



City of Downey

FUTURE UNLIMITED

July 19, 2011

CITY COUNCIL

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CITY MANAGER

GERALD M. CATON

Citizens Redistricting Commission
901 P. Street, Suite 154-A
Sacramento, CA 95814

Honorable Members of the Commission:

As elected representatives of the City of Downey, we have been following your proposals for our area with great expectation. When California enacted laws that allowed your commission to take responsibility for drawing the new district lines we were pleased. To know that politics would finally be taken out of the redistricting process was refreshing.

Up until July 14th we were beginning to see true Communities of Interest being formed. Downey and its residents certainly have deep connections with the communities of Cerritos, Bellflower, Santa Fe Springs, Norwalk, Whittier, La Mirada and Pico Rivera. The congressional map you had drawn PRIOR to the three new Congressional District options you recently published, were a true representation of our community. At a simple glance the map was a whole nugget that took away any appearance of gerrymander drawing and at a closer look, the districts fit with the spirit of Proposition 20.

Then, you suddenly produced very different maps that left us perplexed as to the logic in forming these proposed districts. Downey does not have common interest with cities on the path to Los Angeles. Issues and needs are very different and from a historical perspective, takes us away from Cities we have partnered with in the past for regional issues. Yet all three newly proposed options have cities drawn West towards Los Angeles. At a simple glance, the figures of the three new maps look so elongated and distorted, that it is hard to find how such drastic changes have occurred.

We understand the legal challenges that have been placed upon you in this process and we respect the commission members and all participants for undertaking such important work. Yet, as we observed and participated in the public hearings, it was hard not to also notice the parade of special interest groups advocating for political clout.

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Our concern is that these political campaigns to form maps under the auspices of rule of law, drown the voices of the communities that will have to live with the burden of being misrepresented in our State and National Capitols.

We urge you, please do not link our city with cities on the path to Los Angeles. Our communities of interest in culture, business, family bonds and demographics are to our South and East. Please consider redrawing your maps to reflect the maps before July 14.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mario A. Guerra".

Dn. Mario A. Guerra
Councilman