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From: applications.administrator@capitol.local
Sent: Thursday, March 11, 2021 3:54 PM
To: Senate Redistricting
Subject: INETMAIL: Redistricting Public Input

Date: 2021-03-11

First Name: Rocio

Last Name: Witte

Title: N/A

Organization: Self

Address: [REDACTED]

City: Humble

State: TX

Zipcode: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

Affirm public info: I agree

Regarding: Senate

Message:

I would like to start by saying that the most important thing for this Committee to do is to respect federal and state law, including the Voting Rights Act. None of my testimony today should be used by the legislature to justify diminishing the ability of a minority group to elect the candidate of their choice or artificially distorting maps for racial or partisan purposes.

During the recent hearing to review evidence for the bail-in provision of Section 3 of the Voting Rights Act, U.S. District Judge Xavier Rodriguez criticized the 2011 redistricting effort for not having "maps visible for the public" to view. Therefore, I insist that proposed maps be put on display for the public to view during those hearings. In order to uphold the Voting Rights Act, you should prioritize keeping ethnic and/or language minority groups together (i.e. their neighborhood should be kept whole.)

I also ask that you please provide at the very least, Spanish translation. In the area that I work in (East Aldine) (77039), very few residents know or understand this process and when they do want to get involved and voice their opinion they feel very intimidated because they feel that their concerns will not be heard. If you are not even providing Spanish translation, it gives Latin communities the impression that you are not here to serve them.

In order for our democracy to function, the public needs to have a voice in the process.

I ask that the Committee give the public sufficient notice and capability to review the maps before this hearing. I also want the legislators who draw the maps to explain why they chose to draw them the way they did, and to not hide any communications they have had regarding drawing the maps. In order to build trust that the maps have not been unfairly manipulated, I ask that the legislature doesn't look at partisanship when coming up with maps.

This is an opportunity for the Texas Legislature to finally get this process right and avoid millions of taxpayer dollars and years of lawsuits, so I hope that you will take this testimony to heart. Thank you for your time.

