

From: applications.administrator@capitol.local
To: [Senate Redistricting](#)
Subject: INETMAIL: Redistricting Public Input
Date: Friday, March 24, 2023 9:50:10 AM

Date: 2023-03-24
First Name: anusheh
Last Name: siddique
Title: N/A
Organization: Emgage
[REDACTED]
City: missouri city
State: TX
[REDACTED]

Affirm public info: I agree

Regarding: Senate

Message:

To the Chairwoman and Senators of the Senate Special Committee on Redistricting: My name is Anusheh Siddique and I am testifying against the current Senate map (Plan S2168/formerly S.B. 4/presented in S.B. 375)) on behalf of myself and Emgage, a non-profit organization that seeks to civically engage, educate, and empower American Muslims and the AAPI community. I live in Fort Bend County in Texas Senate District 17. In 1965, the Voting Rights Act was passed to counter Jim Crow laws and to provide safeguards against voter suppression. Section Two of the VRA was critical, an effort to protect minority voters from having their voices and votes diluted. From 2010 to 2020, I'm proud to say Texas has added almost 4 million people and minority communities in Fort Bend have grown substantially and proportionally faster than white communities. Unfortunately, the map this body authored and wants to pass again does not reflect this growth. Your map continues to neglect the rapid growth of minority communities, the same neglect they have previously faced through decades of decision making behind closed doors. Voters should decide who their politicians are. Politicians should not be deciding their voters. Ask yourself, is this a conflict of interest? The district I am supposed to call "mine" carves out AAPI populations and prevent them from consolidating any power as a voting bloc or having any future of electing a representative with our interests at heart. What does proper representation mean and why is it important? Texas ranks fourth in anti-AAPI hate crimes. It is notorious for having poor maternal health outcomes and the highest uninsured rate for both children and adults. This means that when, say my father or my neighbors or my fellow believers in faith are praying for safety at their place of worship or hoping for equitable healthcare practices for example, their representatives are allowed to opt for wildly unpopular decisions without fear of consequences. My community is broken apart to ensure our voices are diluted. That's not an exaggeration; check the Senate map and you will see that it is broken apart. This is intentional and racist. And it impacts my community, our communities in every capacity, from education, to infrastructure, to safety, to healthcare. Chairwoman Huffman: Despite being in your district and being your constituent, I am not represented in this map you support. The map drawers went out of their way to exclude me and people who look like me. I have worked at schools, with non-profits, and community organizations. In each of these fields, I have found marginalized communities are further split and fractured for electoral benefit. And now, Chairwoman, my Senator, you are pretending to collect public input when you have already stated your intention of rubber-stamping the existing maps. I, my colleagues from Emgage, and other community members asked you over and over again in 2021 to keep communities of interest together and not commit racial

gerrymandering. You ignored us, and you are giving us every reason to think you will ignore us again by announcing what your decision is before beginning the public input process. I ask you, my Senator, and all those in power to let the voters decide their politicians, instead of the other way around through “fixing” the maps at the expense of what is supposed to be our democracy. Make a good faith effort to engage the public, and take our testimony into account. Open the doors to the public and when we rise, let us rise together.

