

June 28, 2011

Redistricting Committee for Los Angeles County

Dear Commissioners,

I come to you with concerns about the redistricting of Rowland Heights, all of which is in unincorporated LA County.

You can look at me and see that I am a woman, a senior and a brown skinned woman, and, I was born in Belize in Central America. In my opinion the job of this commission is to redistrict in a way that would bring communities and people together to help them with important daily living concerns and needs, and common issues. Remember, Districts that are not broken don't need fixing.

Issues involving water, transportation, fire, law enforcement, safety, and many other public concerns should be at the forefront of considerations when grouping communities into districts. These issues unite all of our people because they are common needs for everyone. To me, THIS is the real redistricting dilemma; THIS is your job.

What I heard at a prior commission meeting from some commissioners, and have read in many plans, is that it is more important to group communities into clusters of ethnic groups, than to consider the concerns about the basic needs common to all residents. What I heard loudest and repeatedly were questions from commissioners and from people submitting plans that were concerned with "how many whites, how many Latino's, how many blacks, etc." are in each district. That is a real shame. Let's unite people and help them live together, not separate and segregate them. I hope you do not gerrymander districts by ethnicity and race instead of according to public service needs.

Unincorporated area residents are the most vulnerable and require the most consistent representation. Rowland Heights is worried that people from areas far away are submitting plans looking through microscopes in order to favor choices for their own communities, and then pay little attention to others. At the same time, they know nothing about my community and our needs, and have no business making redistricting plans that affect my Rowland Heights community.

That is the very reason why I am not pretending to write a plan for the entire county. What I know most about is **my** community, **my** area, and I don't even pretend to know much about other cities and areas in the county, other than those in close proximity to mine. Most of all I hope the commission is listening to me and won't consider putting Rowland Heights into any other district. I urge you all vote to make sure Rowland Heights remains in District 4 and ask that you do not back any plan moving us to another district.

Thank you,
Lynne Ebenkamp
Rowland Heights resident