



**UnionYes**

Lorena Gonzalez  
*Secretary-Treasurer/CEO*

Mickey Kasparian  
*President*

# San Diego and Imperial Counties Labor Council

June 28, 2011

**VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL**

**Subject: Responses to "ISAND" and "CSAND" Senate and Assembly proposals with respect to Border-Area Community of Interest**

Dear Commissioners:

I write to you again as the duly elected Secretary-Treasurer of the San Diego and Imperial Counties Labor Council. As you remember, I wrote to you on May 23 to describe how Imperial County fits within a **Border –Area Community of Interest (BACOI)** as illustrated by several demographic metrics available through the 2005-09 American Community Survey.

I would like to respond to the Commission's first set of proposed draft maps for Assembly, Senate and Congressional districts which encompass Imperial County.

My comments were foreshadowed in verbal testimony provided to you at the San Diego post-map hearing on Monday, June 20, 2011. Evan McLaughlin, the Labor Council's Political Director, provided testimony as speaker #97.

As it relates to the proposed Congressional map titled, "IMSAND," I believe the Commission did an adequate job linking BACOI communities in South San Diego County with Imperial County. This map recognizes the commonalities of these BACOI communities, despite being in different counties.

However, I respectfully ask the Commission to reconsider the Assembly map called "ISAND" and the Senate maps "ISAND" and "CSAND" which link areas in the BACOI with parts of San Diego County that are NOT in the same community of interest.

I would like to demonstrate the reasoning for this criticism using the same metrics I used in my May 23 letter to show how the BACOI included some parts of Riverside County (Coachella and Mecca) but not others.

In this case, both the "ISAND" Senate and Assembly Districts link parts of East San Diego County – such as Alpine, El Cajon and Santee – that are vastly different than the BACOI communities of Imperial County.

By an even greater degree of mismatch, the Coastal San Diego County communities of Coronado, Pacific Beach, La Jolla, Del Mar and Rancho Santa Fe are worlds apart from the BACOI areas in South San Diego County. However, they would be included in the same Senate District under the proposed "CSAND" map.

To reiterate, the BACOI is significantly comprised of large, lower-income Latino families. These families are more likely to speak a language other than English at home, they have more children than other households, and their per-capita income is very low.

The challenges are immense for this community, if not obvious. Households in this community support more people while having less money at their disposal. Upward mobility is stymied in many instances because of household's custom use of a language other than English.

**This "Border-Area Community of Interest," in which the residents of Imperial County and South San Diego County belong, is concentrated along the U.S.-Mexico border and includes**

- a) the entirety of Imperial County, including the Cities of El Centro and Calexico;**
- b) South San Diego County; including the cities of National City, Chula Vista and the San Ysidro and Barrio Logan zip codes of the City of San Diego; and**
- c) the Coachella Valley communities of Riverside County; including the Cities of Coachella and Indio and the Mecca census designated place.**

The 2005-2009 American Community Survey produced by the U.S. Census Bureau illustrates the traits that work to both define the demographics of the Border-Area Community of Interest (BACOI) and differentiate it from the East San Diego County communities in "ISAND" and the coastal communities in "CSAND."

- Households in the Border-Area Community of Interest are approximately 34% larger than the average household in California.
- Border-Area Community of Interest residents are twice as likely (103%) to speak a language other than English than the residents in the State of California as a whole.
- The BACOI is 43% more densely populated with children (as a percentage of residents under age 18) and has more than twice (147%) the density of Latino residents as the State of California has overall.
- Per capita income in the BACOI is 60% less than the state average.

These figures are much different than in East County and along the San Diego coast.

Similar to the survey I provided of Riverside County communities west of the Coachella Valley – Palm Springs, Palm Desert and Twentynine Palms – I have attached data showing how these coastal and East County communities are not compatible with the BACOI with regards to these important socioeconomic metrics.

Those non-BACOI communities, when identified by the median of all three communities, are substantially less Latino and older than both the BACOI and the State of California as a whole. The household sizes in the community are smaller than both and more likely to speak English at home. Similarly, the per capita income in those non-BACOI communities is higher than the State of California average.

**Of those 5 categories, the median of the seven BACOI communities and the median for the three non-BACOI communities of Riverside County, East San Diego County and Coastal San Diego County fall on opposite sides of the State of California average in every instance.**

The American Community Survey paints a very bright line when identifying the community of interest in which Imperial County counts itself.

Please consider these relevant facts as you revise your proposed districts for this people of BACOI community. The challenges they face are immense and they deserve fair, effective and accountable representation by their government.

In solidarity,

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lorena Gonzalez'.

Lorena Gonzalez

Secretary-Treasurer/CEO

San Diego and Imperial Counties Labor Council, AFL-CIO

Attachment:

- (1) Summary of the 2005-09 American Community Survey data for BACOI, Non-BACOI communities & the State of California