



October 18, 2021

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 the Commission's commitment to ensuring a fair and equitable redistricting process for Los Angeles County. **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 twenty-seven 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 the ActiveSGV in the San Gabriel Valley, and Long Beach Forward in Long Beach. In addition, groups like South Asian Network, Black Census and Redistricting Hub, CAIR- LA, and the Latino Equality Alliance embody the ethnic and racial diversity of the City.

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.

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 twenty-seven 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.
- **Data Analysis:** To create an inclusive and representative plan for the Los Angeles County Supervisors, 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.
- **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. Regularly, draft plans were produced and shared with the People's Bloc members to consult online 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.

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 CRC 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. The "Solidarity Map" preserves the voting power of Latinx Angelenos, creating two VRA districts. Historic Latinx regions, including Boyle Heights, Lincoln Heights, and El Sereno,



maintain a VRA district in the Eastside. A second VRA is drawn, pairing SELA with areas to the south and east like Long Beach and Whittier.

The "Solidarity Map" further represents the compromise of twenty-seven partners to protect COIs within the limitations of population and VRA constraints. In creating two VRA districts, the People's Bloc redrew the boundary between District 1 and District 4 while protecting the community-identified borders of the Eastside and SELA. The Eastside of Los Angeles is home to a dense Latinx community with a rich history. Compromising Boyle Heights, Lincoln Heights, Monterey Park, and Montebello, the Eastside is known for street vendors, small business owners, customer service, and a lively food industry. In addition, it houses a large number of renters who are mainly Spanish and English speaking. They are teachers, social workers, and blue-collar workers. Residents identify SELA as eight cities, including Bell, Bell Gardens, Cudahy, Maywood, Huntington Park, Lynwood, Vernon, and South Gate. Its two unincorporated areas are Florence-Firestone and Walnut Park. These locales have similar demographics: a high percentage of Latino residents with low socioeconomic status, large immigrant populations, low adult educational attainment, a shared socioeconomic history, similar government structures and challenges, and strong social networks. The "Solidary Map" represents a strategic vision for keeping these communities whole within a two VRA district configuration.

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

Black Census and Redistricting Hub

Black Women for Wellness

CAIR- LA



CARECEN

Community Coalition

Communities for A Better Environment

Comunidades Indigenas en Liderazgo (CIELO)

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

Power California

SCOPE

SELA Collaborative

Social Justice Learning Institute

South Asian Network

The Community Action League