

February 3, 2009

Barbara Paget
Bureau of State Audits
555 Capitol Mall, Suite 300
Sacramento, CA
95814

Dear Ms. Paget:

In response to your Notice of Interested Persons Meetings, I am suggesting the following. Creating objective, multi-factored, coherent regions, using the tools of their broad discipline, is one thing geographers do well. I hope that in your outreach and in the final selection, the Citizens Redistricting Commission will contain as many professional geographers as possible. We hire engineers to build bridges and doctors to provide medical care. We should choose geographers to do what they are already well trained to do.

While the above may be apparent and have already happened, I am suggesting that you reach the members of the following by contacting:

Douglas Richardson, Executive Director
Association of American Geographers

Robert Richardson, Secretary/Treasurer
Association of Pacific Coast Geographers
Department of Geography
CSU Sacramento
Sacramento, CA, 95819-6003

Jennifer Helzer, President
California Geography Society
Geography Department
CSU Stanislaus

I would particularly commend to your attention Dr. William Bowen and Dr. James Allen. Both are highly respected, cartographically gifted, recently retired, folks who communicate beautifully, understand California and are experts at both analysis and synthesis. Both may be reached through Cal State Northridge. (Disclaimer: I am not a graduate of CSN but an admirer of their work for many years.) Dr. Tanya Atwater of UC Santa Barbara would be another excellent choice.

Clearly, we have been offered an opportunity to turn a self-serving, opportunistic system into one that will truly represent our diverse interests and concerns. The incorporation of the skills of geographers and their objectivity, rather than the political tradeoffs of the current system, offer a hope of reality based democracy. I wish you well in this important endeavor.

Cordially,

Joanne Wuerker

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cc: Richardson, Richardson and Helzer