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August 18, 2021

City of San Diego Independent Redistricting Commission

c/o: Ms. Laura J. Fleming, Executive Director Redistricting2020@san-diego.gov; LJFleming@san-diego.gov;

202 C Street, MS 2A

San Diego, California 92101

RE: Non Agenda Written Testimony for Regular Meeting of August 19, 2021

Community of Interests - Actual Residential Population v. Special Tourism Business Districts and Areas

Dear Honorable Chairman Hebrank, Honorable Vicechair Malbourgh, and Honorable Commissioners,

Thank you for the opportunity to participate at last night's Special Meeting. The meeting was well organized and professionally conducted.

I am submitting Non-Agenda Written Testimony for the Regular Meeting of August 19, 2021 concerning Community of Interests - Actual Residential Population v. Special Tourism Business Districts and Areas. These Non-Agenda Comments were prompted by an insightful article in today's, August 18, 2021, Voice of San Diego, "**San Diego's Vietnamese Community Is Booming and Wants Redistricting to Show it**".

At last evenings Special Meeting, a request was made for the Commission staff to make a special effort to identify Racial and Ethnic Asian communities of interests, within the City. I support this this request.

San Diego has a significant and unique history of contribution from Asian persons. Historic Asian and Pan Asian Communities of interest exist throughout the City. Examples are in the San Ysidro community and Downtown (somewhat as the result of the Chinese immigration wave.as Railroad workers); the Pilipino persons in District 4 & 8 areas surrounding our military and naval bases, the Samoan Polynesian peoples from both the Independent State of Samoa and American Samoa in District Four (particularly as members of my District 4 St. Rita's parish community); the Chamorro people of Micronesia's Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (somewhat in District 7 by Zion Health); the Korean peoples (somewhat in District 7 and Kearney Mesa); the Japanese peoples (somewhat historically engaged in Otay Mesa farming in D8); the Tai ethnic group Lao people or Laotians in D4's Encanto and east of 54th street; and the Vietnamese of throughout the City.- Mira Mesa, Rancho Penasquitos, Allied Gardens, and Talmadge/College areas.

"The Supreme Court recognizes keeping communities of interest whole as a key part of the map-drawing process. A jurisdiction's communities of interest are its overlapping sets of neighborhoods, networks, and groups that share interests, priorities, views, cultures, histories, languages, and values. The following is a non-exhaustive list of elements that help define communities of interest:

- Shared interests in issues such as schools, housing, transit, health, and environmental conditions;
- Common social and civic networks, including churches, temples, mosques, homeowner associations, and community centers, and shared use of community spaces, like parks and shopping centers;
- **Racial and ethnic** compositions, cultural identities, and language;

- Similar socio-economic factors such as income and education levels;
- Other shared political boundary lines, such as shared school districts;
- Natural and man-made features, including streets, highways, canals, hills, etc.” ((REDISTRICTING FOR COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT: A Legal How-To Guide, ACLU NoCal, ACLU SoCal, CA Common Cause, 2021 page 8).

The Commission must be careful not to fall into the Mayor Wilson Era solution to Racial and Ethnic diversity. In that era the solution was to appoint one complimentary representative from the then simplistic color choices of Brown, Black, and Yellow, to add to a mostly White Council. Today, we recognize that within very generalized racial groups there are a wide variety of ethnic groups, each with distinct identities and cultural groupings. No one would lightly classify together the Irish, Scotts, Welch and English, as simply common “Pan Isles White People.”

The Commission will also be challenged by other factors, in addition to continuity, to define a residential community of interest, based on the above elements. San Diego has established several historic and economic districts themed for the promotion of business/tourism. These varied districts may have had, at one time, large and specific racial and ethnic groups; but today the founding resident population has moved to or been forced out of those areas.

Old Town, The Presidio, & Mission San Diego de Alcalá are places of significant common social, civic and historic identity with the Kumeyaay and Mexican peoples. The areas have churches, clubs, restaurants, and themed shops based on these peoples’ historic presence; but today the residential population has changed. Often native peoples return for festivals and church services but they live and vote in other places.

Similarly, Little Italy; Downtown’s Chinese District; Little Saigon, Roseville, La Jolla’s Duval enclave, the College Area Jewish community, and others have features and business owners that reflect a largely absent population. The names on buildings and streets remain but the people have largely left. For example, a significant indicator of a peoples’ social and religious presence can be an Eruv. Three existing **San Diego eruvim** are in La Jolla, University City, and the **San Diego** State University area. Planning is process for a fourth San Carlos eruvim. But the mere presence of an eruvim does not indicate the residential population necessary for voter districting. Residents of an eruvim area should not be split. Similarly, residents in one parish area should not be placed in a voting District away from their church.

I would be pleased to assist the Commission’s Redistricting efforts with additional background on most of these special historic economic / tourism districts as I have in the past served as their Counsel or as elected representative for their redevelopment. Themed cultural areas can have a great economic boost but must be linked with actual racial and ethnic populations to form a true community of interest to promote voters rights and participation.

I look forward to presenting oral testimony on the matters presented in letters, at the Commission’s regular meeting, of August 19, 2021. Please include this letter and my two previous letters in the record.

All the best,
/s/

John Stump, resident, property owner, and taxpayer in current Districts Four and Nine

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