



September 6, 2022

VIA Email to the Office of the Governor and Author

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor of the State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 2494 (Salas) – County of Kern Citizens Redistricting Commission – REQUEST FOR GOVERNOR'S SIGNATURE

Dear Governor Newsom:

The League of Women Voters of California writes to request your signature on AB 2494 (Salas), which would establish a Citizens Redistricting Commission in Kern County, charged with redrawing the boundary lines of the districts of the Board of Supervisors. AB 2494 creates criteria for redrawing districts and a process for adopting the redistricting plan. The League supported similar past legislation for Los Angeles and San Diego counties, and current legislation for Fresno and Riverside counties, and believes that all counties would benefit from the independent process designed to protect voting rights, promote fair representation, and draw fair maps.

The League of Women Voters of California supports a state redistricting process and standards that promote fair and effective representation with maximum opportunity for public scrutiny. We believe responsibility for redistricting should be vested in an independent commission with diverse membership that is representative of the public at large and protective of minority group interests.

The League was a proponent of Proposition 11 (the Voters FIRST Act) creating the state Citizens Redistricting Commission, which is nationally praised as a model for redistricting reform, and we continue to monitor the redistricting process in jurisdictions throughout the state.

AB 2494 follows Proposition 11 in many of its criteria and processes. The selection process excludes people from serving on the commission who are likely to have a conflict of interest, and it is independent of incumbents. Criteria for drawing district boundaries include compliance with the U.S. Constitution, equal population, and compliance with the federal Voting Rights Act, contiguity, maintaining the geographic integrity of cities, neighborhoods, and communities of interest, and, to the extent practicable, compactness. Like Prop 11, the bill also includes post-service restrictions on commissioners' eligibility to run for office, hold appointive office, serve as staff in elective governmental agencies, or register as a lobbyist. Provisions regarding public accessibility to hearings are designed to ensure community participation in the redistricting process.

For these reasons, the League of Women Voters of California strongly supports AB 2494 (Salas) and requests your signature. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Carol Moon Goldberg
President