

**Community of Interest Testimony
to the California Citizens Redistricting Commission**

Date: October 5, 2021

Zone: J (Orange County)

Area: Artesia/Cypress/Cerritos/Buena Park

Name: Fayaz Nawabi

Organizational Affiliation: Council on American-Islamic Relations (People's Redistricting Alliance)

Communities of Interest: AMEMSA and North African communities

Direction: Keep Artesia, Cypress, Cerritos, and Buena Park whole in an OC district

Introduction:

Hi, my name is Fayaz Nawabi, and I'm writing on behalf of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR-LA). As part of our organizing and advocacy, we are a member of the People's Redistricting Alliance, a coalition of 16 community-based organizations established to promote a greater community voice in statewide and local redistricting processes here in Orange County.

Who my community is:

My community is Arab, Middle Eastern, Muslim, South Asian, North African, immigrant and refugees that live in Artesia, Cypress, Cerritos and Buena Park. My community also consists of low/middle income families, minimum wage workers, renters with some homeowners here and there.

My community is located:

My community is in Artesia, Buena Park, Cypress, and Cerritos. The current political district boundaries divide our community. We would like to see our community be kept intact and together. Artesia in particular is a major shopping district that is known in Southern California for its South Asian restaurants and clothing shops. Families as far as San Diego visit Artesia to shop at these South Asian Ethnic boutiques.

In addition, Islamic Relief the largest Muslim humanitarian relief organization is located in Buena Park. Islamic Relief employs many members of the AMEMSA and North African community and their headquarters is used as a meeting place for the AMEMSA and North African community in the areas of Buena Park, Cypress, Artesia and Cerritos.

Furthermore, many mosques and community centers that serve the AMEMSA and North African communities are located in Artesia, Cypress, Cerritos and Buena Park. These mosques and

community centers include the Islamic Center of Cerritos, Baitul Mukarram, Al Burooj Academy and the headquarters of Islamic Relief.

My community is similar to the following neighborhoods:

My community is similar in the following neighborhoods of Artesia, Cypress, Cerritos and Buena Park. These communities are similar to low/middle income families, minimum wage, AAPI and Latino communities.

My community is different from the following neighborhoods:

My community in Artesia, Cypress, Cerritos, and Buena Park is different from LA County and would prefer to be drawn in a political district map in Orange County. My community does not want to be considered part of LA County because they culturally feel closer to being part of an Orange County drawn district map. Artesia in particular houses many South Asian restaurants and clothing boutiques that Orange County residents shop at frequently.

The communities of Artesia, Cypress, Cerritos, and Buena Park have more affinity to the communities of Garden Grove and Westminster than any city that LA County can offer up.

What makes my community special is:

What makes my community special is that we are an Arab, Middle Eastern, Muslim, South Asian, North African, immigrant and refugee community. Our community has historically been victims of Islamophobia and anti-Immigrant rhetoric from elected officials. Our community would like to see elected officials that are either from our community or at the very least culturally competent to the concerns of our historically demonized community.

In conclusion:

We want the Artesia, Cypress, Cerritos and Buena Park community to be kept together in an Orange County political district map. We believe these communities share the same demographic and socio economic background. These communities also share community centers that the four different cities frequent interchangeably. Thus, they must be kept together.