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Subject: Proposed districts for Lompoc in Santa Barbara County

Date: Fri, 17 Jun 2011 15:55:06 -0700

From: Carol Benham <[REDACTED]>

To: [REDACTED]

June 16, 2011

Citizens Redistricting Commission
901 P Street, Suite 154-A
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Commissioners,

The proposed congressional district for the city of Lompoc in Santa Barbara County is a vast improvement over the current 24th congressional district in which Lompoc is included. The new district is a compact, logical, commonsensical grouping of the adjoining counties of San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara Counties along the California coast.

But the proposed districts for Lompoc's representation in the State Assembly and Senate are deeply troubling. The Commission's first-draft maps split the city of Lompoc's population of 42,000 nearly in half, assigning each half to different assembly and senate districts.

The commission's criteria for redistricting includes the charge to keep cities and communities of interest intact. The proposed districts violate both those criteria.

Splitting a small city of 42,000 into two nearly equal pieces for representation in state districts is tantamount to stripping the city of the representation its residents and size deserve. The commission's new districts effectively place half of Lompoc residents in different districts. Neighbors on the same streets will reside in different districts as the districts boundaries stair-step throughout the city. Additionally, half of Lompoc's residents will be separated from adjoining spheres of influence — Vandenberg Village, Mission Hills, and Mesa Oaks residents who routinely shop, dine and travel a mile or two daily to the city of Lompoc.

The physical configurations of the assembly and senate districts for Lompoc show a long, narrow ribbon extending outward from the bulk of the district, apparently for the sole purpose of picking up half of Lompoc's population. Half of Lompoc's population will once again reside in the same district as the geographically dissimilar cities of Santa Paula, Ojai and Fillmore, making the new district similar to the unwanted gerrymandering of the existing 24th congressional district.

That is not an acceptable solution to the challenge of creating equitable, fair and commonsensical senate and assembly districts. I urge the commission to reconsider its first-draft maps and reconfigure the state assembly and senate districts to keep the city of Lompoc and the Lompoc Valley intact.

Thank you for your consideration.

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