



Date: September 4, 2013

To: Austin Independent Citizen's Redistricting Commission

From: Austinites For Geographic Representation

Re: Comments on the Minority District maps presented August 28th

Our organization wishes to express our thanks to your Chair and Executive Director for the invitation extended to our organization to present the maps we prepared for four minority Districts in Austin. AGR strongly supports the effort of the ICRC. We are grateful to all of your members for their willingness to work so hard to bring fair geographic representation to Austin.

We deeply appreciated the opportunity for the Co-Chairs of our Advisory Committee to speak and for our mapping team to present our maps and answer all your questions. These maps were overwhelmingly endorsed by the leadership of AGR's constituent organizations and further are supported by both Austin NAACP and LULAC #7. We hope the maps will receive your full and thorough consideration.

We have points we do want to emphasize about these maps,

- The districts all comply with the most basic Constitutional requirement of one person-one vote. In fact the total variance from the biggest to smallest is 4.66% where the tolerance is 10%
- All 4 districts are legally compact and contiguous. The apparent boundary issues in District one are all created by City Limit lines not decisions of how the lines are drawn.
- These districts all comply with the Federal Voting Rights Act and the second requirement of the Charter Amendment. This requires that any districting plan do nothing to reduce the position of protected minorities (i.e. African-Americans & Hispanics in Austin).
- District 1 is a fragile African-American District and we do believe it cannot be significantly modified without defeating its purpose; and its legality.
- Districts 2, 3, & 4 are Hispanic Districts, which if modified must be changed in ways that make them as good or better for Hispanic Austinites. AGR is eager to work with the ICRC and your mapping consultants on this process with the goal of fair geographic representation for Hispanics.

AGR is very sensitive to the interests of all minorities, communities and neighborhoods. However, we also know that assuring the voting rights of protected minorities takes legal precedence over the interests of any other group. These 4 districts were drawn to meet the requirements of the Constitution and the Voting Rights Act.

We again appreciate the opportunity to offer our professional input and look forward to further working with your body for the interest of all of Austin.