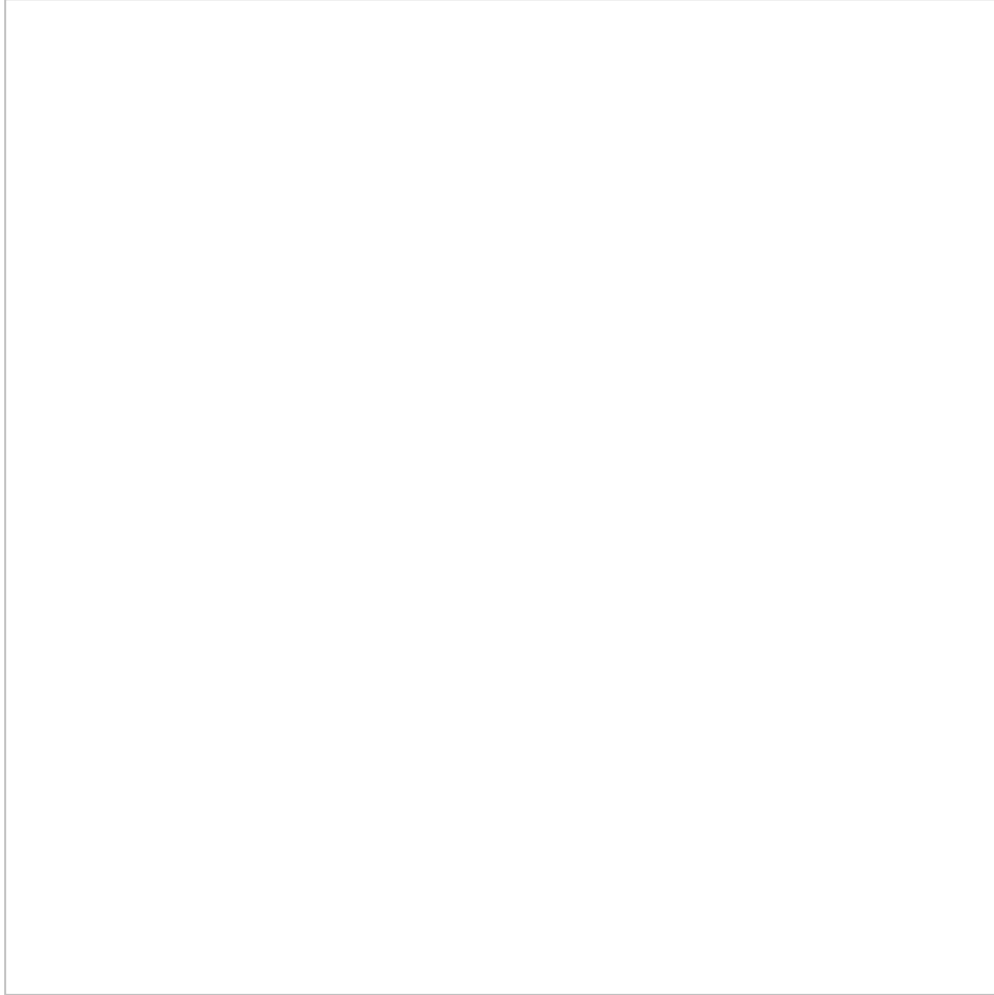


From: [NAACP Santa Rosa – Sonoma Branch](#)
To: [Linda Howard](#)
Subject: NAACP Redistricting Map Concerns
Date: Monday, November 15, 2021 9:30:18 PM

EXTERNAL

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November 15, 2021

Dear Board of Supervisors,

We are writing to voice our concern and disappointment regarding the handling of the map presented by the Sonoma County Advisory Redistricting Commission. After close observation and review of the last board meeting, it has been made abundantly clear that your Board is entertaining the pressures of historically privileged local communities versus upholding the close attention to detail of the law, equity principles and time the ARC dedicated to work with NDC to generate the map they submitted.

It is vital for this branch to continue to advocate for our voiceless and powerless community members. Redistricting is an issue of vital importance to all voters and requires a strong commitment to transparency and integrity. Historically, redistricting has been an effective tool to disenfranchise Black, Indigenous, Latino/Hispanic and other communities of color and concentrate power in existing, white controlled political systems that are upheld by Sonoma County large industries and business interests.

Those affiliated with these systems have the access and capacity to ensure you hear their concerns, while communities of color do not enjoy the same access. Many of these eleventh hour objections are rooted in keeping things the same way. Few, if any, take into consideration the changing demographics of this county and their recommendations/requests certainly do not center equity. Your board claimed, at the initiation of this process, that equity was a pivotal area of focus, however based on the remarks by some members of the Board, it would appear that personal interests have supplanted equity as the main pillar. Not the least of which was the use of the word "Gerrymandering" in reference to the ARC's map which was designed to meet the equity principles of the county.

The electorate demonstrated the desire for representation, equity and diversity over the last election cycle. The ARC demonstrated a commitment to equity by establishing principles to guide their work, gathering community leaders, across several generations, to share their stories, and partnered with Hernandez Consulting on outreach events and meetings held in every district and studied the 2019 Fair Maps Act criteria.

After watching this process unfold and hearing from so many in the community, we conclude that equity cannot be deferred for another decade in the Sonoma County redistricting process.

Every member of the ARC viewed restoring the historically marginalized and

underrepresented communities of Roseland and Moorland by moving them to a district connected to the central Santa Rosa region as key to fair representation and undiluted voting power.

Only one map, NCD D 511692, restores Roseland and Moorland to their proper placement. This map creates districts that provide equitably balanced representation for incorporated and unincorporated communities alike. While some claim that "it ain't broke, don't fix it" are located in regions that have never had a history of being broken; it comes as no surprise to us that they lack the understanding of what it means to be underserved. Simply put, by rejecting this map at the request of the fortunate communities, the Board is sending a loud message to underserved communities: you are broke, but we won't fix it.

While we appreciate the rise of concern from communities and cities, it is important to circle back to the Racial Equity Toolkit you all adopted in November 2020 and the Equity Principles established by the ARC. Plus, the 2019 Fair Maps Act criteria specifically outlines the key priorities to be followed. With all of these tools at hand and the hard work of the ARC, you all have the task to manage and lead the outcome that embodies the framework for which you set forward.

Signed,

NAACP Santa Rosa - Sonoma County Branch

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NAACP Santa Rosa-Sonoma County Unit #1074B

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