

Subject: Public Comment: Kern County Redistricting

Date: Tuesday, May 10, 2011 6:45 PM

From: Mr. Anthony J. Amarante [REDACTED]

To: <votersfirstact@crc.ca.gov>

Conversation: Public Comment: Kern County Redistricting

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Message Body:

Kern County's more than 800,000 residents make it too large to fit the whole county into one Congressional district with one State Senate district and two State Assembly districts nestled inside. However, you could get most of Kern County's population and certainly the Greater Metropolitan Bakersfield (GMB) area in to one such district. Furthermore, since State Senate districts have more constituents than congressional districts you could ideally have most of the county in one.

Because of our geography and our social and economic factors I believe that this area specifically the incorporated City of Bakersfield, all the scattered county pockets, the adjacent unincorporated areas north, south, east, and west, as well as outlying communities such as Lamont, Arvin, Shafter, Edison and like satellite communities within the valley portion of Kern compromise a community on interest. In all of these places it seems that there are mostly people of childbearing age raising children.

Some families are headed by first or second generation Americans; but that doesn't make every last one of them exclusively from Mexico or some other place in Latin America. This is true throughout California. The starkest of contrasts is what I think makes GMB most qualified to be considered a community of common interest. The Bakersfield area is one of the driest places in North America with 6 inches of rain or less most years. However we are blessed to be in a location with abundant fresh water. To find a greater source traveling south, you'd have to go all the way to the border with Arizona. GMB is a community of common interest because you know that you are a part of the community when you realize that either directly, or indirectly your life and your livelihood depend upon water from the Kern.

I don't think the Kern River is still a natural boundary for our community because when driving throughout the city especially during rush hour traffic the flow of cars seems to choke up close to or over areas where the road and the river cross.

Not only did the Great Recession/Foreclosure Crisis of 2008 hit everywhere, but also Anglos today aren't the supermajority that they were thirty years ago. Maybe the Voting Rights Act isn't what it once was either? Either way I don't think that the best representation comes when the winner of a political race ran unopposed or with only token opposition. I think that the most effective politicians are those who won by the slightest of margins.

Graduates from Kern High School District high schools, and/or Bakersfield College, and/or Cal State Bakersfield, could also be evidence that Metro Bakersfield and its surroundings is big enough to be its own Congressional district in a state of 37 million people.

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