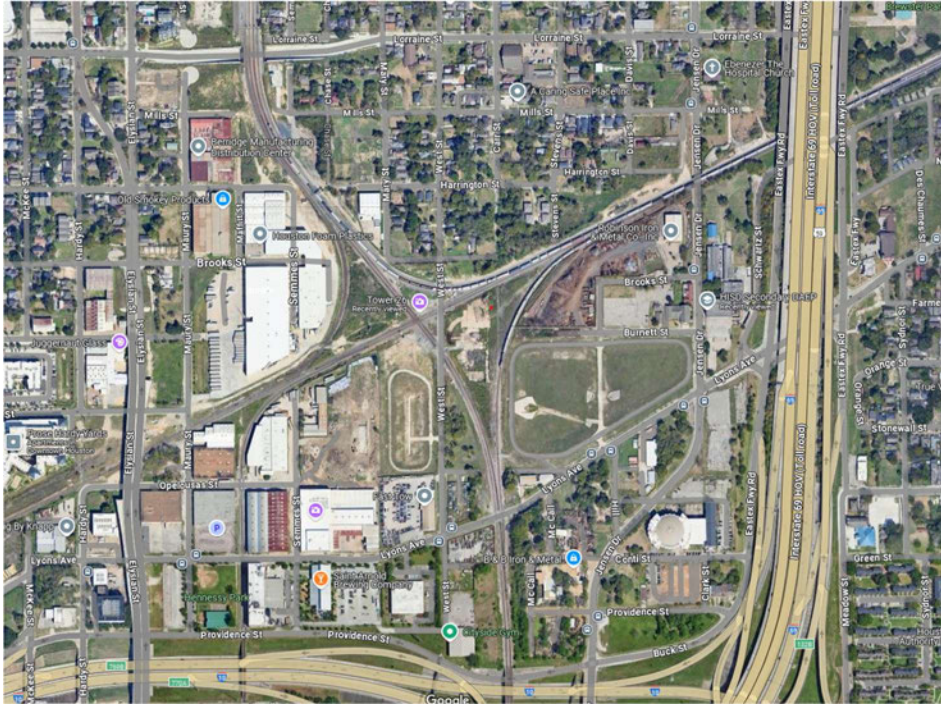
It is a system revamp with benefits for both residents and train operators. Federal "sticks and carrots" are probably required.



Some of these lines handle less than 10 trains per day.

In addition, junctions tend to be single grade – effectively one train cannot continue on a North-South route while another is progressing East-West.

“Tower 26” (named after the original signal-box, since demolished) is probably the most significant single grade junction in Houston. An ariel view is shown below.

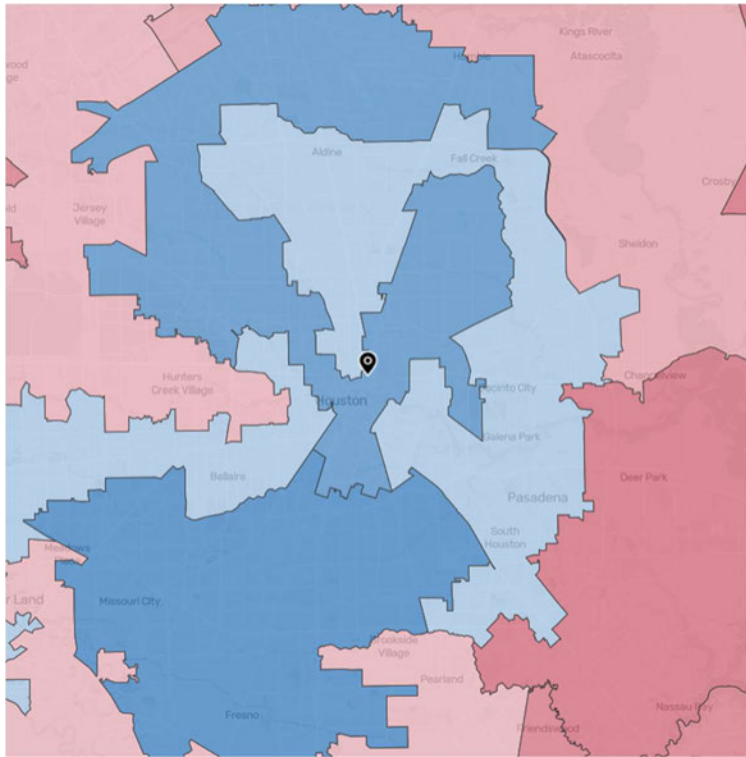


It is located at 1415 West St. Houston Tx 77020. It is a simple single grade crossing as seen in the picture below.



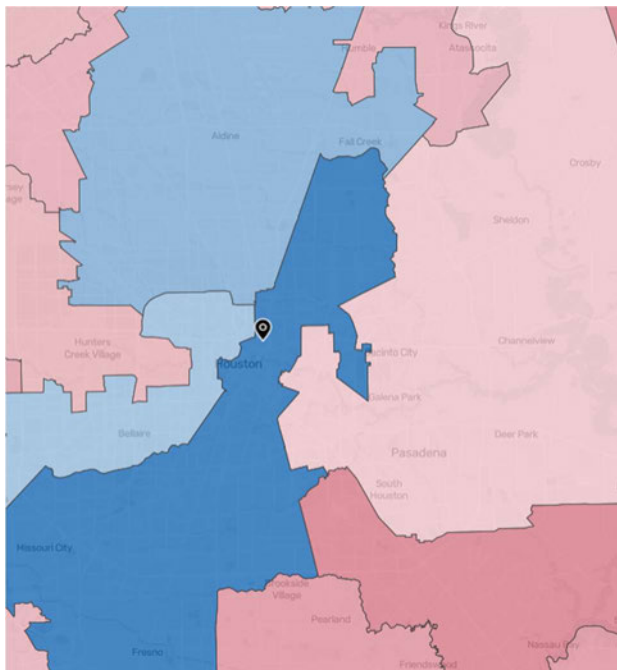
I currently live in the Houston Heights in District 18. My father was a railway-man for all of his career.

In the current districting map, Tower 26 is within District 18.

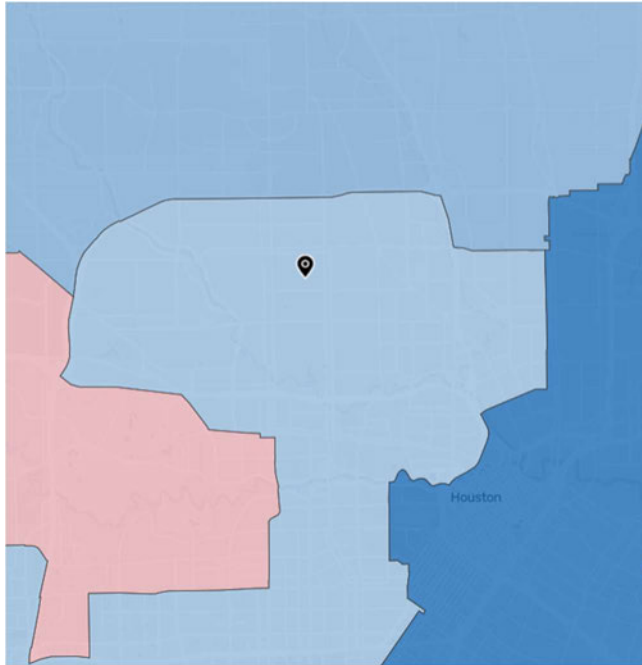


Current Map – Tower 26 within District 18.

In the proposed redistricting it is not.



Proposed redistricting with Tower 26 shown.



My location following redistricting.

What Redistricting Results in:

1. Issues that were in one district are now in a different one.
2. Individuals who could address their Congress Representative on the matter of an issue that was within their district will find it much more difficult to follow up on the issue with a Congress Representative who is simply not theirs.

Redistricting is simply a huge distraction which takes away momentum to sort out issues that are important to and affect many citizens.

Colin Leach



Houston, Tx

