



Date: 2025-08-07
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Affirm public info: I agree

Regarding: Congressional

Message:

My name is Khanay Turner. I am a resident of Fort Worth, Tarrant County, Texas, and I serve as the Executive Director of the Barbara Jordan Leadership Institute (BJLI)—an organization committed to uplifting, training, and empowering Black Texans across Greater Houston, North Texas, and East Texas to understand their power and fight for a seat at the table.

We carry the legacy of the Honorable Barbara Jordan, the first Black woman from the South elected to the U.S. Congress, who used her seat to speak truth to power and defend the Constitution with unflinching clarity. Yet here we are, in 2025, facing a redistricting process that once again erects barriers to that very representation and silences communities that have built and sustained this state.

HB 4 is more than a bad map. It's a targeted effort to undermine Black and Brown political power in Texas. The proposed congressional map completely dismantles Congressional District 9 (CD 9)—a historic Black opportunity district in Houston—leaving more than 800,000 Texans without fair or effective representation. It packs Black, Latino, and Asian American voters into CD 18 and 29, suppressing our influence across neighboring districts and violating both the Voting Rights Act and the Equal Protection Clause.

And the damage extends far beyond Houston. In Tarrant County, where I live and work, this map completely removes any Black or minority-majority congressional representation, effectively silencing

the voices of nearly 1.3 million people of color. These are the very communities who fueled the state's growth. Their contributions matter—and so should their votes.

If SB 4 is enacted, Texas—one of the most racially diverse states in the country—would be left with only two congressional districts where Black Texans have a meaningful opportunity to elect candidates of their choice. That is not democracy. That is disenfranchisement.

Let's be clear: 95% of Texas' population growth in the last decade came from communities of color, yet this proposed map completely ignores that demographic reality. It is not a coincidence—it is a choice. A deliberate one, designed to dilute, divide, and dismiss the very people who have built this state and made it what it is.

At BJLI, we believe in building Black civic power. But when the state draws maps that erase our presence and undermine our rights, that mission becomes harder, and our democracy weaker.

I urge this Committee to reject SB 4. Do not move forward with mid-decade redistricting without updated Census data or full legal review of the current maps. Honor the legacy of Barbara Jordan. Protect the voices of Black Texans, and all Texans who believe in fairness, equity, and representative government.

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