



**Testimony
Decennial Redistricting
Senate Hearing on Redistricting
March 2, 2009**

On behalf of the statewide members of the League of Women Voters of Texas, we thank you for the opportunity to present comments on the redistricting process. The League is a nonpartisan political organization that encourages the informed active participation of citizens in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

Following the census in 2010, the 2011 Texas State Legislature will be required to adopt a plan for redistricting. An important consideration is to create voting districts approximately equal in population as a basic step to ensure that each citizen's vote carries the same weight in an election. In the past there has been partisan wrangling and court rulings regarding the drawing of district lines. One way to introduce fairness and prevent past problems is with the creation of an independent bipartisan commission with the responsibility of formulating a redistricting plan, designating Congressional and Texas Senate and House districts.

The League of Women Voters of Texas calls for an independent redistricting commission to draw district lines for State Senate and House Districts as well as U.S. Congressional Districts. The League strongly supports Senator Wentworth's bill, SB 315, to create an independent commission to draw district lines for the Congressional United States House of Representative. This would be a major step toward making the process more orderly, less partisan, and more focused on protecting the weight of each vote. The legislature will continue to have the final say in approving the plan for redistricting.

Your work in supporting SB 315 is vital in strengthening the democratic process. The focus is protecting the citizen's vote, not partisan gain. Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation.