

Charles L. Krugman

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June 27, 2011As a resident of downtown Fresno I am concerned about erroneous information that was presented as testimony during your public hearing in Fresno on June 23, 2011. Any consideration that uses Freeway 41 as a dividing line of legislative districts through the city of Fresno undermines the goals that need to be used in redistricting. Growth and community divisions in Fresno have always been on a northerly pattern with community divisions occurring using boundaries that traverse the city from east to west. E.g. through streets such as shields avenue and Shaw Avenue. The use of Freeway 41 divides communities with cultural and economic interests and should be prevented at all costs. Such a boundary divides both Hispanic and southeast Asian communities which have low voter turnout. Use of such a boundary would make it difficult for funding to be secured for various social programs in all districts that would be impacted by this boundary as there would be smaller concentrations of members of these specific communities. This also disenfranchises low income parts of the city by making it more difficult for residents in these areas to be properly represented. This is important when considering funding for government programs that provide social services and health care. The southern and central parts of Fresno have inadequate health care providers as much of the health care resources have moved to the part of Fresno that is north of Shaw avenue. Your current plan adequately addresses the needs of residents of the city of Fresno and should be left intact in any final redistricting proposals.

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# Memorandum

**To:** California Redistricting Commission

**From:** Cesar X. Sanchez

**Date:** June 27, 2011

**Re:** California Redistricting Concerns

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Dear Honorable California Redistricting Committee Members,

This memo is in regards to the recent effort to redefine the districting lines for California.

As a life long resident of the Fresno, CA area, I can attest to the significance of three main factors that affect citizens in the San Joaquin Valley; the three main factors include education, income, and overall health. Given that a community possesses all three to an adequate level, the aforementioned factors are generally correlated with higher rates of community involvement and political astuteness. As a result, in order to protect the common good, it is reasonable to conclude that any redistricting plan for California should reasonably be expected to provide fair opportunities to communities who may be lacking in any of the three main factors mentioned above. As of now, it is my assessment that no fair opportunities exist with the current draft for the Fresno County area.

It has been a longtime fact in the Fresno metropolitan area that northern Fresno is the more economically enriched area than the southern part. Any onlooker who chooses to tour Fresno can visually see the economic conditions deteriorate as soon as that person travels south of Shaw Avenue. Private suburbs, with an estimated average household price of over \$300k, immediately downgrade to an average household price of under \$150k. Parents of a higher income level, and who desire a quality education for their children, ensure that their children attend Clovis West High School in north Fresno instead of Roosevelt High School, a much more economically disadvantaged school in southeast Fresno. Only a few short years ago, a student was shot and killed on this campus during school hours.

In addition, the family health conditions are much more bleak in the southern part of Fresno. Because of the economically depressed conditions of the area, students

who attend schools in the southern part of Fresno are more likely to get addicted to controlled substances or have family members who suffer from drug abuse. The risk of drug abuse is exacerbated by the fact that many parents/adults, who live in the southern part of Fresno, work long hours with little time off to worry about family health. I introduce to you the common scene that is southern Fresno.

Because of the above conditions, higher education, good health, let alone political astuteness, are qualities that are not regarded in the highest esteem by many families south of Shaw Avenue. Who can worry about education, community organizing, or good health when there is no money for rent? A family that is barely able to get by on a daily basis will logically have little interest organizing in the community or voting. Low rates of higher education lead to long hour jobs and little pay. The absence of education and income leads to a higher propensity to get involved with controlled substances and a lesser quality of life. Once again, political astuteness is not a priority for an individual facing the mentioned challenges. The absence of income, education and health undoubtedly decrease southern Fresno's ability to represent itself. If the communities of southern Fresno face obstacles attaining proper representation now, how will the division of southern Fresno via Highway 41 affect its representation tomorrow?

The current redistricting proposal for the Fresno area includes a division between the east and western parts of the city via Highway 41. This division creates a scenario where the wealthier, healthier, and more educated population of northern Fresno will have absolute advantages over voters of southern Fresno. Not only will voters from the northern half of Fresno be more able to organize in the community, but they will definitely have much more time to develop political astuteness not seen among their southern community counterparts. Once again, with adequate levels of education, income, and health, a person is able to develop their political identities and find time for community organizing.

Putting a wealthier and more educated community, who has a higher propensity to vote and organize, against a poor and less educated community who has a lesser propensity to vote and organize, is the essence of a class system. As a country and state, we cannot allow the less privileged to live without a fair shot at gaining representation. I urge each of you to reconsider the division of the Fresno metropolitan area via Highway 41.

The new district lines should be made to reflect a more fair and equal district that will allow communities of lower income to have a more equal chance at gaining representation. The disadvantages they face with current district lines are tough as they currently stand. The division of southern Fresno into two equal parts, and the pitting of these individual southern regions against communities with a higher propensity to vote and organize in the north, is a blow to democracy, and ultimately, the common good.