



## **Background: What is redistricting?**

- Every 10 years, after the census, new boundary lines for Congress and CA Senate, Assembly and Board of Equalization districts are drawn. Currently, the CA State Legislature draws those lines. This is a major conflict of interest.

## **How would California Voters FIRST Act change redistricting?**

- 14-Person Citizens Redistricting Commission. The California Voters FIRST Act would create a politically balanced Commission - 5 Democrats, 5 Republicans, 4 others. Commissioners would be chosen for their impartiality, skills, and to reflect our State's demographic and geographic diversity.
- Protecting communities, cities, and counties. The California Voters FIRST Act would create a list of prioritized mapping criteria for the Commission to follow. This would ensure that our Constitution, federal and state laws are followed.
- Open and public process. The Commission would hold hearings to receive public input. The California Voters FIRST Act would end the closed-door political deals. Legislators have a conflict of interest. Instead of drawing districts to reflect California's population changes, they draw lines to maximize their own ability to get elected.

## **How would the Commission be formed?**

- California registered voters are invited to participate.
- A pool of 60 (20 Ds, 20 Rs, 20 others) is selected based on their skills, ability to be impartial, and diversity by a review panel of state auditors.
- The 4 Legislative Leaders can strike up to 24 people from the pool.
- Out of the remaining pool, 8 Commissioners are randomly picked - 3 Ds, 3 Rs, 2 others.
- The final 6 Commissioners (2 Ds, 2 Rs, 2 others) are chosen by the 8 Commissioners from the remaining pool based on the balance of skills and diversity they would bring.

## **What Mapping Criteria would the Commission have to follow?**

In ranked order, the criteria are:

- a. Districts shall comply with the US Constitution, including equal population requirements.
  - b. Districts shall comply with the Voting Rights Act.
  - c. Districts shall be geographically contiguous.
  - d. The geographic integrity of any city, county, or city and county, neighborhoods, or communities of interest shall be respected. Communities of interest shall not be defined as having a relationship with incumbents, candidates, or parties.
  - e. To the extent possible, after the above criteria have been satisfied, districts shall be compact.
  - f. To the extent possible, after the above criteria have been satisfied, districts shall be nested.
- \* Incumbent residences may not be considered; districts may not be drawn to favor politicians or parties.

## **What is the scope of the Citizen's Redistricting Commission?**

- The Commission will draw California Senate, Assembly and Board of Equalization seats in the next redistricting, 2011 and after each decennial census.
- The State Legislature will draw Congressional seats, following the same mapping criteria and hearing requirements as the Commission.

Please go to [www.commoncause.org/cavotersfirst](http://www.commoncause.org/cavotersfirst) for more information and to read the full initiative.