



Date: 2025-08-07

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Affirm public info: I agree

Regarding: Congressional

Message:

TESTIMONY

FAIR MAPS TEXAS

Senate Committee on Congressional Redistricting, Special

August 7, 2025

My name is Stephanie Swanson, and I am providing testimony on behalf of the Fair Maps Texas Coalition as well as for myself. We are in strong opposition to SB 4.

Expert Witness Report: I would like to start by informing the committee that I have emailed a copy of the expert witness report that was prepared by Dr. Monica Munoz Martinez on behalf of the Fair Maps Texas plaintiffs for our litigation challenging Texas' 2021 state legislative and congressional district maps. This report examines the history of voting discrimination in Texas against African-American voters, Asian-American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) voters, and Latino voters. It also examines how other types of discrimination against racial and ethnic voters depress their political participation.

Judicial Review: We urge the Legislature to respect the separation of powers between the judicial and the legislative branches of our government and allow the ongoing litigation over the state's current congressional map to conclude. It is not ok for the Legislature to use mid-census redistricting as a way to hold up our maps in court indefinitely, preventing communities from ever seeing relief.

Intentional Racial Discrimination: The Fair Maps Texas Coalition has genuine concerns about the constitutionality of this map proposal. The State has brazenly targeted districts that are presently providing minority voters meaningful opportunities to participate in the electoral process and elect representatives of choice. Several of the districts that have been dismantled are historical districts and have deep significance to the communities living within these districts. The Minority CVAP (MCVAP) of these districts in PlanC2193 are as

follows:

CD 18 has a total MCVAP of 75.8%.

CD 29 is a majority-minority district. It has a MCVAP of 86.2% and a Hispanic CVAP of 64.8%. It is protected under Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act.

CD 9 has a total Minority CVAP of 81.3%.

By targeting and eliminating the power that these districts presently provide to its inhabitants, the State is engaging in illegal intentional race- based discrimination.

The State has also chosen to target districts that were created by the courts to reconcile Texas' past history of racial discrimination.

These districts include CD 33 and 35. The Minority CVAP (MCVAP) of these districts in PlanC2193 are as follows: CD 33 has a total Minority CVAP of 76.2%.

CD 35 has a total Minority CVAP of 65.8% and a HCVAP of 47.6%. It should be noted that the HCVAP of CD 35 was decreased by the state during the 2021 round of redistricting. In 2020, the HCVAP for the district was 52.67%, meaning that this district was a protected district under Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act had the State not diluted it.

While the boundaries of these districts might have changed during the 2021 round of redistricting, the core of the districts have remained intact, and they have allowed communities of color to elect candidates of choice. By purposely targeting these districts, the state appears to be showing a lack of respect for the judicial process and is again engaging in illegal intentional race-based discrimination.

Time to assess the maps: This public hearing is being held only a week after publication of the draft Congressional map. That is not sufficient time for the general public, who do not have access to RedAppl and all of its reports, to assess the maps and determine whether they are fair and abide by the constitutional and federal law. There are genuine concerns about the constitutionality of these maps – it appears that as in previous cycles, there are patterns of packing and cracking of Black, Latinx, and AAPI communities across the state. By providing only a few days for the public to assess the maps, the Legislature is sending a clear message that it is not interested in hearing the concerns of its constituents and is merely going through the motions while moving full steam ahead with its own plans and disregarding the concerns and voices of the constituents you claim to serve.

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