

[REDACTED]

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Affirm public info: I agree

Regarding: Congressional

Message:

Dear Senate Subcommittee,

“Let us rededicate ourselves to America's mission of freedom; and let us resolve that we will stand, as did those before us, with all who love freedom and yearn for democracy, wherever they might be. And let us remember our heritage and, with it, our destiny -- the destiny of this shining city on a hill, this beacon of freedom for all the peoples of the Earth.”

– Ronald Reagan.

Throughout the history of the American Republic, the most significant principle that has driven the progress of our nation is democracy. At every step of the way, every leap and bound forward, democracy has soaked every page and event where we declared ourselves triumphant. It was there when the first words of the Constitution were written; it was there when voter rights were expanded, not once, but again and again and again, and when those same rights were defended from voices seeking to drown out our democracy. The eyes of history continue to wash over and gleam at those moments when we find ourselves able to unify differences in race, nationality, gender, religion, economic status, and orientation through the expansion of democracy. And, there are seldom moments greater for the liberation of unjustly oppressed people when they are given the simple right to vote. However, the right to vote means nothing without the ability to do so, and this is a lesson we have learned over and over and over again. A victory was given to injustice when freed slaves were given the right to vote, only for poll taxes, literacy tests, and intimidation were used to strip their children of the ability to act on that right for 100 years.

A similar threat is on our doorstep today. Regardless of political affiliation, the act of turning a 56% - 42%, Republican – Democrat state (by 2024 popular vote) into a 79% - 21% state (by district) is undemocratic. Making this change would be insulting to all Texans; it is no clearer cut than that. Not only does the Democratic Party suffer, but so does the entire state. Republican constituents and Democratic constituents are being treated like numbers on a map, not like the people they are. This map silences the voices of people across the political spectrum. The river of democracy runs dry when there is no one to feed into it. Texas already struggles with voter participation, and this only makes it worse. What will be the point of voting if everyone has been crammed into a district where a supermajority votes and believes the same thing? The progress and change that is

necessary for both parties to make, as society changes and new problems arise, will not happen because they cannot be forced to by the voters. If these practices had been present 60 years ago, Texas would have had a minority democratic population sovereign over republicans. Such an idea should shock and confuse any rational person who believes in American democracy.

“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all people should be treated equal” is a quote that has likely been ringing through these hearings, and I hope the sentiment breaks through. Texas will be cast aside and treated as just another red state, our voters less than any other. Texas should be a red state because republicans can prove that their policy works, and they can convince voters that they know what is best, unlike anyone else. A Texan is not handed something on a silver platter; they fight for it, and our politicians can’t be treated differently. If we truly want to be the state that leads the 21st century, we can’t back down from a fight, submit to complacency, and be a tool of injustice.

We refuse to have our proper vote and representation taken away from us. We are not another number to be sorted for political advantage. As someone who lives in Austin, in what would be a supermajority democratic district, I find my soon-to-be lack of impact in the democratic process disheartening and a stain on what this state and country believe in.

I urge you to listen to what is being said. Listen to Texans, listen to your gut, not some man a thousand miles away in Washington D.C. telling you what to do.

Reject this map, reject complacency, reject injustice.

To a future that shines brighter than today,  
Henry Holmes

