Exhibit 20 to Davis Intervenors’ Opposition to Plaintiff State of Texas’ Motion for Summary Judgment

Letter from Fort Worth City Council members to Department of Justice (May 10, 2011)
May 10, 2011

Mr. Thomas Perez
Assistant Attorney General
United States Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division
950 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, D.C. 20530

Mr. Chris Herren
Chief, Voting Section
Civil Rights Division
United States Department of Justice
Room 7254-NWB
1800 G Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20006

Dear Sirs:

We each serve on the Fort Worth, Texas City Council and represent minority neighborhoods within the 10th Senatorial District of Texas. We are writing to express our deep concern that the voting rights of minority citizens we represent within Fort Worth may be badly damaged under a State Senate redistricting plan soon to be enacted by the Texas Legislature.

Fort Worth has a population of over 740,000 residents and is the fifth largest city in the State of Texas. Fort Worth is a majority minority city. According to the 2010 Census, only 42 percent of Fort Worth residents are Anglo. Our city contains the third largest concentration of African American citizens in Texas and one of the largest concentrations of Hispanic residents in our State. Both the Hispanic and African American populations in Fort Worth increased in raw numbers and as a percentage of the total population during the last decade. Most of the African American and Hispanic residents in Fort Worth live within the 10th Senatorial District.

When the current lines of the 10th Senatorial District were drawn in 2001 and Texas submitted its Senate map to the Department of Justice for preclearance, in its submission the State anticipated that during the decade the voting strength of minority citizens in the 10th District would grow and evolve to the point where they would elect their candidate of choice. The Texas submission said in part:

..District 10 contain[s] significant minority communities that are essentially kept intact within [the] district. The voting strength of these minority communities in the future will depend on the cohesion within and between Black and Hispanic voters and the ability of such voters to form coalitions with other racial or ethnic groups in support of their preferred candidates. (State of Texas Section 5 Preclearance submission, August 2001)
The State’s prediction in its submission was accurate. Over the last decade, the minority population in the 10th District grew to the point that Anglos now make up less than half the population of the district. African American and Hispanic citizens form an effective coalition and have demonstrated their ability to elect their candidate of choice.

Most notably, in 2008 a credible and highly qualified candidate, Wendy Davis, successfully challenged a long-time incumbent in District 10. Ms. Davis lost the Anglo vote but won election to the State Senate on the strength of the united support of minority citizens. Time, money and effort invested to mobilize the minority vote resulted in her victory. In short, when minority residents in Senate District 10 were given the opportunity to unite and support a candidate of their choice, they were successful.

Now, there is a clear possibility, and perhaps even likelihood, that partisan forces within the Texas Legislature will break apart the 10th District in order to crack the effective block of minority voters and eliminate their ability to elect their candidate of choice. Senate District 10 would be altered to insure that elections are controlled exclusively by Anglo voters.

We believe that any effort to dilute the voting strength of minority citizens in the 10th Senate District of Texas would constitute illegal retrogression. We respectfully call on you to be vigilant in examining the State Senate redistricting plan presented by the State of Texas for preclearance either to the Department of Justice or to the Federal District Court of the District of Columbia and file an objection to any plan that reduces the voting strength of minority citizens. Moreover, we ask that you closely review alternative redistricting plans that may presented that enhance the voting strength of minority citizens in Fort Worth and the surrounding areas to fully realize the voting potential of the growing minority population in our area.

Thank you for your assistance with this important matter. We are committed to protecting the rights of the citizens we represent and are available to speak personally with you at any time to further assist your efforts.

Sincerely,

Councilwoman Kathleen Hicks
Councilman Joel Burns
Councilman Sal Espino
Councilman Frank Moss