
From: Kay Bertken <kayb@mail.fresnostate.edu>
Sent: Friday, April 09, 2021 11:26 AM
To: BOSComments
Subject: Redistricting Advisory Commission

CAUTION!!! - EXTERNAL EMAIL - THINK BEFORE YOU CLICK

I understand that the Board will be considering the appointment of an advisory commission to recommend new Supervisorial district lines. I also understand that the commission will be composed of just 5 members chosen by the Supervisors. I suggest that you reconsider that composition. Redistricting should be a process independent of the currently sitting supervisors--they should not be your handpicked appointees. Also, the commission should be larger and representative of the various areas of the county. There are best practices regarding redistricting that should be respected.

From: District 5
Sent: Monday, April 12, 2021 9:19 AM
To: Berryhill, Sherrie
Cc: Seidel, Bernice
Subject: FW: Supervisorial Redistricting Commission

April 13, 2021 Item 6 comment

From: Nancy Griesser <nancyg@mail.fresnostate.edu>
Sent: Monday, April 12, 2021 9:15 AM
To: District 5 <district5@fresnocountyca.gov>
Subject: Supervisorial Redistricting Commission

CAUTION!!! - EXTERNAL EMAIL - THINK BEFORE YOU CLICK

Supervisor Magsig:

I'm writing in support of an independent citizens commission being appointed to redraw the Fresno County Board of Supervisors district lines.

Citizen redistricting commissions consider, debate, and adopt proposed boundaries with opportunities for community input throughout the process. They create logical and legally defensible boundaries and their work increases public trust in the process. Studies show that independent commissions generally draw districts that are more representative of communities of interest and minority populations when compared to districts drawn by legislative bodies.

In 2008 and 2010, California voters approved the creation of the California Citizens Redistricting Commission which has successfully ended partisan gerrymandering of State Assembly, State Senate, and US Congressional district lines. Other California counties, some smaller than Fresno, have already established independent redistricting commissions. It is time to bring that level of transparency and accountability to Fresno County.

Sincerely,

Nancy Griesser

nancyg@mail.fresnostate.edu

From: Rush, Bret
Sent: Monday, April 12, 2021 9:21 AM
To: Berryhill, Sherrie
Cc: Seidel, Bernice
Subject: FW: Redistricting Coalition Materials
Attachments: Fresno Supervisors Redistricting Coalition Letter 4.9.21.pdf; 2021 03 29 Redistricting Powerpoint for Supervisor Pacheco.pptx

April 13, 2021 Item 6

From: Kaya Herron <kaya@fmbcc.com>
Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 1:22 PM
To: Rush, Bret <brush@fresnocountyca.gov>
Subject: Redistricting Coalition Materials

CAUTION!!! - EXTERNAL EMAIL - THINK BEFORE YOU CLICK



April 9, 2021

Fresno County Board of Supervisors
2281 Tulare Street, Room 301
Fresno, CA 93721-2198

Re: Redistricting Recommendations for the Fresno County Board of Supervisors

Dear Fresno County Supervisors:

Our coalition of groups dedicated to civic engagement, democracy reform, and Fresno County communities stands ready to aid Fresno County's 2021-2022 redistricting process. As you know, district lines have enormous power. Redistricting can keep people with common interests, identity, language, and history bundled together so they can effectively advocate for themselves and make their voices heard in local affairs. Or it can gerrymander them and silence their voices. To that end, we hope to see a Fresno County redistricting process that is as fair, as independent, as accessible, and as inclusive as possible.

We are writing today to state our recommendations and requests for the Fresno County redistricting process.

Commission

1. Adopt an independent redistricting commission to maximize public trust and participation in the County's redistricting process.

Meetings and Public Input Hearings

1. Prior to selecting a map-drawing consultant/demographer, hold at least one public meeting at which the options for the map-drawing consultant/demographer are discussed.
2. Prior to finalizing an outreach plan, hold at least one public meeting at which the County's draft outreach plan is discussed.

3. Hold at least one public input hearing in each existing district prior to the drawing of draft map(s), to ensure that transportation barriers do not pose an issue for any attendees and to ensure that every part of the County has a hearing where its views are prioritized and centered. If hearings are virtual, dedicate at least one virtual hearing to each existing district.
4. Hold at least four public input hearings after the drawing and release of draft map(s).
5. Ensure that members of the public can watch and participate in all public meetings and public input hearings both in-person and online.
6. Ensure that all public meetings and public input hearings offer live translation in at least Spanish, Hmong, Punjabi, and American Sign Language. Ensure that all materials and documents associated with public meetings and public input hearings are translated into Spanish, Hmong, and Punjabi, and that the translated version of materials and documents are released at the same time as materials and documents in English.
7. Ensure that all public meetings and public input hearings are accessible to people with disabilities, including closed captioning for online formats.
8. Ensure that hearings are held at times of day and days of the week that allow working people to attend, e.g. weeknights and weekends.

Map-Drawing Consultant/Demographer

1. Mandate that map-drawing consultant/demographer hired by the County commits in their bid/proposal to provide the community with accessible in-person and online opportunities to submit public input and proposed maps, and to provide the community with simple online mapping tools.

Outreach and Community Education

1. Do robust community education. Outreach as widely as possible to community leaders and organizations. Meet community members and community organizations where they are and in the languages they speak in order to engage them in this process.
2. Leverage trusted community partners and ethnic media in order to engage hard-to-reach communities.

Funding

1. Provide adequate funding and personnel to accomplish the goals listed above.

Thank you again for your time, your interest in fair and honest redistricting, and your willingness to hear our recommendations. For follow-up questions, please contact Dillon Savory at dsavory@myunionworks.com.

Sincerely,

Dillon Savory
Chair, Central Valley Partnership

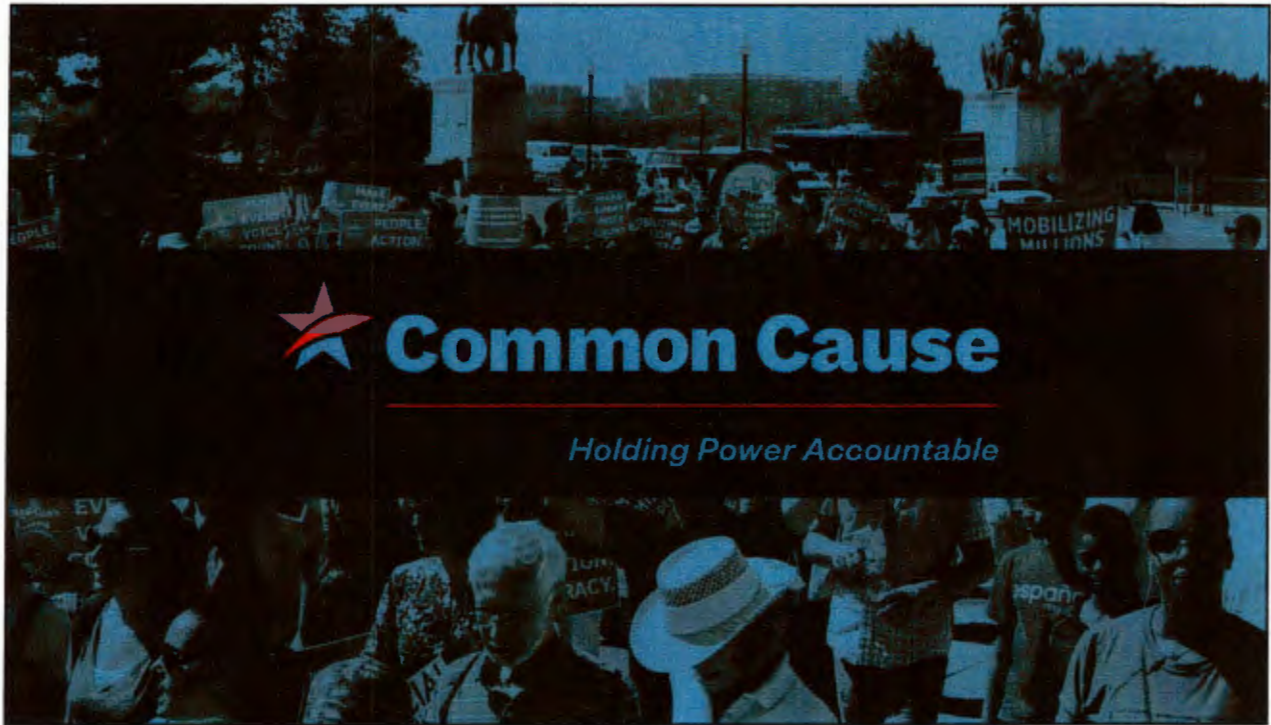
Kaya Herron
Director of Community Engagement and Advocacy, Fresno Metro Black Chamber of Commerce

Pablo Rodriguez
Executive Director, Communities for a New California Education Fund

Jonathan Mehta Stein
Executive Director, California Common Cause

Nancy Xiong
Executive Director, Hmong Innovating Politics

Sukaina Hussain
Deputy Executive Director, Council on American-Islamic Relations Sacramento Valley/Central California



1

Who We Are

Committed to honest, open, and accountable government for 50 years!

In California, working to build an inclusive and accessible democracy, through voting rights, redistricting, and money in politics reform.

				
Ethics & Accountability	Media & Democracy	Money & Influence	Gerrymandering & Redistricting	Voting & Elections

2

The Census & Redistricting

- Decennial Census is conducted each decade to count the total population
- Every ten years, district lines are redrawn based on Census data to account for population changes and to ensure everyone has an equal voice in government
- Includes ALL district lines: congressional, state legislative, county board of supervisors, city councils, school boards, and special districts

3

Who Draws the Lines? How Are They Drawn ?

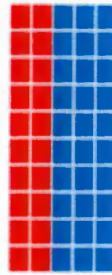
- **WHO:** In most cases elected officials redraw their own district lines
- **HOW:** Under new state law, minimum of four hearings with some mandatory community outreach. Racial gerrymandering prohibited by federal law. Partisan gerrymandering prohibited by state law. But district lines can be manipulated for incumbents to maintain power.

4

What's the Problem? Gerrymandering



HOW TO STEAL AN ELECTION



100 PRECINCTS
60% BLUE
40% RED



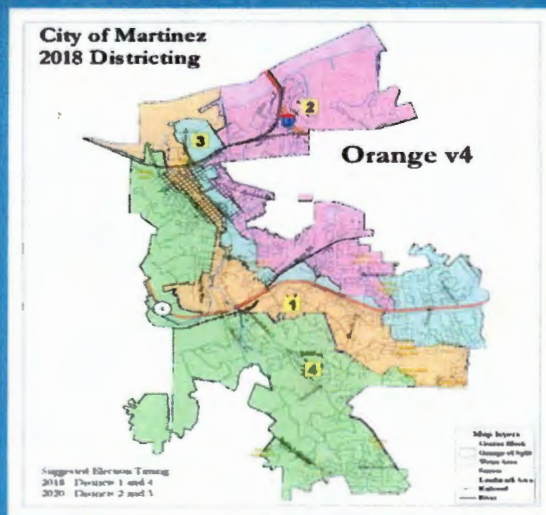
5 DISTRICTS
5 BLUE
0 RED
BLUE WINS



5 DISTRICTS
3 RED
2 BLUE
RED WINS

5

What's the Problem? Gerrymandering.



6

What's the Alternative?

We believe that voters should choose their politicians, politicians should not choose their voters.

CA Common Cause advocates for diverse, community-run redistricting commissions to redraw district lines transparently with large volumes of community participation and public input.

7

Changing Laws to Stop Gerrymandering

Common Cause and the League of Women Voters helped pass:

Prop 11 (2008) creating the California Citizens Redistricting Commission (CRC) to redraw State Senate and Assembly district lines

Prop 20 (2010) expanded the CRC to redraw CA Congressional district lines

8


Changing Laws to Stop Gerrymandering

AB 849 (2019) Standardizes fair redistricting criteria and community access to the process

- Prohibits partisan gerrymandering
- Requires districts to be compact and contiguous
- Requires communities of interest be kept together
- Requires four public hearings for resident comments
- Requires some community outreach
- Requires maps to be posted for the public to view
- Education materials required in “applicable languages”

9

Does Fresno County Want to Go Further?

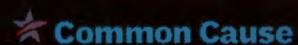
 Common Cause

10



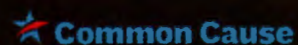
INDEPENDENT REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE:

a group of citizens—not lobbyists or special interests—from across the community who oversee the redistricting process



11

The First-Ever California Citizens Redistricting Commission Was a Smashing Success:
Well-Qualified, Capable, Diverse, Independent, and Fair



12

Independent Redistricting Commissions

- Best practice if goal is to allow zero politicalization of the process. Avoid the inherent conflict of interest when elected officials draw their own districts.
- The commission is appointed by trusted third-party entity. Details vary.
- Commission has the power to adopt the new district maps.

13

Independent Redistricting Commissions

- Berkeley
- Long Beach
- Oakland
- Sacramento
- San Diego
- San Francisco
- Santa Barbara
- Los Angeles County
- San Diego County
- Santa Barbara County

14

Advisory Redistricting Commissions

- Members appointed by sitting incumbents
- Provide recommendations for district boundaries that a governing board may adopt, modify, or ignore
- Useful in increasing public participation in redistricting but great vulnerabilities (LA, San Jose)

15

Advisory Redistricting Commissions

- Anaheim
- Downey
- Los Angeles
- Pasadena
- Salinas
- San Jose
- Stockton
- Watsonville
- And many others...
- Alpine County
- Fresno County
- Imperial County
- Mendocino County
- Monterey County
- San Mateo County
- Santa Cruz County
- Shasta County
- And many others...

16

Hybrid Redistricting Commissions

- Blend between independent and advisory commissions
- Typically have third-party selection, not appointments by sitting incumbents
- Have the power to adopt new district maps once they have received input from the governing board

17

Hybrid Redistricting Commissions

- Chula Vista
- Escondido
- Merced
- Modesto
- Sunnyvale
- Santa Clara County?
- San Mateo County?

18

Commission Timelines

- Commission can be created via ordinance
- 2-4 months for application and selection process
- Census data not available until Sept 30, 2021 or potentially after. Time available to create a commission, but action needed soon

19

Redistricting Commissions Best Practices (Our View)

- Empower the community to drive the redistricting process via a redistricting commission
- Commissioners should be qualified, diverse, and impartial
- Commissioners should be selected in an open, accessible, and inclusive process

20

Redistricting Commissions Best Practices (Our View)

- Residents should be highly engaged in the process
- Community testimony & Voting Rights Act compliance should be prioritized when drawing new districts
- The result should be maps that everyone can see are fair and increase trust and participation in county government


21

Contact Us

California Common Cause commonly provides training and technical assistance to counties, cities, and community partners

redistrictingCA@commoncause.org

Commoncause.org/localredistricting2021/

 Common Cause

22

From: BOSComments
Subject: FW: April 13, 2021 Agenda Item #6

From: jacquiecanfield@comcast.net <jacquiecanfield@comcast.net>
Sent: Monday, April 12, 2021 3:50 PM
To: BOSComments <BOSComments@fresnocountyca.gov>
Subject: April 13, 2021 Agenda Item #6

CAUTION!!! - EXTERNAL EMAIL - THINK BEFORE YOU CLICK

Fresno County Board of Supervisors,

Unfortunately, I can not be at tomorrow's meeting where you will be discussing and possibly deciding on what type of commission to oversee the Fresno County's redistricting process. I strongly request that an independent commission be established to avoid the appearance for favoritism. The redistricting requirements this year are more demanding than 10 years ago. At minimum, the selection process for commissioners should be equal to an independent commission. In addition, Fresno County should have more than 5 people deciding how lines should be drawn.

For your convenience, here is a link to the League of Women Voters website that shows the minimum criteria that the county must follow.

[Fresno County Board of Supervisors Required Criteria | MyLO \(lww.org\)](#)

It is important that the lines be draw in a fair and transparent way.

Jacquie Canfield
3597 W Loma Linda, Fresno, CA

From: Olivia Seideman <oseideman@leadershipcounsel.org>
Sent: Monday, April 12, 2021 4:05 PM
To: BOSComments
Cc: Mariana Alvarenga
Subject: Public Comment for Agenda Item #6 on Redistricting, Meeting 4/13/21
Attachments: 4.13.21_Fresno BOS Meeting Agenda Item #6 Public Comment.pdf

CAUTION!!! - EXTERNAL EMAIL - THINK BEFORE YOU CLICK

Hello,

I am writing to comment on agenda item #6 for tomorrow's Board of Supervisors meeting on April 13, 2021. Agenda item #6 addresses how the Fresno County Board of Supervisors will draw electoral maps during the 2021 redistricting process. I am urging that an independent commission is adopted.

Thank you,
Olivia Seideman

--

Olivia Seideman (she/her)
Civic Engagement Coordinator
Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability
2210 San Joaquin St, Fresno, CA 93721
oseideman@leadershipcounsel.org | leadershipcounsel.org
559.570.5607 ext. 119 (o) | 510.410.0151 (c)



April 12th, 2021

Submitted via Electronic Mail

BOscomments@fresnocountyca.gov

2281 Tulare Street, # 301
Fresno, CA 93721

Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability works alongside low-income communities of color in the San Joaquin Valley and the Eastern Coachella Valley. As is most relevant here, we work with community leaders across Fresno City and in Lanare, Tombstone, and Cantua Creek to advocate for local, regional and state government entities to address their community's needs for the basic elements that make up a safe and healthy community, including safe and affordable drinking water, affordable housing, effective and safe transportation, efficient and affordable energy, green spaces, and clean air.

As the Board considers the various methodologies for local redistricting for the 2021 redistricting process, we strongly urge the adoption of an independent redistricting commission. If the Board does not adopt an independent commission, then we urge the adoption of a hybrid commission. The County Administrative Officer's agenda item for the April 13th meeting cites four different methods for the redistricting process: the Board draws boundaries without a commission, the Board appoints an advisory commission, the Board appoints a hybrid commission, or the Board appoints an independent commission.

Redistricting, which establishes electoral districts, is an important step in the process of American democracy. Across the United States, redistricting has led to gerrymandering, or unfair drawing of districts that benefits certain political interests, which has undermined public confidence in the electoral process and democracy itself. We believe that in order to maintain and improve public confidence in our local elections, there must be no room for doubt over the fairness of the redistricting process and its resultant lines. As such, we strongly urge the Board to appoint an independent commission.

We believe that in order to establish a fair redistricting process, there must be no conflict of interest or perception of conflict of interest. If the Board were to decide to draw its own lines, we fear that the public will perceive a conflict of interest, undermining confidence in the local electoral process. Similarly, the regulations surrounding advisory commissions are minimal, which could again present the perception of a conflict of interest.

However, stricter rules govern the appointment process for an independent redistricting commission. While the Board maintains the important power of deciding on an appointment process for the commission, there are restrictions in place to ensure that commissioners do not

have any conflicts of interest, the process is open to the public, and the commission itself is explicitly nonpartisan. These are all important reasons why an independent commission is thus the fairest way to implement the 2021 redistricting process. The transparency around the appointment process and the additional protections against conflicts of interest would help ensure confidence in the electoral process, strengthening democracy in our community. Additionally, the delay of census data this year allows the time to select and prepare an independent commission in advance of the formal start to the redistricting process.

For these reasons, we urge the Board to adopt an independent commission for the 2021 redistricting process. If the Board elects not to do so, then we strongly urge the adoption of a hybrid commission. To do so would mean to avoid any perceptions of conflicts of interest, protecting public confidence in the electoral and democratic processes. Thank you.

Best,

Olivia Seideman
Civic Engagement Coordinator
oseideman@leadershipcounsel.org

Mariana Alvarenga
Policy Advocate
malvarenga@leadershipcounsel.org

From: elizabeth Shields <elizs44@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, April 12, 2021 6:01 PM
To: BOSComments
Subject: Comments on Item 6 BOS Agenda April 13th 2021

CAUTION!!! - EXTERNAL EMAIL - THINK BEFORE YOU CLICK

The League of Women Voters is concerned about the haste with which the staff is encouraging the Board to take action on selecting the type of redistricting commission. We believe that if you do things right at the beginning by choosing a more inclusive process you alleviate the risk of litigation or certainly the prospect of losing in the event of litigation. The Fair Maps Act (2019) requires increased transparency in the process and increased community participation throughout.

Our preference is for an Independent Commission similar to the statewide Citizens Redistricting Commission. However whichever type of commission is selected it is important to have **more than five members** on the panel. Each of them should meet **the eligibility criteria** set out in Appendix A of the staff report. In addition a budget should be considered for outreach activities – according to the CA Constitution these expenditures can be reimbursed by the state for costs mandated by the state.

The delay in data being available for use by the commission provides an opportunity for outreach activities in determining the wishes of Fresno County residents. Once the data is available there will be a short window for processing that data so public hearings may be less convenient apart from those mandated by the Fair Maps Act.

From: Marianne Kast <fourkasts@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, April 12, 2021 7:25 PM
To: BOSComments
Subject: 4/13/21, Item #6

CAUTION!!! - EXTERNAL EMAIL - THINK BEFORE YOU CLICK

Dear Chairman Brandau and supervisors,

It is critically important that you include your constituents in the 2020 redistricting process from beginning to end. The staff recommendation, which you've received, to appoint an Advisory Redistricting Commission of 5 citizens, each member selected by a supervisor who stands to benefit from that person's work, is short-sighted. Citizens are sensitive to the kind of "stacked deck" that a small advisory commission, selected by you, implies.

The reason California is a leader in redistricting is that the state legislature understands the importance of impartial redistricting. We, in Fresno County also deserve impartiality. Regardless of the type of commission you resolve to form, you must adopt additional qualifications for the members of the redistricting commission, such as those indicated on the staff report, Attachment A, under "Hybrid Or Independent Redistricting Commission." Citizens who work to draw new supervisorial district lines cannot benefit from those new districts in the short term.

You have nearly 6 months before the census data needed for redistricting will be available. I suggest you delay deciding on this resolution and that you reach out to County residents in person or online to gather ideas for creating the most inclusive, impartial, and independent redistricting process possible.

Marianne Kast

(559)270-7937
5110 N. Fruit Ave. #109, Fresno 93711

From: Diane Merrill <dbm624@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, April 12, 2021 10:47 PM
To: BOSComments
Subject: BOS Meeting April 13, 2021 - Agenda Item 6

CAUTION!!! - EXTERNAL EMAIL - THINK BEFORE YOU CLICK

2021 Redistricting Process

The County staff report recommends establishment of an advisory redistricting commission. This commission would be five members of the public, with one member representing each supervisory district. This would be the same model used in the 2011 redistricting process with some changes, such as an updated guideline for selecting commission members.

1. The timeline for this important, once in a decade process for establishing a redistricting process has been unnecessarily rushed. There has been very little time between the release of the staff report and the April 13 BOS meeting. The public has had very little time to become aware of the process and express its views on how the redistricting commission should be structured. It is premature to recommend a timeline for public outreach before the public has had a chance to weigh in on how it wants the redistricting commission to be structured. Since the 2021 Fresno County census data will be available until October, there is time to consider options for structuring the redistricting commission.

2. The staff report contains very little discussion of why the advisory redistricting commission is recommended over the other two options presented- a hybrid redistricting commission or an independent redistricting commission.

It would be best for the Board to delay this decision to allow for at least a few weeks to allow for public input into the process. That would also give the staff time to prepare a staff report that includes a more thorough analysis of options.

Respectfully,

Diane Merrill

#6
4/13/21

From: Clerk/BOS
Sent: Tuesday, April 13, 2021 8:33 AM
To: BOSComments
Subject: FW: Redistricting advisory commission

From: Kay Bertken <kayb@mail.fresnostate.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, April 13, 2021 8:32 AM
To: Clerk/BOS <ClerkBOS@fresnocountyca.gov>
Subject: Redistricting advisory commission

CAUTION!!! - EXTERNAL EMAIL - THINK BEFORE YOU CLICK

Please reconsider the composition of the redistricting advisory commission. If there is any anticipation that the commission will provide adequate advice based on a thorough look at the new census data and that any decisions you make on the basis of their advice will be considered legitimate and independent of your political interests, the commission should be larger and include members other than your own appointees. Please look at other models for these advisory bodies. Thank you.

Kay Bertken
Fresno, CA 93704

#6
4/13/21

Hancock, Kelley

From: Kao Lao <kaocheng.cvup@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 13, 2021 8:40 AM
To: BOSComments
Subject: Public comment on Redistricting Committee
Attachments: 04_13 Fresno BOS Redistricting Public Comment.pdf

CAUTION!!! - EXTERNAL EMAIL - THINK BEFORE YOU CLICK

Hi Fresno County Board of Supervisors,

My name is Kaocheng and I am the Civic Engagement Table Coordinator for Central Valley United for Power (CV-UP). CV-UP has been closely watching and anticipating the Board of Supervisors' conversation around how to handle redistricting at the county level. Attached to this email you'll find the collaboration of eight organizations' voices, on behalf of Fresno County residents, on the process of selecting a Redistricting Committee.

Also, I was wondering if our public comment will be put on record?

I look forward to receiving a response. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Thank you.

--
Kao Cheng Lao (She, Her, Hers)
Civic Engagement Table Coordinator
Central Valley United for Power
704-773-0683
Follow us on [Facebook](#) & [instagram](#)
"We rise by lifting others."



April 12th, 2021

Submitted via Electronic Mail

BOscomments@fresnocountyca.gov

Central Valley United for Power is a coalition of eight organizations that builds inclusionary and transformative people power across eight counties, including Fresno County, where we work with communities in both Fresno City and in rural unincorporated areas. We promote policies and systems that will provide equitable opportunities for working families, youth, and communities throughout the Central Valley. Our grassroots and people-led organizing strategy expands upon principles of governance through authentic integrated civic and voter engagement.

As the Fresno County Board of Supervisors considers the various methodologies for local redistricting for the 2021 redistricting process, we strongly urge the adoption of an independent redistricting commission. If the Board does not adopt an independent commission, then we urge the adoption of a hybrid commission. The County Administrative Officer's agenda item for the April 13th meeting cites four different methods for the redistricting process: the Board draws boundaries without a commission, the Board appoints an advisory commission, the Board appoints a hybrid commission, or the Board appoints an independent commission.

An independent redistricting commission will best meet California Elections Code that districts be as nearly equal in population as feasible as members of this committee. In addition, by passing the vote for the methodology of an independent redistricting commission, the Board of Supervisors is sending the message to Fresno County residents that they 1) trust and respect their constituents' voices and 2) are empowering their constituents to be civically engaged.

Redistricting, which establishes electoral districts, is an important step in the process of American democracy. Across the United States, redistricting has led to gerrymandering, or unfair drawing of districts that benefits certain political interests, which has undermined public confidence in the electoral process and democracy itself. We believe that in order to maintain and improve public confidence in our local elections, there must be no room for doubt over the fairness of the redistricting process and its resultant lines. As such, we strongly urge the Board to appoint an independent commission.

We believe that in order to establish a fair redistricting process, there must be no conflict of interest or perception of conflict of interest. If the Board were to decide to draw its own lines, we fear that the public will perceive a conflict of interest, undermining confidence in the local electoral process. Similarly, the regulations surrounding advisory commissions are minimal, which could again present the perception of a conflict of interest.

However, stricter rules govern the appointment process for an independent redistricting commission. While the Board maintains the important power of deciding on an appointment process for the commission, there are restrictions in place to ensure that commissioners do not have any conflicts of interest, the process is open to the public, and the commission itself is explicitly nonpartisan. These are all important reasons why an independent commission is thus the fairest way to implement the 2021 redistricting process. The transparency around the appointment process and the additional protections against conflicts of interest would help ensure confidence in the electoral process, strengthening democracy in our community. Additionally, the delay of census data this year allows the time to select and prepare an independent commission in advance of the formal start to the redistricting process.

For these reasons, we urge the Board to adopt an independent commission for the 2021 redistricting process. If the Board elects not to do so, then we strongly urge the adoption of a hybrid commission. To do so would mean to avoid any perceptions of conflicts of interest, protecting public confidence in the electoral and democratic processes. Thank you.

Best,

Kao Cheng Lao
Civic Engagement Table Coordinator
kaocheng.cvup@gmail.com



#6
4/13/21

Hancock, Kelley

From: E Avalos <esperanza.avalos@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 13, 2021 9:06 AM
To: BOSComments
Subject: Meeting Date 4/13/21; Item #6

CAUTION!!! - EXTERNAL EMAIL - THINK BEFORE YOU CLICK

Every ten years after the Census, State and local governments are given the important task of encouraging ordinary citizens to participate in self-government by creating citizen advisory committees to evaluate population shifts and redraw district boundary lines for city council, board of supervisors and special districts. The formation of citizen advisory committees promotes a fair and transparent selection and redistricting process, strengthens democracy, gives all citizens a voice in local government thereby promoting trust in their government, reflects the diversity in the community and ensures fair representation on local government bodies.

In 2020, Census takers risked their health and safety and overcame many other obstacles to complete the very important count that benefits all Americans. The data provided by the decennial Census results in funding for all levels of education beginning with preschool through university level, health centers on reservations, in rural areas and in high density metropolitan cities, public infrastructure which creates good jobs, mental health centers which are critical resources in times of need as well as many other government projects aimed at providing housing, ensuring food security and promoting public safety.

It is for this reason that I strongly urge that the Fresno County Board of Supervisors appoint a citizens advisory committee to work with county staff on local redistricting. There is a time constraint challenge this year, however, many other California counties and communities are forming or have formed citizen advisory bodies.

Thank you for your consideration,

Esperanza Avalos
Board of Supervisors District 2

4-13-21
Item #6



April 5, 2021

Fresno County Board of Supervisors

Sent via email

Re: 2021 Redistricting Process

Dear Honorable Supervisors,

As we know, every ten years after the completion of the U.S. Census, all local jurisdictions in California are required to redraw their boundaries to reflect new population counts and ensure compliance with state and federal law.

There are many changes and new rules for California's local agencies in the redistricting process this time around. Because of delays related to COVID-19, data won't be available until September 30. Because of the delays caused by the pandemic, the California Legislature passed AB1276 last year, extending the local redistricting timeline, as well as adding further requirements to the local redistricting.

The intent of the Fair Maps Act passed in 2019 is to create standardized redistricting criteria to better keep communities together and prevent partisan gerrymandering. The law also requires local agencies to hold public hearings on redistricting and alters the redistricting timeline to allow more opportunities for public participation in the map drawing process.

We respectfully request that your future agendas include at least one public work session on the 2021 redistricting process, to gather and utilize public input on your proposed process and the selection of a proposed consultant prior to their engagement by the County. We also look forward to the Board providing the opportunity for community members to define their own communities of interest, so the Board can consider those resident-identified parameters once Census data becomes available.

Attached is a proposed resolution that articulates a fair and inclusive redistricting process, built on best practices and state law (including AB 849 & AB 1276). We look forward to these provisions being included in your redistricting plan.

We stand ready to assist you as you carry out your responsibilities. Due to circumstances related to the pandemic, the time to launch that process is now.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Kast".

Marianne Kast, President
League of Women Voters of Fresno County

Attachment: Resolution Calling for A Fair And Inclusive Redistricting Process

1345 BULLDOG LANE FRESNO 93710 LWWFRESNO.REDISTRICTING@GMAIL.COM (559)226-8384



Resolution Calling For A Fair And Inclusive Redistricting Process for Fresno County

Whereas, Fresno County Supervisorial District boundaries must be redrawn in 2021 for the next 10 years, determining how communities are represented, address issues of common interest, and which neighborhoods are divided or consolidated; and in the past, there have been few requirements that redistricting be fair, transparent, and engage marginalized communities; and

Whereas, robust, safe, inclusive community engagement to develop district maps requires time and resources to ensure digital access, diverse schedules, translation services, meeting notice, and other requirements identified by best practices and AB 849 and 1276 (Bonta).

Therefore, Be it Resolved that League of Women Voters of Fresno County urges the Fresno County Board of Supervisors to allocate adequate resources and provide policy direction to ensure an equitable and transparent redistricting process consistent with AB 849 and AB 1276 and the best practice guide of the Asian Americans Advancing Justice—Asian Law Caucus [Guide to Best Practices in Districting](#). Specifically, we expect that the 2021 Fresno County redistricting process will achieve the following goals:

1. Protect and maintain communities of interest;
2. Include at least one public hearing regarding the proposed consultant who will develop the map(s);
3. Include at least one public hearing regarding the proposed outreach plan for the redistricting process;
4. Ensure the consulting firm and redistricting process as a whole offers accessible online and in person opportunities to provide input regarding communities of interest, impact of proposed lines, and other comments, questions, concerns, and ideas related to the proposed maps;
5. Include accessibility approaches that remove physical, technological, language, and other barriers to public participation including work schedules and family commitments;
6. Leverage the trusted messengers and communities of interest infrastructure put in place to ensure a complete census count, including engaging community volunteers;
7. Include meetings before and after proposed maps are created and at least two other methods/opportunities for engagement accessible for each of the five districts;
8. Leverage the Municipal Advisory Councils, Interfaith Networks, and other existing network/neighborhood infrastructure to communicate the importance of and opportunity to participate in the redistricting process;
9. Provide adequate funding and personnel to accomplish these goals in partnership with community volunteers; and
10. Provide meeting notices at least two weeks in advance, including notices of applicable Supervisor and Committee meetings.