

Region #2 :
San Bernadino

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~~Palm Desert~~

DR. WILLIAM GUDELUNAS, PH.D.

PALM DESERT, CALIFORNIA 92211

May 18, 2011

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Per _____

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

Re: Public Comment concerning Riverside and Imperial Counties

Dear Commission Members:

I would like to submit the attached comment concerning the Legislative and Congressional Districts to be drawn by your Commission for Riverside and Imperial Counties. I am a tenured Professor of Social Sciences at College of the Desert in eastern Riverside County and a frequent public speaker and media commentator on politics and government in the area. As such, I have a reputation as a knowledgeable and objective analyst of governmental processes and political events. I hope you will agree as you review the attached comment.

I have also been a resident of the area for more than 25 years. For far too long, Riverside County has been cannibalized by politicians in the drawing of districts to preserve or create partisan advantage. I am grateful for your charge to ignore incumbent protection and partisanship in designing our representatives' districts for the coming decade.

Please feel free to contact me at the above address or email if you have questions or would like additional comment from me. Thank you for considering my view.

Very truly yours,



William Gudelunas, Ph. D.
Professor of Social Sciences
College of the Desert

A Fair, Just and Legal Redistricting Plan For Riverside County

Submitted by
Dr. William Gudelunas
Professor, College of the Desert, Palm Desert

The following proposed Assembly, Senate and Congressional Districts for Riverside County, best comply with the criteria the Citizens' Commission is required to apply. What follows is an analysis by geography, population demographics, communities of interest, economic and social interaction and existing political jurisdictional boundaries.

This proposal suggests boundaries for Assembly Districts 64, 65, 66 and 80*; Senate Districts 37 and 40* and Congressional Districts 44, 45 and 49*.

- **Geography:** Each of the proposed districts is contiguous, respects existing political jurisdictional borders of counties, cities, special and school districts—maximizing continuity while complying with the population sizes required by law. Riverside County is naturally split into two distinct geographic areas by a range of mountains including Mt. San Jacinto. For clarity of meaning in this proposal, Eastern Riverside County is proposed to contain Assembly Districts 65 and 80, Senate District 40 and Congressional District 45. The Western portion of Riverside County is proposed to contain Assembly Districts 64 and 66, Senate District 37 and Congressional Districts 44 and 49. The proposed districts respect this natural boundary as well as the natural environments and ecology, naturally occurring features such as the Salton Sea and communities all located in distinct valleys such as the Coachella Valley, the Hemet Valley, the Palo Verde Valley, Cherry Valley, the Pass and Imperial Valley.

The Salton Sea, the largest lake in California, requires management by several political bodies and spans the borders of Riverside and Imperial Counties.

- **Demographics:** The proposed eastern districts CD 45, ADs 65, 80 and SD 40 maximize minority community political influence by compacting communities of interest. The racial make-up of the Coachella Valley is 48.7% Hispanic, 44.9% White, 2.4% Black, 2.3% Asian and 1.7% other. Additionally, the Riverside County communities east and south of the urban areas of Riverside and Moreno Valley share many common characteristics with each other and Imperial County. They are suburban and rural (no city is larger than 80,000) with economies grounded in tourism and agriculture. In addition to large Hispanic communities, they are the home of many retirees.

Proposed Districts CD 44, ADs 64, 66 and SD 37 in western Riverside County also share common characteristics of urbanization, proximity to the urban centers in Los Angeles and Orange counties with which they are economically

connected and separated from the south and eastern portions of Riverside County by a natural mountain boundary. The cities are larger, urban centers or suburbs of larger urban centers to the west of the county. The racial make-up of the Western region is very similar with a larger Black and Asian population and the Hispanic population being the same percentage point, but more densely centered in Riverside and Moreno Valley. The boundaries proposed would maximize the political influence of the Black and Asian communities.

- **Economic Integration:** The mountain boundary of Riverside County also separates the economic interactions of the two sections. Communities in the west (the proposed 64th and 66th ADs, 37th SD and 44th CD) interact with each other and are connected by the I-15 and SR 215 as north-south transportation corridors and the I-10 and SR 60 as east-west corridors. Rail transportation to Los Angeles and Orange Counties link this portion of the county to those urban centers where many residents of the western portion of Riverside County are employed, shop and recreate.

There are manufacturing jobs, light industry, health care and higher education (University of California and private colleges, Riverside Community College) jobs in this section of Riverside County. Residents shop and enjoy entertainment within the cities of Western Riverside County. This integration is recognized by the boundaries of the Council of Governments, Western Riverside Council of Governments (WRCOG), required by State and Federal law to be the multi-jurisdictional agency for transportation, housing and other forms of regional planning. WRCOG is a sub-council of SCAG (Southern California Association of Governments).

That portion of the County east and south of the mountains (proposed ADs 65 and 80, SD 40 and CD 45) contains significant agricultural businesses and land uses. In addition to agriculture, the economies in these communities rely on tourism, retirement centers, health care and entertainment—particularly special events and festivals. Residents utilize retail and entertainment venues within this area. Federal and State transportation, housing and regional planning is undertaken by CVAG (Coachella Valley Association of Governments—a sub-council also of SCAG) and many local governments have a history of working together on public issues such as homelessness and pollution control. The two counties are tied together by Highway 86, also known as the NAFTA highway which links I-10 to the Mexican border. There is no meaningful passenger rail service in this region. Additionally, residents of the eastern portion of the Coachella Valley are included within the service area of the Imperial Irrigation District—a political jurisdiction that handles water issues for Imperial County and provides electricity to its customers in Riverside and Imperial County. It is governed by an elected Board of Directors.

- **Shared Issues:** Issues of concern in Riverside and Imperial Counties are also best addressed by the proposed districts. Eastern Riverside County and

Imperial County have been partners in the same Assembly and Senate Districts for the past 20 years. In addition to the challenges presented by the Salton Sea, both areas are desert ecological system sharing many environmental concerns. Priorities and usages of Colorado River water, irrigation, power generation and transportation tie the region together and cross county lines. Both eastern Riverside and Imperial Counties share persistent high unemployment rates, lack of sufficient health care and public transportation in rural areas and the goal of developing diverse job opportunities for residents. Both counties are affected by proximity to the Mexican Border.

Western Riverside County (proposed 64th and 66th ADs, 37th SD and 44th CD) has experienced extraordinary growth, one of the highest housing foreclosure rates in the country and environmental problems created by industry and urbanization. Traffic congestion concerns impacted by Los Angeles and Orange County affect only this region of the County.

▪ **Political Jurisdictional Boundaries:**

In summary, the proposed Assembly Districts 64, 65, 66 and 80 as well as Senate Districts 37 and 40 and Congressional Districts 44 and 45 fully comply with the legal requirements and mandated criteria to be utilized by the Citizens' Commission in the objective to fairly and effectively redistrict the State of California. These districts contain the appropriate population of residents, maximize communities of interest, respect natural and political boundaries and recognize shared public policy challenges. We respectfully request full consideration of these proposed districts for the 2012 through 2020 elections.

* Proposed District numbers utilize the existing numerical designation for the same portion of Riverside/Imperial Counties as currently exist and are offered for clarity of the discussion.

Statistical Summary of Proposal

45th Congressional District: Target 702,905

Population 2010: 709,210 as proposed

Cities: Banning, Beaumont, Blythe, Cathedral City, Coachella, Desert Hot Springs, Indian Wells, Indio, La Quinta,
Palm Desert, Palm Springs, San Jacinto, Rancho Mirage

County Areas: Imperial County, Mecca, Thousand Palms, Bermuda Dunes, Cabazon, Cherry Valley, Homeland, Nuevo, Oasis, Idyllwild, Mountain Center, North Shore, Pine Cover, Sky Valley, Thermal

44th Congressional District Target 702,905

Population 2010: 701,715 as proposed

Cities: Moreno Valley, Perris, Riverside
County Areas: El Cerrito, Gilman Springs, Highgrove, Home Gardens, Jurupa Valley, Lake Mathews, Lake Riverside, Lakeland Village, March Air Force Base

49th Congressional District Target 702,905
Population 2010: 708,451 as proposed

Cities: Canyon Lake, Corona, Lake Elsinore, Eastvale, Hemet, East Hemet, Menifee, Norco, Temecula, Wildomar
County Areas: Coronita, French Valley, Good Hope, Mead Valley, Temecula Valley, Woodcrest, Meadowbrook, Winchester

37th Senate District: Target 931,349
Population 2010: 935,037 as proposed

This Senate District consists of the 64th Assembly District and the 66th Assembly District.
This complies with the nesting requirement of two (2) Assembly Districts with the same geographic and Demographic issues.

40th Senate District: Target 931,349
Population 2010: 935,037 as proposed

This Senate District consists of the 65th Assembly District and the 80th Assembly District and complies with the nesting requirements.
This Senate District will take in Central Riverside, The San Gorgonio Pass, The Coachella Valley and all of Imperial County to the Mexican Border. It will be the most Eastern and Southern Senate Seat in the State and should therefore be the 40th.

80th Assembly District: Target 465,674
Population 2010: 469,041 as proposed

Cities: Bermuda Dunes, Blythe, Coachella, Desert Hot Springs, Indian Wells, Indio, La Quinta, Palm Desert, Thermal
County Areas: Imperial County, Mecca, North Shore, Oasis, Sky Valley, Thousand Palms.

65th Assembly District: Target 465,674
Population 2010: 458,667 as proposed

Cities: Banning, Beaumont, Cathedral City, Hemet, Idyllwild, Palm Springs, Perris, Rancho Mirage, San Jacinto
The City of Calimesa closest to San Bernardino is not included, as this District shares a common school district, Yucaipa/Calimesa with San Bernardino and is in the (909) area code. Further it does not fit the demographics of the rest of the district.

County Areas: Aguanga, Anza, Cabazon, Cherry Valley, East Hemet, Lakeview, Mountain Center, Sun City, White Water, Valle Vista

64th Assembly District: Target 465,674

Population 2010: 497,236 as proposed

Cities: Moreno Valley, Riverside

These two areas have identical demographics, shared geographic areas, and shared economic issues

66th Assembly District: Target 465,674

Total Population 2010: 472,450 proposed

Cities: Canyon Lake, Corona, Lake

Elsinore, Menifee, Norco, Temecula,

Wildomar, Winchester

County Areas: Highgrove, Home Gardens,

Romoland

Submitted by Dr. William Gudelunas

Professor, Social Sciences

College of the Desert

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Palm Desert, California

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