



LYNN C. WOOLSEY
MEMBER OF CONGRESS
6TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
CALIFORNIA

REP. LYNN WOOLSEY
REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
MAY 23, 2011

For the last 18 years, I have had the honor of representing Marin and Sonoma Counties as a member of the U.S. House of Representative from California's Sixth District. Throughout my service in Congress, I have built a strong relationship and dialogue between the two counties I represent, precisely because the two-county district shares many common values and interests – in particular involving the shared coastline, transportation, agriculture, water, and high-tech industry.

Quite simply, the Sixth Congressional District makes sense. It includes all of Marin County and the majority of the population of Sonoma County. A Marin-Sonoma district ensures the best federal representation for the people of both counties. We are the quintessential community of interest as defined by Propositions 11 and 20.

Marin and Sonoma Counties share a long contiguous coastline. They collaborate on water policy, with both relying on the Russian River for most of their water supply and both active in restoring wetlands for the health of the San Pablo Bay. They both have a rich conservation heritage, pursued through their respective agricultural land trusts and their regional water reuse authorities, with productive agriculture an essential part of a diverse local economy.

The two counties are linked by their transportation infrastructure and work in tandem for improvements to Highway 101, the Golden Gate Bridge and the Golden Gate ferry system. Highway 101 is the connective thread that holds the district together. All of our major population centers are located along this corridor, as are most of our jobs, housing and services. Residents and commuters move frequently along this artery for their daily activities. The bi-county cooperation extends to mass transit as well, with both Marin and Sonoma counties working together to successfully pass taxing authority for a SMART rail system.

Economically, our district has a distinct profile. Marin and Sonoma both are home to several start-ups and a variety of high-tech industries – from biotechnology and telecommunications to laser manufacturing and green industries -- thanks to an educated and skilled workforce and enviable quality of life. We have a dynamic entrepreneurial community, which is supported by our universities, many business

Not printed at government expense





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incubators including the Sonoma Mountain Business Cluster (which has been designated a regional hub for the North Bay by the state of California), as well as several angel groups and venture capitalists.

We share a multigenerational legacy of commercial fishing, which has contributed to strong intercounty cooperation on marine protection. Both counties have a vibrant agricultural sector, particularly in viticulture and organic commodities, and the Sonoma Marin Cheese Trail brings our artisan dairies together. Tourism is also an important industry throughout the district, with visitors around the world drawn to our state and national parks, vineyards, arts communities, destination farmers' markets and fine restaurants featuring local and sustainably grown foods. We are one of the birthplaces of the Slow Food movement.

The two counties are further bound by their partnerships in health care and education. The Redwood Health Coalition represents community health centers in both counties. Students district-wide have access to excellent K-12 school choices and are served regionally by Sonoma State University, with teaching and nursing programs offered collectively by institutions across county lines, including Dominican University, the College of Marin, Santa Rosa Junior College and Sonoma State University.

Since the Sixth District is currently short roughly 38,000 people, the additional population can easily be acquired by moving deeper into Sonoma County either north or east, without changing the character of the district or violating the principle that no congressional district should cross a major body of water. Including our southern communities with San Francisco would have the effect of swallowing suburban Marin County – its interests would be overwhelmed by those of the larger city and therefore not properly heard at the federal level.

Congressional district lines must not be arbitrary. Districts must not be cobbled-together chunks of 703,000 people, but rather cohesive units with unique identities that clearly belong together. California's Sixth District is exactly that. I urge the Commission to keep it intact, to maintain the Marin-Sonoma pairing that has served residents of both counties so well, which can be accomplished by adding more of Sonoma County to the district.