

Region 6: Fresno

May 20, 2011

California Citizens Redistricting Commission

Sacramento, CA 95814

JUN 08 2011

Honorable Commissioners:

I am writing you today on behalf of I-5 Social Services, which operates eight Early Childcare Educational Centers east of Highway 5 on the westside of the San Joaquin Valley serving up to 700 children and their families. At present, our service area is divided into three Congressional districts: the 18th, 19th and 20th. My request for our community of interest is that it be reunited and joined with other similar communities of interest.

My name is Javier Guzman. I was raised in Huron and worked in the cotton fields of the west side as a child. After working for many years with the Legislature in Sacramento, I returned to the San Joaquin Valley. Currently, I work with I-5 Social Services Corporation, which has as its mission to increase resources in rural underserved communities throughout the San Joaquin Valley through business enterprises and partnerships that create childcare, economic development, education, employment, health, housing and other social programs/services.

The San Joaquin Valley has long been recognized as this nation's richest agricultural area while home to some of the most poverty-stricken communities in the country. For the last half century, organizations have strived to address that dichotomy. Despite these efforts, little has changed. A tour of communities on the west side of the San Joaquin Valley is a revisit of the *Grapes of Wrath*.

- The Public Policy Institute of California reported in 2009 that the Child Poverty Rate in the San Joaquin Valley ranged from a low of 20% in Kings County to a high of 33% in Tulare compared to 18% nationwide.
- The James Irving Foundation reported in 2010 that household income for the San Joaquin Valley skews lower than that of all Californians and clearly lags in the highest income brackets.
- Perhaps the most alarming statistics were reported by Oxfam America and the Rockefeller Foundation's study *The Measure of America*. They report that poverty, poor health and low graduation rates have put the San Joaquin Valley's 20th Congressional District (reaching Fresno, Kings and Kern counties) dead last in a national scorecard that ranks the well-being of residents of 436 districts nationwide.
- A recent Gallup Survey that identified the top 10 national metropolitan areas with the highest percentage rates of food hardship rated Fresno as the No.1 "Hunger Capital" of the nation.
- A close look at the communities where I-5 Day Care Centers are located finds unemployment rates ranging from a low of 20.2% in Cantua Creek to a high of 42.7% in Mendota.

The communities are mostly Latino (98%) with household incomes that range from below poverty to moderate income. The majority of these families are employed in the agricultural sector and live in the rural San Joaquin Valley. Less than 50% of our parents have the equivalent of a high school diploma. More than four out of five (80%) of the children live below the poverty level, and 77% of them face food shortages in the home. More than half of the children and families do not have health insurance. Nearly 100% of the children qualify for free and reduced lunches at school.

In drawing state Congressional, Assembly, Senate and Board of Equalization districts, it is essential that each district's "Communities of Interest" reflect similar characteristics in terms of poverty, healthcare access, educational achievements and employment opportunities so that together we can more

comprehensively address our needs. This clearly demonstrates that as a COI the rural west side has much more in common with the southeast and southwest areas of the City and County of Fresno than with the northern Fresno urban area.

The Boundaries of our Community of Interest are as follows:

- West: I-5
- North: Highway 152
- East : 99 South to McKinley; McKinley East to Academy; Academy South to 99; 99 South to 198.
- 198 West to Avenal Cutoff; Avenal Cutoff to I-5.

I request that my testimony be entered as part of the public comments regarding redistricting. If you have any questions, you may reach me at my contact information included below.

Thank you for your consideration.

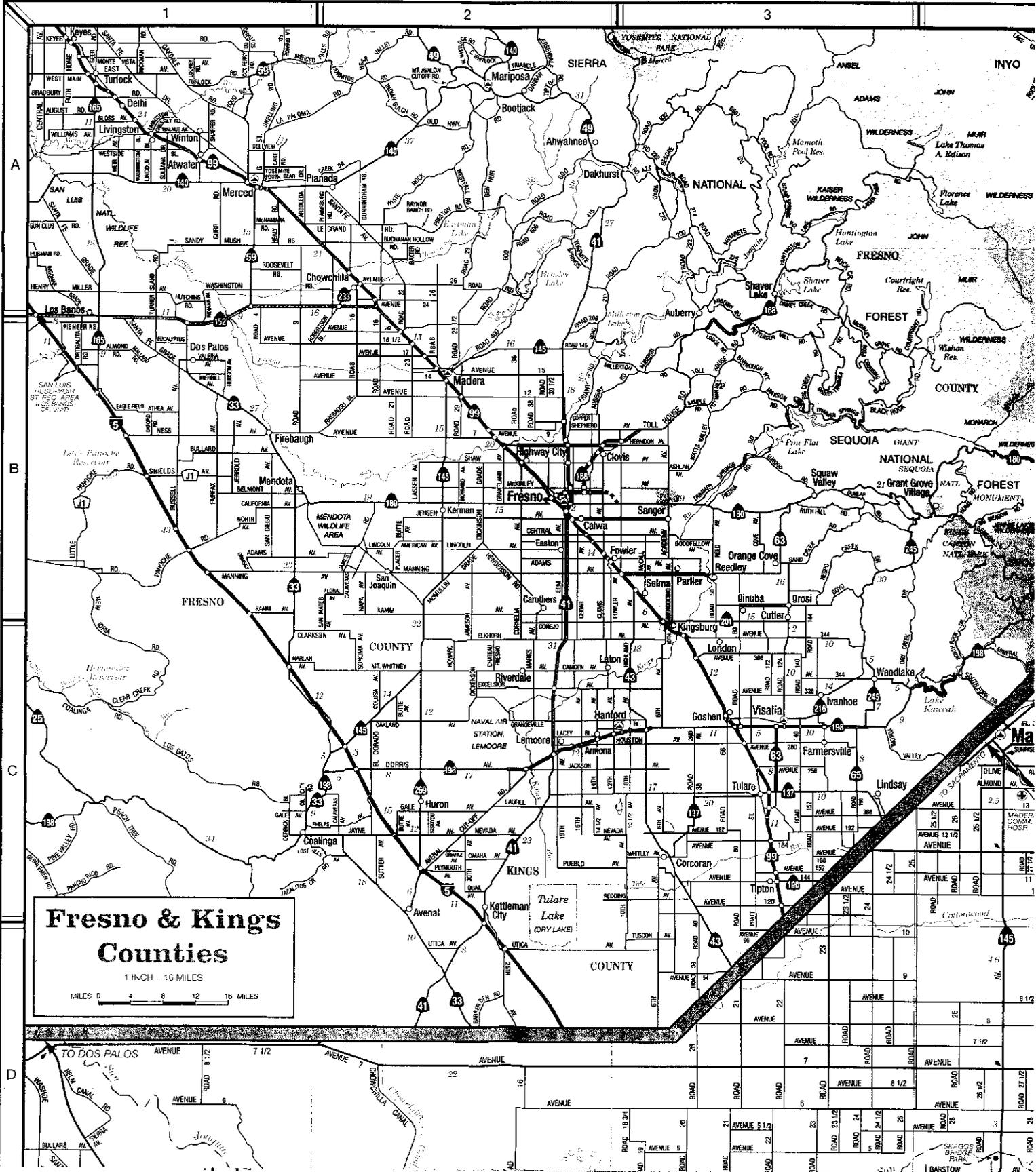
Sincerely,



Javier Guzman

[REDACTED]
Fresno, CA 93710
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

I am attaching a map that outlines the COI.



Fresno & Kings Counties

1 INCH = 16 MILES

MILES 0 4 8 12 16

SHRUGGS BENESE PARK BARSTOW

RECEIVED Region #6 - Fresno County

JUN 08 2011

MAY 24 2011

My Community of Interest Testimony

Fresno, CA 93704

Per _____

My name is KAREN E. LAWS and I am from (state community) FRESNO

I have lived in this community for 38 years. Owned home since 1973.

I am here today to request that my community of interest is kept together in the maps that the Commission is drawing.

Other Comments: Old Morris Daily elementary school neighborhood, southwest of
defined by Santa Fe railroad tracks to the northeast

Define your Community Boundaries: Identify street names, highways, landmarks, mountain ranges, rivers, etc

North Dakota Ave

South Shields Ave

East ~~Santa Fe railroad~~ Palm Ave

West Fruit Ave

Describe what makes you a unified community: Describe annual festivals, traditions, shared utilities, schools, etc

This area is in the City of Fresno, an established neighborhood (1945)
with mixed renters and homeowners, mixed socioeconomic levels,
mixture of college-educated and working class, mixed ethnic community
(Latino + white). We are very different from north Fresno or the
unincorporated "Old Fig Garden" "county pocket"

Describe your shared community social and economic characteristics: If available use demographic data if not

available use anecdotes to describe the shared economic and social characteristics

The Santa Fe railroad tracks and the canal represent historic boundaries
of communities in Fresno. The "other side of the tracks" is
southwest of the tracks and north of Shields. At one time, post-WWII,
this ~~was~~ was the edge of the City of Fresno. Today it is ~~an island~~
island with apartments to the north and west of Dakota,

Distinguish Your Community

My (our) community is similar to Please keep us in the same district as Fresno
High School: represented by the ~~unincorporated~~ urban districts (now SD-16,
And it is unique/distinct/different from Old Fig Garden "county pockets"
and the north-of-Shaw, north Fresno area.

AD-31,
CD-20)

