

Prepared April 19, 2011

TO: California Citizens Redistricting Commission Members and Staff
FROM: Brian Lawson

RE: Wrap-up Meetings and Directing Line Drawing

1. Getting the Most out of Wrap Up Meetings

- (a) If the Commission is going to realistically be able to give direction for drawing four maps in one day (May 27) then a fair amount of preliminary work needs to be done at the wrap up meetings.
- (b) There are some lessons that can be learned from the April 16 wrap up meeting which might be useful for future wrap up meetings. The April 16 meeting was slated to “wrap up” regions 5, 6 and 9 (just over 9 million people).
 - i. Commissioners need time to receive and consider public input before the commission can decide how to use that information.
 - ii. Commissioners need demographic information about the area. In particular information about the population and locations of counties and cities (places) and information given about the location and density of groups protected by the VRA.
 - iii. Without this information the commission was not able to make any recommendations to “wrap up” its position on this region in preparation for the May 27 line drawing meeting.
- (c) What lessons can be learned from this experience?
 - i. It is important that commissioners have information in hand when they begin the wrap up process. Not only is it helpful to have summaries of the public input, but it is critical to have the relevant demographic data to be able to make informed preliminary decisions.
- (d) What can be done now?
 - i. The “wrap-up” approach is probably a good idea. It is unlikely that the commission will be able to do everything on May 27 without careful preparation. The information received about each region should be considered as close to the time when the region is visited.
 - ii. One way to get back on track would be to move each wrap up meeting to the “next spot” on the calendar. In other words, do the wrap for regions 5, 6 and 9 on May 1, the wrap for region 4 on May 14, the wrap for regions 1, 2 and 3 on May 23 and the wrap for regions 7 and 8 perhaps on May 26. This would give commissioners time to look over all the data and would give staff time to prepare the relevant information.

- (e) What should be done at wrap-up meetings? Below are some suggestions, you may have other ideas or want to cover different issues. But, whatever you do, you should have a plan for what you will achieve at the wrap up meeting.
- i. Identify general location of section 2 districts. This will most likely come from census data. Identify the general location where are there a sufficient number of individuals from protected groups to form: a) majority-minority districts, b) cross-over districts, c) influence districts.
 - A. Your legal counsel and line drawer may not have given you sufficient guidance by the next wrap (May 1) to identify these areas, but hopefully by the following wrap (May 14) they will have informed you of their best recommendation for standards for these issues and you can begin making preliminary guesstimates on these issues during the wrap.
 - B. This is not as bad as it seems because if the May 1 wrap is for regions 5, 6 and 9 there are probably not very many section 2 districts. The May 14 wrap (for region 4) is likely to be very contentious with respect to section 2 districts and you will want to have that information in hand before you wrap that area.
 - ii. Identify which counties and cities need to be split. Some of this is mechanical and will come from PL 94-171 population numbers (if a city or county is larger than an Assembly, Senate or Congressional district, then you know it has to be split for the appropriate map). Some of it may come from public testimony (although there don't seem to be a lot of people asking to be split).
 - iii. Identify which counties, cities and communities of interest should be combined and which should not be combined. This will probably come from public testimony and perhaps also from looking at natural geography and other sources.
 - iv. If possible try to come up with general areas for non-section 2 districts. Different maps require different sizes. This may require some areas to be split on one map but not split on another map. If you can come up with "approximately right sized clumps" (not exact districts) for each map you will be doing a good job preparing yourself for May 27.
 - v. Issues like compactness and nesting are probably something you will have to deal with at a global level on May 27. But, if you see opportunities to nest, you might note them during the wrap.

2. Directing Line Drawing

- (a) If you are going to try and give direction about how you want all four maps drawn on just one day it will be helpful to make some "process" decisions beforehand.
- (b) My suggestion would be to give direction for the maps one at a time. Each map is sufficiently unique that it will probably be easiest to consider them separately.
- (c) Conceivably, you could try and do it from either north to south or south to north and try to do all districts at once for all maps in a region as you move through the state. You may prefer some combination of map-by-map followed by regions, returning

to map-by-map. However you decide to do it you should make that decision well before May 27. If you do not have a clear process in place before you start it could easily last well through Memorial Day.

- (d) Decide the level of detail which you are going to give staff beforehand. In consultation with your linedrawer and legal counsel you should determine well before May 27 what sort of information they expect to receive from you on May 27. Do they expect you to give them information down to the tract level (or in some cases blocks)? Can they draw a map if you just give general direction about places and counties? If they say they can do it with “general” direction, what type of “general” direction is sufficient?
- (e) Make sure staff supplies commissioners with all the information needed so that commissioners can give effective direction on May 27.
- (f) You will probably benefit from a systematic process for recording your direction to staff throughout the day on May 27.
 - i. Human nature being what it is (and California being a very big state) there will probably be times when you will want to revisit decisions made earlier in the day. When that happens you will need a way to go back and look at previous decisions.
 - ii. One way to address this would be to keep a written document or spreadsheet which is projected where you can see it containing all your directions up to that point.
- (g) It seems to me the point of the May 27 meeting is not to get it perfect, but to get a general idea out to the public in a form which they can comment on. Of course, initial choices do influence final outcomes, so you should do the best you can in a reasonable length of time. Almost certainly, after you have the first set of maps done you will be swamped with comments. Actually, if you start making meaningful decisions at your wrap up meetings you will probably start getting a lot more feedback at that point.