

Subject: Public Comment: 5 - San Luis Obispo

From: Vallerie and Gary Steenson <[REDACTED]>

Date: Sun, 12 Jun 2011 00:17:44 +0000

To: [REDACTED]

From: Vallerie and Gary Steenson <[REDACTED]>

Subject: draft maps

Message Body:

Congratualtions on the first drafts. We are pleased to see that San Luis Obsipo County is not divided in the new Congressional districts. This is important to us.

We attended the Commission's hearing here and were tremendously impressed with the serious way the Commission approached its work.

Thank you.

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This mail is sent via contact form on Citizens Redistricting Commission

Subject: Public Comment: 5 - San Luis Obispo

From: David Holmes <[REDACTED]>

Date: Sat, 11 Jun 2011 21:42:51 +0000

To: [REDACTED]

From: David Holmes <[REDACTED]>

Subject: CA-23

Message Body:

While nothing's perfect, I think that the new map for CA-23 Congressional District (Capps) and the related Calif. Assembly/Senate Districts are fine.

I'm not a political professional or active in politics in any way; just a voter who's now retired and cares about fairness and not having district lines drawn by self-interested politicians.

This new way is better, in my opinion.

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This mail is sent via contact form on Citizens Redistricting Commission

Subject: Public Comment: 5 - San Luis Obispo

From: "Sharon G. Whitney" <[REDACTED]>

Date: Fri, 10 Jun 2011 19:55:51 +0000

To: [REDACTED]

From: Sharon G. Whitney <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Lois Capps' District

Message Body:

Thank you for keeping this district intact. We are a community of interest by virtue of our shared proximity and love of the southern Central Coast, which is struggling to balance our desire to protect natural ocean resources and green energy alternatives.

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This mail is sent via contact form on Citizens Redistricting Commission

Subject: Citizen comments for Redistricting Commission - May 24

From: John Uebersax <[REDACTED]>

Date: Fri, 10 Jun 2011 11:31:23 -0700

To: [REDACTED]

Dear California Redistricting Commission,

I am re-sending a message and document with public comments, originally emailed to your office on May 24. It does not appear that these comments have been posted in the Public Comments section of your website, although other comments I sent a few days later have appeared there.

Please let me, therefore, request your assistance, first, in placing these comments in the Public Comments section of your site, filed under the appropriate date of May 24. As these are not new comments, they should not be placed in the June section. (I will be sending different comments on the June 10 draft maps.)

Second, it seems likely that, since they were not posted, neither were they shared with the Commission members. Therefore I would like to ask that this oversight be corrected, and with the fact that these were submitted on May 24 communicated to the Commission members.

It seems unusual to me that your office could not send out an automatic reply of "message received" to comments supplied by email, as this would take nothing but a couple of keystrokes, and would have prevented precisely the issue we have now.

The other option is for me to drive up there and take care of this in person, which I would be happy to do if you would find that more convenient.

Sincerely,

John Uebersax

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John Uebersax PhD

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] (mobile)

----- Forwarded message -----

From: John Uebersax <[REDACTED]>

Date: Tue, 24 May 2011 14:38:14 -0700

Subject: Citizen comments for Redistricting Commission

To: [REDACTED]

Dear Redistricting Commission,

It would appear that I am emailing these comments one day after the official deadline for the current round of citizen comments. I request that you will please exercise the flexibility to accept them nonetheless.

One reason for the tardiness is the excessive time I have had to

devote in recent days to monitoring and responding to, in accord with my civic duty, the recent escalation of US military involvement in the Libyan Civil War.

Comments are supplied in duplicate: that is, as both a pdf and doc file.

Thank you very much for your understanding and assistance.

With best regards,

John Uebersax

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John Uebersax PhD

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] (mobile)
[REDACTED]

Uebersax - Citizen comments.pdf

John S. Uebersax PhD

[REDACTED]
Paso Robles, California 93446
United States

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Monday, 23 May 2011

California Citizens Redistricting Commission
Sacramento, California (by email)

Dear California Redistricting Commission:

Subject: Citizen comments on US Congress Redistricting

(I could not readily discern from the text of the current Request for Comments, whether it solicits input for State or for Federal legislature redistricting. My comments suppose the latter, and are only directed to the drawing of US Congressional districts.)

We are, at this time, in the midst of a grave national crisis. While this is not something we tend to emphasize publicly – pessimism runs counter to the American spirit – each Commission member may privately reflect on this and come to his or her own conclusions.

Our domestic and foreign policies as a country are, in a word, disastrous. The main reason for this state of affairs, in my opinion and that of many others, is the negligence and compromised status of the United States Congress, including the House of Representatives.

Instrumental, if not wholly responsible, for this situation is the spirit of rancor and divisiveness which characterizes the Republican and Democratic parties, and the monopoly which these two parties, together, hold on national politics.

Even more fundamentally, it is evident, to anyone who chooses to investigate the matter objectively, that the policies of both parties are ultimately driven, not by the needs and interests of citizens, but by special interests – mainly, corporations, financial institutions, and, to a lesser extent, labor unions.

The ability of citizens to assert themselves and to produce stable, effective government is eliminated by a 'divide and conquer' strategy, promoted by these special interests, that permeates our government, media and culture.

Now concerning redistricting, there is one school thought – very prevalent, if not dominant today – that suggests that district boundaries should be based mainly on issues of local community homogeneity and heterogeneity, on the rationale that this will, somehow, produce more equitable representation in Congress, and a more just society with regards to diverse ethnic and cultural groups. I suggest, however, and emphatically so, that this view is fundamentally erroneous and misguided.

Far beyond ethnic and cultural differences, we are all Californians. Indeed, I am of the opinion that race, for example, is itself an unscientific and meaningless construct. As a statistician who has had occasion to study the matter formally, I can assert, beyond all

equivocation and doubt, that the variation within ethnic and community groups is so great that it vastly exceeds the average differences between groups. Two African-Americans, say, or two Hispanics, chosen at random are, basically, as likely to differ from each other, on any relevant index of comparison, as two randomly selected members of different ethnicities. The same can be said with respect to religion, education, or income.

We are not Black, Brown, Yellow, White and Red people. We are people. One people – all Californians – with precisely the same interest, which is the welfare of the whole. Ethnic divisions and rivalries have, ultimately, no basis in science or culture. Rather, divisions have been exaggerated and exacerbated by political demagogues and special interests with the specific aim of keeping us all incapacitated from effecting any real change in government. In the name of serving 'each', the 'all' suffer.

As should be completely obvious, California Congressional districts have, in the past, functioned to serve the joint interests of the Republican and Democratic parties, and the special interests who control them. The examples of this are too numerous to list here. In my opinion – as a social scientist, a statistician, and most importantly, as a citizen of California – this problem will persist until such time as a more objective and politically neutral criterion is used to draw Congressional boundaries.

I believe that the conventional theories of districting based on 'equitable ethnic and cultural representation' should be placed in the garbage bin. The so-called science of redistricting has been heavily contaminated with false opinion, self-interest, and the well-known academic depreciation of common sense. Indeed, modern theories of redistricting, based, as they are, on the culture of 'elitist' academic institutions, are heavily contaminated with the divisive spirit promoted by special interests, media, and party.

Moreover, any notion that this approach can be made more plausible or effective by use of multivariate statistical models is so far beyond being merely remote that it might be properly called absurd. Rather, every new variable introduced adds to the extended assumptions, and lessens the robustness and overall plausibility of any such approach.

What would be far better, in my opinion, would be, for example, to divide California into simple and consistent geometric areas – e.g., with horizontal or vertical lines – and to adjust them by algorithm or trial and error to produce the requisite Congressional districts.

Were it not the case that an inordinate amount of my professional and personal time must be spent dealing with the consequences of our dysfunctional Federal government, I believe I could make a solid and persuasive scientific case in defense of this view, based on research and sound theory.

Having supplied this perspective for your consideration, let me add the earnest wish that you will give it serious and unprejudiced thought, allowing yourselves the opportunity to reflect and consider it, detached from habitual modes of viewing the problem, and granting yourselves the luxury of entertaining what might at first seem too radical or unconventional a suggestion, but which is ultimately grounded in basic common sense.

The eyes of the state are on you, and – as California is arguably the most progressive state – those of the nation, and the world are as well. Perhaps, as Alexander Hamilton wrote in

the prefacing remarks to the Federalist Papers, "This idea will add the inducements of philanthropy to those of patriotism." In any case, your hard work and dedication to the people of California is most appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

John S. Uebersax

Subject: Public Comment: 5 - San Luis Obispo

From: Frank & Trudy Jarrattt <[REDACTED]>

Date: Fri, 10 Jun 2011 20:35:57 +0000

To: [REDACTED]

From: Frank & Trudy Jarrattt <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Assembly, Senate & Congressional Maps

Message Body:

From what we saw - if we read the maps correctly - you have put out SLO county back together for Assembly, Senate and Congress. Nice to be in the same districts as our neighbors once again since we have so many shared issues and services. We certainly did not have much in common with the valley.

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