

[REDACTED]

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Date: 2025-07-28

First Name: Ottis

Last Name: Foster

Title: N/A

Organization: self

Address: [REDACTED]

City: McGregor

State: TX

Zipcode: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

Affirm public info: I agree

Regarding: Congressional

Message:

Thank you for this opportunity to submit public comments on Texas redistricting in this first Special Legislative Session for 2025. I understand that this redistricting is intended to create congressional districts that provide additional Republican seats in Congress. This Gerrymandering renders meaningless an individual's vote, since the outcome is essentially pre-ordained by those already in power. With gerrymandering, no longer does our government (as said in the Declaration of Independence) 'derive (its) just powers from the consent of the governed.'

That the courts have not ruled against gerrymandering is baffling, given its incompatibility with a republic like ours that relies on the will of the citizens expressed at the ballot box. During this redistricting effort, I respectfully request a Texas law stating in essence that gerrymandered districts favoring a candidate or party are illegal, providing for the immediate correction thereof, and providing substantial penalties for individuals and/or entities attempting to directly or indirectly gerrymander future voting districts. This redistricting effort is an opportunity for our legislature to restore fair elections by outlawing gerrymandering. Computer software reprogrammed to exclude gerrymandering could quickly generate fair districts, and candidates could then appeal for support to govern accordingly.

At the very least, I request that the legislature view computer-generated redistricting maps created with the usual redistricting parameters, but excluding partisan gerrymandering. Maps could also be generated that exclude race and/or ethnicity parameters, although the stated reasons for including these parameters are to address systemic inequality and not intended to give unfair advantage to a party or candidate in power. Since including race and or ethnicity I understand does currently or in the recent past give advantage to a particular party, deciding on these parameters is a matter for serious deliberation.

The party in power may be surprised to find that these more democratic districts may still result in the party's dominance, with the benefit that the new districts would be more compact and restore a fairer voting system. Recognizing that the party in power does want to retain power, even if by unfair means such as gerrymandering, the legislature could tweak the non-partisan boundaries for partisan gain but not continue with outlandish boundaries that have little connection between voters other than party affiliation.

Best wishes for a productive session that is a blessing for Texans.

Ottis Foster,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]