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ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

July 8, 2021

Fresno County Advisory Redistricting Commission 2021
2281 Tulare Street, Room 304
Fresno. CA 93721

Dear Commissioners:

Congratulations on your selection to serve on Fresno County's Advisory Redistricting Commission!

You held your Fresno County Advisory Redistricting Commission meeting yesterday evening, July 6. I joined your Zoom meeting at 6:00 p.m. and waited to speak on agenda item H, Public Comment. For some reason or malfunction, I was not able to speak although I believe I performed the necessary computer steps.

I have enclosed my written presentation that I had prepared to present to you. Please consider its content and recommendation. Thank you for your attention to my comments.

Respectfully,


Venancio Gaona

P. S. The meeting was lengthy, but all of you endured!

July 7, 2021

Presentation to the Fresno County Advisory Redistricting Commission

My name is Venancio Gaona, member of the Central California Coalition for Equitable Realignment.

My comments: The need for “Training Focus on Redistricting Rules”:

It seems that the presentation on redistricting rules merits only one slide (page 35 on the Agenda), while two slides discuss defining communities of interest and five slides are devoted to the various mapping tools available.

The redistricting rules are complex, particularly in light of the interplay between the federal rules, the recently adopted state Fair Maps Act of 2019, which details the priority order of specific criteria that must be considered, and traditional redistricting principles. The slide on page 35 is entitled “Redistricting Rules and Goals”. I presume the term “Goals” refers to the “Other Traditional Redistricting Principles”, given that both the federal and state criteria are mandated by statute.

It is critical that Commissioners and Supervisors understand how federal, state and traditional rules work together, to ensure equitable maps are drawn. And not just more of the same, which will be the likely result if decision makers give undue wight to traditional redistricting principles. This is a realistic concern, given that several Supervisors have previously expressed that they expect only minimal changes in the district lines drawn on the 2020 Census data.

The public deserves to know how the County (and County Counsel) recommend the Commissioners and the ultimate decision makers, the Supervisors, should weigh the criteria in each of the three columns on page 35.

Thank you.

