



**For Immediate Release**

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[www.lwvtexas.org](http://www.lwvtexas.org)

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**TEXAS LAWMAKERS MUST ADDRESS CONGRESSIONAL REDISTRICTING CONCERNS**

Austin, TX--

“For Texas to comply fully with the Voting Rights Act, the redistricting process must be transparent, open, and responsive to constituent concerns,” according to LWV-TX President Karen Nicholson. “So far, congressional redistricting doesn’t meet these criteria, and that may leave the plan moving through the Legislature vulnerable to challenge.”

The proposed congressional redistricting map was not available for public review until June 1. The June 3 public hearings were held on short notice, giving interested individuals inadequate time for thorough analysis of the proposed congressional districts.

Nonetheless, there was an outpouring of opposition at the June 3 public hearing. While only three individuals testified or registered for the proposed map of congressional districts, 114 testified or registered against the proposed districts. Despite the number and consistency of those who expressed opposition at the hearing, apparently no changes were made to address these concerns. However, changes were made as a result of calls from congressional representatives and other public officials.

The congressional redistricting plan passed by the Senate June 6 repeats the mistakes of the past. This plan may have the same problems under Voting Rights Act that federal court found in the last Texas redistricting.

LWV-TX calls on the Texas Legislature to resolve the concerns raised by so many during public hearings. “We will only achieve the ideal of government by and for the people in Texas,” Nicholson believes, “if redistricting establishes compact congressional districts that reflect the growth of minority populations and preserve the cohesiveness of communities of interest in this state.”

LWV-TX testified at hearings of both the House Redistricting Committee and the Senate Select Redistricting Committee. LWV-TX testimony can be found at:

<http://www.lwvtexas.org/Testimony/2011/Testimony%20HB%204%20Congressional%20District%20Map.pdf>

<http://www.lwvtexas.org/Testimony/2011/Testimony%20SB%204%20Senate%20Select%20Committee%20on%20Redistricting.pdf>

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The LWV-TX, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy.