

[REDACTED]

Date: 2025-07-29
First Name: Kelsey
Last Name: Balaban
Title: N/A
Organization: self
Address: [REDACTED]
City: Austin
State: TX
Zipcode: [REDACTED]
Phone: [REDACTED]

Affirm public info: I agree

Regarding: Congressional

Message:

My name is Kelsey Balaban, and I'm representing myself. Thank you to the Committee and to Chairman King for the opportunity to testify, and to my Senator, Sarah Eckhardt, for alerting me to this opportunity. I'm a native Texan and I live in Austin.

I signed up to testify and watched the hearing until the very last minute before I had to go back to work. I'd like to register my deep opposition to this mid-decade attempt to redistrict, especially when we have no maps to show the actual plans. I support redistricting run by independent commissions that leads to more Texans being fairly represented. On the other hand, partisan redistricting—on either side—dilutes representation. I'm deeply concerned that continuing with these redistricting plans will further our state's long history of leaving fellow Texans who are Black, Latino, and Asian underrepresented. I'm also concerned about the fact that this Session's actions are already motivating other states to call for their own similarly-partisan redistricting.

I echo previous speakers in saying that this focus takes time that the Special Session could use to address the recent flood victims' needs, prepare for future natural disasters, and deal with many other pressing issues. We have many ongoing problems in Texas that need bipartisan ideas and cooperation. We have more billion-dollar natural disasters than any other state. We have a looming water crisis. Our schools rank 40th out of 50 in the nation. Pregnant women in Texas have been dying in the last few years at 5x the rate of the rest of the country. We're dominant in affordable renewable energy, but lawmakers have taken actions this year that weaken our dominance. I urge the Committee to turn their attention to these and other concerns held by Texans.

I have no idea yet if my district will be affected, but I would like for it to stay intact. I care about my neighbors and I being able to afford good schools, clean energy, healthcare, housing, and preparedness for increasingly intense weather disasters. My current representatives share my values, and I'm concerned that if my district is redrawn, it will be harder to work for these priorities. So for that reason, I oppose the redistricting. Thank you for your time.

[REDACTED]