From:	Dorry Elias-Garcia
To:	zzRedistricting Commission Voicemail
Subject:	Support the creation of Majority Minority Districts based on the Unity Maps
Date:	Tuesday, October 11, 2011 11:30:55 AM

Dear Redistricting Commissioners,

I am writing on behalf of the Minority Executive Directors Coalition (MEDC) comprised of 135 community leaders of color who are enthusiastically supportive of a majority minority Congressional and Legislative District in Washington State. We extend our heartfelt thanks to you for your work thus far on the redistricting maps and as this pocess moves toward a final vote, we strongly urge you to support the important redisdistcting proiorities for communities of color including immigrants, in Washington State.

The decisions you and your fellow commissioners make now will dramatically impact the political process in Washington State As the Washington Redistricting Commision, you have the collective power to change the course of Washington State's history. Before making your final decision, we ask that you consider the potential consequences of your actions. For example, will your decision serve to further isolate and exclude people of color and immigrants from the political process? Will your decision serve to increase racial disparities in public policies, resource distribution; k-12 education? If you make a decision to maintain the status quo can you accept the fact that you are making a decision to ignore the dreams and desires of an entire community and further perpetuate and promote institutional racism?

Once again, on behalf of MEDC, I urge you to draw final maps that will encourage and allow full participation of communities of color in Washington, including the following:

Congressional Districts

· MEDC support the “Majority Minority” district in South King County, as drawn by Commissioner Huff. Many Unity Map supporters advocated for this exact district and it was truly gratifying and empowering to see this very map, the “Unity Map,” included in the draft plans. We believe this district—with no incumbent—presents the best opportunity for strong representation of immigrant communities and communities of color in Congress. We appreciate that Commissioner Huff listened to our communities.

· MEDC members ask that you continue to keep Yakima and the Tri-cities in the same Congressional District. All four maps have Yakima and Tri-cities in the same Congressional District.

State Legislative Districts

· MEDC support the creation of “Majority Minority” state legislative districts. As a result, I urge you to create three majority people of color state legislative districts in King County, Tacoma and at least one majority people of color (by minority voting age citizens) state legislative district completely contained in Yakima County.

· MEDC asks that you create a state legislative district in Yakima County where a majority of citizens of voting age are people of color. However, I believe the true measure of fair representation for this district is the percentage of voting age minority citizens.

· MEDC supports a unified Pasco. All of the commissioners said during the release of the maps that keeping cities together is a priority. However, two of the four maps cut Pasco—with its large Latino and immigrant population—into two different districts. Cutting Pasco in half will only dilute the power of the large Latino and immigrants populations in the city.

As Commissioner Huff mentioned in his release of the maps, it is important for commissioners to listen

to the “will of the people.” We are excited to a greater representation of immigrant communities and communities of color in our area and across Washington State. Again, MEDC thanks you for your work. We will hold onto the hope that you will make a decision that will lead to "fair representation:".

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