

A map of California showing a redistricting plan. The map is overlaid with a complex network of black lines representing district boundaries. A blue-bordered box is superimposed over the upper portion of the map, containing the title text. The map shows the state's outline and internal district lines, with a higher density of lines in the coastal and central regions.

Fighting for an Independent Redistricting Commission

California

 **Common
Cause**

Holding Power Accountable

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California Common Cause

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About Common Cause

Common Cause was founded in 1970 by John Gardner as a vehicle for citizens to make their voices heard in the political process and to hold their elected leaders accountable to the public interest. Today, Common Cause is one of the most active, effective, and respected nonprofit organizations working for political change in America. Common Cause strives to strengthen our democracy by empowering our members, supporters, and the general public to take action on critical policy issues. Now with nearly 1.2 million members and 30 state organizations, Common Cause remains committed to honest, open, and accountable government, as well as encouraging citizen participation in democracy.

Mission Statement

Common Cause is a nonpartisan, grassroots organization dedicated to restoring the core values of American democracy, reinventing an open, honest and accountable government that serves the public interest, and empowering ordinary people to make their voices heard in the political process. We believe that by banding together, citizens can make a difference. We throw a spotlight on issues that affect all citizens. We work to strengthen public participation and to ensure that the political process serves the public interest, rather than the special interests.

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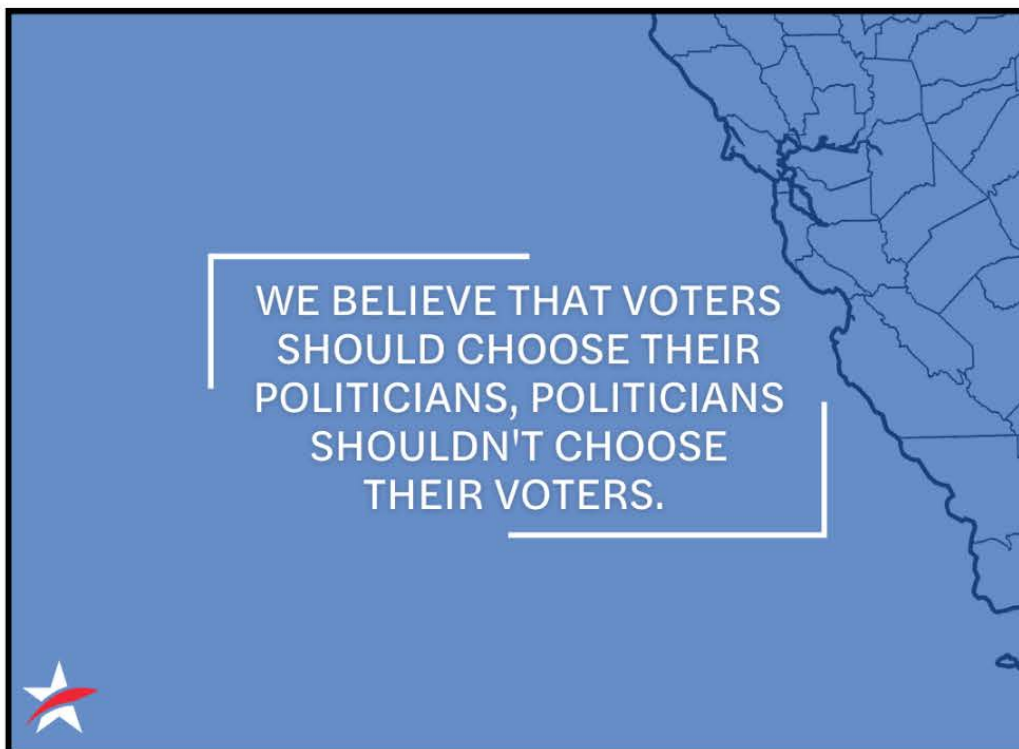
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Introduction

OUR MISSION

California Common Cause is dedicated to building a democracy that includes everyone. We work on voting rights, redistricting reform, government transparency, and money in politics to end structural inequalities in our state and local democracies and to create governments at all levels that are accountable to and reflective of California's communities.

“California Common Cause has led the charge to make California the nation's gold standard for voting rights. Their work has been vital to improving representation and increasing political participation among all Californians.” – US Senator, Alex Padilla

OUR WORK

Since 1970, California Common Cause has led dozens of successful efforts to reform government and the political process, elevating the voices and power of everyday people. We have helped enfranchise hundreds of thousands of Californians through reform in three key areas: elections, redistricting, and money in politics.



Elections

CCC reshapes elections for today's voter by:

- Making voter registration simple, streamlined, and same day
- Ensuring voters can choose when, where, and how they vote
- Simplifying elections, ballots, and the voter experience
- Making voting meaningful and accessible to all



Redistricting

CCC advocates for redistricting by the people, for the people by:

- Empowering people, not politicians, to draw the lines
- Driving change with tools, support, and community organizing
- Ensuring line-drawing is fair, transparent, and representative
- Preparing diverse communities to lead and inform redistricting



Money in Politics

CCC builds a better democracy by:

- Lifting voters' voices above big money
- Creating people-focused campaign finance systems
- Making government responsive to everyday people

For more information, visit us at commoncause.org/California.
Contact us at (213) 623-1216 or california@commoncause.org.

OUR APPROACH

California Common Cause engages the left, right, and center to enact reforms that strengthen our democracy. Key elements of our approach include:

Finding common ground to push for uncommon solutions

With a reputation as a trusted, good government organization with partnerships across the political spectrum, we have been able to bridge divides among diverse stakeholders and forge solutions to intractable issues that curb political participation.

Guiding policy change from start to finish



California Common Cause takes a comprehensive approach to policy change. We have a track record of success at every stage of the policymaking process.

Making sure the political process works for everyone

Communities of color, youth, language communities, and other marginalized groups are more likely to face barriers to political participation. California Common Cause works with diverse communities to knock down these barriers and elevate their voices.

OUR IMPACT



We made voting more accessible by sponsoring and passing Online Voter Registration in 2011. This work contributed to nearly **850,000 CALIFORNIANS REGISTERING TO VOTE** within the first months of its implementation.



We led the effort to pass the Voters FIRST Act, establishing an open independent redistricting process that resulted in a **29% INCREASE IN CONGRESSIONAL REPRESENTATIVES OF COLOR** in the first election with the new maps. **36,000+ CALIFORNIANS** applied to serve on or gave testimony to the commission.



We led coalition efforts to **IMPROVE TRANSPARENCY** and pass bills that strengthen disclosures by candidates, initiatives, and elected officials. Our advocacy helped secure **\$14 MILLION FOR A MODERN, USER-FRIENDLY DISCLOSURE PORTAL** for the public to access.

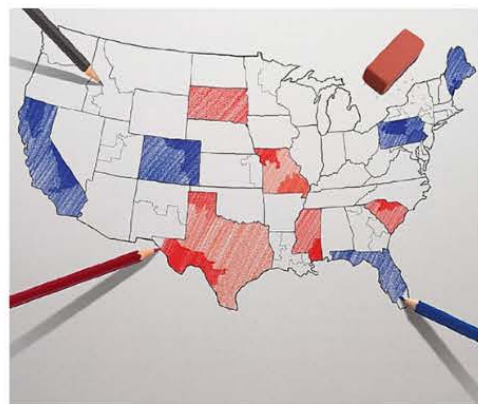
Our Work to Establish Fair Redistricting in California

On February 14th 1990, Ed Salzman, a political savant in the mid to late 20th century, claimed in his opinion article “Seeking Villains in a Sacramento Swamp” that legislative districts in California were gerrymandered. This meant incumbents drew their own lines to make it easier for themselves to get reelected and harder for regular communities to have a voice. In essence, politicians could choose their voters instead of the voters choosing their politicians. Given there were no reforms passed, in the year 2000, the next decennial, the majority party ran the redistricting process.

Finally, in 2008 California Common Cause and our allies successfully passed the Voters First Act, Proposition 11, which changed the California Constitution to create the Citizens Redistricting Commission. This commission was formed to amend the redistricting process by giving citizens the power to draw fair district boundaries without the influence of special interests and politics. Specifically, the reform tasked the commission with redrawing the California Senate and Assembly districts.

Two years later, Proposition 20 was passed, again amending the California Constitution to give the California Redistricting Commission the power to draw Congressional districts. Proposition 20 also defined communities of interest and deemed that they should be included in a single district. Also in that same election, Proposition 37, a ballot measure which sought to return the redistricting process back to the politicians, failed.

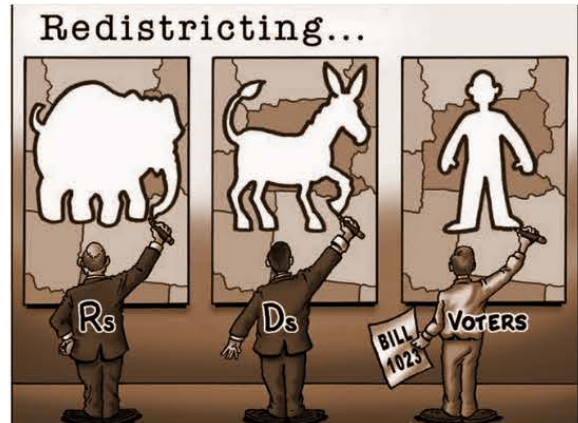
The California Citizens Redistricting Commission has been regarded throughout the nation as the best practice for redistricting. Since its establishment, some California counties and cities have adopted redistricting commissions, as well as other states. The purpose of this toolkit is to continue our work to reform the redistricting process by providing residents the information and steps necessary to establish redistricting commissions in their county, city, or school board.



Plans

Introduction: What You Can Do To Support Fair Districting

Initiating a plan to end gerrymandering can be daunting but is nonetheless achievable. In the 2016 election cycle, Measure L was presented to Sacramento voters that would establish an independent redistricting commission. The measure was passed thanks to local activists and members of CA Common Cause. Our allies also helped to pass AB 849 in 2019, which created new rules for redistricting. In 2018, CA Common Cause supported Menlo Park in an effort to establish new districts and Martinez to address gerrymandering in their districts. This year, we are working with residents around the state to establish independent redistricting commissions. Residents like you can work together to fight for good governance practices and the team at CA Common Cause is here to help!



Preliminary Questions & Research



Counties:

- All counties have districts, and district lines in most counties are drawn by the Board of Supervisors. What process does your Board of Supervisors use to draw these lines?
- Has there ever been a discussion and/or criticism of how the Board of Supervisors drew the districts in their board meetings, local news, or published commentaries?
- Has the Board of Supervisors ever discussed using a commission to draw the districts?
- Based on this information, is fighting for a redistricting commission feasible?

Cities:

- Does your municipality (city or town) have districts or is it at-large, meaning no districts? If they have districts, either the city council or commission will draw the lines—what process do they use to do this?
- Has there been any discussion or criticism on how the city council drew the districts by residents, in the news, or in public commentaries?
- Has your city or town council ever discussed using a commission to draw the districts?
- Based on this information, is fighting for a redistricting commission feasible?

Local Fair Redistricting Campaign Checklist

CHECKLIST

- Determine that a redistricting commission is winnable
- Establish a steering committee to lead and make decisions to launch your campaign
- Prepare a potential campaign timeline
- Identify potential supporters (elected officials, community leaders/orgs., etc.)
- Identify potential detractors/opposition (elected officials, community orgs, etc.)
- List potential volunteer sources and how many you will need
- List ideas for actions to support your campaign
- Identify social media resources and list contacts
- List potential sources for funding, if needed

Campaign Plan: Vision/Goals/Power Mapping/Strategy/Tactics

The following templates can be utilized for any campaign you work on moving forward. Here are some initial thoughts and questions to help you get started with your redistricting campaign:

Vision: To establish methods to implement fair districting and redistricting.

Goal: Do you want to establish a redistricting commission or work to change the existing redistricting rules?

Power Mapping: Examining your ability to achieve your goal.

Strategy: Passing an ordinance, resolution or a ballot measure to establish the commission or, to adopt changes to existing redistricting rules.

Tactics: What actions will you take to achieve your campaign goal?

Research Prompts:

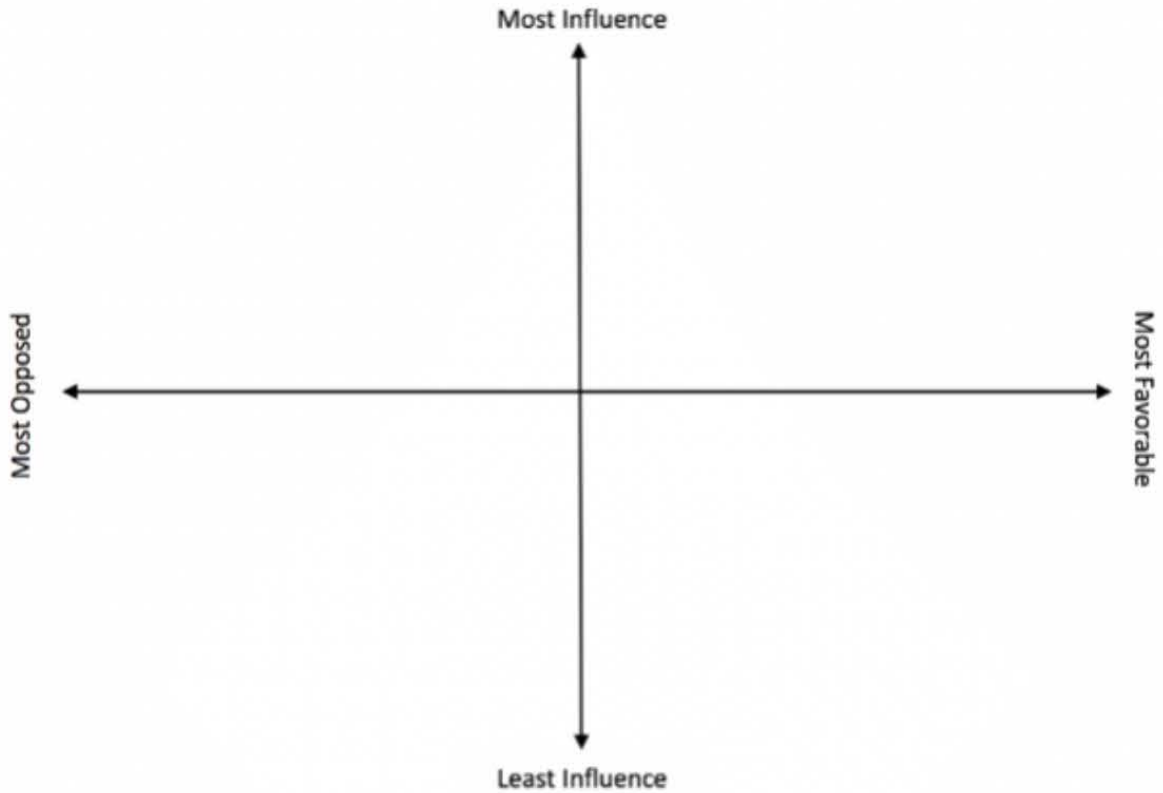
- What community organizations in California focus on redistricting?
- Which local and state politicians have drafted and/or supported fair redistricting reform? How can you contact them?
- Who are the key stakeholders in your community when it comes to redistricting?
- What successful mobilization strategies have other community organizers used?
- How can you use your current network to help drive forth your campaign?

How to Plan and Run Successful Grassroots Campaigns

<p>1. Vision</p>	<p>What problem do you want to solve? If you could design the outcome, what would the solution look like?</p>
<p>2. Goal</p>	<p>What specific solution would help you achieve your vision? Your goal should aim to (a) improve people’s lives, (b) be specific and measurable, (c) be winnable, and (d) be inspirational. Example: “Pass the Dream Act Now.”</p>
<p>3. Assessment/Power Map/Target</p>	<p>Do research! Has this solution been tried before? Who supports your solution? Who is opposed to your solution? And what power do those stakeholders have to help you win? How can you influence those key stakeholders? List them.</p>
<p>4. Strategy</p>	<p>Plan your strategy to win. Would a Judicial, Legislative, Executive, Community, or Public Education strategy be best? This in part depends on who you need to convince to win.</p>
<p>5. Tactics</p>	<p>How will you best carry out your strategy? Examples: Protests, Rallies, Strikes, Community Forums, Media, Lobby Visits, Petitions, and Op-eds.</p>

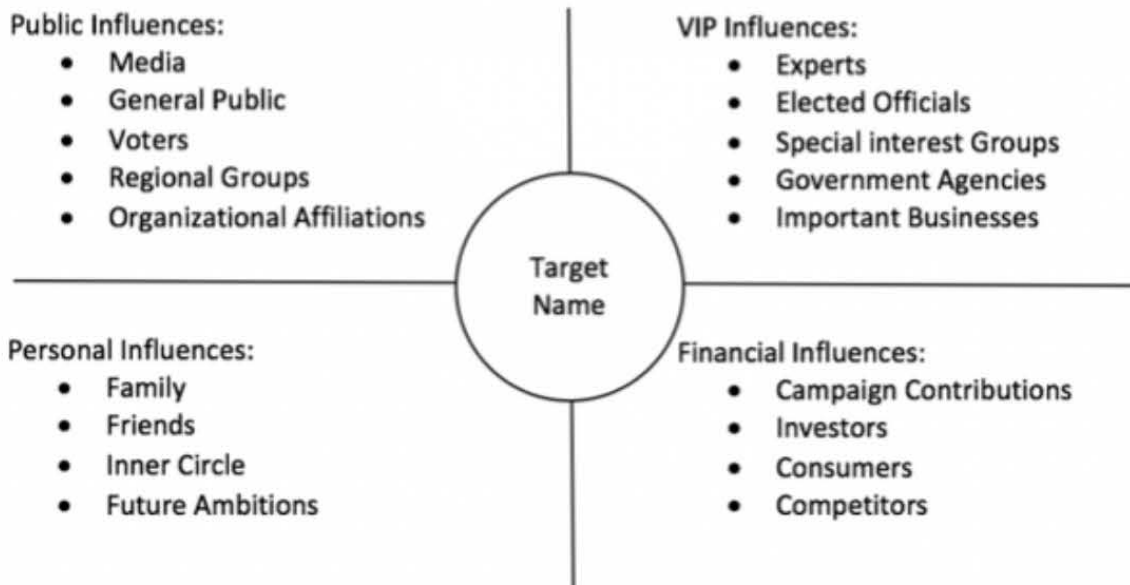
Power Mapping

Locate your stakeholders and decisionmakers on the axes most appropriate for your goal or objective.

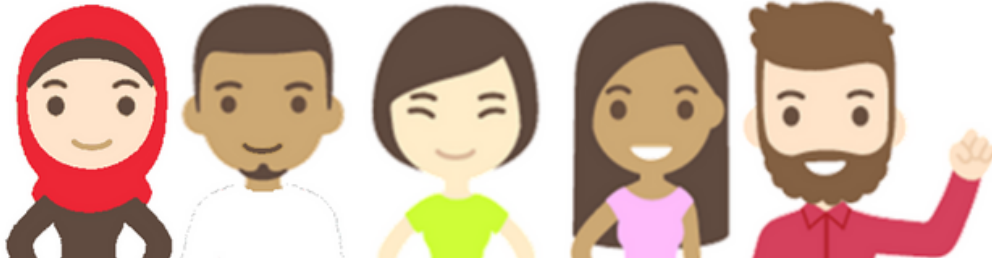


Target Chart

Identify a target and what activities or actions might be required to move them in your favor.



TAKE ACTION!



Checklist for Successfully Running Your Campaign

To see examples of each item on the list below, visit our website here: [commoncause.org/california/our-work/ensure-fair-districts-reflective-democracy/local-redistricting/](https://www.commoncause.org/california/our-work/ensure-fair-districts-reflective-democracy/local-redistricting/)

CHECKLIST

- Campaign name & logo
- Campaign Tagline & slogans
- Informational materials
- Create website & social media
- Petition for supporters to sign
- Resident support letter & endorsement form
- Coalition support letter & endorsement form
- Sign up for volunteers
- Sign up for campaign updates/collect emails or texts
- Email messages for every stage of your campaign
- Text messages for every state of your campaign
- PowerPoint presentations
- Media and social media graphics/ads
- Calendar for local events to promote your campaign

*Consider including these elements in your campaign

Campaign name, logo, tagline, and slogans:


You don't need a campaign name, logo, tagline, or slogan, but they will help you publicize your efforts and attract new allies.

Informational Materials:

Create an informational flyer, postcards, and/or brochures to explain the who, why, what, and where of your campaign. Consider creating materials in the languages that are spoken in your community.



Let's Work Together for Fair Redistricting



Who: CA Common Cause is a nonpartisan, grassroots organization dedicated to restoring the core values of American Democracy, reinventing an open, honest, and responsive government that works for the public interest, and empowering ordinary people to make their voices heard.

What: To work with residents and coalition allies to establish an independent redistricting commission to draw the new Santa Clara City Council district lines using 2020 Census data.

Why: We believe that voters should choose their politicians, politicians should not choose their voters. We want redistricting done by the people and for the people. City Council district lines need to be drawn through a fair, transparent, assessable public process led by an independent commission of diverse Santa Clara residents.

How: Sign up for our Zoom educational forums on redistricting. Help us spread the word to all the residents of Santa Clara you know! Help us establish an independent redistricting commission. If a redistricting commission is established, apply to serve!

When: Join US NOW! At: <https://tinyurl.com/y4u9xucf>

*For more information contact
Helen Grieco, hgrieco@commoncause.org, (415) 531-1774*

→ "Fair Redistricting" is the name CA Common Cause chose for the mapping campaign.

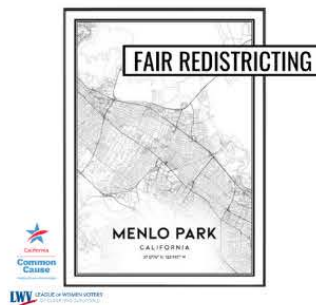
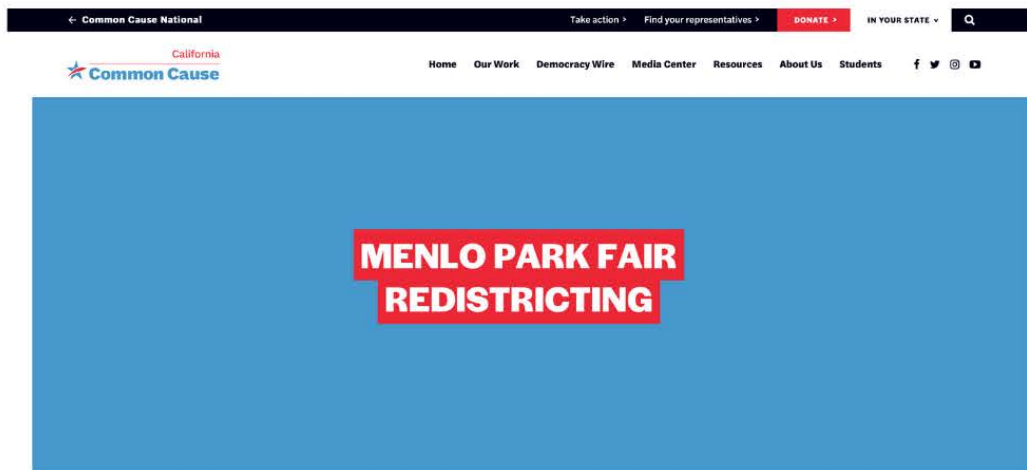
→ CA Common Cause designed a logo for each city that includes the campaign title and city name.

→ The graphic includes information about the campaign and how other residents can get involved.

→ CA Common Cause designed a logo for each city that includes the campaign title and city name

Website and social media sites:

Search the internet for "buy a domain name" and review your options to purchase one. Try to get the URL for your website to match your campaign name. If it's not available, get one that is easy to identify with your campaign name. Your website and social media sites should include your mission, education, and information on fair redistricting, an about page to showcase the core team that is running the campaign, an action page with a calendar, an opportunity for people to volunteer and make a contribution!



CA Common Cause is a non-partisan, grassroots organization dedicated to restoring the core values of American Democracy, reinventing an open, honest and responsive government that works for the public interests, and empowering ordinary people to make their voices heard. To achieve this, we work to establish independent redistricting commissions to draw the new city council district lines using the 2020 Census. **We believe that voters should choose their politicians, politicians should not choose their voters.** We advocate for redistricting done by the people and for the people.

The way district lines are drawn impacts who gets elected and whether elected officials are responsive to the community. When district lines actually reflect our communities, we have a greater ability to elect candidates of our choice and hold politicians accountable. When district lines slice up communities and protect incumbents, the opposite is true.

We believe we get better district lines, and avoid gerrymandering, when independent, community-run redistricting commissions are in charge, instead of politicians.

There are four redistricting models used to draw new district lines for cities and counties:

***Redistricting by City Councils and Boards of Supervisors:**

This model gives politicians the sole power to draw the new district lines and adopt new district maps. Under this model, politicians can gerrymander districts to protect their incumbency and their party's majority. They can also draw the new district lines to undermine communities and limit representation.

Petition for supporters to sign:

Search the internet for "how to create a petition" and select an option that best suits your campaign. Your petition can be online and/or printed - however, in light of the COVID-19 pandemic we recommend an online version. Your petition should include a statement of your mission that people can sign to support. It should also include a place for them to give you their name and contact information. This can be their email address, phone number, or social media information. We suggest providing people with all possible contact avenues so they can choose the one most suitable for them. Your petition can include a box for people to check to sign up to be a volunteer and to agree to receive texts from your campaign.

Menlo Park Independent Redistricting Commission Petition



Holding Power Accountable

To: Menlo Park City Council
From: [Your Name]

Menlo City Council Members,

I am a resident of Menlo Park and I support establishing an Independent Redistricting Commission to draw the new districts from the 2020 census data. Independent redistricting commissions are used in cities across California, including cities small, medium, and large. In fact, California established a statewide independent redistricting commission to draw our congressional, state senate, and state assembly districts over a decade ago, and states around the nation have been imitating us ever since. An independent redistricting commission comprised of qualified, diverse Menlo Park residents would cost the same as the Advisory Redistricting Commission, but would have final authority over what future City Council districts look like, ensuring full independence from the elected incumbents who have an inherent conflict of interest in ensuring district lines that benefit them.

Sincerely,
Concerned Residents

First Name

Last Name

Email *

Zip/Postal Code *

Not in the US?

I am a resident of Menlo Park.

- Yes
 No

I believe that voters should choose their politicians, politicians should not choose their voters. I support establishing and Independent Redistricting Commission in Menlo Park.

- Yes
 No

I will tell my friends, neighbors, family and co-workers about this! You can download the flyer from [HERE](#) and send it.

- Yes
 No

I would like to volunteer to help establish and Independent Redistricting Commission in Menlo Park.

- Yes
 No

I would like to attend the Redistricting Educational Forum.

- Yes
 No

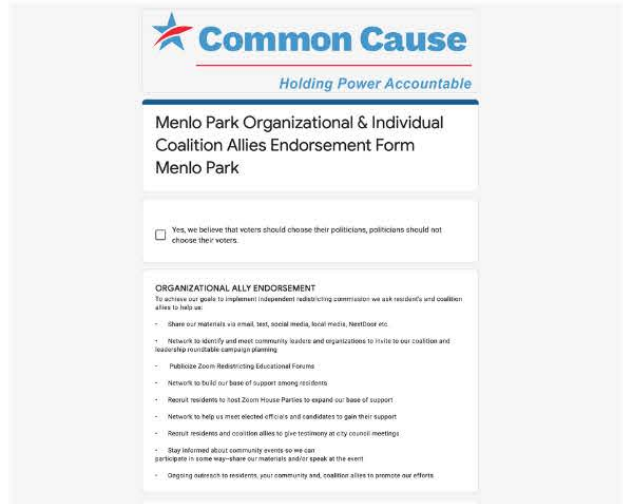
[CLICK HERE](#) to sign up.

Mobile Number:

(555) 555-5555

Endorsements for individuals and organizations to join your coalition:

Create an endorsement letter to outline your campaign and what their support entails. Create an endorsement form (for example, a Google Forms) for individuals and organizations to build support for your campaign. This will also protect you so you have their official agreement as a supporter of your campaign.



Volunteer Sign-Ups:

On your petition form, website, and/or social media accounts, include a sign-up for volunteers. This should include a check box that gives people the option to indicate if they want to volunteer. To build power in your campaign, make sure you capture the information of your supporters on all your platforms so you can stay in touch with them. Suggested resources for sign-ups include Google Forms, JotForm, Sign-Up Forms, and Mailchimp.



Join the Action Team!

Common Cause is fighting to make our democracy more open, honest, and accountable -- and we need your help.

In the past year, Common Cause activists have helped to establish new public financing programs... spread automatic voter registration to several new states... hold the Trump administration accountable... and achieve dozens of other victories.

Are you ready to reach out to other people to hold power accountable in your community, state legislatures, the halls of Congress or even the White House? **Sign up here to join our Action Team** -- a group of dedicated Common Cause members who fight for our democracy online and offline with support and training from our staff.

To learn more about the Action Team (or if you have any questions), email us at grassroots@commoncause.org.

First Name *

Last Name *

Email *

Zip/Postal Code *

[Not in the US?](#)

Which activities are you interested in?

- Organize: lead action teams, get trained, train community members, win reforms in your state and community.
- Volunteer: Help with in office needs at a Common Cause state office.
- Rapid Response: Phonebank, Text Common Cause members, Plan Mobilizations (e.g. petition deliveries, rallies).

Mobile Phone

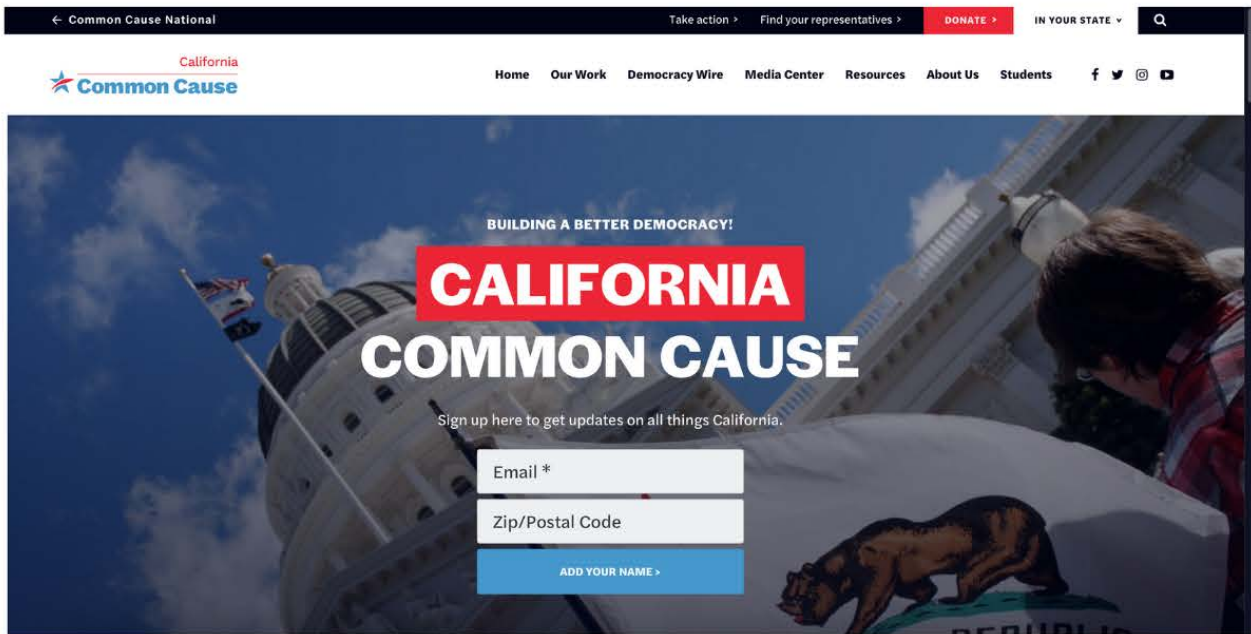
Mobile Opt-In

- Yes, I want to receive text messages.

Add Your Name

Campaign Update Sign Ups:

Providing your supporters with a sign up to receive updates. Plan to send out updates via email, social media or texts to keep your supporters informed.



Educational Presentations:

To build more support for your campaign, offer educational presentations to your community. Create a slide deck (e.g. PowerPoint, Google Slides, Prezi, etc.) that teaches the community, local organizations, and elected leaders the why, how, what, and when of your campaign. Visit www.commoncause.org/california/our-work/ensure-fair-districts-reflective-democracy/ for sample resources that you can adapt to your campaign.



Social Media Graphics, Ads, and Publicity:

Create graphics and advertisements to raise awareness and gain support for your campaign. Spread the word about your campaign through all available means of publicity. Use local papers, radio, television, social media, and community news services like NextDoor. The most affordable way to publicize your campaign is to get earned media, rather than paid media. Creating an event that is newsworthy can get your campaign free media coverage. Visit twitter.com/CommonCauseCA for social media examples that you can adapt for your campaign.

Graphics should have the campaign name and a short paragraph that acts as a call to action for residents in that city

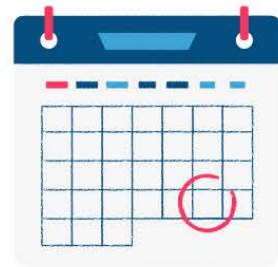


Make sure that materials have the logo of all organizations involved so residents know who is a part of the campaign

The bottom of the graphic includes the campaign slogan and website for residents to get more information about the mapping process

Calendar of Events:

Create a calendar of events for your campaign. This should include important campaign deadlines as well as volunteer/community engagement opportunities. Publicize events on your website, through social media, emails and texts. Ask your supporters to make you aware of any other events that would help spread the word about your campaign.



What you are asking individuals to do for your Fair Redistricting campaign:



CHECKLIST

- Share our materials via email, text, social media, local media, NextDoor etc.
- Network with community leaders and orgs to invite to our campaign planning sessions
- Publicize Zoom Redistricting Educational Forums Network to build our base of resident support
- Recruit residents to host Zoom House Parties to expand our base of support
- Network to help us meet elected officials and candidates to gain their support
- Recruit residents and allies to testify at city council meetings
- Stay informed about community events so we can share our campaign materials and/or present at the event
- Keep reaching out to residents in your community and other allies to promote our efforts

Steps to Implement a Fair Redistricting Commission Campaign

Commission Considerations:

We recommend reviewing www.localredistricting.org and its section on the laws governing the establishment of a redistricting commission, their research and resources

Here are important considerations for your redistricting commission to keep in mind:

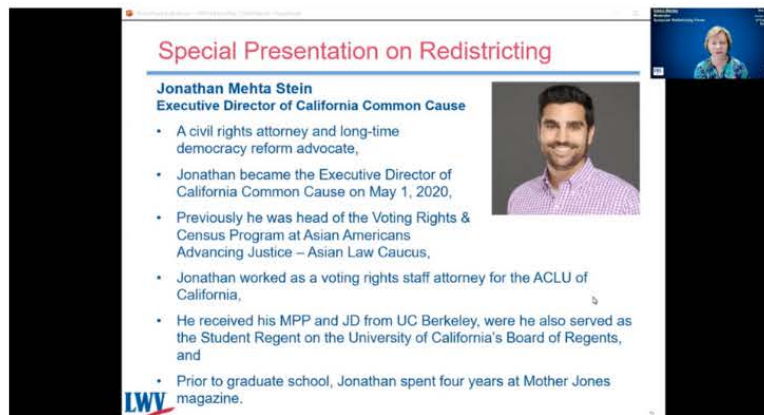
Redistricting Commission Considerations

-  **Commission Size**
Vary from 5 to 21 members. Smaller commissions are easier to manage, while larger commissions allow for a more diverse group.
-  **Commission Diversity**
Encourage the diversity of geography, race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, economic/social class, and party affiliation.
-  **Selection Method**
Political appointment, independent appointment, random draw, and retired judges are the main ways to select new members.
-  **Commissioner Qualifications**
Requirements ensure that commissioners are politically independent and knowledgeable about their jurisdictions communities.
-  **Commissioner Restrictions**
Restrictions during and post-service protect the image of the commission as nonpartisan and prevent members from using the position for personal gain.
-  **Administration**
Ordinances may include administrative provisions for the smooth functioning of the commission, including its budget, staffing, and map adoption deadlines.
-  **Public Engagement**
Public comments, outreach, hearings, and notices allow for a more transparent relationship with the community.

 ***Information from www.localredistricting.org**

Community Study Sessions:

CA Common Cause holds study sessions for all interested persons to educate them on comprehensive considerations for creating a redistricting commission. Here is a video presentation explaining the key concepts of how to create a fair and transparent redistricting process for residents of Sunnyvale and the League of Women Voters: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7hcuQHgvsHE&feature=youtu.be>



Special Presentation on Redistricting

Jonathan Mehta Stein
Executive Director of California Common Cause

- A civil rights attorney and long-time democracy reform advocate,
- Jonathan became the Executive Director of California Common Cause on May 1, 2020,
- Previously he was head of the Voting Rights & Census Program at Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Asian Law Caucus,
- Jonathan worked as a voting rights staff attorney for the ACLU of California,
- He received his MPP and JD from UC Berkeley, where he also served as the Student Regent on the University of California’s Board of Regents, and
- Prior to graduate school, Jonathan spent four years at Mother Jones magazine.

Below is a sample agenda for a redistricting study session. Terms in red represent our recommendation for best practices.

Top Question: What choices do you need to make when building a redistricting commission?

This document is limited to first-order questions: What kind of commission should be used and how should that commission be composed? This document does not discuss critical questions about the line-drawing process, including “what criteria should be used when drawing districts” and “how many hearings should be held and how can we ensure those hearings are as accessible as possible.” Those topics deserve discussion (though state law does provide baselines/guidance following the passage of AB 849), but likely necessitate a separate conversation.

1. What kind of commission should your city use? Each type is used in several cities around the state. Options:

- **Independent**
 - Commission is appointed by trusted third-party entity. This is required of general law cities. Charter cities can choose their own selection process. (see question 2 below for more information)
 - Commission draws maps and has sole power to select final map
- **Advisory**
 - Commission is appointed by incumbent lawmakers. This is usually how it is done, but is not a legal requirement. The city council can decide how commissioners are appointed.
 - Commission draws maps but incumbent lawmakers have power to modify or disregard, and to select final map
- **Hybrid**
 - Commission typically appointed by trusted third-party entity
 - Commission draws maps; commission and incumbent lawmakers work in combination in some way to select final maps

2. If an independent commission is used, who should appoint commissioners?

Options:

- **Independent Evaluation and Appointment**
 - After an open application process, a selection body that is independent of city council appoints the commissioners. In Escondido, a panel of retired judges reviews applications and appoints commissioners. In San Francisco, the city’s Elections Commission appoints a subset of the commissioners.

- **Independent Evaluation, Random Draw, & Commission Appointment**
 - After an open application process, an independent selection body removes ineligible applicants, evaluates applicants, and creates a subpool of the most qualified candidates. A subset of commissioners are selected at random from that subpool. Those commissioners then select the final commissioners from the remaining applicants in the subpool.
 - Example: In Los Angeles County, the elections office narrows the applicant pool to 60. In Sacramento, the Ethics Commission narrows the pool to 25-30.
- **Pure Random Draw**
 - No evaluation process is used. Applicants put themselves forward and those failing conflict of interest criteria are removed. Commissioners are then selected at random from the remaining pool of applicants. This approach is the purest experiment in citizen democracy and is currently only used by Roseville and Berkeley.
- **Retired Judges**
 - The commission is constituted entirely of retired judges from the county who are selected by random draw. Unlike the other commissions, above, this model prioritizes the impartiality and technical skill of judges over creating a more representative citizen body. The City of Santa Barbara uses this approach.

3. How large should the commission be?

- Commissions vary in size. Settling on the right number of commissioners is a balancing act. Larger commissions may be more geographically and ethnically diverse and have a better collective knowledge of a jurisdiction's different neighborhoods and communities. Smaller commissions may be easier to administer and allow for more in-depth deliberation. Some examples include:
 - San Diego County: 14
 - Escondido and Chula Vista: 7
 - Modesto and San Francisco: 9
 - Berkeley and Oakland: 13
 - Los Angeles County and the State of California: 14

4. What kinds of diversity should be prioritized in the selection process?

- Some commissions require or encourage different types of diversity on the commission, especially geographic and ethnic diversity. For example, Oakland requires at least one commissioner to reside in each of its existing districts. Sacramento requires city staff to reach out to diverse communities when recruiting commissioners and to consider ethnicity and gender in selecting commissioners. Commission diversity can promote public trust in the redistricting process and help ensure a broader base of knowledge of the different communities in a jurisdiction.

- **Commission ordinances can require or encourage diversity of:**
 - Geography (e.g. at least one commissioner from each existing district)
 - Race/Ethnicity
 - Gender
 - Sexual Orientation
 - Economic/Social Class
- Note that the law around affirmative action does not permit the use of strict formulas or ratios. For example, the law governing the CA Citizens Redistricting Commission states that the selection process shall “ensure the commission reflects this state’s diversity, including, but not limited to, racial, ethnic, geographic, and gender diversity. However, it is not intended that formulas or specific ratios be applied for this purpose.” Cal. Gov. Code Section 8252.

5. Should political party affiliation/balance be considered in the composition of the commission? If so, how? Options:

- **Political party affiliation not considered (for cities)**
 - Party registration is not requested from applicants and not considered in the application process. This approach is used in all city-level redistricting commissions in California.
- **Balance of political party affiliations**
 - E.g. the CA Citizens Redistricting Commission, which requires 5 Democrats, 5 Republicans, and 4 No Party Preference or third party members.
- **Political party affiliation tracks Sunnyvale voter registration overall**
 - E.g. A city with 50% Democrats, 30% Republicans, and 20% NPP/third party would use a commission in which commissioner party registrations roughly track those percentages.
 - This approach is used in several county-level redistricting commissions.
- **Prohibition on all commissioners being of the same party.**
 - This is required under state law for independent commissions created by general law cities or counties.

6. What qualifications should the application prioritize and should the evaluation body be selecting for?

- **Commissions can ask applicants to demonstrate their qualifications on different metrics/topics.**
- Examples from other cities: Chula Vista looks for applicants who show that they have relevant analytical skills, are impartial and civically active. Los Angeles County looks for applicants who show that they have relevant analytical skills, are impartial, and have an appreciation for LA County’s diversity. Sacramento looks for applicants who show that they have relevant analytical skills, are impartial, are collegial, and have knowledge of Sacramento’s neighborhoods and communities.

- The CA Citizens Redistricting Commission requires that the selection process be completed “on the basis of relevant analytical skills, ability to be impartial, and appreciation for California’s diverse demographics” (According to Cal. Gov. Code Section 8252).

7. What criteria should be mandatory in order for an applicant to be eligible?

- **Commissions can treat different basic qualifications as mandatory to be eligible to serve.**
- E.g. Oakland requires only that an applicant be a resident of the city for the past three years. Stockton and San Diego require an applicant to be a registered voter in the city. Los Angeles County requires applicants to have been registered to vote in the county for the last 5 years without any change in political party affiliation.
- The CA Citizens Redistricting Commission (Art. XXI, Sec. 2(c)(3)) requires:
 - “Each commission member shall be a voter who has been continuously registered in California with the same political party or unaffiliated with a political party and who has not changed political party affiliation for five or more years immediately preceding the date of his or her appointment.”
 - “Each commission member shall have voted in two of the last three statewide general elections immediately preceding his or her application.”
- *Limiting the applicant pool to voters makes noncitizen members of the community ineligible to serve.*

8. What conflict of interest criteria should disqualify an applicant?

- **In order to prevent conflicts of interest and to ensure the commission is acting only in the public’s best interest, commissions can treat different past roles, actions, and relationships as disqualifying.**
- Sacramento disqualifies an applicant if in the past 10 years the applicant or any member of their family was a city elected official, staff, or consultant to an elected official, a city candidate, or staff or consultant to a city candidate. Sacramento also disqualifies an applicant if in the past four years the applicant or any member of their family was a city employee or lobbyist.
- Other cities take a lighter approach, for fear of disqualifying too many people and making the applicant pool too small. Berkeley does not permit a commissioner who was a city elected official, a candidate, or an elected official or candidate’s staff member within the last two years and does not permit a commissioner who is, at the time of application, a family member of an elected official, a city employee, or city contractor. Los Angeles simply disqualifies current elected officials and current employees. There are some cities that have no disqualifying criteria at all.
- Under SB 1108 and SB 1018, commissioners for general law city or county independent commissions must meet stringent criteria for impartiality.

- The CA Citizens Redistricting Commission takes a strict approach. It disqualifies anyone who has met any of the following criteria in the 10 years prior to applying:
 - Been appointed/elected to or have been a candidate for federal/state office.
 - Served as an officer or employee of a political party or campaign committee.
 - Served as staff or consultant to an incumbent elected official.
 - Are a family member of an incumbent elected official.
 - Served as an elected/appointed member of a party central committee.
 - Been a registered federal, state, or local lobbyist.
 - Served as paid congressional, legislative, or State Board of Equalization staff.
 - Contributed two thousand dollars (\$2,000) or more to any political candidate.

9. What positions should commissioners be barred from during/after their service?

- Commissions can restrict the activities of commissioners during and after their service. These restrictions are designed to protect the image of the commission as a nonpartisan body and to prevent commissioners from using their position to advance their personal financial or political interests.
 - During-service restrictions: In Sacramento, commissioners may not contribute to or volunteer for a campaign for city office while serving on the commission.
 - Post-service restrictions: In Berkeley, commissioners cannot serve on another city commission or be hired as staff for a city elected official for two years, and cannot run for city office in the next election. In Oakland, commissioners may not run for office for 10 years and cannot be hired by an elected official, register as a lobbyist, or receive a non-competitively bid contract for 4 years.

Passing your ordinance, resolution, or ballot measure

There are three legal processes to establish a local redistricting commission. Your city council or county board of supervisors can pass an ordinance/resolution or it can be established by a local ballot measure.

When establishing your commission via an ordinance, you need to investigate the positions that your elected officials hold regarding redistricting commissions. CA Common Cause recommends reviewing the ordinance generator at www.localredistricting.org/generator. To succeed in passing your ordinance, you will need to lobby council members to gain their support for a redistricting commission; organize local residents; plan testimony at public meetings; create persuasive letters/emails addressed to your local government and public; achieve media coverage; and ensure that residents voices are heard on their preferences for the commission’s considerations and duties.

Promoting/advertising the commission application process

Once the redistricting commission is established the city will announce it on their website and create materials to promote it.

Here is Berkeley's website: <https://www.cityofberkeley.info/redistricting/>



Below is one of the advertisements CA Common Cause created to help promote Roseville's independent redistricting commission:



Organize your community to comment on the need for diverse residents to be selected for the commission

Here is a sample email that CA Common Cause sent out to help promote Berkeley's independent redistricting commission:

Berkeley

Application Deadline: October 9, 2020

Website: <https://www.cityofberkeley.info/redistricting/>

Subject: Shape Berkeley's Future as a Redistricting Commissioner

Friend,

We're writing to share a once-in-a-decade opportunity: Berkeley is seeking residents to serve on its very first independent redistricting commission! Will you serve on the commission or nominate a friend to ensure fair representation in Berkeley?

Berkeley is one of a handful of cities in California where residents, not politicians, will have the power to draw its City Council district boundary lines. The Berkeley Independent Redistricting Commission gives power back to the people and allows for a transparent redistricting process that incorporates public feedback into the district maps. The City Council district maps that are drawn in this process will last for the next decade -- and will determine how well Berkeley's communities are represented in local government.

As a Berkeley resident, YOU can shape the redistricting process by serving as a commissioner. You don't need to be a redistricting expert to apply. We are looking for community members who are impartial, representative of the city's diversity, and committed to creating fair maps for Berkeley's communities. As a commissioner, you hold public hearings to hear public feedback and direct the redistricting process. You will also be provided training and tools to prepare you for the role.

How you can help ensure the Berkeley redistricting process is a success:

1. Submit an application to serve on the Berkeley Independent Redistricting Commission before October 9!
2. Forward this email to 5 friends who you think are fair, reflective of Berkeley's diversity, and committed to fair maps, encouraging them to apply to serve.

The future of our communities and how well they are represented by the City Council relies on a successful redistricting process. One of the most critical steps is ensuring the Commission has qualified members that are reflective of Berkeley's diversity. With your help, we can ensure that the commission has fair-minded and diverse community members. We hope you consider applying and ask your friends to consider applying as well.



Redistricting: Key Terms

Census

- The counting and survey of every person in a population. In the U.S., a census is taken every ten years. The census is required by the Constitution for reapportionment and is used in the redistricting process.

Census Bureau

- The federal government agency that administers the census.

Citizen Voting Age Population (CVAP)

- Citizen Voting Age Population (CVAP) is the total population age 18 and over and a citizen. (Related to VAP)

Coalition District

- A district where the combined racial minorities make up a majority of the population and where the voters from these different racial groups vote together to elect the minority-preferred candidate. Coalition districts are not legally required by the Voting Rights Act. (Also called Minority Coalition District)

Community of Interest

- A neighborhood, community, or group of people who have common policy concerns and would benefit from being maintained in a single district.

Compactness

- Compactness refers to the shape of the district. It describes boundaries that are drawn closely and neatly packed together unless there are good reasons such as VRA compliance or following oddly shaped boundaries, like city boundaries or rivers.

Contiguity

- A characteristic describing a boundary's single and uninterrupted shape (i.e. all areas in the district are physically connected to each other).

Cracking

- A splitting of a racial minority community into two or more districts so that the minority community is not a significant portion of any district. For example, cracking occurs when a minority population is big enough that it can make up 50% of one district but, instead, is divided into two or more districts so that the minority community makes up a small percentage in each district.

Crossover or Opportunity District

- A district where some majority voters “cross over” to vote with racial minorities to elect the minority-preferred candidate. Crossover or opportunity districts are not legally required by the Voting Rights Act.

Deviation and Deviation Range

- A district’s Deviation is the difference of a district’s population from the Ideal Population. The redistricting plan’s Deviation Range is the plan’s largest deviation to the plan’s smallest deviation.

Ideal Population

- The total population goal for districts in a redistricting plan. It is computed by taking the total population of the jurisdiction and dividing it by the total number of districts in the redistricting plan.

Incumbency (Criteria)

- Making sure the current elected official’s house remains in a district.

Influence District

- A district where a racial or ethnic minority group does not make up a majority of voters but does have enough members of the minority group to influence substantially an election or the decisions of an elected representative.

Gerrymandering

- Drawing of district lines to give one group an unfair advantage over another group. Gerrymandering is not the same as redistricting, but gerrymandering can occur during redistricting. Drawing majority-minority districts to comply with the Voting Rights Act is not gerrymandering.

GIS (Geographic Information System)

- Computer software used to create redistricting maps.

Majority-Minority District

- A district where one racial minority equals 50% or more of the citizen voting-age population. In combination with a few other factors, a majority-minority district may be required by the VRA. ([See Rules of Redistricting: The Voting Rights Act](#))

Minority vote dilution

- Drawing districts which result in minority voters having less of a chance of electing their candidate(s) of choice. This is often done by “[packing](#)” or “[cracking](#).”

Nesting

- A redistricting rule where each upper house (such as the state senate) district is made up of two lower house districts (such as the state assembly).

One Person, One Vote

- The Equal Population rule. A phrase that describes the constitutional requirement that each district be substantially equal in total population. Typically, this means that every district in a redistricting plan should contain the same number of people, regardless of age or citizenship.

Packing

- An overconcentration of a minority population into a suboptimal number of districts. For example, packing occurs when a minority population makes up 90% of the district instead of two districts where the minority population makes up 50% of each district.

Reapportionment

- The redistribution of seats in the U.S. House of Representatives based on changes in a state’s population. This occurs so that a state’s representation in Congress is proportional to its population. Reapportionment is not redistricting, although some states use the terms interchangeably.

Redistricting

- The process used by governments to redraw political district boundaries and applies to all levels of government where district elections are held. Maps are redrawn every ten years after the Census to create districts with substantially equal populations to, at minimum, account for population shifts. There are many types of Redistricting Processes (see Strategies for Different Redistricting Processes)

Unity Map

- A proposed map drawn by a coalition of multiple community groups that demonstrates their multiple communities of interest can be simultaneously respected.

Voting Age Population (VAP)

- The total population ages 18 and over. (Related to CVAP)

Voting Rights Act (VRA)

- The federal legislation passed in 1965 to ensure state and local governments do not pass laws or policies that deny American citizens the equal right to vote based on race. Section 2 of the VRA protects voters from discrimination based on race, color, or membership in a language minority group in all election procedures.

Resources

[Toolkit on Redistricting in CA at Local Level](#)

[Info about all Commissions in Cali](#)

[Image for Our Work to Establish Fair Redistricting](#)

[Image for Representative Democracy](#)

[Image for Why Districting and Redistricting Matter to You](#)

[Image for Our Constitution Requires a Census](#)

[Image for Practices: Introduction](#)

[Image for Why Districting and Redistricting Matter to You](#)

[CA Congressional Districts](#)

[CA Counties Map](#)

[Quote about the Census \(Article 1 Sec. 2\)](#)

[Image of CRC selection for prop 11](#)