Dear Commission,

My name is Rhummanee Hang and I am a Co-Director with AYPAL: Building API Community Power. I would like to provide input on Oakland’s District 2 and Chinatown in Alameda County, where I live and work. I am also writing as a member of the AAPI & AMEMSA Redistricting Collaborative.

Our organization works primarily with API youth in Oakland. We have been active within the community since 1998 providing youth leadership training and advocacy skills to affect change.

When my mother first came from Cambodia as a refugee in 1981, Oakland was where she resettled. I was born, raised, and went to school in Oakland and am now raising my child here.

Our community primarily lives within the boundaries of Oakland’s district 2, which encompasses the San Antonio neighborhood, Eastlake/Little Saigon neighborhood, the neighborhoods surrounding Lake Merritt, and Chinatown.

Our community is made up of many refugees and immigrant communities. Since the early 80s, there are refugees from Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, and more recently, Middle Eastern countries here. There are also many recent immigrants. This is a working class community and many families are low-income. There are language barriers as many families are monolingual or need interpreters. This is a community that needs culturally specific services and has been able to build those services and business to serve the people that live here. We have grocery stores, health clinics, social and mental health services with access to languages that reflect the neighborhoods here.

I am asking the commission to keep my community whole. It’s important that we are drawn together because we have similar needs and understand how to best help each other. Should you need to get in touch with me, I can be reached at rhummanee@aypal.org.

Thank you for your time,

Rhummanee Hang
Co-Director, AYPAL