



education fund

May 5, 2011

Citizens Redistricting Commission
1130 "K" Street, Suite 101
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Honorable Commissioners:

On behalf of the California League of Conservation Voters Educational Fund and our sister organization, the California League of Conservation Voters (with over 50,000 members and activists), we wish to go on record in urging the CRC on two important matters : 1) to keep the Santa Monica Mountains and the areas on both the coast and valley sides of the mountains in undivided legislative districts, and 2) to the extent possible recognize coastal environmental communities of interest adjacent to the Santa Monica Bay and the northern coast of Los Angeles County as part of the redistricting process . We regret we could not offer public testimony at your most recent hearing in San Fernando.

First, the Santa Monica Mountains are a significant natural landmark that residents have in common on both sides of the mountains. The San Fernando Valley and the Las Virgenes cities, share this protected regional open space with Malibu and Los Angeles County Westside residents. Protecting this open space and its watershed, wildlife corridors and recreational areas are an important shared interest of the public on both sides of the Santa Monica Mountains. Having elected representatives that share this priority is vital to the best interests of this community.

Preserving a Santa Monica Mountains community of interest is consistent with the Santa Monica Comprehensive Planning Act that was passed in 1976, which recognized that "the Santa Monica Mountains Zone ... exists as a single ecosystem in which changes that affect one part may also affect all the other parts..." We therefore urge the CRC to keep the valley and coastal areas and the Santa Monica Mountains in undivided legislative districts.

Second, we believe that the coastal areas along the Santa Monica Bay and the north Coast of Los Angeles County constitute an important community of interest that should be recognized in the redistricting process. Coastal communities share a common economic and environmental resource, a common interest in marine stewardship, and a common public access and recreation resource. Protecting the water quality and watershed are of critical concern for coastal communities and the tourist economy of the state. Therefore, CLCV Education Fund and CLCV request that the Commission attempt to minimize the number of legislative districts that will provide representation in this region, in order to diminish separation of these coastal communities of interest.

We believe these points are consistent with the initial testimony to the CRC provided by Warner Chabot, CEO of the CLCV on February 26th in which he outlined two major concerns of League: "to create boundaries and districts that contribute to the quality of life for the communities and people within them". We set forth two criteria that are key to us in establishing new districts: 1) upholding the Federal Voting Rights Act, and 2) the principle of contiguous geographic areas that reflect 'environmental communities-of-interest'.

Sincerely,

H. Eric Schockman, Ph.D, Vice President

