

Subject: California Redistricting Commission

From: Neil Mammen <[REDACTED]>

Date: Fri, 27 May 2011 00:23:02 -0700

To: [REDACTED]

Dear Commissioners,
thank you all for taking your time to do this very important and seemingly thankless task.

My name is Neil Mammen. I was the speaker who seemed to cause a big ruckus at the San Jose Meeting that resulted in the commission calling a break.

Please understand this was not my intention.

If you recall I asked the crowd only to wave in agreement. Some got emotionally charged by my statements and responded verbally as we saw. This escalated.

I would have preferred that my points were carried over to you without the interaction that resulted as the words I spoke were very critical and based on my actual real life experiences.

I am emailing you my testimony for your files and also to ensure you all have all the details I intended to convey, some of which I had to cut short due to time. I believe this is a very serious issue and would appreciate your time in reading it.

I'll follow my testimony with information on the plan that I do support.

Dear Commissioners,

My name is Neil Mammen, I live in the 16th district. I'm an immigrant to the United States born in Ghana of East Indian parents. I grew up in Sudan, Ethiopia, Ghana, Jamaica, India and Yemen. We were forced to leave Yemen due to religious intolerance. In Sudan many of my father's students have been killed due to ethnic strife.

I'm here to ask you to NOT do something that many people have been asking you to do. That is to infer that the Federal Voting Rights Acts requires you to draw districts based on ethnic majorities. If you do so you will pit Section 2 of the Act against Section 5. The act says that you cannot discriminate against minorities but if you create a district that does group certain minorities together you WILL in fact be discriminating against unfortunate minorities of other ethnicities caught in those districts. For instance if you carve out a district of Asians in Milpitas and Fremont you will invariably remove any voice that a few Hispanics who live there may have had. This is ONLY an issue if you start pitting ethnicity against ethnicity. It is not an issue if you make it clear

that you do not support ethnic separation in any form or fashion and expect any representative to represent equally each of his constituents. Therefore you should not create a district based on race.

Dear Commissioners, the reason I came to America was because I wanted to be an American. I did not want to be part of some ethnic community;

I did not want to be an hyphenated American.

I did not want to be identified by my group's special interests.

I don't need an Indian to represent me.

I don't need an Ghanaian to represent me.

I don't need an African to represent me.

I need an AMERICAN to represent me.

Besides what sort of discrimination is that that lumps Chinese and Japanese and Indians and Filipinos all together as though they are one ethnicity? What makes anyone think that just because we come from the same continent we have the same needs, the same desires?

This can only be true if you are lumping all Americans together. What is good for one American must be good for all Americans.

I wanted to be a part of the whole and America was one of the ONLY countries where that is possible.

When I see America being cut up into ethnic portions with each group having their own self-interest it scares me. It reminds me of my persecuted cousins in India a nation where people divide amongst cast or language or religious lines and oppress the others. One politician would get into power and give special privileges to his caste or culture to the disadvantage of all others.

So be aware that any line drawn by you this year to create an ethnic majority is a line drawn to bring Indian and Sri Lankan strife to America. Any line drawn to create an ideological majority is a line drawn to bring South and North Vietnamese separationist strife to American. We must be Americans first, not Mexicans, not Indians, not native Americans, not Europeans.

So council if you listen to MALDEF or NALEO or CAUSE, you are planning to make America something OTHER than the America I dreamed about, the America I worked so hard to come to, the America I love.

My community of interest is patriots and NATURAL geographical lines, like streams and valleys and cities.

Special ethnic interests are what is killing the countries I left. This is America. We are all one. Martin Luther King and Gandhi both said that race and ethnicity are NOT a good criteria to separate people... if you think they are, you should talk to the people in Darfur Sudan? Or the Christians in Orissa India. Or the Rwandans? We're all Americans... we're all Californians...we're all in this together... don't divide us by race, don't divide us by ethnicity, don't divide us by language. If I wanted that, I could have stayed in India or Sudan or Ghana or Ethiopia or Jamaica.

We are counting on you commissioners... keep America America. No special Interests. No ethic separation, no ideology separation and no language separation. If you do, you will start to destroy America. I came to America because it was America. If I'd wanted a little India or a little Sudan I would have stayed there.

Thank you very much.

Neil Mammen

And what follows is the redistricting plan I do support

I urge your support of **all of the Bay Area Maps** being submitted by the **California Conservative Action Group**.

I support fair and competitive districts that fully comply with Proposition 11 with district geography criteria of natural geographical boundaries such as mountain ranges, bodies of water, of equal population and that comply with the Federal Voting Rights Act. I want my district lines to maintain district contiguity, and compactness by keeping cities, communities and neighborhoods intact as much as possible.

1. I strongly oppose the Sierra Club Bay Area plan that violates the Voting Rights Act **and** gerrymanders the

TriValley.

2. I agree with the Sierra Club plan ONLY on the one point, **not to cross the Bay and Golden Gate Bridges.**

3. I reject the San Joaquin County Citizens for Constitutional Redistricting plan; they carve up the TriValley to create a San Joaquin district favorable to a tiny fraction of our Bay Area population.

4. I reject the Latino Policy Forum maps; they create an absurd district that jumps over the water to connect Marin, half of San Francisco and West Oakland in violation of the Federal Voting Rights Act.

5. I strongly oppose the California Institute for Jobs, Economy, and Education (CIJEE) plan and insist that districts not jump across the East Bay hills, because the communities from San Leandro to Milpitas have little in common with the Tri-Valley, and everything in common with each other. The commission got overwhelming testimony in the Oakland input hearings to this effect, both from Tri-Valley and from Oakland, San Leandro, Milpitas, Richmond, El Cerrito etc. to the effect, "Keep the Berkeley Oakland Hills as a natural geographic barrier between urban, ethnic, diverse communities west of the hills and suburban bedroom and office park communities east of the hills."

6. I strongly oppose the Institute for Jobs, Economy, and Education (CIJEE) gerrymander of Union City, an overwhelmingly Asian and Latino city along the East Bay shoreline that CIJEE links with the Tri-Valley communities such as San Ramon and Livermore. Union City is linked to its neighbors in Fremont and Newark by ethnicity, job patterns, and I-880. It has no connection whatsoever to Danville! Additionally, there was very clear testimony at the Oakland input hearing from community groups centered around the auto industry who did NOT want to be connected to Tri-Valley.

7. I strongly oppose the Institute for Jobs, Economy, and Education (CIJEE) plan forcing communities of Lamorinda and Pleasant Hill into a district with Berkeley, as was done in 1981, and is being resurrected by CIJEE. The Berkeley-Oakland area is different in every demographic respect from the suburban communities on the other side of the mountains.

8. I strongly oppose the Institute for Jobs, Economy, and Education (CIJEE) plan gerrymandering that put the mid-Peninsula area around Palo Alto with the city of Santa Cruz - a city on the other side of a mountain range, in a different county, and on the ocean.

9. I strongly oppose the Institute for Jobs, Economy, and Education (CIJEE) plan which splits the Latino community in San Jose into two Assembly districts, although it should be kept together in one district.

10. I strongly oppose the Institute for Jobs, Economy, and Education (CIJEE) plan for Marin. Any AD based in Marin should expand north along Hwy 101, to reach people who work in Marin. It should not be gerrymandered far

east to Benicia, which it has nothing in common with.

11. I strongly oppose the Institute for Jobs, Economy, and Education (CIJEE) plan which merges North Bay districts with SF districts. We insist that the North Bay districts be kept separate from the SF districts.

12. I reject the Coalition of Asian Pacific Americans for Fair Redistricting CAPAFR plan. Specifically but not limited to joining Fremont with The TriValley: the City of Pleasanton.

13. I reject the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF) plan for violations of the Voter Rights Act and abusive gerrymandering. So ridiculous that one commissioner spoke out during MALDEF's presentation on 5/26 in Northridge stating "**Why so many Gerrymander Fingers?**"

Thank you,

Neil Mammen

[REDACTED]

Subject: Public Comment: 7 - Santa Clara

From: Victor Goodrum <[REDACTED]>

Date: Fri, 27 May 2011 21:53:26 +0000

To: [REDACTED]

From: Victor Goodrum <[REDACTED]>

Subject: California Redistricting

Message Body:

Dear Commissioners:

My name is Victor Goodrum and I am writing to urge your support of all of the Bay Area Maps being submitted by the California Conservative Action Group.

I support fair and competitive districts that fully comply with Proposition 11 with district geography criteria of natural geographical boundaries such as mountain ranges, bodies of water, of equal population and that comply with the Federal Voting Rights Act. I want my district lines to maintain district contiguity, and compactness by keeping cities, communities and neighborhoods intact as much as possible.

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3. I reject the San Joaquin County Citizens for Constitutional Redistricting plan; they carve up the TriValley to create a San Joaquin district favorable to a tiny fraction of our Bay Area population.
4. I reject the Latino Policy Forum maps; they create an absurd district that jumps over the water to connect Marin, half of San Francisco and West Oakland in violation of the Federal Voting Rights Act.
5. I strongly oppose the California Institute for Jobs, Economy, and Education (CIJEE) plan and insist that districts not jump across the East Bay hills, because the communities from San Leandro to Milpitas have little in common with the Tri-Valley, and everything in common with each other. The commission got overwhelming testimony in the Oakland input hearings to this effect, both from Tri-Valley and from Oakland, San Leandro, Milpitas, Richmond, El Cerrito etc. to the effect, "Keep the Berkeley Oakland Hills as a natural geographic barrier between urban, ethnic, diverse communities west of the hills and suburban bedroom and office park communities east of the hills."
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7. I strongly oppose the Institute for Jobs, Economy, and Education (CIJEE) plan forcing communities of Lamorinda and Pleasant Hill into a district with Berkeley, as was done in 1981, and is being resurrected by CIJEE. The Berkeley-Oakland area is different in every demographic respect from the suburban communities on the other side of the mountains.
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9. I strongly oppose the Institute for Jobs, Economy, and Education (CIJEE) plan which splits the Latino community in San Jose into two Assembly districts, although it should be kept together in one district.

10. I strongly oppose the Institute for Jobs, Economy, and Education (CIJEE) plan for Marin. Any AD based in Marin should expand north along Hwy 101, to reach people who work in Marin. It should not be gerrymandered far east to Benicia, which it has nothing in common with.

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12. I reject the Coalition of Asian Pacific Americans for Fair Redistricting CAPAFR plan. Specifically but not limited to joining Fremont with The TriValley: the City of Pleasanton.

13. I reject the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF) plan for violations of the Voter Rights Act and abusive gerrymandering. So ridiculous that one commissioner spoke out during MALDEF's presentation on 5/26 in Northridge stating "Why so many Gerrymander Fingers?"

Thank you,
Victor Goodrum

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This mail is sent via contact form on Citizens Redistricting Commission

Subject: Public Comment: 7 - Santa Clara

From: alan wolfer <[REDACTED]>

Date: Fri, 27 May 2011 18:30:16 +0000

To: [REDACTED]

From: alan wolfer <[REDACTED]>
Subject: redistrictin

Message Body:

Dear Commissioners:

My name is Alan Wolfer; I want our communities kept together. I am writing to urge your support of all of the Bay Area Maps being submitted by the California Conservative Action Group.

I support fair and competitive districts that fully comply with Proposition 11 with district geography criteria of natural geographical boundaries such as mountain ranges, bodies of water, of equal population and that comply with the Federal Voting Rights Act. I want my district lines to maintain district contiguity, and compactness by keeping cities, communities and neighborhoods intact as much as possible.

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This mail is sent via contact form on Citizens Redistricting Commission

Subject: Public Comment: 7 - Santa Clara

From: Walter Trebick <[REDACTED]>

Date: Fri, 27 May 2011 16:01:10 +0000

To: [REDACTED]

From: Walter Trebick <[REDACTED]>

Subject:

Message Body:

Dear Commissioners:

My name is Walter Trebick; I am one of 250+ supporters that testified and we want our communities kept together. I am writing to urge your support of all of the Bay Area Maps being submitted by the California Conservative Action Group.

I support fair and competitive districts that fully comply with Proposition 11 with district geography criteria of natural geographical boundaries such as mountain ranges, bodies of water, of equal population and that comply with the Federal Voting Rights Act. I want my district lines to maintain district contiguity, and compactness by keeping cities, communities and neighborhoods intact as much as possible.

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5. I strongly oppose the California Institute for Jobs, Economy, and Education (CIJEE) plan and insist that districts not jump across the East Bay hills, because the communities from San Leandro to Milpitas have little in common with the Tri-Valley, and everything in common with each other. The commission got overwhelming testimony in the Oakland input hearings to this effect, both from Tri-Valley and from Oakland, San Leandro, Milpitas, Richmond, El Cerrito etc. to the effect, "Keep the Berkeley Oakland Hills as a natural geographic barrier between urban, ethnic, diverse communities west of the hills and suburban bedroom and office park communities east of the hills."
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gerrymandering that put the mid-Peninsula area around Palo Alto with the city of Santa Cruz - a city on the other side of a mountain range, in a different county, and on the ocean.

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Thank you,

Walter Trebick

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This mail is sent via contact form on Citizens Redistricting Commission

Subject: Public Comment: 7 - Santa Clara

From: Vitaly Luban <[REDACTED]>

Date: Fri, 27 May 2011 08:38:51 +0000

To: [REDACTED]

From: Vitaly Luban <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Redistricting issues

Message Body:

Dear Commissioners,

My name is Vitaly Luban and I'm writing to you to express my concerns about various existing redistricting plans you will undoubtedly consider. I think that it is a self-evident wisdom that our communities have to be kept together and that communities different by geographic location, predominant ethnicity, types of business and labor etc., should not be mixed together, as this will result in ultimate disenfranchising of voter groups feeling that their vote is unfairly nixed by another larger group with different interests and goals.

Because of the above I urge your support of all of the Bay Area Maps being submitted by the California Conservative Action Group. I think that maps being submitted by the California Conservative Action Group best of any other proposals I've seen so far comply with Proposition 11 with district geography criteria of natural geographical boundaries such as mountain ranges, bodies of water, of equal population and that comply with the Federal Voting Rights Act.

Speaking about other plans suggested I see that

1. Sierra Club Bay Area plan violates the Voting Rights Act and gerrymanders the TriValley,
2. San Joaquin County Citizens for Constitutional Redistricting plan carves up the TriValley to create a San Joaquin district only favorable to a tiny fraction of our Bay Area population,
3. Latino Policy Forum maps create an absurd district that jumps over the water to connect Marin, half of San Francisco and West Oakland in violation of the Federal Voting Rights Act,
4. CIJEE plan makes districts that jump across the East Bay hills, whereas the communities from San Leandro to Milpitas have little in common with the Tri-Valley, and everything in common with each other. Additionally, CIJEE plan forcing communities of Lamorinda and Pleasant Hill into a district with Berkeley, as was admittedly wrong done in 1981. The Berkeley-Oakland area is different in every demographic respect from the suburban communities on the other side of the mountains.
5. Coalition of Asian Pacific Americans for Fair Redistricting CAPAFR plan joining Fremont with The TriValley City of Pleasanton,
6. Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF) plan violates the Voter Rights Act and contains so outrageously abusive gerrymandering that it is impossible to even try do describe it within the limitations of public comment format.

All and every one of the numbered above plans opens a possibility to a legal challenge should any of them will be taken as a basis for your decision, thus practically nullifying your work and significance.

Therefore, I urge you to reject enumerated above plans and to take maps being submitted by the California Conservative Action Group as a basis for your decision.

Thank you,
respectfully,

Vitaly Luban.

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This mail is sent via contact form on Citizens Redistricting Commission

Subject: Public Comment: 7 - Santa Clara

From: Christine Merjanian [REDACTED]

Date: Fri, 27 May 2011 07:36:53 +0000

To: [REDACTED]

From: Christine Merjanian <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Please suport all of the CCAG's Bay Area Maps

Message Body:

Dear Commissioners:

My name is Christine Merjanian; I want our communities kept together. I am writing to urge your support of all of the Bay Area Maps being submitted by the California Conservative Action Group.

I support fair and competitive districts that fully comply with Proposition 11 with district geography criteria of natural geographical boundaries such as mountain ranges, bodies of water, of equal population and that comply with the Federal Voting Rights Act. I want my district lines to maintain district contiguity, and compactness by keeping cities, communities and neighborhoods intact as much as possible.

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Thank you,

Christine Merjanian

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This mail is sent via contact form on Citizens Redistricting Commission

Subject: Public Comment: 7 - Santa Clara

From: Stepan Merjanian <[REDACTED]>

Date: Fri, 27 May 2011 07:24:34 +0000

To: [REDACTED]

From: Stepan Merjanian <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Please Support all of the California Conservative Action Group Submitted Maps for the Bay Area

Message Body:

Dear Commissioners:

My name is Stepan Merjanian; I want our communities kept together. I am writing to urge your support of all of the Bay Area Maps being submitted by the California Conservative Action Group.

I support fair and competitive districts that fully comply with Proposition 11 with district geography criteria of natural geographical boundaries such as mountain ranges, bodies of water, of equal population and that comply with the Federal Voting Rights Act. I want my district lines to maintain district contiguity, and compactness by keeping cities, communities and neighborhoods intact as much as possible.

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Stepan Merjanian

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