

August 30, 2013

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Dear Members of the Commission:

Throughout this independent redistricting process, I have emphasized the need for avoiding politics to assure a fair redistricting. It is my understanding on my return from overseas that you have decided to hire David Richards as legal counsel for the commission. If true, such action jeopardizes the goal of having a nonpolitical, objective redistricting that differing groups can view as fair.

Dave Richards is one of the ten best redistricting lawyers in Texas. I have known and admired Dave as a lawyer for over 35 years.

However, Dave is notorious for being very political. He is effective and committed in his promotion of his own personal political ideology and the success of those elected officials that adhere to his ideology. He has advanced these objectives through redistricting.

Whether Dave can suppress this political activism as legal counsel for this commission is problematic. However, the perception of Dave as a politically biased lawyer who helped engineer the final redistricting plan will tarnish the work and product of this commission.

There are plenty of lawyers qualified to help this commission on legal issues without drawing this commission needlessly into politics.

Thank you.

Steve Bickerstaff