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To: votersfirstact@crc.ca.gov

April 19, 2011

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

Via email

Dear Commissioners:

I write to the commission to discuss Long Beach and its neighboring cities.

I am a deputy to a state lawmaker. This is work I have done now in five legislative offices between 1992 and the present. Four of those five representatives have had as part of their districts the city of Long Beach.

It is my view that the principal connective thread which unites virtually all of the city of Long Beach is hydrological. Fully eight of the nine councilmanic districts in the city touch either the Pacific Ocean, the San Gabriel River or the Los Angeles River. One job in eight citywide stems from work at the port of Long Beach. The mouth of the San Gabriel and Los Angeles rivers figure prominently into the affairs of the city, as it is Long Beach which experiences the flow of trash from upstream communities along both waterways. The ocean and rivers sustain estuaries, wetlands and flyways which nourish birds, plants and marine animals.

Stepping back, to envision the region, the neighboring city to the south -- Seal Beach -- shares a wetlands with Long Beach and the San Gabriel River, which separates not simply the cities, but the counties of Los Angeles and Orange. Having been a Seal Beach resident for 23 years and now a Long Beach resident, I can say that the "Old

Town" and "Hill" portions of Seal Beach feel much more to be a continuation of Long Beach than anything else.

I would suggest that the city of Long Beach be viewed as a single unit for the purposes of both state and federal representation, with the two rivers, the shoreline and the port included together. This would include the portion of Long Beach that is west of the Los Angeles River, as well as those portions of Seal Beach that run from the 405 freeway to the ocean, from Seal Beach Blvd. to the county line.

Having worked for lawmakers since 1992, I have seen two very different set of lines. The lines that stood for the 1990s were crafted by a judge, who created Assembly districts, which he then "nested" with each state Senate district being comprised of two state Assembly districts. The current lines, drawn in 2001 with an agreement between the parties that resulted in no lawsuit filed, and, thus, the lines being those signed by the Governor, abandoned the concept of "nesting."

It's been my experience that "nesting" was easy for most people to understand, whether they were political sorts or common citizens. One Senate equals two Assembly was a formula that made sense, and people could remember who their representatives were. Today, there is no figuring who one is represented by, as there seemingly is no rhyme or reason to the lines. Count me as an advocate of nesting.

Thank you for your time in considering my views, and good luck in your endeavor.

Bill Orton

