



Friday, April 1, 2011

Executive Director Daniel Claypool & Commissioners
California Citizens Redistricting Commission
1130K Street, Suite 101
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Open Letter to the CA Citizens Redistricting Commission

Dear Director Claypool & Commissioners,

It has come to our attention that the only public hearing to be held in San Francisco for Region 8 by the Citizens Redistricting Commission has been scheduled for Sunday, June 26th. As you may not be aware, Sunday, June 26th is the date of the 41st Annual San Francisco Pride Parade and Festival, the single largest annual event held in San Francisco and the state of California.

The Alice B. Toklas LGBT Democratic Club traditionally hosts its annual Pride Breakfast with elected officials from throughout the state the morning of the parade and this year will be no exception. In 2010 we had now-governor Jerry Brown and other important state elected officials attend our event and many of them participate in the full day's activities.

It is particularly important to our organization that members of the LGBT community are able to participate in this hearing. Alice takes the issues of redistricting very seriously as it has always been at the forefront of political issues and activities throughout the state for the last 40 years. Additionally, all the various LGBT political and grassroots organizations in San Francisco are deeply committed to activities on Pride Sunday and will find the timing complicated for scheduling to say the least.

Further, for your own organizing concerns here, you may note that over 1.2 million tourists are welcomed into San Francisco for the annual Pride weekend, which cumulates on Sunday with a 4 hour parade down Market Street and a 15 square block festival that occupies all of the Civic Center. Due to crowds, street closures and traffic, several state-owned buildings will be a struggle to access and parking will not be available at those venues. Logistically, holding such an important hearing on Sunday, June 26th in downtown San Francisco in the afternoon will be very difficult for the Commission, staff and members of the public to attend.

We believe that it is terribly important that the diverse citizenry of San Francisco have an unobstructed opportunity to participate in the redistricting process and strongly urge the commission to reschedule the San Francisco hearing for another day, ideally after the 26th. More importantly, finding a new date to hold the hearing will express sensitivity on the part of the commission to the pride and diversity of San Francisco.

On another note, should the Commission be in San Francisco with a gap day in scheduled hearings, we would like to extend you an invitation to the Alice Pride Breakfast and encourage you to promote the work of the Commission by scheduling an entry in the Pride Parade.

Sincerely,

Bentriish Satarzadeh & Reese Aaron Isbell
Co-Chairs

CC: Angelo Ancheta
Cynthia Dai
Connie Galambos Malloy