

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

**Date: October 5, 2021**

**Zone: J (Orange County)**

**Area: Fullerton and Anaheim**

**Name: Kayla Asato**

**Organizational Affiliation: Orange County Environmental Justice (People's Redistricting Alliance)**

**Community of Interest: low-income communities of color facing environmental justice concerns**

**Direction: Keep South Fullerton and West Anaheim together**

**Introduction:**

My name is Kayla Asato and I am the redistricting organizer for Orange County Environmental Justice. As our name suggests, OCEJ fights for environmental justice in water quality, cleaning the lead from our soils, better air quality, and electoral change to make all of this happen. We mostly do work in the cities of Santa Ana, Anaheim, and Fullerton. In addition, 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 OC.

**My community is:**

Because of the work that we do, especially with disadvantaged communities dismissed by our political establishment, our communities of interest typically include low-income communities of color facing environmental justice concerns, many undocumented. Our communities in Fullerton (South of Chapman), Anaheim (West of the 55 fwy), and Santa Ana (East of Harbor Blvd) are similarly impacted by soil lead levels, sometimes exceeding 50x the recommended limit, ignored when voicing their concerns about water quality due to poor pipes and other infrastructure concerns, or even horrendous air quality from traffic and oil plumes. These devastating environmental justice issues are often overlooked by policy makers, while low-income and mostly Latinx communities already facing problems like housing injustice and police brutality, pay the price. And in South Fullerton and West Anaheim, where the two cities are home to a superfund site water polluted basin anywhere from 5-100x the maximum allowed level of chemical exposure, our communities need to be priorities.

**My community is located:**

In South Fullerton, our communities of interest are generally south of Chapman Avenue near the Anaheim border. In Anaheim, they are located west of the 55 freeway. More specifically, in Anaheim, a majority of the city is burdened by environmental injustice issues in the 864-867 census tracts. Similar to the environmental justice burdens in the Anaheim 867, 866, and 865 census tracts, the burdens in Fullerton (south of Chapman and east of Brookhurst) share the same superfund site in the North OC Water Basin (not mapped as neatly into the census tracts, with some parts of the 110.00 and 112.00 tracts being far cleaner and devoid of the issue than the half of the tracts south of chapman ave), with the rest of south fullerton (south of chapman) aligning with west Anaheim in terms of other housing injustices.

**My community is similar to the following neighborhoods:**

South Fullerton is eerily similar to West Anaheim in terms of demographics, housing disparity, police violence, and even in environmental burdens. And both are similar to East Santa Ana. Both East Santa Ana and the West Anaheim-South Fullerton area are home to a superfund site each.

**My community is different from the following neighborhoods:**

While these areas face similar environmental justice challenges, they are very different from cities to the north and east like Yorba Linda, areas that face SUBSTANTIALLY less environmental burdens, and have more housing security as a result.

**What makes my community special is:**

Across these cities, environmental justice is one of MANY challenges our communities face. In West Anaheim, communities aren't even getting acknowledgement of Little Arabia, let alone the support for action on the oil plume. In Fullerton, we know that there still has not been any justice for Hector Hernandez and other victims of police brutality, nor has there been action on housing, stopping gentrification, or on Ethnic Studies. These are layered issues impacting those that are ignored the most, heard the least, and lack representation. And that is unacceptable. With West Anaheim and South Fullerton being home to a superfund site in the North OC Water Basin, sharing demographics, other environmental burdens, and many other issues from housing injustice to police brutality, and a fight against corporate interests swallowing up the needs of the people, these communities are special and need to be kept together.

**In conclusion:**

And as such, it is essential that these communities of interest are kept together to grow the electoral strength and voice they desperately need. We must keep West Anaheim and South Fullerton together, and when possible, include them with East Santa Ana. Environmental justice concerns often preclude other compounding injustices in education, economic justice, housing, and police brutality because of communities being discarded into sacrifice zones and underinvestment into communities as a result.

We need power to offset the harm that has been done to our communities and advocate for the changes that we need to achieve even a semblance of equity if not liberation. Let our voices be heard, and allow us to be part of the democratic process.