

Talking Points for Testimony on Mid-Census Congressional Redistricting

Where Things Currently Stand: The Governor has called on the Legislature to redistrict our congressional districts during a special legislative session, which will start on July 21, 2025. [The Trump Administration](#) has convinced our state leaders to redistrict so that Republicans can pad their slim majority in the U.S. House in time for the upcoming midterm elections. The Department of Justice is also involved in this unprecedented power grab. On Monday, they [sent a letter](#) to our state leaders citing "constitutional concerns" over four of our congressional districts — CD 9 (Al Greene), CD 33 (Mark Veasey), CD 18 (previously represented by Sylvester Turner), and CD 29 (Sylvia Garcia). These districts are all majority-minority and are located in the Houston and DFW areas. These districts are currently electing candidates of choice for communities of color.

Keep in mind that the current congressional maps that were adopted in 2021 are still being reviewed by a federal court. Texas' population growth over the last decade was fueled by communities of color, but the state did not create a congressional map that reflected that growth. Instead, they reduced the number of majority-minority districts and created new majority-anglo districts. Lawmakers also repeatedly testified in court that they drew the 2021 maps "color-blind", meaning that they did not look at racial data when they drew the maps. This was not an appropriate method for them to have used. Racial data **must** be taken into consideration when drawing districts that uphold the Voting Rights Act.

Now, the DOJ is claiming that the 4 majority-minority districts mentioned above were racially gerrymandered, and the Governor agreed to put congressional redistricting on the legislature's agenda to address the DOJ's concerns. But the State cannot have it both ways — it can't claim to have drawn the maps "color blind" and then claim some of the districts are racially gerrymandered.

Messaging:

- **This brazen move by the Governor and the DOJ to increase Republican representation in the U.S. House by taking it away from communities of color is shameful. It is blatant racial discrimination.**
- **The current district maps have never been about serving the public's interest or community's needs. The move to put mid-cycle redistricting on**

the Special Legislative Session agenda is about increasing the number of Republican districts at the costs of communities of color. This is not about partisanship. This is racial discrimination. The White House has said "jump", and the leaders of Texas are saying "how high?"

- **The makeup of Texas' congressional delegation does not reflect the diversity of our state. Texas consists of 60% people of color, but only 34% of our congressional delegation is represented by people of color. This is not a fight about political parties. It is a fight about political power and who gets to wield it.**
- The State of Texas has a very long history of discriminating against voters of color in their district maps. The State has violated the Voting Rights Act or intentionally discriminated against voters of color in every decade for the past 50 years.
- It is wrong – and unfair to all Texans – for the Legislature to take up mid-decade redistricting to further disenfranchise communities of color when the court has not even weighed in on the last round of discriminatory redistricting.
- We don't even know if the process that the state used in 2021 meets constitutional muster and if the maps that were passed uphold federal law. It is not ok for the Legislature to use mid-census redistricting as a way to hold up our maps in court indefinitely, preventing these communities from ever seeing relief.
- With our State reeling from the tragic loss of so many lives from recent floods, Texans should be seeing caring consideration from their government, not an unjustified congressional redistricting intentionally directed at communities of color.
- The proposed redistricting is nothing more than a brazen display of intentional racial discrimination, whitewashed in a false representation of constitutional law – inspired by political greed.
- There is no justification for this congressional redistricting. It is unnecessary, confusing to voters and will cause the state to waste time and money on a special session – only to later waste more time and money in litigation over whatever maps are proposed.

- “The racial gerrymandering in Texas is so institutionalized that, frankly, it has the aura of the apartheid era’s ‘white minority rule.’ In the Lone Star State, whites are 45% of the state’s population, but control 70% of the congressional districts. The disparity is even more obvious in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, where whites are only 20 percent of the population but have 80 percent of the congressional seats.” - Carol Anderson, historian
- The State is using racial discrimination in the redistricting process to prevent people of color from asserting their full voice and power. This is not a fight about political parties. It is a fight about political power and who gets to wield it.
- The State of Texas has opposed redistricting litigation for over four years by claiming its maps were drawn entirely without consideration of race. The new Department of Justice letter contradicts the sworn testimony of Texas’s lead map drawers and its elected officials, and is wrong. The Constitution and Voting Rights Act do not *require* destroying existing coalition districts. Claiming that districts are racial gerrymanders simply because they contain two or more distinct racial groups turns the Constitution and Voting Rights Act upside down and is not worthy of any response by the Texas Legislature.
- The State cannot have it both ways and claim to have both disclaimed and relied upon race in the same redistricting. The only consistency is that the State’s position will suppress the votes of people of color.
- This redistricting proposal is not just a political maneuver—it’s an existential threat to representation, resources, and rights for Black, Brown, Indigenous, immigrant, and working-class communities. When maps are manipulated, it distorts the very foundation of democracy. It silences the voices of those already struggling to be heard. It’s about clinging to power at any cost.

Solutions:

- The federal court needs to be able to make a ruling in the current litigation, and new maps should be adopted if and when the court deems them necessary.

- District lines should preserve and protect the needs of the communities within them, especially the needs of historically disenfranchised communities. Districts should elect candidates that reflect the diversity of our state.
- We need Congress to pass the John Lewis Voting Rights Act, which will modernize and revitalize the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and protect voters from race-based discrimination. It also would set minimum standards to enable all voters to experience free and fair elections.
- We need fairly chosen representatives who will be responsive to the needs of all the people, not just to billionaires and special interests. This is why we need districts that reflect the diversity of our state.
- Government works best to solve the real problems of ordinary people: affordable housing, a living wage, good public schools and accessible quality health care. Our elections should ensure that the voices of all citizens are heard, not just special interests, wealthy donors, and racially polarized extreme partisans.