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CALIFORNIA STATE AUDITOR NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR THE CITIZENS REDISTRICTING COMMISSION AT WWW.WEDRAWTHELINES.CA.GOV

SACRAMENTO, CA (Dec. 15, 2009) – Today, Californians can begin to take matters into their own hands when it comes to drawing the new state Senate, Assembly, and Board of Equalization district lines as the California State Auditor opens the application process for millions of Californians to join the first-ever Citizens Redistricting Commission (Commission) at www.WeDrawTheLines.ca.gov.

Proposition 11—the Voters FIRST Act, which voters passed last year—changes the process by which the legislative and Board of Equalization district lines are drawn. The Voters FIRST Act essentially transfers the responsibility to draw the lines from the Legislature to a new 14-member independent commission made up of citizens from throughout California. The State Auditor will assess the applicants and create a pool of 60 of the most qualified. The 14 commissioners, comprised of five Democrats, five Republicans and four members of other parties or who have no political party affiliation, will be selected from this group. Applications are only available on line at www.WeDrawtheLines.ca.gov. The application process closes Feb. 12, 2010.

“This is an exciting time in our state’s history,” said California State Auditor Elaine M. Howle. “This is the first commission of its kind in the United States, and we’re ready to take this next step. We’ve already established regulations and laid the foundation for creating the 14-member commission.”

Every 10 years—after the federal census—California must redraw the boundaries of its Senate, Assembly and State Board of Equalization districts to reflect the new population data. In the past, members of the State Legislature drew those boundaries. Now, the Commission will take on this responsibility.

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Citizens Redistricting Commission



Once selected, the Commission will draw the new district lines in conformity with strict, nonpartisan rules designed to create districts of reasonably equal population that will provide fair representation for all Californians. The Commission must also consider the Voting Rights Act, current geographic boundaries, and other criteria when drawing the new lines. Additionally, the new boundaries must not be drawn to favor any particular party or incumbent elected official.

“We know this is a challenge, but we are proud to be part of this new, direct democracy,” Howle said. “We have such talented and diverse people in our state; we’re striving for a deep and broad pool of applicants who will do a fair job of drawing the new lines.”

The application process is open to every registered California voter who will have been continuously registered in California with the same political party, or with no political party, for the five years immediately prior to being appointed to the Commission; and who has voted in at least two of the last three statewide general elections.

For more information, membership requirements and to apply to the Commission, please visit www.WeDrawTheLines.ca.gov, or if you have questions, please call (866) 356-5217. You can also follow We Draw the Lines on Twitter at @WeDrawTheLines and tag related tweets with #WeDrawTheLines.

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