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From: applications.administrator@capitol.local
Sent: Monday, January 11, 2021 3:49 PM
To: Senate Redistricting
Subject: INETMAIL: Redistricting Public Input
Attachments: Fair and Open Process 6.docx

Date: 2021-01-11
First Name: Ginger
Last Name: Johnson
Title: N/A
Organization: Texans Against Gerrymandering
Address: [REDACTED]
City: Richmond
State: Texas
Zipcode: [REDACTED]
Phone: [REDACTED]

Affirm public info: I agree

Regarding: Senate

Message:
Fair and Open Process

Good afternoon. My name is Ginger Johnson and I am a fairly new resident of the state of Texas. As my oldest son likes to tell it, during the summer of 2018, he drove his mother across the country so that she could move into a house in the residential community that would be Ground Zero for the coronavirus in Texas. That actually is true. I live in Del Webb Sweetgrass and we were the first community in Texas quarantined due to one of our residents testing positive after returning from a cruise to Egypt. Because I live in Del Webb Sweetgrass, I am in Fort Bend County, in Texas Senate District 18, and in Texas House District 85.

Today I'm speaking to you as a member of Texans Against Gerrymandering, also referred to as TAG, a group that I joined shortly after moving here. TAG is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization committed to educating the community about gerrymandering and how gerrymandering effects the lives of all of the citizens of our state. It is our desire that our state redistricting be conducted this year as part of a fair and open process.

We've all just gone through a year that will be recorded in the history books as "2020: The Year of the Great Pandemic". Last summer during this pandemic we watched people come together after the death of a man named George Floyd. They marched down streets all over the world. People of different races, nationalities, and religions chose to come out of their homes and join together to speak up for equal justice. Whether they were choosing to wear masks or not, all of these people were risking their lives because they wanted to be heard. Just think about that. In the middle of a pandemic, people were willing to risk their lives in order to be heard. That's how important being heard is to human beings.

All of the people in our communities should have a chance to be heard. Thanks to TAG and other similar organizations, the people in our communities are well aware of the importance of their district maps. They understand how numerous things in their lives will be

determined over the next ten years by how those maps are drawn up. Due to the pandemic in order for the redistricting process to be both fair and open, public hearings about redistricting need to be virtual. These virtual hearings should be held after the proposed maps have been drawn but prior to them being passed through Committee. Adequate time should be provided for the public, as well as legislators, to introduce alternative mapping suggestions. And remember that those maps must comply with the Voting Rights Act so all maps should represent a fair cross-section of the people in those districts.

We shall never have a fair and open redistricting process unless the legislature provides the means by which the people in our communities can be heard. Properly held virtual hearings are the right thing to do because, even during a pandemic, people in communities all over Texas want to be heard.

