

Date: June 29, 2021

To: Long Beach Independent Redistricting Commission (LBIRC)

From: Sean McMorris, Policy and Organizing Consultant

Re: June 23, 2021, LBIRC Meeting and discussion about clarity regarding the Commission's use of existing district cores as a starting point for the line-drawing process

Honorable Members of the Long Beach Independent Redistricting Commission,

I am writing on behalf of California Common Cause, a co-author of Measure DDD. I would first like to thank all of you for your commitment to the Commission and the seriousness you have displayed as stewards of a fair citizen-led redistricting process in Long Beach. As commissioners you have asked hard questions and inquired often about past injustices inflicted on certain communities through the redistricting process. You have also displayed compassion for residents and a desire to draw district lines that are fair and that prevent community disenfranchisement. Thank you for your diligent efforts.

We are aware that you have received California Common Cause's memo outlining our concerns with the [Long Beach City Attorney's Office and Olsen & Remcho's joint-memo](#) that promotes the use of current district cores as a starting point for your redistricting work. As you know, California Common Cause and Equity for Cambodians reject the City Attorney's and Olsen & Remcho's interpretation of charter language pertaining to the use of district cores. This matter was again discussed in light of California Common Cause's and Equity for Cambodians' memos at the [June 23, 2021, Long Beach Independent Redistricting Commission \(LBIRC\) meeting](#). A viewing of that meeting appears to show that a majority of the Commission has rejected the idea of using current district cores as a starting point for the drawing of new district lines. At that meeting, City staff also argued that the Commission's April 21, 2021 no consensus vote concerning "criteria in addition to the City Charter requirements" in [Item 2 of the meeting Agenda](#) means that [City Hall's eleventh proposed criteria](#) to preserve the cores of existing districts would no longer be operative. As a result, the Commission is currently only beholden to criteria in the City Charter. Despite the appearance of a degree of resolution on this matter, California Common Cause still has concerns that can only be alleviated by certain actions by the City Attorney's Office or the Commission, which could include:

1. The City Attorney's Office rescinding its April 15, 2021 joint-memo with Olsen & Remcho,
2. The City Attorney's Office revising its memo to adequately address the arguments made by the framers of Measure DDD concerning the original intent of the mapping criteria,

3. Further action by the Commission in the form of a formal rejection via Commission vote of the joint City-Olsen & Remcho memo and its legal interpretation of Measure DDD as it pertains to district cores, and/or
4. An agendized revisiting of the matter by the Commission in an open meeting to affirm by Commission vote that the Commission will not use existing district cores as a starting point for the creation of new districts.

Such action is important not only for clarity for this Commission and City residents, but for future Commissions, in Long Beach and elsewhere, to prevent undue — city-hall-sanctioned — political intervention that undermines the integrity of independent redistricting commissions.

Short of City Hall action in the form of rescinding or a thorough revising of its joint-memo, we request that the Commission take action to prevent lingering concern about the potentially harmful implications of the City's memo upon this and future independent redistricting commissions.

If the Commission has any questions about our June 16, 2021, memo or about California Common Cause's intent in co-drafting Measure DDD, please do not hesitate to reach out to us [lacc@commoncause.org or dvicuna@commoncause.org]. Thank you for your consideration and your commitment to a fair and independent redistricting process.

Sincerely,
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