

Subject: Pat Washington Written Testimony for the Commission

Date: Friday, May 20, 2011 2:12 PM

From: [REDACTED]

To: <[REDACTED]>

Conversation: Pat Washington Written Testimony for the Commission

May 20, 2011

[REDACTED] <mailto:[REDACTED]>

Dear California Redistricting Commissioners:

I am writing you because I believe that it is important to advance the full inclusion of several key California constituencies in the redistricting of California: African Americans, the API community, (particularly Filipino Americans), Latinos and the LGBT community.

In addition, I strongly believe that two of my communities, African Americans and LGBT families and individuals deserve targeted consideration from your commission. We are both a political and social community. The services, organizations, communities and cultural institutions that are "home" to our groups tend to be located in specific neighborhoods and areas of the city and the state. Please don't inadvertently divide neighborhoods or social-cultural services that it makes more sense to keep whole and that serve as the lifeline for our groups.

I believe individuals and organizations far more articulate than I have spoken before your Commission, have shared the maps they believe represents the more equitable and balanced redistricting outcomes for these communities in particular. I trust that you will agree with me that the voices that have come before you on my behalf and on the behalf of others from my groups deserve full consideration from your commission. For example, Latinos are the second largest population group in California and their population numbers alone, along with that of the Filipino community, cry out for equitable representation. African Americans still struggle to be appropriately counted and represented in the political process, employment and educational arenas and to have cultural and social space that is identifiable and accessible. My LGBT community is a fragile community of interest in terms of equal representation. We all need the protections of the best thinking of you as commissioners and the valuing of the hard work of representatives of our communities that have come forward to share our highest hopes for the outcomes of this process.

I have participated in numerous meetings and organizational sessions where members of these groups have worked diligently to insure that they were truly representing the voices of our communities every step of the way—while also validating the legitimate issues and concerns brought forth by others.

I support the map that has been presented by the Latino Redistricting Committee which is comprised of 40 community leaders and civic-minded community members who have come together in San Diego county to advocate for the historically underrepresented people of Latina/o ancestry and in the interest of preserving the deeply shared American value of “one person –one vote”. I also strongly urge you to safeguard the voting rights of California’s African American communities, particularly as those interests have been articulated for San Diego County by leaders such as Barry Pollard and others.

I believe that you may be subjected to opinions and views that go against the hard, dedicated and inclusive work of Latinos, Asians, and African Americans involved in drawing comprehensive, fair and equitable district maps for San Diego and California. I urge you to rise above efforts to cast aspersions against the hard work of so many every day citizens who want nothing more than equitable and reasonable redistricting outcomes that respect the integrity of neighborhoods, shopping and worshipping patterns; that validate cultural and ethnic community gathering spaces, political voting strength for en

In closing, please be fair, be consistent with the Voting Rights Act, and be realistic about how far African Americans and the LGBT community still have to go in terms of both social and political advancements in California. And, be true to justice for all.

We need your voice and actions as commissioners to protect our voice in California’s political process.

Thank you for your work. Thank you for your careful discharge of your duties as commissioners.

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