

California Citizens Redistricting Commission

"Fair Representation—Democracy At Work!"



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PIONEERING CALIFORNIA CITIZENS REDISTRICTING COMMISSION TO CONCLUDE TERM OF OFFICE; EIGHT NEW MEMBERS OF 2020 COMMISSION TO BE SELECTED IN JULY 2 LOTTERY

The banner of “Fair Representation – Democracy at Work” will soon be passed from the first California Citizens Redistricting Commission (CRC) to its successor. On July 2, 2020, eight members of the next Commission will be named when the California State Auditor conducts lottery drawings to select three Democrats, three Republicans, and two voters of neither party from the group of 35 finalists. These eight commissioners will select the remaining six members of the CRC, and the full Commission will be seated by mid-August.

The members of the first Citizens Redistricting Commission will conclude their terms of office on July 2 as well. Angelo Ancheta, the current chair of the CRC, stated: “California’s commission has been acclaimed as a model of independence and transparency, and we’re all very proud of the work we accomplished in 2011 to redraw the state’s district lines. The California redistricting model is being emulated in states and localities throughout the U.S. during the 2020-21 cycle, and we should see exciting changes in citizen participation all across the country.”

Lilbert (“Gil”) Ontai, the vice chair of the CRC, added: “The first commission will retire with pride and confidence that their work, the first statewide redistricting done by an independent panel of citizens, will endure as a model of transparent, non-partisan collaboration to create fair districts for all Californians.”

The CRC has responsibility for redrawing the district boundaries of California’s congressional delegation, the State Assembly, the State Senate, and the Board of Equalization after each decennial Census. The Commission was created by the Voters FIRST Act (Proposition 11), which the voters of California enacted in 2008 to take responsibilities for state-level redistricting from the Legislature and vest them in a 14-member, multi-partisan panel that would be independent of incumbent and partisan interests. Proposition 20, approved by the voters in 2010, added responsibility for redrawing the state’s congressional lines. California’s pioneering redistricting

law requires not only an independent commission, but a transparent process that is informed by extensive public input from the residents of California.

In 2011, the CRC crisscrossed the state for seven months, holding 34 public hearings to engage with their fellow citizens. Through these hearings and through written submissions, the Commission heard the voices of more than 25,000 citizens representing the full spectrum of California's diverse population. Those voices led to fair maps which withstood challenges in the courts and on the ballot. The California Supreme Court unanimously upheld the maps, stating: "[N]ot only do the Commission-certified Senate districts appear to comply with all of the constitutionally mandated criteria set forth in California Constitution, article XXI, the Commission-certified Senate districts also are a product of what generally appears to have been an open, transparent and nonpartisan redistricting process as called for by the current provisions of article XXI." The CRC's state senate map was also upheld by the voters of California in a 2012 referendum vote.

The CRC maps have also received praise from independent researchers and scholars of democracy. For instance, the Public Policy Institute of California cited the 2011 CRC plan as "more competitive than 72% of the plans in other states." And in recognition of the transparent strategy used by the Commission, the Harvard Kennedy School of Government awarded the Commission the Roy & Lila Ash Award for Innovations in American Government, a national honor. The award included a \$100,000 grant that allowed the CRC to send volunteer commissioners to other states to share the California experience and support nationwide efforts at redistricting reform.

The 2010 Commissioners are grateful for the opportunity to serve their fellow California citizens and acknowledge the leadership of Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, Common Cause, and the League of Women Voters in advancing the cause of fair redistricting. The Commissioners urge their fellow citizens to be active participants in the upcoming 2020 redistricting process and wish the 2020 Commission success in its efforts to create fair maps for all Californians.

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