

[REDACTED]

Date: 2025-07-30
First Name: Ashley
Last Name: Wilson
Title: N/A
Organization: self
Address: [REDACTED]
City: Rule
State: TX
Zipcode: [REDACTED]
Phone: [REDACTED]

Affirm public info: I agree

Regarding: Congressional

Message:

As A citizen of Texas, I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the upcoming redistricting efforts in our state. As you proceed with this process, I urge you to uphold not only the letter but the spirit of the Voting Rights Act and the U.S. Constitution. Any redistricting effort that fails to ensure fair representation for all Texans, especially minority populations, and instead serves to entrench the power of the current political majority, would be a disservice to our state and an absolute betrayal of democratic principles.

Efforts to gerrymander districts for partisan gain undermine the legitimacy of our representative democracy. While legislative districts can be manipulated to dilute the votes of racial minorities and political opponents, it is critical to recognize that this strategy has long-term consequences, particularly at the federal level. U.S. Senate elections are statewide contests that cannot be gerrymandered. If citizens feel persistently silenced or marginalized in state and congressional districts, that frustration will inevitably be expressed through broader electoral participation in statewide elections such as Governor, Lt. Governor, and Attorney General. This has the potential to reshape the political landscape of Texas in ways that cannot be engineered through district maps.

History offers a stark warning against systems that claim to represent people while structurally silencing their voices. During the American colonial period, British officials defended their governance over the colonies using the concept of "virtual representation." Members of Parliament argued that even though American colonists had no direct vote or representatives in Parliament, they were still represented because Parliament purportedly acted in the interest of the entire British Empire.

The American colonists soundly rejected this notion of virtual representation. They understood then, as we must understand now, that representation in name only, without meaningful participation, is no representation at all. The cry of "No taxation without representation" emerged from the recognition that legitimacy in governance requires actual, accountable, and responsive representation. Theoretical or symbolic gestures just do not cut it!

This same flawed concept of virtual representation has been echoed throughout American history in the systemic disenfranchisement of persons of color. From poll taxes and literacy tests to more modern strategies like racial gerrymandering and voter suppression laws, the political power of marginalized communities has been persistently diluted. Like only allowing one drop

box for absentee ballots per county in Texas which hinders voter access, especially in large counties that just happen to have large minority populations. These communities are often told they are still represented, even as they are denied the full power of the vote.

Gerrymandering along racial or partisan lines is simply a modern version of this same fallacy. It creates a mirage of representation while ensuring that the actual interests and voices of minority populations are either fragmented across districts or packed into as few districts as possible. This not only weakens their influence but also breeds deep cynicism about our democratic institutions.

Texas is a diverse and rapidly evolving state. It is both morally and strategically short-sighted to draw districts that fail to reflect this diversity. Fair redistricting is not about favoring one party over another. It is about ensuring that all communities, especially historically marginalized ones, have an equal opportunity to influence the policies that shape their lives.

As it is written in Proverbs 31:8–9: “Open thy mouth for the dumb in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction. Open thy mouth, judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy.” This passage calls upon those in power to speak for the voiceless and to judge with righteousness. In the context of redistricting, that means listening to underrepresented communities and ensuring their voices are not drowned out by partisan maneuvering.

I urge this committee to embrace transparency, fairness, and equity in its redistricting process. Texas has the opportunity to be a model of democratic integrity—not a cautionary tale of how democracies can be hollowed out from within. History shows us how seemingly democratic systems can be manipulated into authoritarian ones. In 21st-century Russia, elections still occur, but the suppression of opposition candidates, and state-controlled media have rendered them largely symbolic. They maintain the façade of democracy without the substance. Similarly, in the Weimar Republic of the early 20th century, legal political processes were exploited to concentrate power, eventually allowing an autocrat to rise through constitutional means before dismantling the very system that enabled him. In both cases, democratic institutions were not destroyed overnight. They were slowly eroded by those who prioritized power over participation. Texas must reject that path. Voters should choose their representatives; the representatives should not choose their voters!

The American colonists fought a revolution over the denial of representation. Let us not forget that history, nor repeat its mistakes under new names and with new tools. Uphold the principle that every Texan deserves a meaningful vote and a voice in the legislative process.

We would do well to heed the warning of Isaiah 10:1–2: “Woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that write grievousness which they have prescribed; To turn aside the needy from judgment, and to take away the right from the poor of my people...” These verses remind us that injustice in lawmaking is not a new problem, but it is always a grave one. When laws or districts are drawn to suppress rather than serve, they violate both democratic principles and moral law. The health of our democracy, and the credibility of this committee especially, depend upon it.

