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Regarding: Congressional

Message:  
Testimony on Redistricting and Health Disparities in the  
Rio Grande Valley  
Cynthia A. Gutierrez, MBA  
Public Health Expert | Trustee, PSJA ISD

\*\* SEE ATTACHMENT



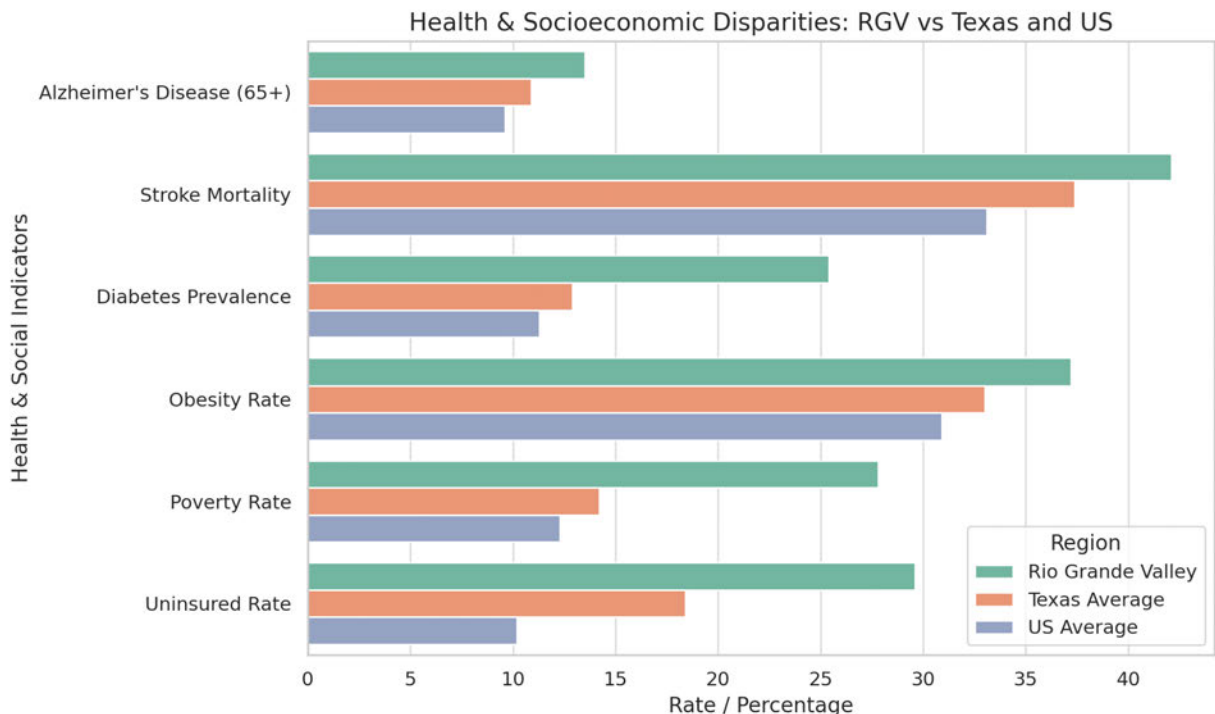
# Testimony on Redistricting and Health Disparities in the Rio Grande Valley

Dr. Cynthia A. Gutierrez, MBA  
Public Health Expert | Trustee, PSJA ISD

The Rio Grande Valley (RGV) is one of the most underserved and vulnerable regions in the State of Texas. This community faces a perfect storm of challenges—from high chronic disease rates to systemic underinvestment. Redistricting proposals that divide and dilute representation in this region risk compounding health inequities and undercutting the Valley’s ability to secure critical resources.

We have significantly higher rates of Alzheimer’s, stroke, diabetes, obesity, poverty, and lack of insurance coverage when compared to Texas and national averages. When overlaid with maps of poverty, chronic illness, and infrastructure gaps, the darkest and most distressed zones fall consistently over the RGV.

The chart below illustrates these disparities clearly:



As someone who helped build the City of Pharr’s first public health department from the ground up, I know what’s possible when we have unified representation and focused investment. The Valley needs more than political reshuffling—we need resources. We need funding to support health departments in every city. We need to establish a Regional Public Health Organization to coordinate services, improve outcomes, and respond to emergencies.

Dividing our congressional districts weakens our ability to achieve this, both politically and

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operationally. Please do not let redistricting rob us of our voice or deny us the infrastructure we need to thrive. We are not a line on a map—we are Texans. And we are asking for a fair and united path forward.