

By: Anchia

H.J.R. No. 133

A JOINT RESOLUTION

1 proposing a constitutional amendment to establish certain
2 principles and procedures for the drawing of districts for the
3 Texas Senate, the Texas House of Representatives, and the United
4 States House of Representatives.

5 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

6 SECTION 1. Section 26, Article III, Texas Constitution, is
7 amended to read as follows:

8 Sec. 26. The members of the House of Representatives shall
9 be apportioned among districts of contiguous territory [~~the several~~
10 ~~counties, according to the number of population in each, as nearly~~
11 ~~as may be,~~] on a ratio obtained by dividing the population of the
12 State, as ascertained by the most recent United States census, by
13 the number of members of which the House is composed[~~, provided,~~
14 ~~that whenever a single county has sufficient population to be~~
15 ~~entitled to a Representative, such county shall be formed into a~~
16 ~~separate Representative District, and when two or more counties are~~
17 ~~required to make up the ratio of representation, such counties~~
18 ~~shall be contiguous to each other, and when any one county has more~~
19 ~~than sufficient population to be entitled to one or more~~
20 ~~Representatives, such Representative or Representatives shall be~~
21 ~~apportioned to such county, and for any surplus of population it may~~
22 ~~be joined in a Representative District with any other contiguous~~
23 ~~county or counties].~~

24 SECTION 2. Article III, Texas Constitution, is amended by

1 adding Section 28a to read as follows:

2 Sec. 28a. (a) The legislature's authority established
3 under Section 1 of this article includes the authority to adopt
4 redistricting plans for the election of the Texas Senate, the Texas
5 House of Representatives, and the members of the United States
6 House of Representatives elected from this state after the
7 publication of each United States decennial census.

8 (b) A plan for the election of the Texas Senate, the Texas
9 House of Representatives, and the members of the United States
10 House of Representatives elected from this state adopted by the
11 legislature must conform to the following principles:

12 1. A plan shall respect the integrity of the state's basic
13 geographic regions to the extent practicable.

14 2. A plan shall avoid unnecessarily dividing counties and
15 municipalities in the formation of districts. District lines shall
16 to the extent practicable be coterminous with the boundaries of
17 these political subdivisions.

18 3. A plan shall to the extent practicable keep intact
19 communities of interest defined by social, economic, racial,
20 ethnic, cultural, industrial, commercial, and geographic
21 commonalities.

22 4. A district shall be composed solely of undivided census
23 tracts as the smallest unit of redistricting.

24 5. A district shall be geographically compact and composed
25 of convenient contiguous territory.

26 6. A plan may not be drawn with consideration to partisan
27 political effect or with intent to favor or disfavor any specific

1 person, political party, or other organization.

2 7. A plan must comply with state and federal constitutional
3 and statutory requirements, including the federal Voting Rights Act
4 of 1965 (52 U.S.C. Section 10101 et seq.).

5 8. The districts in a plan must be equal in population as
6 nearly as practicable in accordance with the other principles
7 described by this subsection.

8 9. In addition to the requirements of federal law, districts
9 must be drawn in a manner that does not discriminate on the basis of
10 race, color, or membership in a language minority group by ensuring
11 the voting strength of racial, ethnic, and language minorities in
12 the districts is not diluted in a manner that deprives minority
13 voters of an equal opportunity to elect a candidate of their choice.

14 (c) The Supreme Court of Texas has original jurisdiction of
15 a legal challenge to a plan enacted by the legislature.

16 (d) The legislature may not redistrict this state's
17 districts adopted for the election of the Texas Senate, the Texas
18 House of Representatives, and the members of the United States
19 House of Representatives elected from this state more than once
20 following each census except to replace a plan ordered by a court
21 with a plan enacted by the legislature.

22 SECTION 3. This proposed constitutional amendment shall be
23 submitted to the voters at an election to be held November 3, 2015.
24 The ballot shall be printed to provide for voting for or against the
25 proposition: "The constitutional amendment to establish certain
26 principles and procedures for the drawing of districts for the
27 Texas Senate, the Texas House of Representatives, and the United

H.J.R. No. 133

1 States House of Representatives."