



Vision, Values & Action
To Improve Our Communities

1010 35th Street
Galveston, Texas 77550
409-939-8017
info@gulfoastinterfaith.org
www.gulfoastinterfaith.org

November 29, 2011

The Honorable Thomas E. Perez
Chief, Voting Section
Civil Rights Division
United States Department of Justice
Room 7254-NWB
1800 G Street, NW
Washington, DC 20006
VIA vot1973c@USDOJ.gov

Re: #2011-4317 Supplement to Objection to the redistricting map submitted by Galveston County, Texas for Commissioners Court precincts.

Dear Mr. Perez.

The undersigned collaborating organizations from Galveston County, Texas file this supplement to support their objection to the redistricting map submitted by Galveston County concerning the Commissioners Court precincts.

We have worked with members of the community, our respective organizations, and with each other in good faith to arrive at a fair map that complies with the Voting Rights Act. We believe any adopted map must be fair for the community for years and many elections beyond the upcoming election.

Background

On November 22, 2011 we sent a letter to the Department of Justice objecting to Galveston County's proposed redistricting map that had been submitted on October 16, 2011. Prior to the submission of the proposed map public hearings had been held where a significant portion of the public expressed their concern about the fairness of the maps and the process and raised other questions. During the process the lone minority commissioner on the Galveston County Court submitted a map for the Commissioners

Court. At the final hearing an alternate new map was submitted, discussed and adopted with a 3-2 vote along partisan political lines. The map was eventually presented to the Department of Justice and at the same time a law suit was filed by Galveston County in USDC in Washington DC. Since the late presentation of the map to the DOJ created time constraints and problems for potential candidates a group of elected Democratic public officials from Galveston County filed a lawsuit in USDC in Galveston, Texas. A hearing was held on November 21, 2011 and an order issued shortly thereafter. A second hearing has been scheduled on November 30th to review possible interim maps.

After the 2000 census Galveston County created a map that was submitted to the Department of Justice. It was approved for pre-clearance. The statistics simply and clearly show there was one over 50% Latino/African-American district.

Galveston County Map 2001 (population 250,158 with 63.1% Anglo) See Ex.1

	Anglo	Latino	African-American	L/A-A	Asian/other
#1	60.53	22.22	12.55	34.77	4.70
#2	72.45	16.97	7.33	24.30	3.25
#3	38.16	21.36	38.35	59.71	4.14
#4	80.12	11.60	3.67	15.27	4.56

Of course, who ended up being elected in the last decade was affected by voter registration, candidate quality, voter turnout and apathy, unforeseen or perceived interruptions and distractions such as weather, voter suppression, etc. Since 2000 Galveston County has had an increase in population. There has been a significant increase in the northern part of the county which has resulted in one precinct that clearly violated the “one man-one vote” constitutional principle established in *Baker v. Carr*. Further, Galveston County suffered through Hurricane Ike in 2008 which contributed to a population reduction in the southern part of Galveston County. Finally, the other significant change has been the increase of Latino residents throughout Galveston County. These changes have created additional challenges to drawing a map that would fairly represent the interests of Latinos and African-Americans in Galveston County and comply with the Voting Rights Act.

In the decade between the 2000 and the 2010 Census, the county added more than 41,100 persons, of whom 20,300 (49%) were Latino, 14,800 (36%) were non-Hispanic White and the remainder 6,000 (15%) were African-Americans or other minorities. Despite the significant increases in minority population share in Galveston County, the 2011 Galveston County map still only manages to create one precinct where there is a majority minority, and the percentage minority in District 1, the second most minority district, retrogressed from 40% minority in 2000 to 37% minority in the Galveston County map.

Galveston County Map 2011 (population 291,309 with 59.27% Anglo) See Ex.1

	Anglo	Latino	African-American	L/A-A	Asian/other
#1	63.42	23.02	9.13	32.15	4.43
#2	70.21	17.62	7.41	25.03	4.76
#3	33.54	31.53	31.36	62.89	3.57
#4	70.74	17.17	5.35	22.52	6.74

The proposed Galveston County map clearly diminishes the voting strength of Latinos/African-Americans when compared to Galveston County's map in 2001 and thus affects their ability to elect and influence the election of candidates of their choice. The map presented by the collaborating organizations almost achieves two majority minority precincts with more compact precinct lines. The map more fairly reflects the minority population of Galveston County and is in compliance with the Voting Rights Act.

Gulf Coast Interfaith Map 2011 (population 291,309 with 59.27% Anglo) See Ex.1

	Anglo	Latino	African-American	L/A-A	Asian/other
#1	50.43	31.44	13.90	45.34	4.22
#2	72.38	16.16	5.24	21.40	6.22
#3	37.48	28.21	31.05	59.26	3.26
#4	76.62	13.76	3.94	17.70	5.69

Conclusion

Galveston County has the burden of demonstrating the proposed precinct changes in the map it submitted are free of discriminatory purpose and retrogressive effect.

Under the 2001 map approved by the Department of Justice the Latino/African-American voters had the ability to elect a candidate of choice in one of four precincts. Ten years later, despite an increase of minorities, Galveston County has submitted a map that, once again, creates the ability for Latino/African-American voters to only elect or influence the election of a candidate of choice in one of four precincts. Further, the minority population was decreased in the second most minority district. We believe the Galveston County 2011 map violates the Voting Rights Act.

We believe the map submitted by the collaborating organizations better reflects the minority population of Galveston County by creating two districts where Latino/African-Americans have more opportunity to elect or influence the election of their candidate of choice. We encourage the Department of Justice to reject the Galveston County Map that is currently under review.

Respectfully submitted,

David Miller
President, NAACP, Galveston Unit 6180

Anna Olivares
President, LULAC, Galveston Council 151

Leon Phillips
President, Galveston County Coalition for Justice

Cornelia Banks
Chair, North Side Task Force

Joe Compian
Leader, Gulf Coast Interfaith

Stephen McIntyre
Leader, Gulf Coast Interfaith

Dotti Jones
President, Barbour's Chapel Community Development Corporation

Dotti Jones
President, NAACP Mainland Branch Unit 6201

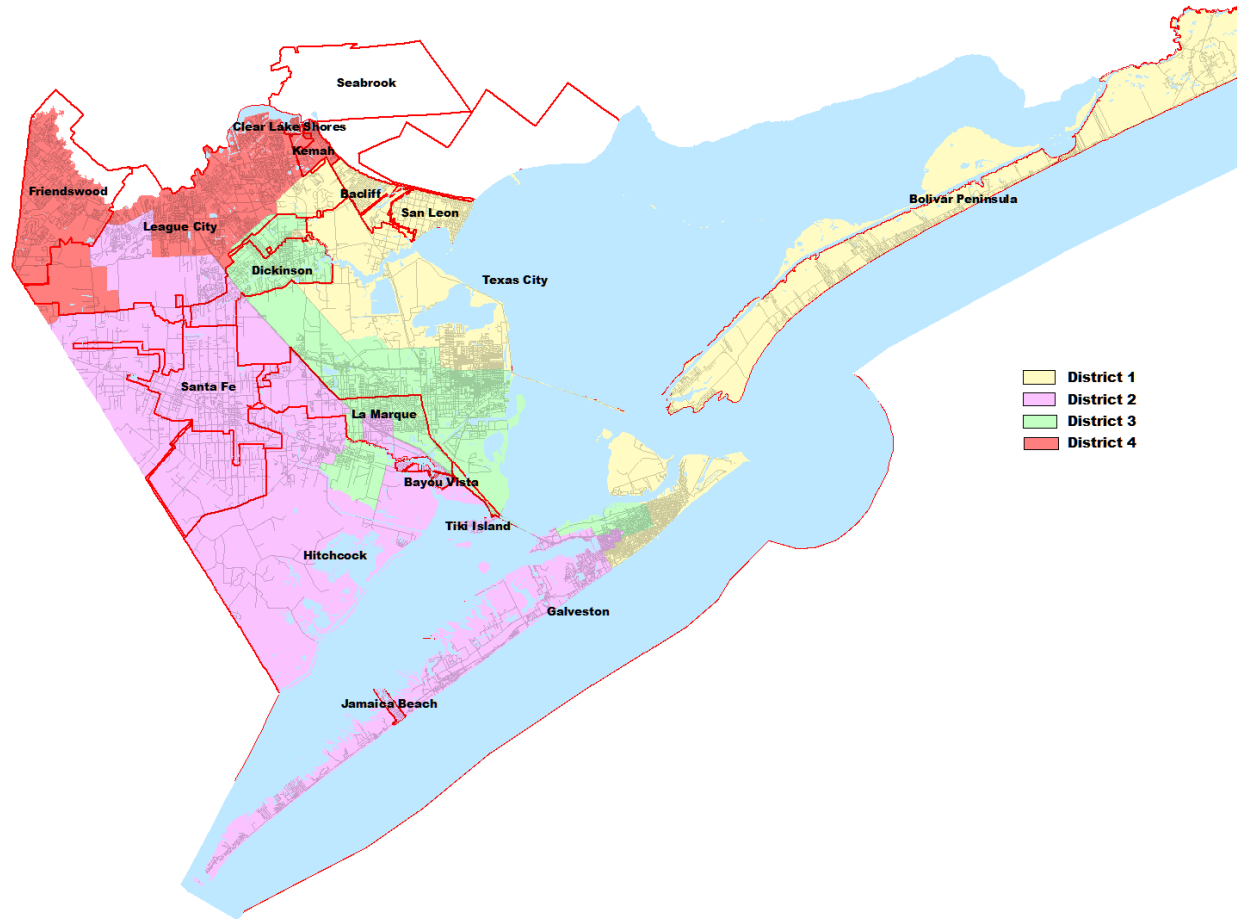
Galveston County Redistricting Possibilities

EXHIBIT 1

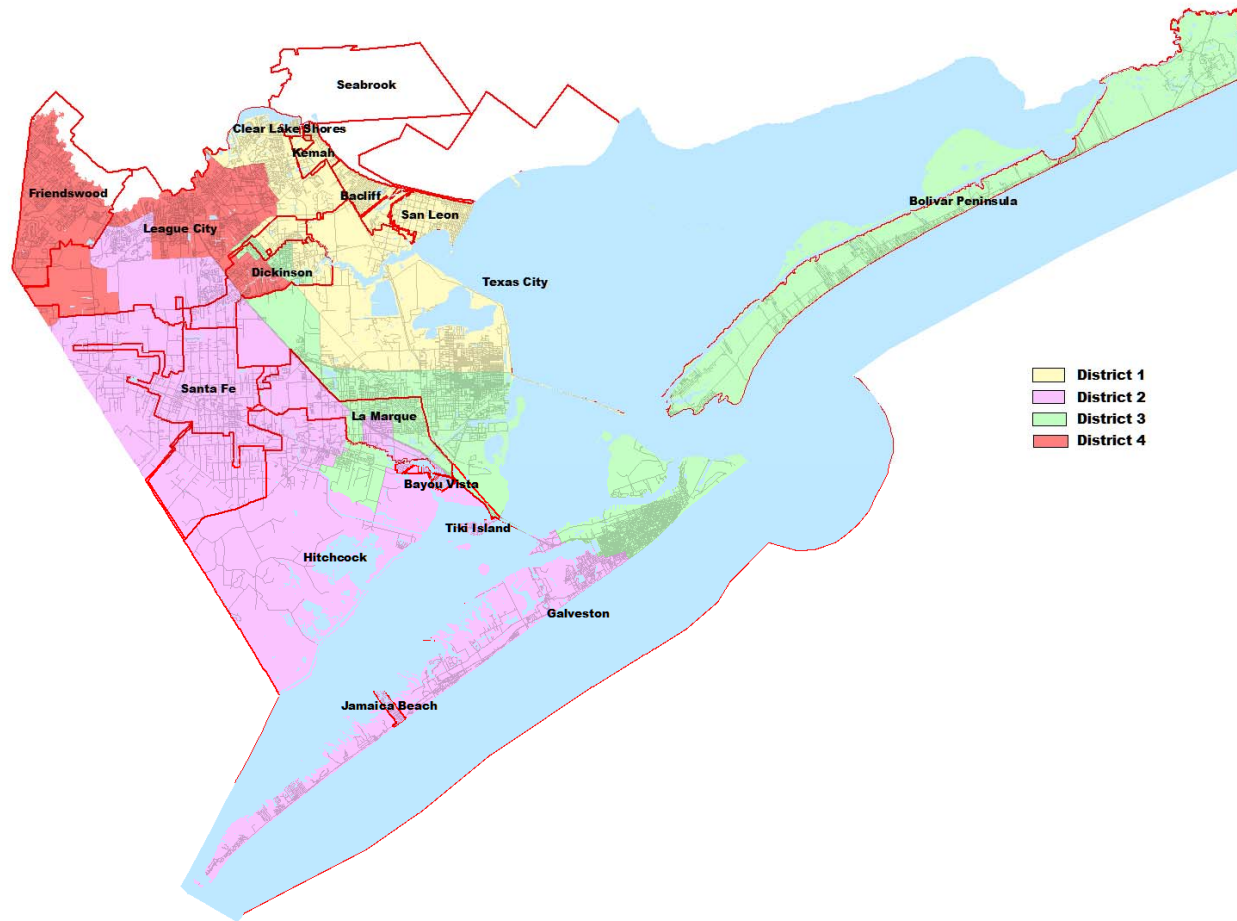
Population Change 2000-2010

	2000	2010	Change	Pct Change	Pct of 2000	Pct of 2010	Pct of Change
Total:	250,158	291,309	41,151	16.45%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Non-Latino							
White	157,851	172,652	14,801	9.38%	63.10%	59.27%	35.97%
Black	38,179	39,229	1,050	2.75%	15.26%	13.47%	2.55%
Am. Indian	893	1,052	159	17.81%	0.36%	0.36%	0.39%
Asian	5,152	8,515	3,363	65.28%	2.06%	2.92%	8.17%
Pac. Islr	88	128	40	45.45%	0.04%	0.04%	0.10%
Other	268	426	158	58.96%	0.11%	0.15%	0.38%
Two +	2,788	4,037	1,249	44.80%	1.11%	1.39%	3.04%
Latino/a	44,939	65,270	20,331	45.24%	17.96%	22.41%	49.41%

Galveston County Map 2001

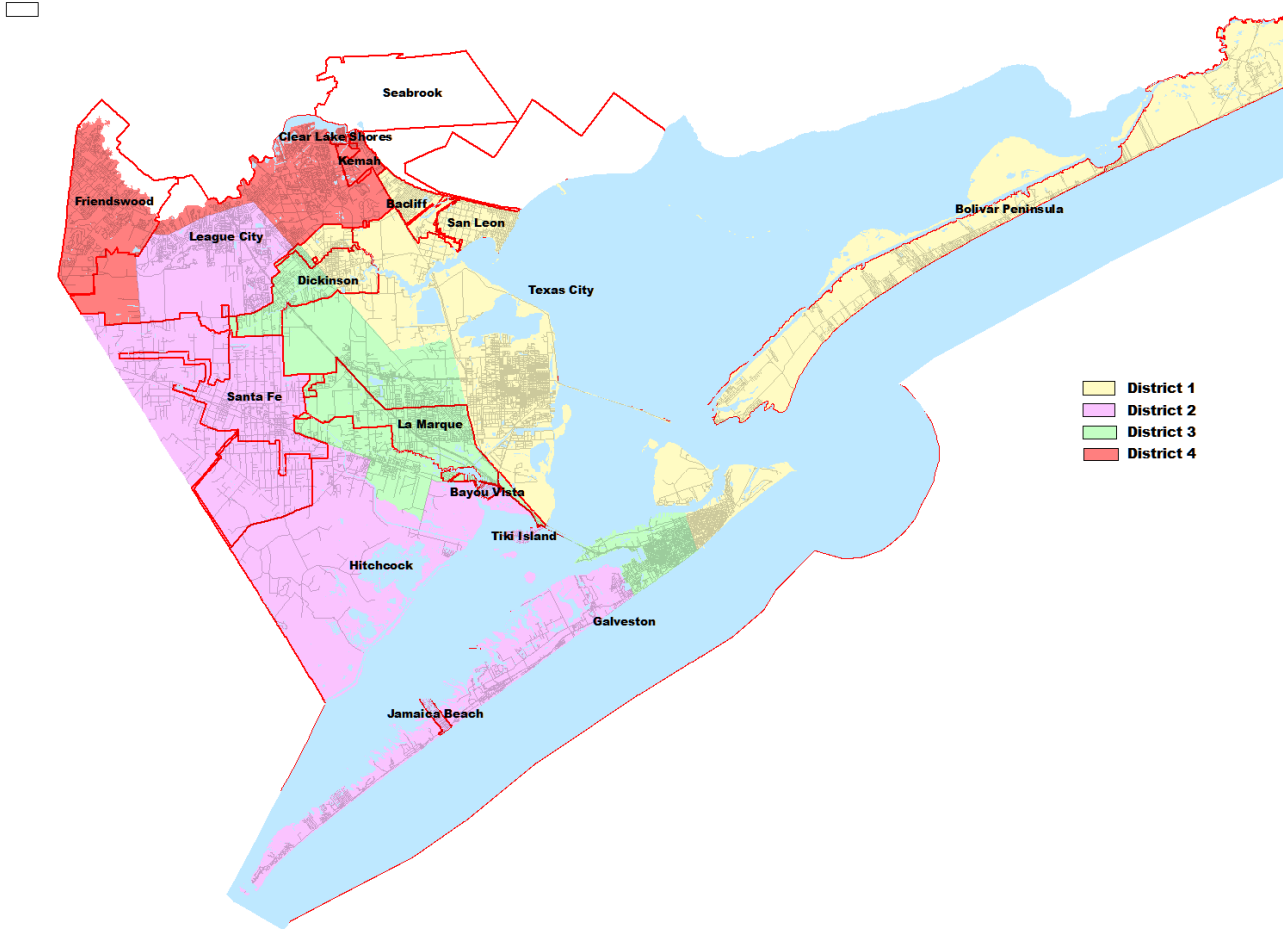


Galveston County Map 2011



Gulf Coast Interfaith Map 2011

“Clean Lines Plan”



Principles of “Clean Lines” Map

- Bacliff, Bolivar CDP, Friendswood, Jamaica Beach, La Marque, San Leon, Santa Fe, Tiki Island are not divided.
- Dickinson, Galveston City, Hitchcock, and Texas City are divided using identifiable boundaries to create minority-majority District 3 (63%/37%) and minority-impact District 1 (50%/50%), respecting principles of Voting Rights Act.
- League City divided using identifiable boundaries to respect incumbent residences in District 2 and 4.
- No Block-level tweaking for partisan or racial/ethnic impact.

Current Numbers 2010 Census

District	Total	NH White	Latino/a	NH Black	All Other
District 1	61,152	34,123	17,552	6,577	2,900
District2	76,684	51,769	15,375	6,002	3,538
District 3	63,534	20,687	18,747	22,407	1,693
District 4	89,939	66,073	13,596	4,243	6,027
Total	291,309	172,652	65,270	39,229	14,158
District 1	100.00%	55.80%	28.70%	10.76%	4.74%
District2	100.00%	67.51%	20.05%	7.83%	4.61%
District 3	100.00%	32.56%	29.51%	35.27%	2.66%
District 4	100.00%	73.46%	15.12%	4.72%	6.70%
Total	100.00%	59.27%	22.41%	13.47%	4.86%

County Plan Numbers*

District	Total	NH White	Latino/a	NH Black	All Other
District 1	71,814	45,545	16,534	6,557	3,178
District2	72,956	51,224	12,852	5,407	3,473
District 3	74,679	25,048	23,543	23,420	2,668
District 4	71,860	50,835	12,341	3,845	4,839
Total	291,309	172,652	65,270	39,229	14,158
District 1	100.00%	63.42%	23.02%	9.13%	4.43%
District2	100.00%	70.21%	17.62%	7.41%	4.76%
District 3	100.00%	33.54%	31.53%	31.36%	3.57%
District 4	100.00%	70.74%	17.17%	5.35%	6.73%

*Percentages supplied by county; population numbers calculated from percentages.

Gulf Coast Interfaith Plan

“Clean Lines” Numbers

District	Total	NH White	Latino/a	NH Black	All Other
District 1	73,605	37,120	23,140	10,230	3,115
District 2	75,123	54,374	12,140	3,935	4,674
District 3	71,757	26,896	20,243	22,277	2,341
District 4	70,824	54,262	9,747	2,787	4,028
Total	291,309	172,652	65,270	39,229	14,158
District 1	100.00%	50.43%	31.44%	13.90%	4.22%
District 2	100.00%	72.38%	16.16%	5.24%	6.22%
District 3	100.00%	37.48%	28.21%	31.05%	3.26%
District 4	100.00%	76.62%	13.76%	3.94%	5.69%

Conclusions

- County grew fast in north county.
- Two-thirds of county growth was minority population growth.
- Many south county cities increased their minority populations, lost Anglo population.
- By using District 1 to grow District 3, and League City to grow District 1, the County plan ignored the possibility of expanding Districts 1 and 3 to minority areas in south county, creating a retrogression in minority voting impact potential, despite minority population growth.