

Koy Kunkel_SC

From: applications.administrator@capitol.local
Sent: Thursday, January 28, 2021 10:14 AM
To: Senate Redistricting
Subject: INETMAIL: Redistricting Public Input
Attachments: Lexis K Deeds Not Words Redistricting Testimony_docx.pdf

Date: 2021-01-28
First Name: Lexis
Last Name: Khetsavanh
Title: Chapter Member-- University of Texas at Dallas
Organization: Deeds Not Words, self
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Affirm public info: I agree

Regarding: Senate

[REDACTED]



Senate Special Redistricting Committee

Attn: The Honorable Joan Huffman, Chair

Capitol Station

Austin, Texas 78711

Re: Written testimony; preserving fair redistricting practices, 87(R)

Dear Senator Huffman and Members of the Committee,

My name is Lexis Khetsavanh, and I am a freshman at the University of Texas at Dallas. I am a Changemaker with Deeds Not Words and the co-chair of my chapter's racial justice committee.

I write to you in support of ensuring fair redistricting practices. It is important to remember the American system of governance was founded upon ideals of equality. In 1787, James Madison's *Federalist No. 10* supported the idea of a representative democracy: "as each representative will be chosen by a greater number of citizens in the large than in the small republic, it will be more difficult for unworthy candidates to practice with success the vicious arts by which elections are too often carried; and the suffrages of the people being more free, will be more likely to centre in men who possess the most attractive merit and the most diffusive and established characters." Though equal representation hasn't always been achieved (and still hasn't been), time and time again we have sought to affirm them. It is time Texas seeks to affirm them as well.

How is it that parts of San Antonio and El Paso are one district, and parts of San Antonio and Austin are another?

How is it that in 2020, 5,890,347 votes were cast for the Republican presidential candidate (52% of the vote) and 5,259,126 were cast for the Democratic candidate

(46.5%)--but 23 out of the 36 Congressional districts (64%) went towards a Republican candidate, a much more significant percentage?

How is it that only 41% of Texans are white, but 61% of Texas lawmakers are?

The math simply does not add up—it is incredibly apparent that voices are being stripped away, and it is the duty of this committee to ensure that does not continue to happen. It is never too late to change, to ensure equality and fairness for all.

In 1870, the 15th amendment affirmed African American men’s right to vote, to make sure that they could receive representation in voting.

In 1920, the 19th amendment affirmed women’s right to vote, to make sure that they could receive representation in voting.

In 1962, *Baker v. Carr* affirmed the doctrine of one man, one vote, to make sure that all people could receive equal representation in voting.

In 1965, the Voting Rights Act once again affirmed African American’s right to vote, to make sure that they could truly receive representation in voting.

In 2021, the Texas legislature affirmed all people’s right to vote and receive equal representation, to make sure that all people could truly receive equal representation in voting.

I wish that I’ll be able to say this last point and mean it. To do so, I urge you to pass legislation to guarantee that districts are redrawn fairly. As we’ve seen, society is always changing, improving, trying to fix its mistakes—don’t impede that process.

For any questions contact, Andrea Reyes, Political Director at Deeds Not Words

[REDACTED]
Austin, TX,
[REDACTED]

Deeds Not Words is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization creating today’s Changemakers and tomorrow’s leaders by galvanizing the power and building the leadership of young people through organizing, policy-making, art, and voting.

