

Assembly Districts in Sonoma County

Based on the reapportionment following the 2010 census, Sonoma County is currently split between three Assembly districts. There are two “coastal” districts, AD-1, coming south from the Oregon border, and AD-10, coming north from the Golden Gate. And there is one “inland” district, AD-4, coming in from Yolo and Napa Counties and taking the surplus Sonoma County population not needed by the two coastal districts.

As we await final census data, it is reasonable to expect that both AD-1 and AD-10 will need to add territory for each to maintain one eightieth of the State’s population. This is due to lower than statewide population growth over the past decade, plus the fact that the populations of the state prisons located in AD-1 (Pelican Bay) and AD-10 (San Quentin) will no longer count locally for reapportionment. Because the current boundaries of both AD-1 and AD-10 respect county lines except in Sonoma County, it would make the most sense to add the needed territory for both in Sonoma County. As a result, AD-4 will be pushed eastward and its footprint within Sonoma County will be reduced.

This provides an opportunity to fix an anomaly of the current reapportionment. The bulk of the population in AD-10 is in communities along the Highway 101 corridor, from Sausalito in the south to Petaluma in the north. But then, rather than including the next 101 corridor cities, Cotati and Rohnert Park, it swerves around them to pick up Sebastopol (not on 101) and the southern part of Santa Rosa, which AD-10 splits with AD-1. Cotati and Rohnert Park, meanwhile, reside in AD-4.

To the extent the final census data allow for it, it would make more sense for (1) Cotati and Rohnert Park to be shifted to AD-10 so the district continues up along the 101 corridor, a unifying community of interest, (2) AD-10 to be pulled out of south Santa Rosa, (3) AD-1 to be expanded within Santa Rosa, and (4) the necessary population balancing be achieved by splitting Santa Rosa between AD-1 and AD-4, rather than between AD-1 and AD-10 as currently. If need be, Sebastopol and environs could be shifted from AD-10 to AD-1 to balance population.