

Subject: Congressional Lines Cut City of Santa Cruz

From: [REDACTED]

Date: Wed, 20 Jul 2011 17:08:03 +0000 (UTC)

To: [REDACTED]

To the California Citizens' Redistricting Commission:

As a resident of the City of Santa Cruz, I was very relieved to see the proposed Assembly and Senate lines for my area. I think that the Commission has made the proper decision to put most of Santa Cruz County back into a distinct coastal Senate district and I applaud your efforts to make our city and county representation whole again. I believe this will once again align the Monterey Bay and support our communities' similar character and interests.

However, I was deeply disappointed to see the draft maps for new Congressional districts. The decision to split the City of Santa Cruz into two Congressional districts is misguided and inappropriate and once again threatens to dilute our city and county's voice and representation. Santa Cruz would be one of the smallest cities in the state to be divided into two districts. It can not be argued that the interests of west Santa Cruz are more in line with those of the San Francisco peninsula than the east side of Santa Cruz. There is simply no common-sense rationale for splitting the City of Santa Cruz into two congressional districts and I urge you to reconsider this adverse and short-sighted action.

Thank you for your hard work and efforts to date. I appreciate your time and consideration.

Melissa Whatley
Santa Cruz, CA

Subject: TESTIMONY

From: [REDACTED]

Date: Wed, 20 Jul 2011 07:40:22 -0400

To: [REDACTED]

July 20, 2011

Dear Members of the CA. Citizens Redistricting Commission:

On two previous written testimonies submitted to the Commission, I requested the inclusion of the City of Watsonville in the same Senate District as the City of Salinas. The Commission draft of June 10th met that inclusion. However, your current Visualization map of July 13th does not. I encourage you to keep Watsonville and Salinas in the same Senate District.

Watsonville is located at the southern most area of Santa Cruz County. Your Visualization map connects us to the city of San Luis Obispo which is 147 miles south of Watsonville and has absolutely no community of interests with Watsonville. San Luis Obispo employment is based on management, sales, and office occupations. Their population is not diverse; 84% is White. Their median household income is \$42,526. Watsonville's employment is primarily in agriculture. We have 55,000 acres devoted to agriculture and timber. The majority of residents are immigrant farm workers, who speak Spanish, and are low-income. The schools the children attend are Program Improvement schools as defined by No Child Left Behind. The families often do not have insurance and receive their health care from a subsidized medical clinic. These community of interests are specific to the community of interests of Salinas' residents. Salinas also is agriculture based with a similar farm worker population who are primarily Spanish-speakers and with needs in education and healthcare as described for Watsonville. Watsonville and Salinas have the same community of interests.

Additional community of interests which are more general are that Salinas and Watsonville are in the same water district. Salinas and Watsonville are both represented on the Association of Monterey Bay Area Government (AMBAG). And Salinas and Watsonville are in the same media market. The radio and television stations for Salinas are also heard and viewed in Watsonville.

Watsonville and Salinas share community of interests. Legislatively, we can address issues of farm labor, education, and health care. In the same Senate District we can support each other in making decisions for the betterment of both communities. Please keep Watsonville in the same Senate District as Salinas.

I would like to add that as I review other redistricting visualization maps I find that the Commission has failed to increase the opportunity for Latinos to progress politically in the state, particularly in the Los Angeles area. As you know since the last Census, California's Latino population has accounted for 90% of the state's growth. However, the Commission's maps do not reflect that growth and in fact diminish Latino's ability for political representation as required by the Voting Rights Act, 1965. In your deliberations, please do address this very serious error.

Respectfully,

Rebecca J. García, Chair
Watsonville City Redistricting Committee
Trustee, Cabrillo Community College