

To:

Region 8 - Solano  
June 27

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

**Subject:**Re: Vallejo redistricting.

**Date:**Mon, 27 Jun 2011 11:58:49 -0700

**From:**Judy Irvin <[REDACTED]>

**To:**<[REDACTED]>

For many, many years Vallejo has been politically hamstrung by a complete lack of representation. Our city is supposedly represented by a confusing number of people in gerrymandered districts for the benefit of those whose loyalty lies elsewhere. The elected representatives need Vallejo's Democratic votes to win in the conservative agricultural districts. But after the elections, they forget about us. Consequently, Vallejo is a backwater used as a dumping ground for regional poverty and for the economic benefit of those who live elsewhere. Partial examples:

1. Mike Thompson authored special legislation to allow a Redevelopment Area on Mare Island for economic reasons alone with no mention of the National Historic Landmark or National Register status. The NHL is equal in importance to the San Francisco Presidio. The BRAC Master Plan and subsequent plans by Lennar involved massive demolition and new construction despite the grave concerns voiced by the National Park Service including a report to Congress listing Mare Island as a Threatened Landmark. I, personally, met with staff of several elected officials who were uninterested in Mare Island. George Miller has lobbied successfully for National Parks in both Richmond (Rosie the Riveter) and Concord; but he has no interest in historic treasures on Mare Island such as a Chapel with the largest collection of Tiffany windows this side of the Mississippi. Ultimately, the dispute was resolved when the National Trust for Historic Preservation mounted a legal challenge. Nancy Pelosi's nephew worked for Lennar.

2. Vallejo's older neighborhoods, including two National Register Districts, originally evolved to house the shipyard workers. Many of the larger victorian homes were chopped up into apartments during WWI. As the shipyard geared down, the homes became rentals purchased by out-of town-owners to shelter their incomes and transitioned in the subsidized housing market. Now poverty and social problems are disproportionately concentrated in Vallejo.

a. A former SF social worker now living in Vallejo tells me he was directed to give Section 8 vouchers to SF clients with instructions to take them to Vallejo.

b. Napa State hospital staff says they release patients to Vallejo.

c. San Quentin sent a bus load of parolees sheduled for release to Marin County to a Vallejo motel after an outcry in Marin.

d. and many more....

In sum, Vallejo's lack of political representation has resulted in an urban containment zone of poverty and social problems. The drop in median home values that underpins the tax base and has partially caused Vallejo's bankruptcy is the direct result of middle class families leaving because of the reduction in livability.

I understand that Napa and Marin Counties have decided that the ABAG affordable housing numbers don't apply to them. I lived in Napa during one round of the County General Plan updates and was horrified to find

that the plan called for eliminating farmworker housing in the vineyards to maintain the tourist ambience and dumping it into the urbanized areas of Napa City and American Canyon increasing traffic and pushing poverty down the road. Now Napa County is lobbying you to make sure the poverty is pushed even further down the road to Vallejo.

Most of the North Bay is agricultural and is more closely associated with other agricultural counties such as Yolo. American Canyon and Napa City have long been urbanized areas directly associated with Mare Island. Historically, a trolley ran through Napa City in the early 1900's to take Mare Island workers to Vallejo and many Napa City 1950's housing tracts openly advertised that they did not allow blacks to appeal to racist Mare Island workers. In addition, Kaiser operated a shipyard in south Napa City as well as one in Vallejo.

I support a redistricting plan that will provide balance and give Vallejo some very needed representation. An urban/industrial city cannot be effectively represented by those with loyalties to agricultural interests and wealthy backers. Historically, Mare Island was the employment center of a region that extended into Napa and Sonoma Counties. That should define your redistricting efforts.

Thank you,

Judy Irvin  
Historical Architect and Vallejo resident.