PRESS RELEASE
2020 California Citizens Redistricting Commission
Expands Public Input Tool to Additional Languages

SACRAMENTO, CA—Today, the 2020 California Citizens Redistricting Commission (Commission) and the California Statewide Database announced the availability of the online Communities of Interest (COI) mapping tool in Vietnamese, Korean, Russian, Armenian, Japanese, Punjabi, and Khmer, in addition to the existing languages: English, Spanish, Traditional Chinese, Simplified Chinese, and Tagalog.

Every 10 years, 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 state's population is evenly allocated among the new districts. When the Commission creates new districts, it must follow certain guidelines, one of which is to learn about communities across California and to keep communities together in the new districts when possible.

The online public input tool allows Californians to tell the Commission what is important about their community, which neighboring communities they want to be grouped with, and allows them to draw their community on a map and submit it directly to the Commission as public input. It can be accessed by visiting: DrawMyCACommunity.org.

"We are excited to announce the availability of the COI tool in seven additional languages. The expansion allows us to engage more Californians in the redistricting process that might not have otherwise participated," stated Chair Jane Andersen. "More participation with the COI tool will result in more representation in the district maps. We are working diligently with the Statewide Database to translate the tool into additional languages to engage more of California's diverse communities."

"The COI tool is an innovative engagement tool for the 2020 California Citizens Redistricting Commission to utilize in its statewide outreach efforts. This project was conceptualized during the last redistricting process, and we are happy to see it up and running for the current redistricting cycle," stated Karin Mac Donald, Director of the Statewide Database at UC Berkeley

In addition to the map drawing feature, the COI tool will capture anecdotal information that will be used to help understand the boundaries of a community. Visitors to the site will be asked to describe their community by answering the following questions:

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?

Participants may submit anonymous submissions, though establishing an account will enable a user to save their work and return at a later time to modify it. With this release, the COI tool is currently available in English, Spanish, Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese, Tagalog, Korean, Russian, Armenian, Japanese, Punjabi, Khmer, and Vietnamese. It will soon be available in Arabic and Farsi, and work will begin soon on Thai and Hmong.

In November 2008, California voters passed the Voters FIRST Act, authorizing the creation of the independent Citizens Redistricting Commission to draw new district lines, taking the job out of the hands of the California Legislature and transferring it to the citizens. In 2010, the VOTERS FIRST Act for Congress added the responsibility of drawing Congressional districts to the Commission's mandate.

For more information, please visit WeDrawTheLinesCA.org.

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