

[REDACTED]

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Date: 2025-08-07

First Name: Kourtney

Last Name: Benton

Title: Attorney and Community Advocate

Organization: Self

Address: [REDACTED]

City: Austin

State: Texas

Zipcode: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

Affirm public info: I agree

Regarding: Congressional

Message:

Good morning. My name is Kourtney Benton, lawyer and community advocate. I am a resident of Austin, Texas. I stand here in opposition of redistricting and the proposed Texas Congressional Map.

“I am sick and tired of being sick and tired. One day I know the struggle will change. There’s got to be a change-not only for [Texas], not only for the people in the United States, but people all over the world.” - Fannie Lou Hamer

What is Democracy? And where did our Democracy go? According to Cornell Law School’s Legal Information Institute, “Democracy is a system of government in which the right to govern lies with the people.” “Democracy is valued for promoting political stability, individual freedoms, and accountability in governance, allowing for peaceful transfers of power and providing mechanisms to redress grievances and injustices.” As a Black resident of Austin, I don’t feel safe. I don’t feel safe because there is an attempt to suppress votes and voices of people whose vote and voice matters. With the proposed Texas Congressional Map, this Race Based Racial Gerrymandering is in play and negatively impacts many people, especially our Black and Brown communities, something that has gone on for years. When is enough enough? I always hated the word Gerrymandering as a kid. However, I understand it more than ever today as I stand here fighting for a fundamental right as boundaries around me get manipulated at the cost of our citizens. The very right that had people who look like me sacrifice their lives through literal blood, sweat and tears to have. Yesterday was the 60th anniversary for when the Voting Rights Act became law. Thank God we have people who are willing to take charge, stand up and fight for this democracy. It saddens me that those very people received potential threats towards them and their families while at the same time having their own Government in which they serve seek to find and arrest them. Lord, I pray for them. If no one does what they are doing, then who will do it? It truly takes nothing but faith, courage and bravery and I thank every single one of them for making me feel important, and standing on business for the sake of our democracy. They deserve more credit. People are still affected by the flood. Education, especially special education, is failing. Gun violence is still at an all time high. Citizens are concerned about healthcare. We have bigger fish to fry than redrawing lines on a map. As Lyndon B. Johnson said when he signed the Voter Rights Act in 1965, “Every American citizen must have an equal right to vote. There is no reason which can excuse the denial of that right. There is no duty

which weighs more heavily on us than the duty we have to ensure that right.”

Thank you.

