



Redistricting Basics Script

SLIDE 1

Thank you for inviting the California Citizens Redistricting Commission to present at your meeting. My name is _____ and I am one of the fourteen commissioners selected to draw the new electoral district lines following the 2020 Census.

Before I begin with the formal presentation, I want to share a bit about myself and why I chose to apply to be on the commission.

In this Redistricting Basics presentation, we will be going over who the Commission is, what we do and how you can get involved in the process.

SLIDE 2—Reminder—No Public Input Will Be Taken Today

As a friendly reminder, California Government Code Section 8253(3) strictly forbids Commissioners and staff from taking public input outside of a regularly scheduled Commission meeting or official public input meeting.

However, at any point you are more than welcome to visit our website at WeDrawTheLinesCA.org to provide input. You will find instructions on how to do so under the “public comment” section.

SLIDE 3—What is Redistricting

How many people in the room know what redistricting is?

We are trying really hard to make redistricting sexy, but it’s rather challenging. Redistricting is defined as drawing new boundaries that determine which voters are represented by each electoral district.

In other words, every ten years we get counted in the census and immediately after that we redraw political districts using that data.

SLIDE 4—Your Voice

One of the greatest powers that the people of California have is to elect their own representatives to conduct the business of their government. How the district boundaries are configured can make the difference between empowering and maximizing the voters’ voices or minimizing and muting those voices. In most other states, politicians redraw districts and often end up drawing “safe” districts for themselves to allow them to stay in office.

Redistricting has been used at times to exclude communities from political power. By fully participating in and monitoring the upcoming redistricting process, more communities may have the opportunity to elect candidates of their choice.

Speaking up about your community is critical to help keep your community whole to the extent possible. This ensures that your voice is heard by your elected leaders when



making decisions such as the quality and funding of your child's education or determining your tax rates.

Your input is valuable in shaping the new political boundaries.

SLIDE 5—Why We Redraw District Lines

You might be wondering why we have to redraw districts every ten years. It is important to note that a lot changes in ten years.

- Communities change.
- People are born, and die, and move (within CA and out of and into CA)
- Communities grow and shrink.
- Areas where there were once roughly the same number of people become unequal.

These are some of the reasons districts need to be redrawn. As communities change, the districts need to be updated to reflect those changes.

SLIDE 6—Redistricting Elements

There's another thing that happens every ten years, the Census. After the federal government publishes updated census information, California must redraw the boundaries of its Congressional, State Senate, State Assembly and State Board of Equalization districts, so that the districts correctly reflect the state's newly counted population.

Redistricting is based on the idea that each of our voices should be represented fairly by creating districts that have the same number of people. Census results are used to draw new maps to account for the ways that populations have changed and moved across the states and districts.

At the federal level, reapportionment takes place to reallocate U.S. House seats among states. This too is done after each national census to ensure that seats are held by the states in proportion to the size of their population. California currently has 53 house seats. That may change after we get the updated census numbers.

Historically, legislators have drawn maps that allow them to choose their voters rather than enabling voters to choose their representatives. This former system undermined the concept of fair representation, which is to give people the power to choose their representatives.

SLIDE 7—Why Independent Redistricting Matters

We have talked about why redistricting matters, but here we will explain why INDEPENDENT redistricting matters. On this slide we highlight two case studies to demonstrate how redistricting has been used by politicians to keep control of congressional seats in Pennsylvania and Maryland.

- In 2012, Pennsylvania Democrats received 51% of the votes for U.S. House of Representatives but won only 5 of the state's 18 seats (27%).



- In 2016, Maryland Republicans received 37% of the votes for congress but won only 1 of its 8 congressional seats (12.5%).
- In California's five election cycles from 2002 to 2010, only one California congressional seat changed parties, and only two incumbents lost in all 253 races.

As a hypothetical, the graphic demonstrates how in a state that is 60% Gold and 40% Purple, 5 districts can be redrawn to favor the gold party and redrawn a different way to favor the purple party.

This is why independent commissions were created, to remove the politics from the process and focus on the people.

SLIDE 8—Different Redistricting Efforts

We are one of many redistricting efforts occurring in California. The Commission is redrawing districts for state offices, while counties, cities, school districts, water districts and community college districts are also redrawing their districts at the same time. We wanted to bring this to your attention because different efforts are happening simultaneously, and it can be confusing.

SLIDE 9—History

Prior to 2010, legislators in California drew the lines. *A few slides back, we saw what happened in Pennsylvania and Maryland.*

In 2008, California voters passed Proposition 11 –the VOTERS FIRST Act, authorizing the creation of an independent Commission to draw new district lines for the State Senate, State Assembly, and Board of Equalization. In 2010, Proposition 20--the Voters FIRST Act for Congress, added the responsibility of drawing Congressional districts to the Commission.

Our goal as a Commission is to spread the word that the people's role did not end with being counted in the Census, and to collect valuable community input to assist us in the process of drawing new districts.

The 2010 Redistricting Commission was California's first independent commission. The 2020 Redistricting Commission is building upon their work and will leave behind detailed documents to assist the 2030 Commission when they perform their duties.

Other States with independent commissions include Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Michigan, Montana, and Washington.

SLIDE 10—Commissioner Selection

The Commissioners all went through a rigorous application process that attracted over 20,000 applicants. Over 2,000 individuals completed a supplemental application. After a thorough review, 120 applicants were invited to interview, from which 60 were chosen to present to the legislature. The California legislature was allowed to remove no more than 24 candidates from consideration. The first eight members were selected through a lottery system. The final six members were then carefully selected by the first eight



commissioners, taking several considerations into account, including political party, geography, race, gender, and expertise.

The Commission will hold public meetings and accept input to assist in drawing the new maps through a fair and transparent process.

SLIDE 11—Who We Are

Meet the 2020 Commission. We are a 14-member Commission made up of five Republicans, five Democrats, and 4 members not affiliated with either of those two parties.

Isra Ahmad, No Party Preference (San Jose)	Trena Turner, Democrat (Stockton)
Jane Andersen, Republican (Berkeley)	Linda Akutagawa, No Party Preference (Huntington Beach)
Neal Fornaciari, Republican (Tracy)	Alicia Fernández, Republican (Clarksburg)
J. Ray Kennedy, Democrat (Morongo Valley)	Patricia S. Sinay, Democrat (Encinitas)
Antonio Le Mons, No Party Preference (Studio City)	Pedro Toledo, No Party Preference (Petaluma)
Sara Sadhwani, Democrat (La Canada Flintridge)	Angela Vázquez, Democrat (Los Angeles)
Derric Taylor, Republican (Los Angeles)	Russell Yee, Republican (Oakland)

The Commissioners are diverse in geography as they are in opinions and expertise. Join us at one of our Commission meetings. They are all held online due to COVID-19; instructions and a link for attending our online meetings are available on our website.

Please note that we have interpreter services available at our meetings. We simply ask that you notify the Commission five business days prior to a meeting.

SLIDE 12—Commissioner Duties

After the education sessions, the Commission will hold public meetings and accept public input to assist in drawing the new electoral maps. However, you do not have to wait until then to provide input to the Commission.

You can participate by submitting public input on our website, during one of our meetings, by using the communities of interest mapping tool that we will talk about shortly, or by mailing documents to us.

All of your input will help the Commission determine the boundaries of your community and your districts.

The Commission will draw maps for four different government bodies, Congress (~53), State Senate (40), State Assembly (80), and Board of Equalization (4).



We've used an example from Sacramento to demonstrate what the different maps look like.

SLIDE 13—Outreach Zones

From February to May, we are conducting these Redistricting Basics presentations to educate the public about the redistricting process.

We have divided the state into 11 outreach zones (A-K) to better manage our outreach efforts and build relationships with community groups. We are particularly interested in engaging communities that are hard to reach, disenfranchised or who typically do not engage. We will be more than happy to set up a Redistricting Basics presentation with any group that asks for one. We will also have this presentation available in the video form in the case that commissioners are not available to present. We will send you the link to the video and you can share it at your convenience.

SLIDE 14—Line Drawing Criteria

The Commission must follow these criteria, in this order, when drawing district maps:

1. Districts must be of equal population to comply with the US Constitution.
2. Districts must comply with the Voting Rights Act to ensure that minorities have an equal opportunity to elect representatives of their choice.
3. Districts must be drawn contiguously, so that all parts of the district are connected to each other.
4. Districts must minimize the division of cities, counties, neighborhoods and communities of interest to the extent possible.
5. Districts should be geographically compact such that nearby areas of population are not bypassed for more distant populations.
6. Where practicable each Senate District should be comprised of two complete and adjacent Assembly Districts, and Board of Equalization districts should be comprised of 10 complete and adjacent State Senate Districts.

SLIDE 15—Communities of Interest

When drawing maps, we have to be mindful of Communities of Interest.

Communities of Interest are defined as a concentrated population which shares common social and economic interests that should be included within a single district for purposes of its effective and fair representation. Examples include areas in which the people share similar living standards, use the same transportation facilities, have similar work opportunities, or have access to the same media. People can belong to multiple communities of interest.

These are some of the ways you can describe your community.

- Geographic
- Boundaries
- Landmarks

SLIDE 16—Participating in the Process



Some of our community partners have put together toolkits that provide tips on how to participate in the process. Here are some tips on how to get involved.

- Familiarize Yourself with the Criteria-- Understand the basic rules and concepts affecting redistricting. We talked about that in Slide 14.
- Organize Your Community-- Find neighbors or organizations interested in redistricting, especially those sharing your views. Create a coalition with a set of principles.
- Clarify Your Goals-- What issues do you and your neighbors care about? How does influencing the maps help your cause?
- Provide Public Input at Meetings and/or submit your comments to the Commission-- Provide input about your community (the more the better). Present maps, community profiles, and impact stories to all redistricting efforts (state, county, city, other local efforts).
- Advocate for Your Community—You know better than us what your community looks like and what the boundaries are.
- Define Your Community or Someone Else Will!

SLIDE 17—Draw My Community Tool/COI Tool

The California Statewide Database has created a tool to help you draw your community boundaries. The Communities of Interest Tool (Draw My CA Community) looks very similar to google maps and has a feature that allows you to zoom in and around the boundaries of your particular community and draw a map. This can be submitted to the Commission as public input to help us redraw your districts.

The tool also asks you the following questions to help the Commission understand your community.

1. Give your community a name
2. Tell us about your community. What are your shared interests? What brings you together? What is important to your community?
3. Are there nearby areas you want to be in a district with? Nearby areas you don't want to be in a district with? Why or why not?
4. Is there anything else you can tell us about your community?

The COI tool is live now! You can submit your map and public input directly to the Commission by visiting the COI tool website: DrawMyCACommunity.org.

SLIDE 18—CA Supreme Court Ruling

COVID-19 has delayed many things, including our ability to access census data to help us draw district maps.

On July 17, 2020, The California Supreme Court ruled that the Commission should have until December 15, 2021, to submit its maps to the California Secretary of State due to the delay in release of census results. If census results are received after July 31, 2021, the Commission's deadline will be adjusted accordingly.

SLIDE 19—Timeline



The US Census Bureau continues to update us about the availability of census data. We have adjusted our timeline accordingly.

- February-May: Education Presentations
- June-September: Public Input Meetings (COI)
- July 31: Census Data Expected to the State
- August 31: Census Data Expected to the Commission
- September-October: Line Drawing Sessions (Pre maps)
- October: Draft Maps Released
- November: Public Input Meetings (COI)/Line Drawing Sessions
- December: Final Maps Released
- December 15: Final Maps to Secretary of State

SLIDE 20—Contact Us

Because we have a constitutional mandate to have the new maps approved and submitted by a certain date, we will be conducting educational sessions like today's presentation prior to going out for public input and using that information to draw the new maps.

To request an educational session, please contact the Commission.

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A video version of this presentation will also be available on our website:
WeDrawTheLinesCA.org.

Please also follow us on social media @WeDrawTheLinesCA.

