

Written Public Comments Submitted for CRC Special Meeting (06/09/2021)

Agenda Item	Name	Position	Comments	Comments Received	Attachment
4	Alejandra Ramire-Zarate (Advancement Project California)	Other	People's Bloc Coalition and Redistricting Equity Index Tool	6/1/21	See A-1
6,B.	Alejandra Ramire-Zarate (Advancement Project California)	Other	<Blank>	6/8/21	See A-2

ATTACHMENT(S) BEGIN NEXT PAGE

A-1 begins the following page



June 1, 2021

Los Angeles County Citizens Redistricting Commission
P.O. Box 56447, Sherman Oaks, CA 91413

Sent via electronic transmission

Re: The People's Bloc Redistricting Coalition

Dear Los Angeles County Redistricting Commissioners,

We appreciate your commitment and dedication to ensuring a fair and equitable redistricting process for Los Angeles County. **The People's Bloc (Bloc)** writes to formally present our coalition and offer our partnership and support in carrying out the mandated tasks for this redistricting cycle. The 34 undersigned organizations hope to serve as a resource and set of trusted messengers to ensure an inclusive and representative process.

As you may know, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a disproportionate impact on communities of color. These are also the communities most historically disenfranchised and marginalized from democratic processes. In prior redistricting cycles, communities of color, especially those in low-income communities, have been ignored, excluded, and gerrymandered, which has resulted in weakening their collective political power. To address this, the Bloc takes a multiracial solidarity approach to redistricting and seeks to empower Black, indigenous, people of color (BIPOC) to participate in the redistricting process. To this end, we believe that it is essential to build out a multiracial, intersectional, and countywide approach to the redistricting process using a racial equity lens. The Bloc will conduct ongoing grassroots community engagement to encourage participation in the redistricting process and plans to submit "solidarity maps" with district lines that are rooted in multiracial solidarity, in which we elevate and support other communities and dismantle white supremacy.

The Bloc builds on the successful coordination of the We Count LA Census Table, which was a unique and collaborative effort comprising diverse organizations working together across regions, ethnicities, and languages to ensure hard-to-count populations in the county were accurately counted. This regionally focused and responsive infrastructure features grassroots partners with a long history of deep engagement with their communities. Across the region, Bloc members apply an integrated voter engagement (IVE) strategy to their work during election cycles and in-between to create solutions and increase outcomes for communities of color and low-income communities.



To support our redistricting work using a racial equity lens, we have created **the Redistricting Equity Index** and, separately, Redistricting Equity Indicators. We hope these tools can also serve as a resource for you. Redistricting Equity Indicators are data that have been selected by the People's Bloc to support our goals of moving towards a more equitable California and Los Angeles by creating districts that ensure BIPOC are able to elect candidates of choice.

Equity Indicators can be used to support the following:

- Community conversations around multiple ways of defining “community of interest” (COI).
- Identification of common social or cultural interests or policy goals across neighborhoods.
- Assessment of proposed districts regarding their potential to maximize opportunities for BIPOC to advance policies that benefit them.

You can access final PDF maps [here](#) and an interactive portal [here](#). On this portal, you can also find the **Redistricting Equity [Index](#) to help identify priority areas that would help ensure fair and equitable district lines for our region.** The Redistricting Equity Index combines equity indicators to highlight areas where equity minded, low-income people and people of color reside.

Please note that these data (i.e., data from the American Community Survey and other sources) are for reference only (e.g., for the creation of COIs) and should not be used to draw actual district lines. Only the Public Law (P.L.) 94-171 data from the U.S. Census Bureau should be used to draw district lines.

We look forward to partnering with you to ensure a successful redistricting process that fully engages all communities across Los Angeles County. **Please feel free to contact Alejandra Ramírez-Zárate with Advancement Project California (azarate@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 the coordination 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

CHIRLA

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

A-2 begins the following page



June 8, 2021

Los Angeles County Citizens Redistricting Commission
P.O. Box 56447
Sherman Oaks, CA 91413

Sent via electronic transmission

Re: Public Hearings

Dear Los Angeles County Redistricting Commissioners,

We thank you for your dedication to a fair and equitable redistricting process for Los Angeles County. Additionally, we deeply appreciate your willingness to incorporate community feedback into your decision making. The 34 undersigned organizations comprising the People's Bloc (Bloc) write to 1) clarify the intention of the summer public hearings, 2) provide feedback on your communities of interest (COI) input form and information being collected from communities, and 3) encourage coordination with City of Los Angeles and Los Angeles Unified School district redistricting efforts to avoid meeting overlap. We're pleased to see this COI public hearing schedule released and offer recommendations to ensure robust participation from county residents.

The People's Bloc is multiracial table dedicated to the inclusion of everyday residents, conducting public education, and proposing solutions to the redistricting process that promote the political voice, representation, and access to resources of historically underrepresented groups. To this end, we believe that it is essential to build out a multiracial, intersectional regional approach to the redistricting process using a racial equity lens.

The Bloc recommends a clarification regarding the purpose of these input hearings. Through these hearings, will you be collecting COI data from county residents to help inform your map drawing later this fall? The public outreach webpage does not mention "communities of interest," nor does it state that the purpose of the meetings is to garner input on the public's communities. Instead, it only states that the ". . . CRC will present an overview of the redistricting process, legal considerations, outreach efforts, public access plan, and a timeline. Your input is valuable to us. These public hearings are important for receiving public comment and soliciting community input regarding questions about the redistricting process [and] what the public would like the CRC to consider in the redistricting effort." This language is confusing and could inadvertently deter people, especially those most marginalized and most at risk of further exclusion, from attending these hearings. **We strongly recommend updating this language to reflect your intention of collecting COI data from community residents, including a clear indication of how you will be using and storing that information.**



Additionally, the [public input Google form](#) you have developed does not include questions most likely to elicit meaningful COI input from communities. We recommend you look at the state commission's questions and their [DrawMyCACommunity.org](#) tool for guidance. The California Citizens Redistricting Commission is using the questions below to collect COI data from community residents. This can serve as a resource for questions you can include in your online form and ask during hearings to guide the public as they share their COI testimony.

CA CRC COI Input Meeting Questions:

- **Begin with your county or city.**
- **Mention the street names and significant locations in your neighborhood to help us identify the parameters of your community.**
- **What are your shared interests?**
- **What brings you together?**
- **What is important to your community?**
- **Are there nearby areas you want to be in a district with?**
- **Nearby areas you don't want to be in a district with? Why or why not?**
- **Has your community come together to advocate for important services, better schools, roads, or health centers in your neighborhood?**

Additionally, the Google form does not include an option to attach files. Many communities are interested in submitting COI data and maps for your consideration. The current form should be updated to include this feature to ensure robust communication with communities eager to share their knowledge with you.

Lastly, there is potential overlap with the [City of Los Angeles' public outreach schedule](#). The county's special countywide Spanish outreach meeting on August 7 at 10 a.m. overlaps with the public outreach meetings scheduled to occur in CD 7 and CD 6, which are scheduled to take place on the same day at 1:00 p.m. and 9:00 a.m., respectively. **This seems problematic as monolingual Spanish speakers that live in CD 6 or 7, will have to choose between attending the county's dedicated Spanish meeting or their city meeting.** The city's COI public hearing schedule is still in draft mode and has not been approved by the full commission. Because of this, we highly encourage you to contact city commission staff to coordinate and avoid overlap to ensure cohesion amongst the various Los Angeles region redistricting processes. It is crucial communities across the county, particularly traditionally marginalized and disempowered groups, receive meaningful opportunities for full and robust participation.



We thank you for your time and consideration. Please feel free to contact Alejandra Ramírez-Zárate with Advancement Project California (azarate@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.

Best,

The People's Bloc

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