

**Finding Legal Counsel  
from H. Harrow  
8/1/13**

Commissioners,

As we've received no applications yet for Legal Counsel, I want to report my actions so far to solicit some & offer a couple suggestions.

1. As Texas is a "mandatory membership" state where all practicing attorneys must belong to the State Bar, I went to its website ([www.texasbar.com](http://www.texasbar.com)) to locate those who list "redistricting" as a specialty. We could send a mailing to them about the job. But though the website lists about 15 specialties like oil & gas, real estate or malpractice, it does not list "redistricting" or "voting rights." There is an "Other" category, but perusing about 25 attorney profiles, I noticed that a few include "Other" instead of specifying what field it is. Thus I failed at finding anything at the State Bar website to help us target our search.
2. You may've seen an excellent Q&A in the *Statesman* July 26 about redistricting, after the Shelby v. Holder decision the previous day. The reporter interviewed Michael Li, a Dallas attorney who writes a blog ([www.txredistricting.org](http://www.txredistricting.org)) that focuses on redistricting. I emailed Mr. Li July 27<sup>th</sup> IDing myself as an ICRC Commissioner & telling him about our Legal Counsel posting. Asked "Do you have advice for how we could best reach lawyers who might qualify for our job?" To date, no response.
3. I personally know 5 lawyers & imagine each of you knows some, too. I'm going to send an email to each lawyer friend something like this:

With the Supreme Court's recent Shelby v. Holder decision focusing attention on voting rights, Austin's newly formed Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission (ICRC) offers an immediate opportunity for an attorney to help make history by serving as the Commission's Legal Counsel. This six-month job involves advising Commissioners on adopting a plan to set boundaries of ten districts, each to elect one Austin City Councilor (previously elected at-large). If you know anyone who might be interested in this opportunity, the full posting & application is at <http://www.jobscore.com/jobs/icrc> .

4. If all else fails, we can reconsider running our Legal Counsel ad on the State Bar's website. They can post it within an hour of getting it, for 30 days. It would be available to all 120,000 attorneys in Texas. This will cost \$551 & would include the "Flash" feature I described at an earlier meeting, plus a separate "Flash" just to Austin attorneys. This is the only way I can find to get our ad to our target audience. The problem to me is not the cost, but getting the funding to do this (I'm unwilling to charge it on my credit card) in a timely manner.