

December 5, 2021

Dear Chair Bame,

I am writing to formally protest both the process and the outcomes of Friday, December 2, 2021 meeting of the San Diego County Independent Redistricting Commission in which crucial final decisions have been made.

Process:

1. The process was developed by three supposedly equal commission members while the other eleven commissioners were unaware of their meetings and received no report of their intent, progress, findings or decisions. The commission as a whole was unable to influence the direction of this effort and no reports by this "executive" committee were made to the full membership; no approval of the process was solicited. Efforts of individual commissioners to discuss possible changes or pitfalls in the executive plan were unilaterally rejected by the three chairs/vice chairs.
2. Important decisions that were made under this plan changed maps in ways that depart from those that the public has been viewing and responding to for more than two months, at a date when further input from that public is not accepted by the Commission.
3. The order and labels with which regions of the County of San Diego were addressed resulted in later regions having to absorb all of the consequences of early agreements even though those agreements were not officially adopted as final decisions. It became clear as we moved on that the order of regions discussed was affecting the decisions left to be made and that a reversal of that order would have significantly altered the ultimate outcome.
4. Early in the discussion, chairs assured other commissioners that early recommendations could be revisited later in the process. That option was later rejected. Early adjustments to district boundaries were deemed "final" and ineligible for reconsideration as their impacts became clear.

Outcomes:

1. The BIPOC community of interest in and around the City Heights and the city of El Cajon was clearly articulated by its immigrant and refugee residents early in the development of redistricting. They submitted many comments and maps that clearly named and delineated city and unincorporated areas that connected their residents. Their COI was greatly diluted with changes to the map that removed communities contiguous to El Cajon and City Heights including (according to my notes) Bostonia, Granite Hills, Rancho San Diego, Paradise Hills, Spring Valley, Encanto, Skyline, La Presa, Casa de Oro and Southeast San Diego. These changes greatly reduced the BIPOC population which, ironically, was later replaced by the majority white population of Clairemont Mesa.
2. "Facts" used to support map changes were not adequately researched and accepted as accurate without evidence. For example, Mira Mesa was accepted as a coastal community even though the area is \pm ten miles from the ocean; no one challenged that statement. It was also stated by experts that the population of Clairemont Mesa was \pm 180,000. Further research shows that the population of the area bounded by SR-52, I-805, Linda Vista and I-5 – Clairemont Mesa – is \pm 79,000 people. That population is majority white and will further dilute the BIPOC community of interest of immigrants and refugees in what is now District 4.
3. Great protection has been offered to the AAPI Community of Interest in Central San Diego County despite the fact that all of our professional consultants have said that it does not yet qualify as a majority/minority district due to the size and contiguity of its population. Preference for this group has been allowed to overrule those of legitimate COIs that may or may not have racial connotations.

Since I do not yet have an updated map with demographic analysis, I am unable to state further issues that I may feel need to be addressed before we meet for the last time on December 9th to make a final decision that the public will understand and accept.

I respectfully request that a special meeting of the commission be called on Wednesday of this week to air these issues. I would be happy to share my concerns with all commissioners. I give my permission to staff to circulate my petition to my colleagues.

Sincerely,
Commissioner Barbara Thompson Hansen