

From: **Michael Trask**
Date: Tue, Jun 1, 2021 at 8:45 PM
Subject: District 23 concerns

May 26, 2021

To whom it may concern

I am writing to do to express my objections to the current 23rd legislative district lines. I have lived here for 40 years and I am unable to determine whether the district lines were drawn to include certain businesses or to exclude certain ethnic groups.

I took the opportunity to review the California constitution, specifically article 21 that contains guidelines/rules for the creation of districts. The 23rd legislative district does not appear to follow these guidelines and in fact appears to be specifically gerrymandered to exclude certain population centers, ethnic groups, and appears to be engineered to support a specific political group rather than the allowing for representation that serves the entire population of the area.

My concerns are based on the following.

Section 2 of the California constitution specifically states the following items:

(d) The commission shall establish single-member districts for the Senate, Assembly, Congress, and State Board of Equalization pursuant to a mapping process using the following criteria as set forth in the following order of priority:

(1) Districts shall comply with the United States Constitution. Congressional districts shall achieve population equality as nearly as is practicable, and Senatorial, Assembly, and State Board of Equalization districts shall have reasonably equal population with other districts for the same office, except where deviation is required to comply with the federal Voting Rights Act or allowable by law.

(2) Districts shall comply with the federal Voting Rights Act (42 U.S.C. Sec. 1971 and following).

(3) Districts shall be geographically contiguous.

(4) The geographic integrity of any city, county, city and county, local neighborhood, or local community of interest shall be respected in a manner that minimizes their division to the extent possible without violating the requirements of any of the preceding subdivisions. A community of interest is a contiguous 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 of such shared interests are those common to an urban area, a rural area, an industrial area, or an agricultural area, and those common to areas in which the people share similar living standards, use the

same transportation facilities, have similar work opportunities, or have access to the same media of communication relevant to the election process. Communities of interest shall not include relationships with political parties, incumbents, or political candidates.

(5) To the extent practicable, and where this does not conflict with the criteria above, districts shall be drawn to encourage geographical compactness such that nearby areas of population are not bypassed for more distant population.

My objection is that the district is not designed to be compact and geographically contiguous in a manner that represents all the citizens of the area but appears designed to bypass population and ethnic centers, favoring industry rather than people.

To illustrate this point the district is not drawn so as to include areas with common social and economic interests, being served by a common media of communication in regards to the election process but in fact divides a large metropolitan area. Specifically a large section of southeast Bakersfield is excluded from the district as well as the neighboring communities of Lamont and Arvin California. While Taft California and an area north of Taft is included by drawing a pathway around this area apparently with the intent to include an area of sparse population but high density oil production.

The communities mentioned are served by healthcare, financial, and news services all located in Bakersfield. I would argue that the people are not being fairly represented, and the district as currently drawn is a good example of gerrymandering for political purposes rather than fair representation of the constituents.

I am asking the 23rd district be redrawn to include the obvious donut hole that excludes Lamont and Arvin, and propose that if adjustments need to be made to maintain some equality between districts based on population that the Lancaster area be considered for inclusion in the 25th district. The Lancaster area is much closer to Palmdale and Santa Clarita and would possibly be better served by being included in the 25th district.

Please do not publish my contact information

Regards;
Michael