



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 California's census based population is released, redistricting begins. That is, new district lines will be drawn that put the same number of people in to each electoral district.

► What is the *California Citizens Redistricting Commission*?

In 2008 voters passed Proposition 11 and in 2010 Proposition 20 which, for the first time in California, created a new 14-person, citizen-lead commission called the *Citizens Redistricting Commission* that will draw maps of:

- 53 Congressional districts
- 80 California Assembly districts
- 40 California Senate 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.

► Why can't a computer simply draw lines or boxes throughout the State?

The *Citizens Redistricting Commission* must draw maps that follow specific prioritized criteria:

1. **Draw district 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.

► Why does the Commission want to hear from the public?

Public participation in drawing districts is critical to ensuring that communities have the strongest voice possible to express their preferences and this can most effectively be done by the public themselves.

► 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.

► 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.

➤ **Can a Community of Interest be defined by an incumbent or political party?**

The Commission may not consider an incumbent or political candidate’s residence in creating a district, nor can the Commission consider Communities of Interest based on party affiliation or district preservation.

➤ **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.
- Electronic Submissions: public comments can be sent via email to votersfirstact@crc.ca.gov
- Via Mail or fax: Citizens Redistricting Commission
1130 K Street, Suite 101
Sacramento, CA 95814
Fax: (916) 322-0904

➤ **How should public testimony at Input Hearings be given?**

Each individual at a Public Input Hearing will be given up to 5 minutes (3 minutes if the size of the public necessitates) to present their Community of Interest 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.**

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

Yes! All Commission meetings are open to the public, lived-streamed on the web (to the extent possible), and video-tapped at a minimum which, along with transcripts and archived videos, provides unparalleled public transparency in the redistricting process. !

➤ **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.o.ca.gov .

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