

From: **Kimberley Coles**
Date: Tue, May 18, 2021 at 10:01 AM
Subject: public comment

May 18, 2021

California Citizens Redistricting Commission
c/o Public Comment
721 Capitol Mall, Suite 260
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Commissioners:

I write today to ask you for more detail on your now, alas, boiler-plate agendas. As an interested individual citizen, I find it almost impossible to determine whether and when to observe and listen to the meetings. Thus, I am forced to carve out all the time that the Commission meets regardless of my particular interest.

This issue of agenda specificity has come up before, and I have appreciated the Commission's responsiveness to public comment, in for example:

- the heads-up timing notices that are given at the beginning of the meetings, especially for scheduled guests;
- the regularity of public comment at the beginning of the day, after lunch, and at the end of the day;
- the mixing up of schedules, both as to the day of week, and time of day.

Thank you; these activities have assisted a great deal with the ability of "the public" to participate meaningfully. Consistency and regularity is appreciated given the balancing acts we all have with life, work, civic engagement, etc.

Other items which would assist in meaningful transparency and participation by the common citizen are:

- The actual provision of transcripts, as specified on the agenda "important notices." This shouldn't be overly burdensome given that they are already close-captioned.
- Guideposts on agendas, on videos, on summaries, on transcripts would be a proactive commitment to the transparency that I believe the Commission is striving for. At one point, I remember someone remarking that agendas would be annotated afterward so that one would be able to find them on the provided video. This may be a misrecollection; it may have been that in lieu of transcripts, summaries would be provided. Neither of these have happened. Thus, if I, for

example, miss a meeting, I need to listen or watch the whole meeting. This isn't as difficult for one hour or even two, but since meetings are normally 4-6 hours in length, guideposts would be enormously helpful.

- Meaningful production of the agenda. I understand that this may be considered burdensome as it requires the Commission to know not just the basics general topic of conversation, but have something specific to discuss or act upon. However, the agendas are (particularly recently) almost useless in assisting anyone to know what will be the topics of conversation and action at a meeting. The flexibility that the vague agenda potentially gives the Commission is counter-productive to your aims. It undermines transparency, and, I believe, creates a burden for Commissioners too. I'm sure you've all been in meetings that are less productive than they could have been as the agendas were not fully thought out! Currently, organizations need to ensure that they have a dedicated staff person assigned to the meeting for each day that you meet, and individuals are put at a disadvantage as it is impossible to figure out when a topic of interest will actually be of interest since the agenda is too vague and "high-level." The agenda is actually disempowering and discouraging engagement.

Thank you for your thoughtfulness and concern is achieving the tasks laid out to you, not only in citizen redistricting, but in service of and for the public and their engagement.

Best Regards,
Kimberley Coles