

EXAMPLE SCRIPT

Hello,

I am constituent of _____, and I would like to voice my support redistricting reform. Under the current redistricting process, legislators and political parties meet behind closed doors to draw election maps that keep themselves and their party in power. By doing so, they are robbing voters of their constitutional right to hold their representatives accountable at the ballot box.

Like you, I value the integrity of my vote. I want elected officials who work for the common good who are not driven by partisan pressure. I would like to see the Legislature pass reform that would take redistricting out of the partisan battles of the Legislature and give it to an Independent Texas Redistricting Commission that would draw district lines at public hearings using objective criteria. This would give an unparalleled level of transparency and legitimacy to the redistricting process and ensure all voters are represented fairly.

TALKING POINTS

Many of these talking points have been taken from a national [survey](#), commissioned by the Campaign Legal Center.

- A recent national survey of 1,000 likely 2018 general election voters regarding partisan redistricting, commissioned by the Campaign Legal Center, reports that voters want to remove partisan bias from redistricting, even if it means their party might not win as many seats. People strongly prefer free and unbiased elections rather than what is best for their own party.
- Politicians shouldn't meet secretly in backrooms to make decisions out of the public eye, but that's what's happening in the current redistricting process. Politicians are manipulating voting maps behind closed doors without accountability.

PROBLEMS CAUSED BY GERRYMANDERING

- We lose our guaranteed freedom to choose our own leaders when electoral maps are drawn to favor one political party.
- We lose our constitutional right to fair representation when electoral maps are drawn to favor a political party.

- In America, elections are supposed to represent the will of the people, not politicians. But partisan politicians manipulate voting maps to keep themselves and their party in power.
- When you take the responsibility to do your civic duty and vote, you want your vote to count. But when politicians cheat and manipulate the voting maps, they're basically fixing election outcomes in advance.
- In the past, both parties have worked behind closed doors to manipulate party lines to their advantage.
- Extreme gerrymandering and manipulation of district lines robs voters of their constitutional right to hold their representatives accountable at the ballot box.
- I am concerned that elected officials in partisan-rigged districts do not accurately reflect the interests of their constituents.
- I am concerned that elected officials are rewarded for being loyal to their party, rather than being loyal to their own constituents.
- Partisan redistricting prevents us from being a genuinely representative democracy.
- Partisan redistricting disadvantages voters on the basis of their political views, race, age, gender, and mental status.
- Partisan redistricting discriminates against voters based on their beliefs.
- Partisan redistricting disadvantages voters on the basis of their political views.

HOW WE FIX IT

- People who value their vote are taking action to reform the rules, so the process of drawing election maps will be transparent, impartial and fair.
- We need to pull back the curtain and make sure elections reflect the will of the people, not the politicians. Then we'll have government of, by and for the people.
- Politicians in power shouldn't be allowed to draw voting maps that benefit themselves. We need to reform the rules and create a fair system so that

voters are choosing the politicians, instead of politicians choosing their voters.

- Election Day is when we get to have our say, and we need to reform the rules so every vote matters.
- **The League of Women Voters supports legislation that would reform the redistricting process so that it is conducted in an open manner with real opportunities for public dialogue and feedback, not behind closed doors.**
- **The League of Women Voters believes the responsibility for redistricting should be vested in an independent special commission, with membership that reflects the diversity of the unit of government, including citizens at large, representatives of public interest groups, and members of minority groups. The commission should:**
 - **Promote political fairness**
 - **Use specific time lines for the steps leading to adoption of the redistricting plan**
 - **Use clear criteria for establishing districts—not only abiding by the U.S. Constitution and the federal Voting Rights Act but also recognizing communities of interest and the political boundaries of cities and counties.**
 - **Use an open and public process—with public hearings, sufficient notice to those who want to participate, committee deliberations in public and all records posted on the Internet. Proposed maps will be available for public review and comment prior to any decision.**
- **Criteria and standards for drawing district boundaries include the following:**
 - **Districts must be apportioned on the basis of equal population**
 - **Districts must be geographical and contiguous**
 - **Consideration must be given to ensuring that the districts be compact, that district lines coincide with boundaries of local political subdivisions, and that districts not be drawn to dilute the voting strength of minority populations or drawn with the intent to favor or disfavor a political party or incumbent**

- **Districts must not be apportioned on the basis of numbers of electors, but on total population (a qualified elector is any person eligible to vote in a state election in Texas; federal apportionment law is based on total population.)**