

Koy Kunkel_SC

From: applications.administrator@capitol.local
Sent: Friday, January 29, 2021 10:06 AM
To: Senate Redistricting
Subject: INETMAIL: Redistricting Public Input

Date: 2021-01-29
First Name: Carolyn
Last Name: Salter, MD
Title: Dr. or Hon. (former Mayor of Palestine TX)
Organization: self
Address: [REDACTED]
City: Palestine
State: TX
Zipcode: [REDACTED]
Phone: [REDACTED]

Affirm public info: I agree

Regarding: Senate

Message:

I made this testimony/statement on Zoom to the committee with only a few minor changes.

Texas Senate Special Committee on Redistricting. Hearing on East Texas region held on January 29, 2021.

Name: Carolyn Salter, MD

Date: January 29, 2021

[REDACTED]

Interested: practicing physician, small business owner, former mayor of Palestine Texas.

Speaking on behalf: self only

I am Dr. Carolyn Salter, MD and am a physician, small business owner, and a former mayor of Palestine, Texas in Anderson County. I would like to thank the members of this committee, the Chair and Vice=Chair and especially my Senator, Robert Nichols, for hearing me today.

My statement before this committee today is to ask that Texas move toward an impartial, transparent, bipartisan redistricting process. Although a long-held tradition in Texas, redistricting in favor of a single party has not in Texas, especially rural areas, led to a process that promotes something Republicans repeatedly state that they want, and that is competition. Gerrymandering in Texas districts, from congressional to state house and senate levels, has led to non-competitive races, non-responsiveness to constituents, and has not produced prosperity in rural areas. If 20 years of gerrymandering in favor of Republican prospects was an effective way of governing, we would have high-speed Internet, bustling

small, locally owned businesses and excellent schools in all our rural areas which currently does not exist.

Gerrymandering can produce some benefits such as decreased campaign expenses, at least some minority representation and seniority of representatives over time. Studies have also shown that gerrymandering leads to higher costs of credit to constituents because of the relaxation of financial regulation which stifles consumer spending and building of new business. It also reduces of vulnerability to being accountable to their voters and a tendency toward more radicalized ideologues occupying positions, such as the talk of secession now. I encourage you to put fairness, transparency, and accountability as a primary goal of the redistricting process for more responsive government and less voter apathy. I urge you again to move toward an impartial bi-partisan redistricting process. Thank you for listening to my comments.

