August 24, 2021

Hello, my name is Richard Konda, and I am the Executive Director of the Asian Law Alliance located in San Jose, CA. I am calling in today to provide input on the Berryessa Neighborhood in North San Jose and to provide an introduction for the AAPI & AMEMSA State Redistricting Collaborative.

Over the past few months, the Asian Law Alliance has worked as a regional anchor partner with the AAPI and AMEMSA State Redistricting Collaborative in the South Bay. The testimony that my colleagues and I have prepared for you today is a reflection of our coalition’s engagement with our communities, collecting feedback from multiple stakeholders to map South Bay COIs.

This past summer, our State Collaborative held 5 community workshops, reaching 17 different community based organizations and over 40 community members and staff. Across these workshops, we’ve mapped multiple COIs that capture the diversity of the AAPI & AMEMSA community in the South Bay while providing education on the ways to engage with the state redistricting process. Outside these meetings, members have also engaged in direct outreach to their respective communities, gathering insight from religious leaders, business owners, students, and families. We hope our Collaborative’s work helps the Commission better understand the diverse AAPI & AMEMSA communities in the South Bay.

With the most recent data release from the 2020 Census, we now know Asian Americans makeup 38.9% of Santa Clara County, making us the largest and fastest growing racial group in the region.

Both the Berryessa area in North San Jose and Milpitas have large Chinese & South Asian populations, which share many similarities with Asian American communities in Santa Clara & Fremont, including languages spoken and poverty rates. The core of Berryessa runs from the 880 freeway and up past 680 to the hills, from Berryessa Road in the south, extending north to Calaveras. My colleague Gabriela Garzón Gupta will be able to speak about these COIs in more detail.

As you may know, in 2001, prior to the creation of an independent redistricting commission, the Berryessa neighborhood was split into 4 Assembly districts. This prevented Berryessa residents from having a strong voice at the state level for the next ten years. Last redistricting cycle, the Asian Law Alliance worked to uplift the needs of Berryessa, successfully advocating for its reunification in 2011.
Today, I am urging the commission to keep the Berryessa neighborhood whole, and with the areas of Santa Clara & Fremont. It is important that we are drawn together to continue to amplify the voice of Asian Americans across North Santa Clara County.

Thank you so much for hearing from me today and the rest of the AAPI & AMEMSA State Redistricting Collaborative

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Richard Konda
Executive Director