

Subject: Public Comment: City of Benicia and Solano County**Date:** Sunday, May 22, 2011 8:14 AM**From:** Christina Arrostuto <[REDACTED]>**To:** <[REDACTED]>**Conversation:** Public Comment: City of Benicia and Solano County

From: Christina Arrostuto <[REDACTED]>
Subject: City of Benicia and Solano County

Message Body:

Hello and thank you for your important and dedicated efforts. I attended the public hearing in Oakland on May 21 and didn't get a chance to speak. As a Vallejo native, current Benicia resident and lifelong resident of Solano County, I have the following comments:

First I would like to comment on our Solano County national-level representation:

I strongly disagree with the speaker from Contra Costa County who didn't think that any of Solano County should be in the 10th Congressional District. As funny as they may look to someone not familiar with Solano County and the East Bay and Sacramento Valley Regions, the representation we have for Solano on the national level is quite appropriate and works well for us. This is because there are distinct differences within Solano County that lend us to have multiple "communities of interest" in the region.

--If you grow up in the Vallejo/Benicia area, you believe you grew up in the San Francisco Bay Area.

--If you grow up in Vacaville/Dixon area, you think you grew up in the Sacramento Valley Region.

--If you grow up in Rio Vista, you think you live in the San Joaquin Delta Region.

This is how differently life is experienced in Solano County.

Using these references, you can see that in Vallejo/Benicia, we think nothing of crossing the Benicia/ Martinez or Carquinez bridges to shop, have dinner, go to school or work, etc. We fly out of San Francisco or Oakland, eat and shop in Concord or Napa, and drive out Highway 37 to go to the movies in San Rafael. The water is not a barrier to us.

Residents of Vacaville and Dixon see Sacramento as their "big city," eat, work, attend college and shop there and fly out of their airport. Until the Kaiser in Vacaville opened, they went to Davis or Sac for medical care. They view going to the Bay Area as a big trek. This area is prime agricultural land and agriculture is the largest economic interest of Solano County - you can see why residents in this part of the county more easily identify with their Yolo and Sacramento Valley neighbors.

Rio Vista is not even in the territory of the Solano County Office of Education - it's in the River Delta School District. Folks there shop, work and play all along the Delta corridor, boating, fishing and farming.

I'm not really sure how people in Fairfield identify. I think that since this is the county seat, they think of themselves as more aligned with the county, or that they stand alone, but you'd have to ask someone who lives there about that.

As you can imagine, there are economic and ethnic communities of interest that clump up along these geographic lines as well, serving as a "two-fer" in determining lines of representation.

So the disparate representation works well for us on the national level. This also makes sense to split us along these lines because, given the number of constituents each Congressperson must absorb, all of Solano would be only a smaller part of any one District.

On the state level, we enjoy a similar blend of strength in the numbers of our representatives, also falling reasonably well along geographic and "community of interest" lines.

These are my comments. Please feel free to contact me at [REDACTED] if you have any questions.

Best regards, Christina Arrostuto

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