



U.S. Department of Justice

Civil Rights Division

Office of the Assistant Attorney General

Washington, D.C. 20035

December 19, 2003

Honorable Geoffrey S. Connor
Secretary of State
P.O. Box 12060
Austin, Texas 78711-2060

Dear Secretary Connor:

I am writing in reference to your recent submission pursuant to Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act, 42 U.S.C. 1973c, of (i) Texas House Bill 1, which provides for the extension of the filing period for congressional candidates, changes in the primary election dates, procedures for canvassing, and the allowance of late counting of ballots; and (ii) Texas House Bill 3, which provides the 2003 Congressional Redistricting Plan enacted by the Texas Legislature. We received your initial submission on October 21, 2003, and received supplemental information at various times through December 11, 2003.

The Attorney General does not interpose any objection to the specified changes in House Bill 1 or House Bill 3. We do note, however, that Section 5 provides that the failure of the Attorney General to object does not bar subsequent litigation to enjoin the enforcement of the changes. See the Procedures for the Administration of Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act, 28 C.F.R. 51.41 and 51.43.

Because the Section 5 status of these changes is of interest to the court in *Session v. Perry*, Civil Docket No. 2:03-CV-354 (E.D. Texas, Marshall Division), we also are providing a copy of this letter to the court.

Sincerely,

Sheldon T. Bradshaw
Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General

cc: Honorable Patrick E. Higginbotham
Honorable T. John Ward
Honorable Lee H. Rosenthal