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02/11

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The Walt Disney Company

March 23, 2011

Via Electronic Mail
Citizens Redistricting Commission
1130 K Street, Suite 101
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Members of the Citizens Redistricting Commission:

I am writing on behalf of the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund to express our perspectives on the Commission's draft meeting schedule. The NALEO Educational Fund is the leading nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that facilitates full Latino participation in the American political process from citizenship to public service. Our Board and constituency include Republicans, Democrats, and persons who are not affiliated with either of those parties.

We congratulate the Commission's efforts in refining the draft meeting schedule to include weekend meetings. However, we feel that in order for the Commission to fully comply with Proposition 11 and provide the community with meaningful opportunities for public input, the Commission should consider the following recommendations.

First, we recommend that the Commission continue to refine its meeting schedule to reasonably reflect California's population distribution. This would include giving special consideration to timing and scheduling of meetings for the state's largest cities including Los Angeles, San Diego and San Jose. The Commission should consider having multiple meetings in each of the largest cities during each of the meeting cycles. Los Angeles City alone has nearly 4 million residents, yet the current schedule reflects only one meeting in the post-map input hearing phase for this city. Additionally, when scheduling meetings in the largest cities, the Commission should hold meetings on weekends to allow for the greatest participation of residents. The Commission currently has weekday meetings for each of these three cities, and weekday traffic and work schedules may prohibit residents of these larger cities to participate in public hearings on a weekday.

Second, we request that the Commission select meeting locations that are centrally located and take into account accessibility. Specifically, meeting sites should meet the following criteria: low cost or free parking, near public transit, accessible to persons with disabilities, and near major highways. Another factor that the Commission should consider is the time that meetings start during the weekday. The start time of meetings and their location should take into account of how traffic may affect the public's commute.

Members of the Citizens Redistricting Commission
March 24, 2011
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Finally, we encourage the Commission to make meetings accessible for persons who are not yet fully proficient in English. Translation services should be available at all public meetings. We recognize the budget limitations of the Commission, and understand that the Commission may not have interpreters at every meeting. However, we request that the Commission anticipate the needs of local communities and make language assistance available upon request. Furthermore, the Commission must widely publicize that interpretation services are available.

Thank you for your attention to our comments, and we look forward to continuing our work together.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Arturo Vargas', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Arturo Vargas
Executive Director