

By: Howard of Travis

H.J.R. No. 12

A JOINT RESOLUTION

1 proposing a constitutional amendment to establish certain
2 principles and procedures for the drawing of congressional
3 districts.

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

5 SECTION 1. Article III, Texas Constitution, is amended by
6 adding Section 28-a to read as follows:

7 Sec. 28-a. (a) The legislature's authority established by
8 Section 1 of this article includes the authority to enact
9 congressional redistricting plans for this state following a
10 federal decennial census. When enacting a congressional plan, the
11 legislature shall comply with the following principles to the
12 extent practicable and authorized by law:

13 (1) districts must keep intact identifiable
14 communities of interest defined by social, economic, racial,
15 ethnic, cultural, industrial, commercial, or geographic
16 commonalities;

17 (2) districts must respect the integrity of the
18 state's basic geographical regions;

19 (3) districts must be geographically compact and
20 composed of convenient contiguous territory;

21 (4) districts must be coterminous with the boundaries
22 of counties and municipalities and not unnecessarily divide
23 counties or municipalities;

24 (5) districts must be composed solely of undivided

1 census tracts;

2 (6) districts may not be drawn based on partisan
3 political considerations or with intent to favor or disfavor any
4 specific person, political party, or other organization;

5 (7) districts must be as nearly equal in population as
6 practicable and feasible in accordance with these principles; and

7 (8) redistricting plans must comply with state and
8 federal constitutional requirements.

9 (b) The Supreme Court of Texas has original jurisdiction of
10 a legal challenge to a congressional redistricting plan enacted by
11 the legislature.

12 (c) The legislature may not redistrict this state's
13 congressional districts more than once following each federal
14 decennial census except to replace a plan ordered by a court with a
15 plan enacted by the legislature.

16 SECTION 2. This proposed constitutional amendment shall be
17 submitted to the voters at an election to be held November 8, 2011.
18 The ballot shall be printed to provide for voting for or against the
19 proposition: "The constitutional amendment to establish fair
20 redistricting principles and procedures for the drawing of
21 congressional districts for the State of Texas."