Exhibit 18 to Davis Intervenors’ Opposition to Plaintiff State of Texas’ Motion for Summary Judgment

Letter from Tarrant County Constable Sergio L. De Leon to Senator Kel Seliger (May 12, 2011)
May 12, 2011

The Honorable Kel Seliger
State Senator
Chair, Senate Select Committee
on Redistricting
State Capitol
Austin, Texas

Re: State Senate District 10

Dear Senator Seliger:

I am writing to express my profound concern at the map that has been presented by your committee. This new map carves up and splits the minority communities of Tarrant County. The work of the committee constitutes nothing more than a thinly-veiled political to power grab aimed at defeating Senator Davis in the next election cycle.

State Senate District 10 was created and subsequently approved under then President Bush’s Department of Justice with the intent to give minority voting coalitions the ability to have a major impact in deciding who represents them in Austin. The people made their decision in November of 2008 and minority coalitions were instrumental in the effort to bring about that change to the Texas State Senate. Now, the committee is seeking to divide and conquer. As public servants, I hope you can rise above the partisan fray and remain true to the Texas value of Opportunity; the notion if you worked hard and played by the rules in America anything was possible. Sadly, this committee appears to have embraced the notion of partisan advantage at all cost.

As an elected Constable in Tarrant County and a proud Hispanic, I take exception to the fact that under the proposed map Latino Voters in State Senate District 10 have their voices effectively silenced. This retrogression is in clear violation of the Voting Rights Act and will not be tolerated. Under the current map, Communities of Interest in the historic north and south sides Fort Worth have nothing in common at all with neighborhoods in Denton County. Clearly, these are two distinct populations groups with different ethnicities, cultures, and socio-economic
backgrounds. Moreover, the Latino Community knows, sees, and hears regularly from our State Senator.

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I find it hard to believe this committee would recommend such a map knowing it was in violation of the Voting Rights Act and will be challenged in the courts. Your actions will become the financial responsibility of all Texas and cost taxpayers hundreds of thousands of dollars and likely millions of dollars in needless litigation. Where are your conservative principals now? Why subject state coffers to this great expense only to have an Obama Justice Department fix what you broke?

I implore you do what is right and urge your committee to work with Senator Davis and the people of Texas State Senate District 10 in developing a map that respects communities of interest, safeguards voting rights and the rights of all Texans.

Sincerely,

SERGIO L. DE LEON
Constable, Pct. 5
Tarrant County

CC: Members of the Committee
Department of Justice

/sld