

RESOLUTION NO. _____

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PASADENA APPROVING
AND ENDORSING THE CALIFORNIA VOTERS FIRST ACT WHICH PROPOSES TO
ENACT AMENDMENTS INTO THE CONSTITUTION AND RELEVANT STATE LAW

WHEREAS, the current redistricting process creates a conflict of interest, as state legislators are effectively choosing their own constituents; and

WHEREAS, the redistricting process should be conducted in an open manner with real opportunities for public dialogue and feedback, not behind closed doors; and

WHEREAS, public input and involvement in the redistricting process will empower our communities from the start by allowing communities to elect representatives who represent their interests on issues that are important to their lives; and

WHEREAS, the boundaries of state districts are currently drawn by legislative incumbents, often sacrificing the integrity of neighborhoods and cities; and

WHEREAS, important principles such as the protections of the federal Voting Rights Act of 1965 and respect for neighborhoods and cities should be clearly listed for a Commission to abide by;

WHEREAS, voters are more likely to participate when they feel that their vote will count and that they have a reasonable chance of electing candidates who represent their interests; and

WHEREAS, elected officials are more responsive to constituents when voters have a choice of candidates, thus increasing accountability and serving the best interests of the voters of California; and

NOW, THEREFORE IT IS RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Pasadena hereby endorses the California Voters FIRST Act, which proposes to enact the following amendments into the Constitution and relevant state law:

1. The State of California should establish an independent commission, representative of California's diversity, partisan balance, and geography, for all future redistricting. This Commission will draw the lines of the state Senate, Assembly and Board of Equalization districts.

2. This Commission should be comprised of 14 members, with a balance of 5 members of the largest party, 5 from the second largest party, and 4 who are registered with neither. The vote to pass any plan should require a majority from each of these three.
3. District boundaries should be drawn by the Commission according to clearly described criteria, including respect for:
 - a. The U.S. Constitution's requirement of one person, one vote;
 - b. The Voting Rights Act (VRA);
 - c. Contiguity requirements (to draw districts as one connected area where possible);
 - d. Communities of interest, city and county boundaries;
 - e. Compactness, where this does not conflict with the above criteria;
 - f. Nesting, where this does not conflict with the above criteria.
4. The Commission should not draw maps based on the addresses of any individual, including an incumbent officeholder.
5. The Commission should conduct a transparent redistricting process with full opportunities for public participation. All redistricting plan information should be available in a timely fashion, free of charge, via a public website and other means.
6. Members of the Commission must be prohibited from all off-the-record communications with anyone (including lobbyists, political party officials, elected officeholders and candidates), except staff and legal counsel.
7. Redistricting should occur once every 10 years following the decennial U.S. Census and Congressional Reapportionment.

Adopted at the regular meeting of the City Council on the _____ day of _____, 2008, by the following vote:

AYES:


NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

Jane Rodriguez, CMC
City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:


Michele Beal Bagneris
City Attorney