

Subject: Public Comment: north Orange County

Date: Wednesday, May 11, 2011 4:33 PM

From: Ron Garcia [REDACTED]

To: <votersfirstact@crc.ca.gov>

Conversation: Public Comment: north Orange County

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Message Body:

Dear Commissioners:

As you probably have heard, Orange County is far more diverse than most people realize. Heavily Latino cities such as Santa Ana and the part of Anaheim west of Highway 55 belong in the same districts. Coastal communities from Seal Beach to Newport Beach share common environmental concerns.

Yet, districts are large as a Congressional or state senate seats may well require you to make some decisions that are not easy. You are required to draw senate district with 931,000 people in them, which will require you to make very large districts.

As an elected official from Brea, I'd note that my community has more in common with the East San Gabriel communities of Diamond Bar, Walnut and Rowland Heights than it does Orange County cities like San Clemente or San Juan Capistrano. In fact, Yorba Linda and Brea share undeveloped land deemed a "wildlife corridor", which is partly comprised of Chino Hills State Park and a continuing swath of undeveloped rolling hills that bridges the three counties of Orange, San Bernardino, and Los Angeles. This open space continue west of the 57 freeway to La Habra Heights (LA County) and La Habra (Orange County). It is not just the wildlands they have in common, but wildfires, too, such as the "Freeway Complex" fire in 2009 that burned Chino Hills State park, much of the above-mentioned undeveloped land and hundreds of structures between Chino Hills, Yorba Linda and Brea.

Brea is home to a large retail shopping mall, right off the 57 freeway. Folks come to our mall to shop from up and down the 57 corridor. Bus service connects Brea to these communities. We also share a transportation entity with our neighbors in Los Angeles, San Bernardino, and Riverside Counties called the Four Corners Transportation Advisory Group. The transportation concerns of our region involve all 4 counties.

North Orange County, the East San Gabriel Valley and even Chino Hills have similar incomes and similar housing needs. We all commute on Highway 57 and many of us have children attending Cal-State Fullerton. I know that breaking county lines is not ideal but neither are Senate Districts which include both Fullerton and Laguna Niguel (the current 33 Senate District) or Yorba Linda and Arcadia (the current 29 Senate District) or Yorba Linda and Santa Margarita. Sometimes communities of interest and sensible transportation corridors are more than a county line.

Thank you for your consideration,

Ron Garcia
Councilmember and Immediate Past Mayor
City of Brea

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