

## **Comment for the Public Input Hearing in Redding and on April 9, 2011**

April 8, 2011

Peter Van Meter

Former City Council Member, City of Sausalito, CRC Applicant

Dear Commissioners:

**Set the Golden Gate as the southwestern boundary for all northern California districts. This action cures a major past defect, and will result in three conforming senate districts, with nested assembly districts.**

The error to be corrected starts with the current 3<sup>rd</sup> Senate District. It encompasses just half of Sonoma County, all of Marin, and incredibly, half of San Francisco. This district is a poster child for non-compliance with both former and current law:

- It is NOT contiguous (leaps across the Bay)
- It is NOT compact (classic gerrymandered shape)
- It does NOT respect city/county lines (splits two of three counties, and cities)
- It is NOT a community of interest (Ross and Hunters Point?)
- It probably VIOLATES the Voting Rights Act (diluting San Francisco's minority neighborhoods)
- It does NOT include nested Assembly districts (no congruency).

When I was on the Sausalito City Council in the early 1980s, a council member from another Marin city (of the other major party) and I testified together at legislative "hearings" against this debacle, but to no avail. Now that politics is (hopefully) out of the process, constitutional mandates should be properly followed.

Logic and the law dictate that the Golden Gate should become an anchor point for "blank slate" redistricting. As you break the unnatural link between Marin and San Francisco, population allocations will move north and east, resulting in major improvements in representation.

The North Coast can be unified, as Marin, Sonoma, Mendocino and Humboldt Counties can form a new senate district. They deviate from the required population by less than 3%. A historic North Coast community of interest can be maintained that also respects county boundaries. It is wonderful when a correct outcome is so easy to achieve. (attached map, "Senate District 1").

Moving east, the combined size of Solano, Napa, Yolo, Lake, Colusa, Glenn and Tehama Counties is within less than a half a percent of the ideal population. ("Senate District 2").

This leaves the balance of the northern part of the state as the third senate district in the region. ("Senate District 3"). Whole counties in this district would be Sutter, Yuba, Nevada, Butte, Sierra, Plumas, Trinity, Shasta, Lassen, Del Norte, Siskiyou and Modoc.

Rural census tracts in the foothill and Lake Tahoe portions of Placer County can be added to meet the district's population requirements, leaving the County's urban portions in the greater Sacramento area for combining with a Sacramento centered district to the south.

These three new senate districts lend themselves well to nesting assembly districts. Marin, and Sonoma north to Rohnert Park, can be one district like the current 6th. No longer would another district cut the heart out of Sonoma County, as the current 7<sup>th</sup> does, taking the City of Santa Rosa to Napa County. The balance of "Senate District 1", northern Sonoma, Mendocino and Humboldt Counties now become another assembly district.

Assembly district nesting works well in the other two new senate districts as well, keeping communities of interest for urban/rural areas and mountain areas, while mostly maintaining county integrity. In "Senate District 2", Solano County and West Sacramento (from Yolo) can be an assembly district. Likewise, Butte, Sutter, Yuba Counties and the down slope portion of Placer can be grouped into a district in "Senate District 3".

This plan unites the northern portion of the state along a line from San Francisco Bay to Lake Tahoe, roughly following long established transportation corridors – Interstate 80 and the Southern Pacific railroad. Many Californians think of Northern California this way, and lines can now be drawn to acknowledge this.

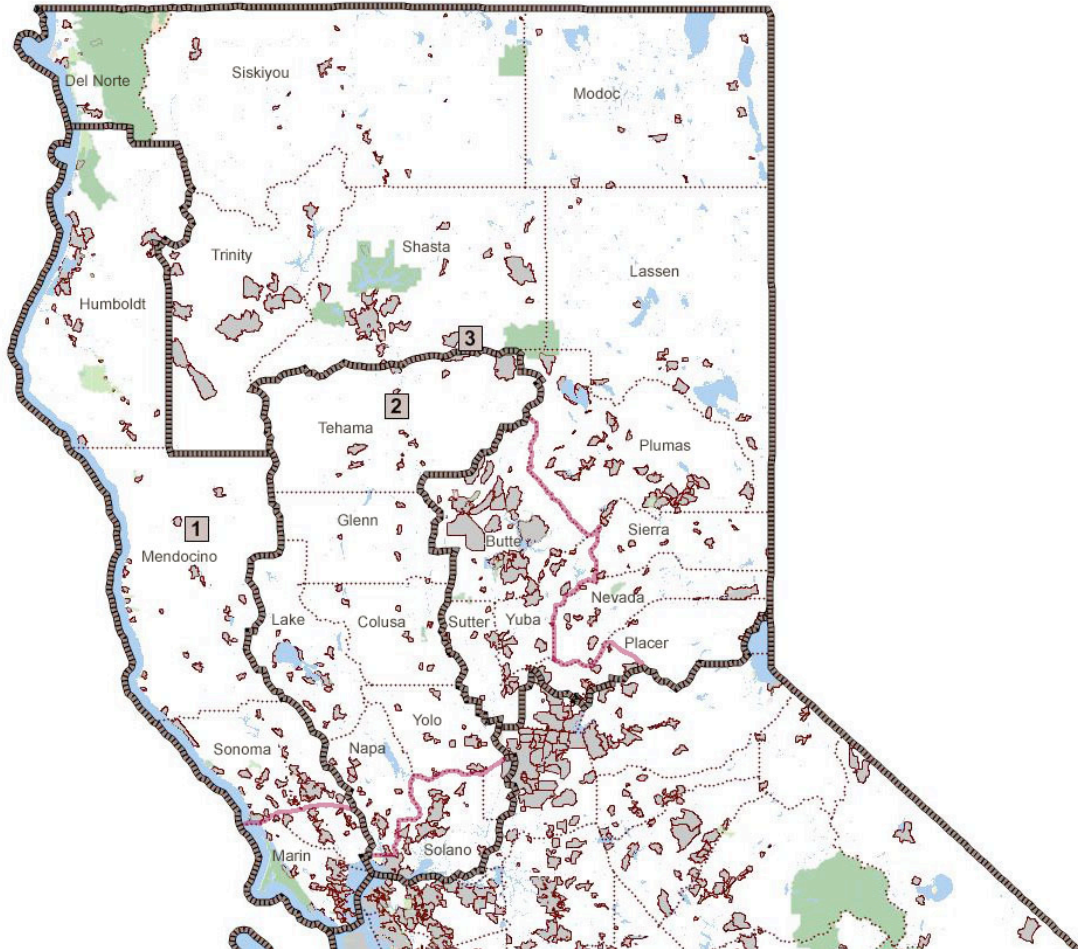
A copy of this map is attached for your consideration.

## Comment for the Public Input Hearing in Yuba City and on April 10, 2011

April 9, 2011

Peter Van Meter

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Proposed State Senate Districts (heavy/black lines) based upon establishing the Golden Gate as the southwestern boundary for Northern California line drawing. Nested Assembly Districts are shown (red/thin lines.)