

----- Original Message -----

**Subject:**comment from citizen in Sonoma County (region VIII):

**Date:**Tue, 31 May 2011 10:22:51 -0700 (PDT)

**From:**K. M. <[REDACTED]>

**To:**[REDACTED]

Dear Commissioners:

As I was out of the state on May 20 when you held a public meeting in Santa Rosa, CA (my hometown), I would like to make a recommendation now:

**The CA [redistricting lines drawn by Columbia Law School](#) for congressional districts makes very good sense.** These districts keep counties (definitely communities of interest) whole whenever possible. They unify the upper breadth of our state -- something those counties have not experienced for some time and which many there want. Generally speaking, the districts are as unified and cohesive as possible, avoiding some of the odd little carveouts that resulted in previous redistricting efforts and which your commission is expected to avoid.

**With respect to my own area, the Columbia map combines my county, Sonoma, with Mendocino and part of Napa. This proposed district is ideal in my opinion.** Sonoma County, mainly rural, has far more in common with these counties than with Marin County. Marin and Sonoma so not share as much in common as some would suggest, and those who forward the idea that they should continue to be linked are mainly politicians who benefit directly from their political linkage. I'm not a politician, just a concerned citizen, and as the population of Sonoma/Marin is too large to fully combine the two into a congressional district, I do not want to see Sonoma County once again have to be divided. We have suffered division too long and deserve that chance to exert our own interests as a full county in Congress.

**I urge you to closely consider the Columbia redistricting plan. I hope you will**

**adopt it.**

Thank you very much for all your efforts. I have confidence in this new investiture of redistricting power in citizens -- all of you. You can restore the faith of ordinary Californians in a fair and beneficial redistricting process and really sensible, naturally influential districts. I look forward to your first published maps.

Sincerely,  
Kirstin Merrihew  
Santa Rosa, CA

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