From: John Kersting
To: zzRedistricting Commission Voicemail
Subject: We Need Fair Representation
Date: Friday, October 07, 2011 9:44:26 AM

Dear Redistricting Commissioners,

I appreciate the thought and effort needed to weigh the benefits and drawbacks to redistricting our state. With the economic, educational and political upheaval of today, we desperately need to do things differently, whatever your political beliefs. Giving gays rights did not end the world as we know it, for example. I urge you to support important redistricting priorities for immigrant communities and communities of color in Washington State.

The decisions you make will have a dramatic impact on the political process in our state and have the ability to help or harm our communities. This process isn't just about lines on a map, but about peoples' lives, their futures. Our communities face common challenges and disparities in education, health and income.

For this reason, I urge you to draw final maps that will encourage and allow full participation of immigrant communities and communities of color in Washington, including the following:

- I support a “Majority Minority” district in South King County, as drawn by Commissioner Huff.

- I support 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 into two different districts. This will only dilute the power of the large Latino and immigrants populations in the city.

- I support creating a state legislative district in Yakima County where a majority of citizens of voting age are people of color. Of the map drafts that have been released so far, I support the efforts of Commissioners Gorton and Ceis, who both created majority Latino legislative districts. However, the true measure of fair representation for this district is the percentage people of color by citizens of voting age.

As Commissioner Huff mentioned in his release of the maps, it is important for commissioners to listen to the “will of the people.” Thank you, again, for your work and I urge you to continue to provide us with the hope of fair representation.

Sincerely,

John Kersting
2404 Olympia Ave NE
2404 Olympia Ave NE
Olympia, WA 98506