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From: LAWSON\_BRIAN [REDACTED]  
Sent: Thursday, January 27, 2011 10:06 AM  
To: Commission, Prop11  
Subject: public comment on filling vacancy

Dear Commission:

Please distribute the following public comment to the members of the commission for their discussion regarding filling the vacancy.

Thank you,

-- Brian

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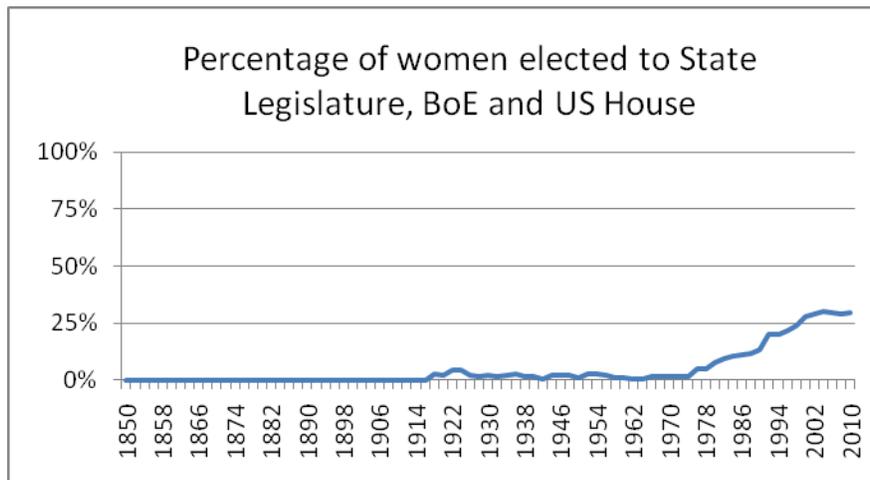
Prepared January 27, 2011 for Commission meeting January 28, 2011

TO: California Redistricting Commission Members

FROM: Brian Lawson

RE: **Commission Vacancy: Choose a Woman**

One of the factors you are called on to consider when choosing a commissioner is gender. Currently women are dramatically under-represented in the state legislature and California US House delegation.



The figure above shows that men have dominated for the last 150 years. After much agitation by women, in 1911, men in California voted to give women the right to vote. The first women were elected in 1918. For almost 60 years women made up less than 5% of the legislators. Starting in 1976 there was a steady increase. In 2002, though, there is a noticeable leveling off in the percentage of women. One possible factor for this is the 2001 redistricting plan which "froze in place" existing patterns of representation. In a 2006 article Dan Walters mentions that the lack of participation by women in the redistricting process caused friction later:

"Matters reached a flash point in 2001, when the Legislature drew new legislative districts as part of a bipartisan deal, and it became apparent that the all-male team of negotiators had created state Senate districts that effectively blocked the senatorial ambitions of several female Assembly members."

Source: This article is available on the Statewide Database "Resource" webpage in the section on "California redistricting news" in the June 2006 section, titled "Legislature's female ranks may shrink this year -- June 7, 2006"

The bipartisan California Legislative Women's Caucus has been active in attending meetings in preparation for establishing the redistricting commission. A public comment from this group

arguing for the importance of representation on the commission is posted on the wedrawthelines website at:

[http://www.wedrawthelines.ca.gov/downloads/Assblprsn\\_Saldana\\_C\\_LWC.pdf](http://www.wedrawthelines.ca.gov/downloads/Assblprsn_Saldana_C_LWC.pdf)

At the public meetings on setting up the commission Assemblywoman Saldaña spoke about why women should be represented on the commission:

“What we saw in the last redistricting process is that many woman who would have otherwise been very strong candidates for elected office were, in fact, drawn out of the districts they represented. And so our numbers have actually declined in recent years.”

Source: March 3, 2009, transcript, p. 21

She also stated that having women on the commission would be helpful because in her experience, not just as a legislator, but also as a volunteer she observed that:

“I was an appointee from the mayor's office up to the president of the United States, and at the end of the day, many of us would say, if you want something said, ask the men in the group, but if you want something done, ask the women in the group. So, if nothing else, having more, at least a balance of women on this board, I think will ensure that you are going to get your work done and on time and efficiently and effectively.”

Source: March 3, 2009, transcript, p. 25

Sources for the figure:

Assembly and State Senate:

<http://www2.legislature.ca.gov/womenscaucus/membership.aspx>

US House:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United\\_States\\_congressional\\_delegations\\_from\\_California](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_congressional_delegations_from_California)

Board of Equalization:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State\\_Board\\_of\\_Equalization\\_%28California%29](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State_Board_of_Equalization_%28California%29)