



October 11, 2021

721 Capitol Mall, Suite 260 Sacramento, CA 95814

Sent via electronic transmission

Re: The People's Bloc Redistricting Coalition

Dear California Citizens Redistricting Commissioners,

We appreciate the Commission's commitment to ensuring a fair and equitable redistricting process for the State of California. **The People's Bloc (Bloc)** writes to formally submit our "Solidarity Map" for the 2021 redistricting cycle. This map represents the aligned recommendations of the thirty-four undersigned member organizations. Collectively, these organizations serve as a set of trusted messengers within traditionally underrepresented communities.

The People's Bloc

To facilitate community engagement in the redistricting process, Community Coalition and Advancement Project California established the People's Bloc. The Bloc is a multiracial table dedicated to ensuring inclusion of everyday residents in the process, conducting public education, and proposing redistricting-related solutions that promote the political voice, representation, and access to resources of historically underrepresented groups.

Collectively, the Bloc represents the geographic and racial diversity of Los Angeles County. Members of the Bloc are deeply rooted in their communities, many bringing decades of experience building relationships and connections with residents. Geographically, the Bloc stretches from groups like InnerCity Struggle in the Eastside, to Black Women for Wellness in South Central Los Angeles, and Long Beach Forward in Long Beach. In addition, groups like Asian Pacific Policy and Planning Council, Black Census and Redistricting Hub, CAIR-LA, and the Latino Equality Alliance embody the ethnic and racial diversity of the region.

We believe it is essential to carry out a racial equity, intersectional, and interregional approach to the redistricting process. Throughout the process, and to center community voices, members of the Bloc have worked across communities and geographies to conduct ongoing grassroots community engagement around structural racism through storytelling, education, and targeted messaging. This work has culminated in the creation of a "Solidarity Map," which comprise district lines rooted in multiracial solidarity, elevate multiple communities, and dismantle white supremacy.

To further these goals and bring the priorities of Los Angeles County stakeholders represented by the Bloc to larger, regional tables, the Bloc joined the IVE Redistricting Alliance mapping process. The Alliance was formed to ensure low-income communities and communities of color throughout the State of California participate in the redistricting process. The 20 partners include statewide and regional networks of community-based



organizations that implement Integrated Voter Engagement strategies and prioritize issues of racial and economic equity.

Collaboration in the development of our "Solidarity Map"

In the interest of developing maps that prioritize racial equity, the Bloc created a community-informed mapping process that prioritized multiracial solidarity. The following approach guided development of the "Solidarity Map:"

- **Community Engagement:** The Bloc's thirty-four members worked throughout the year to educate residents across Los Angeles County about the redistricting process and identify communities of interest (COIs). This process included distilling and synthesizing redistricting information into easily digestible materials and community events. Information gathered through this engagement process became the guide for priority setting and line drawing.
- **Equity Index:** To ensure a racial equity lens to our redistricting work, the Bloc created the Redistricting Equity Index and, separately, Redistricting Equity Indicators. These indicators represent a cross-section of data that the Bloc identified to support the goals of moving towards a more equitable California where BIPOC communities are able to elect candidates of choice.
- **Data Analysis:** To create an inclusive and representative plan for the State Assembly, State Senate, and Congressional districts in Los Angeles County, our data analysts and geographers conducted a data-driven analysis on the current district lines with 2020 geographies and compared them to the most updated census data released. This data formed the architecture to incorporate COIs with federal Voting Rights Act (VRA) considerations in the creation of viable maps.
- **Partner Alignment:** Through weekly COI workshops and bi-weekly steering committee meetings, members of the Bloc shared community preferences. Simultaneously, communities of interest were gathered and reproduced as geospatial files. This regular discussion process generated data and built toward collective priorities that could inform draft maps. This process informed the Bloc's participation in the IVE Redistricting Alliance.
- **Mapping and Collective Decision-making:** All of this intel was used to develop maps that met VRA regulations, kept communities whole, balanced the changing population, and connected regions with similar interests. In partnerships with the Alliance, regularly drafted plans were produced and shared with the People's Bloc members to consult on line drawing. Then, through an inclusive and representative decision-making process, the Bloc reviewed and refined draft maps until they achieved consensus honoring diverse community perspectives while ensuring the Bloc's regional maps were feasible statewide.

Simultaneous to the mapping process, Bloc members have continued to provide workshops, participate in panel discussions, and give presentations to the Commission on various topics.



Community organizations have presented on topics such as lessons learned from public participation in the 2010 redistricting process, 2020 Census outreach, and best practices for community outreach and engagement, especially among Asian Americans, Blacks/African Americans, Latinxs, Native Americans, Pacific Islanders, Muslims and other religious communities, immigrants, refugees, and youth of color. They have led resident outreach and supported their participation in the CCRC public hearing process to further elevate the voices of the most historically disenfranchised and marginalized communities.

Ensuring COI and VRA compliance

In order to ensure communities can elect their representative of choice, the Bloc's "Solidarity Map" adheres to Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act, 52 U.S.C. § 10301, prohibiting discrimination in voting on the basis of race, color, or membership in a language minority group, while protecting COIs in areas where VRA considerations do not come into play.

- **Congressional**

- The "Solidarity Map" maintains six Latinx VRA districts in Los Angeles County (not including the San Bernardino VRA district that includes the City of Pomona) while redrawing lines in San Fernando Valley to keep low-income immigrant Latinx COIs whole and enable them to elect their candidate of choice.
- Lines in South LA are adjusted to maintain two Black influence districts.
- Based on AAPI community preference, the "Solidarity Map" does not draw an Asian VRA district in San Gabriel Valley. AAPI leaders believe this configuration enables their communities in the valley to elect their candidate of choice better than a majority Asian district that connects unrelated communities with disparate priorities and interests.

- **Assembly**

- The "Solidarity Map" maintains an Asian VRA district in the San Gabriel region.
- Due to the increasing Latinx CVAP in Los Angeles County, this plan increases the number of Latinx VRA districts in Los Angeles County from eight to eleven (not including the San Bernardino district that includes the City of Pomona).
 - Including one Latinx VRA district in the Antelope Valley/High Desert, which had not had a majority Latinx seat in 2011, and two Latinx VRA districts in San Fernando Valley that keep low-income immigrant Latinx COIs whole.
- This proposed plan does not draw Black VRA districts in South LA. Instead, leaders within the Black Community prefer to draw four Assembly districts in historically Black communities that maintain high (30%+) Black CVAP to ensure Black communities can elect their candidates of choice.

- **Senate**



- The "Solidarity Map" creates an additional Latinx VRA district in Los Angeles County in the San Fernando Valley, which reflects the significant increase in the Latinx eligible voter population. There are four Latinx VRA districts in LA County in this plan (not including the San Bernardino VRA district that includes the City of Pomona), one more than in 2011.
- This plan draws two Black influence districts in South LA, keeping COIs whole and maintaining the ability of Black communities in South LA to elect their candidate of choice.

The "Solidarity Map" further represents the compromise of thirty-four partners to protect COIs within the limitations of population and VRA constraints. There are many examples of these COIs submitted alongside the Bloc's "Solidarity Map." The following are a sample of COIs the Bloc has worked to protect:

- The Antelope Valley is home to a growing Latinx population, many of them immigrant residents who came to this community to escape the high cost of living in the City of Los Angeles and the San Fernando Valley. The "Solidarity Map" is drawn to unite these communities at the Assembly, Senate, and Congressional levels. For example, the "Solidarity Map" draws an Assembly district with the east side of Lancaster and Palmdale, including the rural areas of Littlerock and Lake Los Angeles.
- The San Fernando Valley is one of the most diverse neighborhoods in the U.S., with a large immigrant Latinx community including but is not limited to Peruvians, Chileans, and Argentinians. Based on community guidance, the Bloc's Assembly map split the San Fernando Valley into two districts to avoid packing the Latinx community.
- At the requests of Asian American and Pacific Islander partners, the Bloc's state plans keep Koreatown with Little Tokyo, Historic Filipinotown, and Chinatown.
- Past redistricting maps have not consistently kept East LA whole. The "Solidarity Map" addresses this by keeping unincorporated East LA together and paired with other Eastside communities. The Assembly map combines East LA with similar communities in El Sereno. The Congressional and Senate maps unite it with the entire Eastside of Boyle Heights, El Sereno, and Lincoln Heights.

Thank you for accepting our submission. **Please feel free to contact Aaron Robertson with Advancement Project California (arobertson@advanceproj.org), Kirk Samuels with Community Coalition (kirk@cocosouthla.org), and Jacky Contreras with Community Coalition (jacky@cocosouthla.org) with any questions you may have and to assist in communication with partners.**

Sincerely,
The People's Bloc



People's Bloc Members:

ActiveSGV

Advancement Project California

AltaMed Health Services

Anti-Recidivism Coalition

Asian Pacific Policy and Planning Council

AWOKE/The GR818ERS

Black Census and Redistricting Hub

Black Women for Wellness

CAIR- LA

CARECEN

Casa Esperanza

Community Coalition

Communities for A Better Environment

Comunidades Indigenas en Liderazgo (CIELO)

Dolores Huerta Foundation

Inner City Struggle

Khmer Girls in Action

LA Black Worker Center

LA Voice

Latino Equality Alliance

Long Beach Forward

Long Beach Immigrant Rights Coalition

Newstart Housing Corporation



Nuestro Voto

Pacoima Beautiful

Power California

Salvadoran American Leadership and Educational Fund

SCOPE

SELA Collaborative

Social Justice Learning Institute

South Asian Network

The Community Action League

Tia Chucha's Centro Cultural