

Subject: California Redistricting 2011

From: "Mary Helen Barro" <[REDACTED]>

Date: Mon, 23 May 2011 00:27:59 -0700

To: <[REDACTED]>

Esteemed Commissioners,

Please accept my testimony (attached) regarding our Community of Interest in Kern County, which is currently divided between the 20th and 22nd Congressional Districts. It is our desire to see our Community of Interest reunited within the 22nd Congressional District. Thank you for your consideration.

Mary Helen Barro

[REDACTED]
Bakersfield, CA 93305

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Mary Helen Barro

April 13, 2011

California Citizens Redistricting Commission

████████████████████
Sacramento, CA 95814

Honorable Commissioners:

I wish to submit comments for your consideration regarding the redistricting of Congressional District 22, located in Kern County. At present, our community of interest is divided into two districts, the 20th and 22nd Congressional Districts. Throughout the years, our community has suffered due to lack of a cohesive, united representative voice. We therefore request that our community of interest be reunited within one Congressional District, the 22nd District.

My opinion is based on decades of serving on various local boards and commissions, as well as my experiences as a broadcaster in Kern County. Additionally, for approximately ten (10) years (1986-1995), I was the owner/operator of KAFY Spanish Radio (970 AM), which served the greater Bakersfield, Arvin and Lamont communities as a cohesive unit. Residents in these cities continually participated in, and continue to enjoy a strong bond due to shared experiences, including:

- All students attend Kern High School District schools
- Common shopping at the Mercado Latino, an extremely large shopping complex in East Bakersfield
- Numerous cultural events and parades (Oaxacan, Mexican, Puerto Rican, Black History and Good Neighbor Festivals)
- A common soccer league, with participation by over 150 teams
- Extensive investments in commercial core and senior housing complexes
- Kern Regional Transit links all three cities

There is general agreement of the importance to preserve this community of interest, which is bordered by the following boundaries:

- North boundary – Columbus Street in Northeast Bakersfield
- South boundary – below the cities of Arvin and Lamont
- East boundary – El Tejon Mountains
- West boundary – Highway (Freeway) 99

A map outlining our community of interest is attached for your reference.

Other pertinent criteria/unifying data affecting our community of interest has been sourced from various county, state and federal agencies (ACS, Census, school enrollment, free lunches, etc.), as follows:

- The community needs jobs, better education, access to better healthcare, improved roads, better flood control, access to public transit, greater teen pregnancy prevention
- The primary employment is in agriculture
- The three largest employers in our community are Grimmway Farms, Bolthouse Farms and Giumarra Vineyards
- The majority of the residents earn less than \$30K annually
- The majority of the residents are largely Mexican American, Oaxacan and Puerto Rican, and the majority of Kern's Black residents also reside within this area
- The majority of homeless people and services they need, not just in Bakersfield but throughout all of Kern County, are located/concentrated in the Southeast Bakersfield area, which falls within the reconfigured district proposed herein.

It is our urgent hope that our community of interest will be kept intact under one Congressional District in order that we may work toward having a stronger and united voice with our elected officials in the state legislature and in Congress, so that we can improve the quality of life for our families.

If you or your staff have any questions regarding my written testimony, which I request be entered as part of the public comments regarding the 2011 Redistricting for California's Congressional, State Senate, State Assembly and Board of Equalization districts, you can reach me at my contact information included below.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Mary Helen Barro

Mary Helen Barro

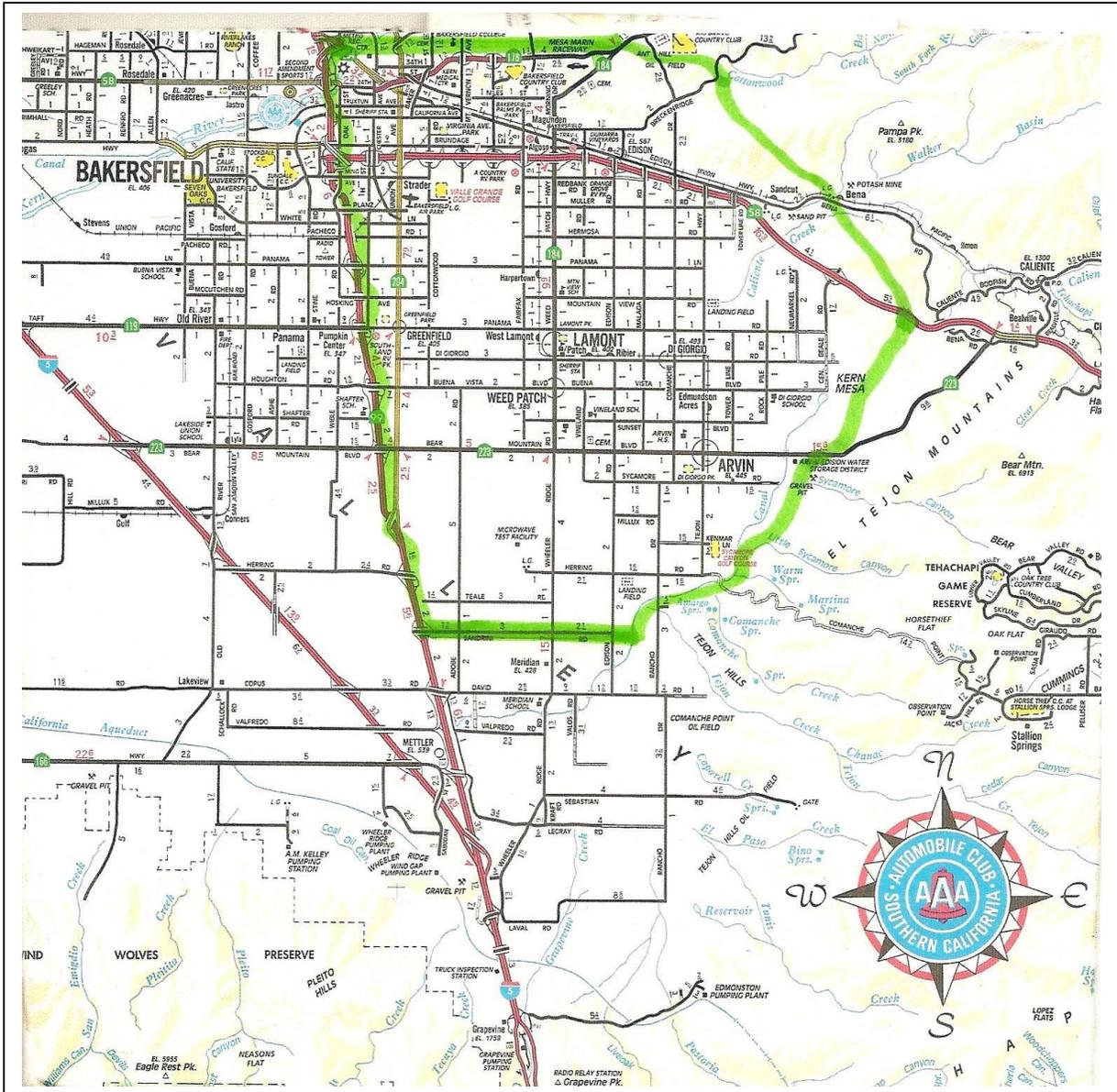
[REDACTED]
Bakersfield, CA 93305

[REDACTED]

MHB:a

Attachment – Map of Kern County Community of Interest

Map of Kern County Community of Interest



Subject: Redistricting for Ridgecrest -

From: "Darin & Kathy Russell" <[REDACTED]>

Date: Mon, 23 May 2011 13:09:33 -0700

To: <[REDACTED]>

Ridgecrest should remain in Kern County.

Kathy Russell

[REDACTED]
Ridgecrest, CA 93555

[REDACTED]

Subject: Redistricting effort

From: Rebecca Neipp <[REDACTED]>

Date: Mon, 23 May 2011 17:20:22 +0000

To: "[REDACTED]" <[REDACTED]>

The following letter was also published in the Wednesday, May 18, edition of the News Review:

Dear Commissioners:

You have already heard from our fellow residents the many reasons for keeping Ridgecrest within the current boundaries for state legislative and congressional districts. We share with Kern County services, cultural interests, government agencies, social and natural history, tourism and other industrial ties.

But perhaps the greatest reason to keep our representation established in Kern County is that of all the nearby cities, Bakersfield is home to those most knowledgeable about — and committed to solving — our local challenges.

A primary concern is preserving the Navy mission at China Lake. When military bases across the country faced reduction or elimination in the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure process, our county, state and federal representatives joined our local elected officials in lobbying on behalf of China Lake.

Understand that the work accomplished at China Lake is not simply an economic engine that keeps our small, isolated, politically insignificant town on the map. It is a unique set of ranges with a pioneering collaboration between civilian and military resources that play a critical role in our national security. Our current elected officials understand the importance of this asset, and go to bat for us regularly. We have not always been so lucky. When Ridgecrest was lumped with San Bernardino County leaders, it was a constant challenge to educate them on these and other issues relevant to our area.

If you think that the cities in North Los Angeles County are going to give us fair representation, I urge you to talk to our leaders about how unimportant a team member we were when the High Desert was lobbying for a four-year university in our area. (Ironically, the Antelope Valley Board of Trade — the agency so keen on having us included in their proposed High Desert District — is the very same agency that thought our city was too insignificant to have a seat on the effort's steering committee.)

Cutting us out of the current district lines does not just cause the inconvenience of having to reestablish political relationships, or prompt the hope that our relatively inconsequential number of votes wins us favor, or at least attention, with our new representatives.

Through an alliance with other East Kern communities, the Indian Wells Valley has a seat at the table and a voice in the political debates. Robbing us of our strength in numbers pushes us into a political obscurity that threatens our viability, and perhaps even our very existence.

We at the News Review have no doubt that far greater cities — with vastly greater numbers — are lobbying their own interests. Our only hope is that when it comes down to drawing lines on a map that impacts cities that are far, far away from any of your own home towns, you will make your decision based on what is right. Because if it comes down to numbers, like always, we haven't a prayer.

Rebecca Neipp
News Review

Ridgecrest, CA

Subject: redistrict

From: "Barbie Nichols" <[REDACTED]>

Date: Mon, 23 May 2011 10:58:35 -0700

To: <[REDACTED]>

Please do not redistrict Kern County into Los Angeles County, our voices and needs will not be addressed or represented well with this plan.

Thank you Barbie Nichols

Subject: Re: Public Comment needed by May 23 for Redistricting Issue

From: "Manion, John K CIV NAVAIR, 418400D" <[REDACTED]>

Date: Mon, 23 May 2011 14:24:15 -0700

To: <[REDACTED]>

I just heard about this meeting today and from what I understand you are considering moving Ridgecrest and the Indian Wells Valley out of our current Congressional District shared with Kern County into one shared with Los Angeles County.

We are currently in the 22nd Congressional District (Federal), the 32nd Assembly District (State), and the 18th Senate District (State) and we are well represented because our voices are heard. Melding with Los Angeles or San Bernardino County may well cause our voices to be lost in the crowd.

I am completely against this move into the Los Angeles District. Please do NOT do this. It will hurt our ability to be properly represented in the government.

Thank You,

John Manion
[REDACTED]

Ridgecrest, CA
93555

Email: [REDACTED]

7841

Subject: Public Comment: Ridgecrest in Kern County

From: Nancy J Autrey <[REDACTED]>

Date: Mon, 23 May 2011 21:58:18 +0000

To: [REDACTED]

From: Nancy J Autrey <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Ridgecrest in Kern County

Message Body:

I have been a long time Kern County resident in Ridgecrest & would like to keep it that way. I use Bakersfield for a lot of my needs including medical, legal and shopping. Many of our children in the Indian Wells Valley attend Bakersfield college. I do not associate Ridgecrest belonging to San Bernardino or L. A. counties. If you look at the map of California, Ridgecrest is not in southern California, it is in central California, just like Bakersfield and makes the perfect corner to Kern County. We have had a long relationship with Bakersfield, in business and in many other facets of living. Thank you for your attention. Respectfully submitted, Nancy J. Autrey

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This mail is sent via contact form on Citizens Redistricting Commission

Subject: Public Comment: redistricting

From: William Rogers <[REDACTED]>

Date: Mon, 23 May 2011 20:30:57 +0000

To: [REDACTED]

From: William Rogers <[REDACTED]>

Subject: redistricting

Message Body:

to whom it may concern:

I am writing to express my opinion of the current proposal to re-define our district representation in Congress.

I feel, that as a rural community, our interests meld more closely with those of Bakersfield and other communities in Kern County rather than in the more populated areas of San Bernadino and Los Angeles. Our ties with the China Lake Naval Base make our community one of the most important in the State. Ridgecrest is also unique in its tourism and culture. We are the Gateway to Death Valley and a stopping point to and from many other recreational destinations. Our cultural community thrives with theatre, music, history and local artists that make us unique in the desert. We love our life here on a smaller scale than folks in the more populated counties and, therefore, feel that we should be represented accordingly---with other cities in Kern county. Thank you for reading.

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This mail is sent via contact form on Citizens Redistricting Commission

Subject: Public Comment: Redistricting

From: "Robert W. Campbell" <[REDACTED]>

Date: Mon, 23 May 2011 18:49:06 +0000

To: [REDACTED]

From: Robert W. Campbell <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Redistricting

Message Body:

I voted for and believe in fair redistricting. However, I understand you are seriously looking at separating Eastern Kern County away from Kern County Seat (Bakersfield). I believe the redistricting should follow County lines as a first priority. This at least ensures some connectivity between the County administrative issues and the voting District. If not practical within any highly populated County, then it is ok to have more than one district within one county--or more than one county in a district. But in every instance it should be all inclusive. That is, don't include portions of more than one county in a district unless that portion is 100%. Keep it simple for the folks in the district/county so that they can more easily address issues that need to be brought to the attention of their representatives (County, State, and National), and the representatives have incentive to work TOGETHER.

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This mail is sent via contact form on Citizens Redistricting Commission

Subject: Public Comment: Redistricting Inyokern

From: Paul Nugent <[REDACTED]>

Date: Mon, 23 May 2011 20:28:25 +0000

To: [REDACTED]

From: Paul Nugent <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Redistricting Inyokern

Message Body:

It would be a great disservice to the residents in the Ridgecrest area to move them out of their current district. I have business in the area and feel strongly that moving them to a more populated district will result in the local citizens having a lesser voice in the governance of their area.

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This mail is sent via contact form on Citizens Redistricting Commission

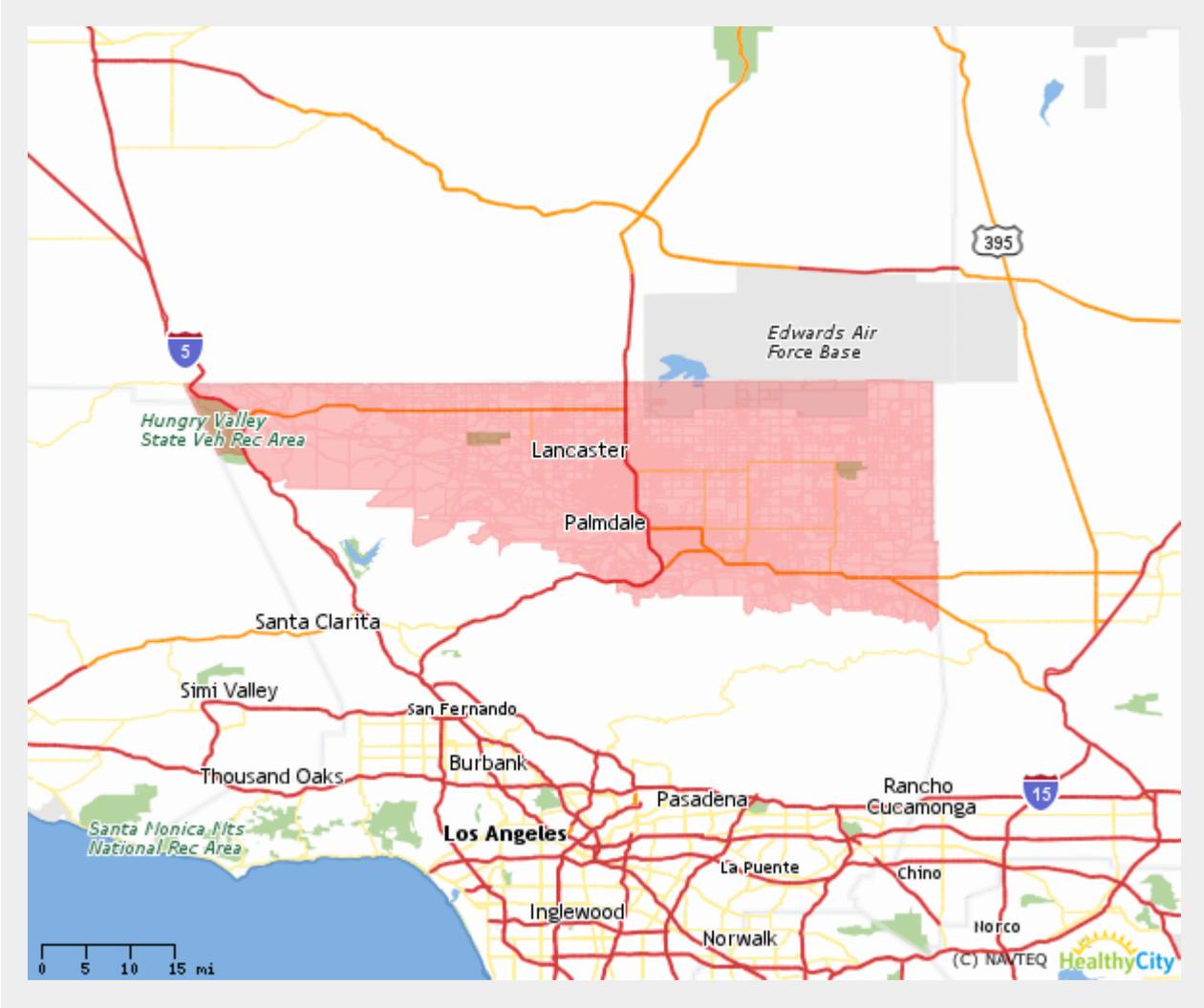
Northern Los Angeles Antelope Valley

The entire Antelope Valley desert region runs in both eastern Kern County and northern Los Angeles County. After the Commission's recent public hearing in the Antelope Valley, there was discussion of not only dividing the two counties, but also splitting Lancaster and Palmdale into different districts. We respectfully urge the Commission to reject this idea. Lancaster and Palmdale have been within the same state legislative districts since at least the 1970s. As bad politician driven redistricting has been, even they kept these two cities together.

Lancaster and Palmdale share a sixteen mile border, as well as several special districts that cover both cities including the Antelope Valley Hospital District, Antelope Valley College District, Antelope Valley High School District, Antelope-Valley East Kern Water Agency, Antelope Valley Transportation Agency providing bus service throughout the two cities and surrounding communities, Antelope Valley Air Quality Management District and regional LA County Sanitation District. Most regional associations cover both cities as opposed to one or the other. These include the Greater Antelope Valley Association of Realtors, the Antelope Valley Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, the Antelope Valley Black Chamber of Commerce, the Antelope Valley Board of Trade and the Greater Antelope Valley Economic Alliance. The state has also recognized the areas economic ties by designating Lancaster and Palmdale in the same Antelope Valley Enterprise Zone. The federal government has done the same by recognizing them in the same Antelope Valley Foreign Trade Zone.

Together, the two cities and the surrounding desert communities in just LA County make up approximately 80% of an Assembly District and 40% of a Senate District.

This Map denotes the Los Angeles County portion of the Antelope Valley. Whichever direction Legislative, Equalization or Congressional Districts go, this area should be preserved together.



Population

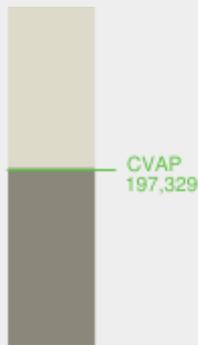
Total Population: 377,215

Universe: Total Population
 Datasource: U.S. Census Bureau Decennial Census
 Data Year: 2010
 Data Level: Census Block

Total Population

377,215

Citizen Voting Age Population



Universe: Total Population
 Datasource: Statewide Database at the University of California Berkeley
 Data Year: 2010
 Data Level: Census Block

Citizen Voting Age Population

197,329

Ethnicity / Race

44.73% Hispanic or Latino
 33.22% White alone
 14.98% Black or African American alone
 3.86% Asian
 0.71% Some Other Race
 2.50% Two or More Races

Universe: Total Population
 Datasource: U.S. Census Bureau Decennial Census
 Data Year: 2010
 Data Level: Census Block

Original District = Blue line

Hispanic or Latino

44.73%
168,746

White alone

33.22%
125,316

Black or African American alone

14.98%
56,499

Asian

3.86%

	14,570
Some Other Race	0.71% 2,667
Two or More Races	2.50% 9,417

Additional Information

The unemployment rate is approximately 18% throughout the district, with a housing cost of \$50-\$80 per square foot. This differs greatly from Bakersfield and Central Valley communities, some with even higher unemployment as well as the Santa Clarita/Ventura County areas with unemployment around 8% and housing costs nearing \$250 per square foot.

Aerospace has historically been one of the booming businesses in the Antelope Valley. Edwards Air Force Base, USAF Plant 42, and the China Lake Naval Weapons facility and Virgin Galactic at Mojave Spaceport are major economic engines.

Recently, the Antelope Valley has become the green energy capital of North America. Wind and solar resources are better here than anywhere else in the country with dozens of wind and solar energy production facilities being developed throughout east Kern and northern Los Angeles County.

Educationally, the entire High Desert, including northern Los Angeles, eastern Kern and northern San Bernardino counties have joined forces to promote a comprehensive four year university as the next California State University campus. The nearest CSU is over sixty miles from almost any point in the High Desert.

Several government agency boundaries already cross the Kern/Los Angeles County line in order to provide local services. These include the Antelope Valley-East Kern Water Agency and the Antelope Valley Community College District.

Demographically, we have a fast growing Hispanic Community. Splitting us outside of the High Desert would dilute the influence of our Hispanic community.

Conclusion

In every sense, the Antelope Valley is a community of interest that transcends artificial county lines. Environmentally, demographically, geologically, socially and economically we are distinct from areas outside of our mountain boundaries. If there must be a division of the two-county Antelope Valley, at a minimum the LA County portion ought to remain together with Lancaster and Palmdale in the same district. This idea is endorsed by:

The City of Lancaster

The City of Palmdale

Antelope Valley High School District

Antelope Valley College District

Antelope Valley Board of Trade

Greater Antelope Valley Economic Alliance