

SENATOR JOAN HUFFMAN  
CHAIR

SENATOR JUAN "CHUY" HINOJOSA  
VICE CHAIR



POST OFFICE BOX 12068  
AUSTIN, TX 78711  
(512) 463-0493  
FAX: (512) 463-0173

## SENATE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON REDISTRICTING

March 10, 2021

Miguel Ángel Rivera  
Redistricting Outreach Fellow  
Texas Civil Rights Project  
Via email: miguel@texascivilrightsproject.org

Mr. Rivera,

Thank you for your March 8, 2021 email to the Texas Senate Special Committee on Redistricting. Your letter incorrectly stated that “the Committee is not providing language interpretation services for members of the public who do not speak English but wish to participate in” the Committee’s regional public-input hearings. I write to correct this misunderstanding, and to inform you that all members of the public are welcome to testify at the Committee’s regional hearings. Public witnesses who wish to testify at a regional hearing in a language other than English have several options available to them.

A public witness or their representative may contact the Committee office in advance of a regional hearing to request assistance testifying in Spanish. Committee staff will identify a Committee member able to translate the witness’s remarks from Spanish into English during public testimony. Several individuals have requested that testimony-translation services be available at particular regional hearings, and Committee members able to translate were on hand to assist, but no witness has actually shown up to testify at a regional hearing of this Committee in a language other than English. Nevertheless, the Committee will continue to provide this opportunity on request. Staff requests at least 72 hours advance notice in order to accommodate translation-assistance requests, but will work to accommodate requests made after that deadline.

Witnesses who do not speak English are also welcome to provide public input at regional hearings through a translator of their choice. Those providing translation assistance may register as a witness and inform Committee staff via [redistricting@senate.texas.gov](mailto:redistricting@senate.texas.gov). When the witness using translation assistance is called to testify via videoconference, staff will unmute both the witness and their chosen translator, who may provide a translation of the witness’s remarks in real-time. This can also be accomplished if a witness and translator participate in the Zoom meeting from the same location.

The Committee will continue its efforts to make language assistance available when a witness requests it. To that end, you state that you represent “community members wishing to testify in their native languages at the [Committee’s regional] hearing on March 13, 2021[.]” If you provide the name, contact information, and assistance requested for any such witness as soon as possible, the Committee will make every effort to accommodate non-English-language testimony.

Please do not hesitate to contact my Committee office at 512-463-0493 if you have any further input or questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joan Huffman". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the left of the typed name.

Joan Huffman  
Chair, Senate Special Committee on Redistricting

CC: Members of the Senate Special Committee on Redistricting