



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

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

SLIDE 4—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 (priorities, interests, goals, make up of community).
- 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 5—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 6—How Redistricting Affects You

We thought it would be beneficial for us to break down how redistricting affects you directly.

Power to the People—The Voters First Act was historic in California; it transferred the power of drawing district maps away from politicians and gave it to the people.

Champion Your Issues—Having the opportunity to elect representatives that champion your issues is important in a state like California, where issues can vary drastically from one street to the next. Northern California might champion environmental and economic issues, while Central California might champion water and agricultural issues, and Southern California might champion issues dealing with transportation, housing and employment.

Funding Priorities—Tied to the issue of electing representatives that champion your issues, you might want to elect representatives that have your financial interest at heart. When the time comes to build a budget, you will want a representative fighting to ensure your community gets the financial resources it deserves for various services such as education, water, and fire protection.

Community Boundaries—The redistricting process is all about drawing lines and determining which communities get grouped into districts. Your input in this process is essential to help Commissioners understand where your community starts and ends.

Redistricting in California is one of the few civic activities that any Californian can provide input to regarding their community that ultimately impacts the law and regulations, tax structure, how funding is distributed, and which services are provided.

SLIDE 7—Road to Fair Representation

The U.S. Constitution requires that every American receive as close to equal representation as possible in government. As populations of districts change over time, it can leave some people overrepresented and others underrepresented in government. Redistricting evens out the population between districts.

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 latest count of the state's 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 every ten years 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 now has 52 House seats. That may change after we get the updated census numbers.

Historically, legislators have drawn maps that allowed them to choose their constituents rather than enabling constituents 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 8—Why Independent Redistricting Matters

We have talked about how redistricting affects you and now we will explain why INDEPENDENT redistricting matters. Democracy depends on voters having the opportunity to choose their representatives. When elected officials redraw the lines of their own districts, they get to design their own territory and choose who their voters are.

This slide highlights key terms in redistricting to help you understand why it is important to delegate the power of redistricting to the people.

Gerrymandering happens when the election district boundaries are drawn in a way that gives a particular set of people - like a political party or racial group, an unfair political advantage over another.

This graph shows how in a jurisdiction with 50 people (60% Orange and 40% Purple), 5 districts can be drawn in multiple ways, but it's not always fair. The first two examples show two ways to draw district lines in a fair manner, where the districts are drawn to reflect the population proportionally. The two examples on the far-right show ways to draw district maps in a manner that does not reflect the population fairly, which is referred to as gerrymandering.

This is why independent commissions, like California's commission, were created, to remove the politics from the process and focus on the people.

SLIDE 9—Line Drawing Criteria

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

1. Districts must be of nearly equal population to comply with the U.S. Constitution.
2. Districts must comply with the Voting Rights Act to ensure that minorities have a fair 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. This requirement refers to density, not shape.
6. Where practicable each Senate District should be comprised of two complete and adjacent Assembly Districts. Board of Equalization districts should be comprised of ten complete and adjacent State Senate Districts.

In addition, the place of residence of any incumbent or political candidate may not be considered in the creation of a map, and districts may not be drawn for the purpose of favoring or discriminating against an incumbent, political candidate, or political party.

SLIDE 10—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. Aside from being involved in the state redistricting process, we encourage you to also be involved in your local redistricting efforts.

SLIDE 11—History

Prior to 2010, legislators in California drew the lines. If the Legislature failed to properly draw the lines, the court drew the lines.

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 12—Commissioner Selection

The Commissioners all went through a rigorous application process that attracted over 20,000 applicants in 2019. After an initial review, over 2,000 individuals completed a supplemental application. After a very thorough and public review, 120 applicants (40 D/ 40 R/ 40 Others) were invited to interview, from which 60 (20 D / 20 R / 20 Other) were chosen to be presented to the legislature. The California legislature was allowed to remove no more than 24 candidates (8 from each pool) from consideration, leaving a total of 36. The first eight members (3 D / 3 R / 2 Others) were selected through a public drawing in July 2020. The final six members (2 D / 2 R / 2 Others) were then carefully selected by the first eight commissioners in August 2020, taking several considerations into account, to include political party, geography, race, gender, and expertise.

SLIDE 13—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)	Sara Sadhwani, Democrat (La Canada Flintridge)
Linda Akutagawa, No Party Preference (Huntington Beach)	Patricia S. Sinay, Democrat (Encinitas)
Jane Andersen, Republican (Berkeley)	Derric Taylor, Republican (Los Angeles)
Alicia Fernández, Republican (Clarksburg)	Pedro Toledo, No Party Preference (Petaluma)
Neal Fornaciari, Republican (Tracy)	Trena Turner, Democrat (Stockton)
J. Ray Kennedy, Democrat (Morongo Valley)	Angela Vázquez, Democrat (Los Angeles)
Antonio Le Mons, No Party Preference (Studio City)	Russell Yee, Republican (Oakland)

The Commissioners are diverse in geography as they are in opinions and expertise. There are 7 from Northern California, 7 from Southern California; 8 women and 6 men; we range in age from the 30s to the 60s; there are NGO leaders, engineers, pastors, law enforcement officers, political scientists, a lawyer, and public servants.

Join us at one of our Commission meetings. They are currently all held online due to COVID-19. Instructions and a link for attending our online meetings are available on our website.

SLIDE 14—Commissioner Duties

After the education sessions, the Commission will hold public input meetings and accept community input and public testimony to assist it in drawing the new electoral maps.

The Commission will draw maps for four different government bodies; Congress (52), 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 for each district type.

SLIDE 15—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 to build relationships with community groups. We are eager to engage with all communities. We are more than happy to set up a Redistricting Basics presentation with any group that requests one. We plan to have this presentation available in video form in case groups would prefer that option.

SLIDE 16—Communities of Interest

When drawing maps, we have to be mindful of Communities of Interest. We can obtain the city and county information, but we need the communities of interest information from Californians.

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, have similar cultures, use the same transportation facilities, have similar work opportunities, or have access to the same media. People can belong to multiple communities of interest.

Keep in mind that a Community of Interest is not the same as a district, but Communities of Interest are key building blocks of districts.

Some ways to describe your community:

- Geographic (waterways, rural, urban, mountains)
- Boundaries (cities, towns, counties, school areas)
- Things you have in common

SLIDE 17—Defining Your Communities

Communities of interest can be described by creating maps and telling us about your community. While there are no clear rules on how to define a community of interest, the following are the basic elements to help you define your communities.

Oral Testimony— Personal stories are powerful. Share examples of things members of your community have in common and what makes your community unique. Imagine describing your community to a visitor from out of town. Does your neighborhood share certain celebrations or traditions, like street festivals or parades? Are there important places where your community gathers, like parks or community centers? What is the history of how your community came together?

This can be done at Commission meetings or hearings.



Written Testimony – A written description can be used to tell your community’s story. Describe what connects the people and why it’s important that they be kept together during redistricting. Whenever possible include statistics to support your testimonies, including data on ethnicity, religious groups, education levels, graduation rates, median household income, poverty levels, access to technology, homeownership rates, language isolation, voter registration rates, etc. Consider using reliable sources such as the Census Bureau.

Community Issues – Communities often get involved in redistricting because they feel their issues have not been adequately addressed by their elected representatives. Highlighting community issues in personal stories and written narratives help demonstrate the importance of having elected officials who understand and respond to community needs. Has your community come together to advocate for important services, better schools, roads, or health centers in your neighborhood? Have you worked for more recognition or support of your community, like having holidays recognized or historical events commemorated?

Boundary Maps – Create a map of your neighborhood or area. Mark the street names and significant locations. You can include significant landmarks and gathering places, including social service agencies, community centers, shopping districts, schools, and religious places. It may be helpful to have or create a name for your community area to be a reminder about what makes your community unique. Use the electronic or paper COI tool.

SLIDE 18—Participating in the Process

Your input is vital to the success of the Commission. We’ve identified the ways you can participate in three simple steps.

DESCRIBE your community--Tell us about your community. What are your shared interests? What brings you together? What is important to your community? 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?

DRAW your community on a map.

SEND your testimony directly to the Commission.

All this can be done by using an online tool that allows you to DESCRIBE, DRAW and SEND your input to the Commission by visiting: DrawMyCACommunity.org.

SLIDE 19—Ways to Provide Public Input

You can provide public input to the Commission in several ways, including submitting your input through the Communities of Interest Mapping Tool (COI Tool), by visiting our website at: WeDrawTheLinesCA.org, by emailing us, by phoning us, or by postal mail.

In addition to English, the online COI Tool is also available in Spanish, simplified Chinese, traditional Chinese, Vietnamese, Tagalog, Korean, Armenian, Farsi, Arabic, Russian, Japanese, Punjabi, and Khmer.



SLIDE 20—Language Access

Language access is very important to the commissioners. We have taken several steps to ensure more Californians will be able to participate in the process.

Translation of Materials—We now have our fact sheet, flyer, FAQs, and Redistricting Basics Presentation in English, Spanish, simplified Chinese, traditional Chinese, Vietnamese, Tagalog, Korean, Armenian, Farsi, Arabic, Russian, Japanese, Punjabi, and Khmer.

We may provide interpretation services for the public comment sections of CRC business meetings if provided with five days advance notice.

Written public input can be sent to the CRC in any format and language and will be translated into English.

If you need an interpreter to provide input during a meeting, we ask that you notify the Commission five business days prior to a meeting to request interpreter services. The Commission will attempt to contract with an interpreter in the requested language.

SLIDE 21—CA Supreme Court Ruling

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

On February 12, 2021, the Census Bureau announced it would deliver redistricting data to all states by September 30, 2021. And in March, the Census Bureau announced it would provide the Census data in a legacy format in late August.

So any delay after July 31 in the state receiving the Census data means that the Commission's final maps would be due after December 15.

We are working with the Legislature and others to minimize the impact of the delay on the 2022 elections.

SLIDE 22—Timeline

The US Census Bureau continues to update us about the expected availability of census data. We will adjust our timeline as needed.

February-May, 2021: Education Presentations (California Redistricting Basics)

April, 2021: Reapportionment Data

June-August, 2021: Public Input Meetings (COI)

August 15-30, 2021: Census Data Expected to the State

September 30-October 31, 2021: Census Data Expected to the Commission

October-December, 2021: Public Input Meetings/Line Drawing Sessions
(Pre district maps)

November-December, 2021: Draft District Maps Released

December 2021-January 2022: Public Input Meetings/Line Drawing Sessions

December 2021-February 2022: District Maps Released

December 2021-February 2022: Final District Maps to Secretary of State



*Dates will be updated on our website once the census data are received and the Commission adopts the final schedule.

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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 24—Contact Us

Because we want to engage the public in the redistricting process, we are conducting educational sessions like today’s presentation prior to going out for public input.

To request an educational session, please contact the Commission by emailing: Marcy.Kaplan@crc.ca.gov.

Please also follow us on social media [@WeDrawTheLinesCA](https://twitter.com/WeDrawTheLinesCA).

