



ALEX PADILLA
CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE

January 27, 2021

Sacramento Independent Redistricting Commission
915 I Street
New City Hall
Sacramento, California 95814

Long Beach Independent Redistricting Commission
411 W. Ocean Blvd.
Long Beach, CA 90802

Los Angeles Independent Redistricting Commission
12400 Imperial Highway
Norwalk, CA 90650

San Francisco Redistricting Taskforce
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, CA 94102

San Diego County Independent Redistricting Commission
1600 Pacific Highway
Fourth Floor, Room 402
San Diego, California 92101

Dear City Clerks and County officials overseeing redistricting,

I respectfully urge the LGBTQ community be identified as a community of interest in the redistricting process. In 2011, California made steps in the right direction when the LGBTQ community was identified as a community of interest. For the first time, in 2021 same-sex marriage data will be available to better design and draw districts that are centered around the LGBTQ population.

According to a 2016 report by The Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law, LGBT women tend to face bigger socioeconomic obstacles like poverty and income, compared to their male counterparts. As we undergo the current recession amid the pandemic, we must ensure the LGBTQ community has the political representation it deserves.

The Fair Maps Act requires the protection of communities of interest. I would advocate for the recognition of the LGBTQ populations as "a population that shares common social or economic interests" and recognize that these populations have faced discrimination in employment, health, education and the workplace, have been subject to state and local policymaking that has infringed upon their rights, and, as a result, they necessitate additional protections from vote dilution that could occur in the redistricting process.

Further, within the Act's requirements, I would recommend that Commissions work with LGBTQ centers, organizations and local leadership in order to fulfil their charge to outreach "through good government, civil rights, civic engagement, or community groups or organizations" as you inform the public about redistricting in your community.

Finally, I advocate that Commissioners work with available datasets to identify same-sex heads of households in the US Census, and, where available, utilize data that is made available from organizations or members of the public as to the areas of greatest LGBTQ concentrated community of interest, and how to protect these communities through the redistricting process. A request to recognize the LGBTQ community as a community of interest has also been sent to the director of the United States Census.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James Schwab', with a stylized, flowing script.

James Schwab
Acting Secretary of State