# Statement on Redistricting

Victoria Locke, Chair
July 24, 2025

Greg Abbott is exploiting the devastating Hill Country floods, not to offer relief, but to ram through a cynical and divisive agenda. Rather than prioritizing aid for Texans in crisis, Abbott is pushing for a legislative session to enact a ban on hemp products, a discriminatory bathroom bill, and further restrictions on abortion pills. Most egregiously, his main priority is a power grab, seeking five additional congressional seats for Republicans in Texas, a move that shockingly comes before any flood relief.

## What exactly is going on and why should you care?

Historically, after every census, the seats in the House of Representatives are reapportioned based on the census count. Texas was apportioned two additional seats after the 2020 census. While the population growth was fueled by Latinos, the Republicans in the state legislature deliberately redrew the maps to silence, disenfranchise, and drastically diminish the political power of Latino and African-American voters by reducing the number of districts that were minority-majority, and instead increased the number of majority white districts.

The Voting Rights Act unequivocally demands that the legislative maps must not disenfranchise voters based on their race and ethnicity. In 2019, in a devastating blow to equal representation, the Supreme Court ruled that gerrymandering along partisan lines did not violate the Voting Rights Act.

According to Fair Maps Texas, at the time the districts were drawn, the Republican lawmakers insisted that they did not use racial data to create the districts, despite adding majority white districts, thus impacting communities of color. The maps were challenged by the civil rights organizations including the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). The challenges were consolidated and a bench trial was held in Spring, 2025. The maps remain under legal review by the Federal courts. The reason is clear and concise: racial data must be used to ensure legislative maps remain fair and that they comply with the Voting Rights Act. The integrity of democracy depends on it.

In a move that surprises no one, the Department of Justice under Trump has questioned some of the districts, saying that race was a factor and the districts are racially gerrymandered, and demanding that they be redrawn. Trump wants five more congressional seats for Republicans, meaning that the maps that are already unfair could be redrawn to further dilute the votes of Latinos and African Americans.

Republicans are trying to have it both ways: The maps did not take into account race and ethnicity, but they have to revisit them because they were racially gerrymandered to favor non-whites, even though more majority white districts were added. Who can follow that logic?

Texas has a long history of discriminating against racial minorities when composing their maps after the census, and this effort to redraw them midway is yet another glaring power grab by Republicans. The current maps are under review, and this attempt to change them again will make congressional representation even more discriminatory.

Fairness in representation matters because all citizens deserve equal opportunity to be represented, heard, and shape policy. When diverse voices are added to the conversation, better policy is made that benefits everyone. We believe that all Texans deserve fair representation, especially those that have historically been disenfranchised and discriminated against. Federal courts need to weigh in on the current maps before any changes are made. Concerned citizens should contact Governor Abbot's office, and let their state representatives know that they oppose this power grab.

https://www.fairmapstexas.org/
https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/18pdf/18-422_9ol1.pdf
https://redistricting.lls.edu/case/lulac-v-abbott/