

California State Senate

ALEX PADILLA
SENATOR, 20TH DISTRICT



September 22, 2011

Members of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors
383 Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Board Members:

I write to express my concerns regarding any Los Angeles County redistricting proposal that fails to acknowledge the tremendous demographic changes that have taken place over the past decade.

The United States Census indicates that the Latino population in Los Angeles County increased by 445,676 between 2000 and 2010. Over the past decade Latinos accounted for 65% of the growth in the County.

If our goal is to ensure equal opportunity and representative government, it is counterintuitive to pretend that these changes have not occurred. Strained arguments to justify district lines that maintain an underrepresentation of one community in order to perpetuate the overrepresentation of another is neither democratic, nor equitable.

County politics and policies should not pivot on race or partisanship. Only by reaching out and opening doors can we hope to enjoy a democracy that is both healthy and sustainable. In an equitable, representative democracy we should not fear change that reflects the growing electorate, we should embrace it.

History has never judged kindly those who have sought to defer equity. And, in this nation the courts can and likely would reject maps that failed to recognize the population changes that have occurred. I encourage board members to see beyond their own political interests and look to the greater interests of inclusion, empowerment and consensus.



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For example, while I don't subscribe to the assertion that only a Latino/a can represent the Latino community, I do believe that the Latino community should be empowered to make that choice for itself. Thwarting that empowerment is contrary to the spirit of the voting rights act and the letter of the law.

It is my sincere hope that the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors will approve a redistricting map that acknowledges the very real changes and growth within the county and clearly demonstrates the county's commitment to equal opportunity and representation now and in the future.

Sincerely,



ALEX PADILLA

California State Senator, 20th District