

California Citizens Redistricting Commission

"Fair Representation—Democracy At Work!"



PUBLIC INPUT HEARINGS

What is Redistricting?

Every ten years, the census gives us a snapshot of how many people are in the United States and where they live. Once we know how many people live in California, we redistrict. That is, we draw new district lines that put the same number of people into each electoral district.

What is the *California Citizens Redistricting Commission*?

In 2008 and 2010, the voters passed Propositions 11 and 20. In 2011, for the first time in California, a 14-person Commission will draw maps of:

- 53 Congressional districts
- 40 California Senate districts
- 80 California Assembly districts
- 4 Board of Equalization districts

Based on census data and public input, the Commission will draw new district maps in open public meetings and has until August 15, 2011 to approve the final maps and report.

How will the Commission decide where to draw district lines?

The *California Constitution* gives the Commission specific prioritized criteria in drawing district maps:

1. **Draw districts with equal population**, based on the U.S. Constitution.
2. **Comply with the federal Voting Rights Act**, to ensure minority voters have an equal opportunity to elect candidates of their choice.
3. **Draw districts that are contiguous**, so that a district should be connected at all points.
4. **Respect counties, cities, communities of interest, and neighborhoods**, to the extent possible.
5. **Draw districts to be compact**, where practicable, and applied only after the earlier criteria have been satisfied.
6. **Draw districts to nest within each other**, where practicable. That is, one Senate district contains two Assembly districts, one Board of Equalization district contains ten Senate districts, and so on.
7. **Additionally the Commission may not consider an incumbent or political candidate's residence in creating a district.**

Why does the Commission want to hear from the public?

Speaking up about your community is critical to ensuring district lines are drawn to keep your community whole and grouped with nearby communities with similar interests. This ensures that your voice is heard by your elected leaders in such decisions as to the quality of your child's school or how high your taxes are.

What will happen to publicly submitted comments and how will they be used in line drawing?

Along with census data, publicly submitted comments will be used to assist the Commission when it begins drawing district boundaries. The focus of public testimony is to receive information about the unique characteristics of the public's Communities of Interest from those most familiar with their neighborhoods.

Will the public be able to see where the lines will be drawn?

Yes! All Commission meetings are open to the public, livestreamed on the web (to the extent possible), and videotaped, which, along with transcripts and archived videos, provide unparalleled public transparency in the redistricting process. Draft maps of proposed districts will be posted on the Commission's website in June and July.

What is a "Community of Interest"?

A Community of Interest (COI) is a geographically connected population which shares common social and economic interests. Examples of such shared interests are:

- Those common to areas such as urban, rural, industrial, or agricultural; as well as geographical such as rivers, mountains, coastal, inland, watershed, etc.
- Those common to areas in which the people share similar living standards, use the same transportation facilities, have similar work opportunities, or have access to the same media of communication relevant to the election process; as well as shared common goals.

How can public comment and testimony be given?

The Commission encourages the public to provide testimony in an effort to best identify the unique regional qualities of Communities of Interest. Public comments about Communities of Interest can be submitted in a variety of ways, including:

- In-Person at an Input Hearings which are being held around the state. A schedule of all input hearing locations and dates can be found at the www.wedrawthelines.ca.gov website.
- In writing: public comments can be sent via email to votersfirstact@crc.ca.gov or via mail or fax:
Citizens Redistricting Commission
1130 K Street, Suite 101
Sacramento, CA 95814
Fax: (916) 322-0904
- Through a community-based organization (CBO): There are many CBOs that are working with communities and presenting testimony to the Commission. Go to: www.RedistrictingCA.org.

How should public testimony at Input Hearings be given?

Each individual at a Public Input Hearing will be given up to 2 minutes to talk about their community to the Commission. It is recommended that the public consider incorporating answers to the questions listed below in an effort to assist the Commission in understanding each Community of Interest.

What bonds your community – what do you see as the common links in your community?

Where is your community located – what are the boundaries of your community?

Why should the community be kept together – or separate from another area?

Maps are very helpful! Examples include Google Maps, AAA, or even hand-drawn.

Where can I learn more about the *Citizens Redistricting Commission* or redistricting in general?

The Citizens Redistricting Commission's web site offers useful information and important links to redistricting sites and issues throughout California at www.wedrawthelines.oca.gov .

*Join us in making California redistricting about "*Fair Representation – Democracy at Work!*"