



May 14, 2021

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† deceased

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

Dear Commissioners:

On behalf of the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund, we are writing to provide our feedback on the *Draw My CA Community* online platform that will collect communities of interest (COI) information across the state for California's redistricting process.

NALEO Educational Fund is the leading non-profit, non-partisan organization that facilitates full Latino participation in the American political process, from citizenship to public service. Our constituency and Board include Republicans, Democrats, and Independents. For several decades, NALEO Educational Fund has been at the forefront of efforts to increase Latino civic engagement through naturalization promotion and assistance and through non-partisan activities to mobilize Latinos to become fully engaged as voters. Since the 1990 Census, our organization has also conducted outreach campaigns to promote the full and accurate count of the Latino community. Together with media and community-based organizational partners, we launched iHAGASE CONTAR! ("Make Yourself Count!") and iHAZME CONTAR! ("Make Me Count!") campaigns to drive response to the 2020 Census. In addition, in the 2010-2011 redistricting cycle, we conducted our "Latino Draw the Lines" campaign, where we mobilized Latinos throughout California to participate in the state's redistricting process. We have re-launched this campaign for the 2020-2021 redistricting cycle, and we are also actively working with the Commission to ensure that the public input process is accessible for Latinos and all Californians.

We would like to express our sincere appreciation to the Commission for providing the opportunity to make recommendations regarding the COI tool. We also are grateful for the hard work of the Commission and the Statewide Database in thinking through the various issues involved in the design of the COI tool and the comprehensive approach the tool takes to obtaining COI information. We have thoroughly examined the interactivity of the tool and would like to offer some feedback with a view to creating a more user-friendly experience for community members when navigating the platform.

**I. Interactivity**

Overall, the tutorial provides very basic context about the redistricting process and includes messages emphasizing that everyone is welcome to participate. However, it would be beneficial to also offer a short message or educational video on redistricting when users first enter the website, rather than requiring them to navigate to another site for this information.

**II. In the tutorial section, we recommend the following for each section (the numbers below correspond to the section of the tutorial):**

1. The tutorial should provide a few bullets as to why submitting the COI information is important. The opening slide of the tutorial mentions the Commission and its purpose, but does not clearly indicate why submitting COI information is important for the redistricting process. This slide states that there are no “wrong answers” to the questions posed. However, it would be helpful for the tutorial to provide some guidance or examples for individuals who lack familiarity with redistricting or the concept of COIs. For example, it would be helpful to provide some examples of how to specifically “Describe your community.”
2. In this slide, some examples of how to specifically “Describe your community” could be very helpful here, particularly for individuals who have never engaged in the redistricting process before.
3. When users choose the option to “Start the Tutorial,” we understand that the tool will offer users an option to view short tutorial videos through a hyperlink. We strongly recommend that these videos be made available in Spanish and the 11 other “top languages” in which the tool itself is translated.
  - a. We note that the video tutorial option can be easily missed and difficult to find given that it takes three screens to get to the video tutorial. We recommend making the video tutorial hyperlink more visible by increasing the size of the font and making it visible at the top of the screen, as opposed to the small font at the bottom.
  - b. Each tutorial video should be labeled to indicate the content of the tutorial, and users should be provided guidance on the order in which to view the videos.
  - c. We also recommend adding the video tutorial hyperlink to other components of the COI tool. For example, it should be added to the “User Guide” section of the COI tool.
4. For this slide, the “Draw Your Community” section, we recommend adding the hyperlink of the video tutorial that describes the steps on how to navigate drawing the COI map.
5. In this section, we recommend making the video tutorial hyperlink more visible by increasing the size of the font.

**III. Starting a New Map**

1. Describe your Community: When users first start to create a new map, the first prompt is to “Describe your Community.” This is another place where providing examples would be useful – in this case, some examples of how to “Describe your Community.”
2. Draw Your Community: To create a map, the “Start a New Map” icon is at the very bottom of the page. Intuitively, users navigate to the top of the screen when searching where to start. Perhaps the “start” icon could be moved to the top so that it flows into the next step, which is “Draw Your Community.” We note that in the current configuration, after starting at the bottom of the page, users now must navigate to the top of the page, which can be disorienting. Also, after “Draw Your Community,” there are additional phases users must go through before submitting their maps. It would be

more user-friendly to label each phase as “Step 1, Step 2, Finish,” so that users know each step is necessary.

- a. When navigating the drawing tools, it is difficult to find community streets until the user experiments with the “Drawing layer” section to have a better visual of the streets. An option of allowing users to type in a zip code should be considered, so that the so the system zooms in on the immediate neighborhood.
- b. The map takes a long time to load and becomes blurry to read, making it difficult to find a particular street or landmark that one may be looking for. Consider incorporating a version of Google maps to include clearer and more detailed points on a map or landmarks.
- c. There is absolutely no tutorial about the “drawing layer” feature. The drop-down menu options are: Default, Counties, Cities & towns, Tribal areas, tracts and blocks, where most are greyed out. Moreover, the user is not able to draw a map in any community except under the “Default” option. In addition, when drawing or selecting areas of a particular community, predetermined boundaries are already set within the system, and certain areas get added to “your map” that were not necessarily selected. Consider addressing this problem. It would also be useful to create a tutorial for this section.

#### IV. Saving Your Map

1. After initially saving a map, the user does not have immediate access to that saved map. The user can only access that map by either logging back into the system or creating another map.
2. There is an option to export your map; however, it is only accessible if the user clicks on the “Help” menu on the far-right top corner of the screen. There should be a distinct and clear option to export your map immediately after saving it, without having to go to the “Help” menu.
3. To access a saved map after submitting one, the user must navigate the system to find “My Maps” under the “Help” menu. The user can edit the saved map by clicking the three dots next to the name of the map. We recommend that the capability to access and edit saved maps be transferred from the “Help” menu to a separate and clearly labeled drop-down menu.

#### V. Submitting a COI map

Before submitting the map, the user has the option to review it, and the option to download the map. The download option is a zip file containing a pdf of the submitted map, an excel file, and a shapefile to be used in a mapping software. The user finds out the different file options after receiving the confirmation email. Consider providing the different file options within the same screen where the user submits the COI map.

#### VI. Separate Guide for Use of COI Tool

The Commission should create a “standalone” short guide which includes a step-by-step description on how to access and use the COI tool. Although there is a User’s Guide within the tool for each section, it would be helpful to have a standalone guide where all of the information is in one place. This will also enable users to have a document to refer to without having to log-in to the platform.

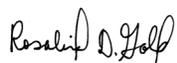
## VII. Spanish-language issues

We note that all of the foregoing issues should be addressed in the Spanish-language version of the system. Below are some additional recommendations or issues we have regarding the Spanish-language version.

1. Tutorial sections:
  - a. In section 3 of the tutorial, the “Basemap” section on the left column is not translated.
  - b. The “User Guide” is in English only; we recommend that this resource becomes available in Spanish and the other top 11 languages.
  - c. Section 6 is missing the hyperlink to the statement about clicking for more information: *“Para obtener más información sobre cómo la Comisión usará la información que usted proporcione sobre su comunidad, haga clic aquí.”*
  - d. In the last tutorial window before clicking “Terminar” (which then allows you to start describing and drawing your community), one of the bullet points, “Chat with Tech Support” is not translated into Spanish.
2. Submission: The email confirmation is in English. We recommend the email confirmation users receive is in whatever language they used to provide their COI information.
3. Chat Box: The chat-box is in English only, including the pop-up instructions. In testing the system, we were able to get someone to chat in Spanish, which we appreciate. However, we recommend the chat pop-up window also be translated in-language where assistance can be provided in languages other than English.

We greatly appreciate your willingness to incorporate the foregoing feedback, and to make modifications to the *Draw My CA Community* online platform to respond to our concerns. If you have any questions about the issues raised in this letter, please contact Ms. Jacqueline Coto, at [jcoto@naleo.org](mailto:jcoto@naleo.org) or 213.747.7606 ext. 134. We share the Commission’s vision of an inclusive and accessible redistricting process for all Californians, and we look forward to continuing our work together to achieve this important goal.

Sincerely,



Rosalind Gold  
Chief Public Policy Officer



NALEO  
Educational Fund