

CLAREMONT MCKENNA COLLEGE



The Rose Institute of State and Local Government

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Statement of Douglas Johnson, Rose Institute Fellow

Regarding the Senate Leadership's redistricting initiative proposal

The Senate Leadership's proposal does not reform California redistricting. Instead of creating an independent redistricting commission, it creates a legislator-controlled commission. There is nothing independent about it.

The Institute's research has found that there are **two keys to effective redistricting reform**: the selection of independent people for the Commission; and the inclusion of clear, effective criteria to guide the Commissioners. The Senate Leadership's version of SCA 3 contains neither.

The seven-member Commission is not independent:

- Four Commissioners are directly appointed by legislators
- One is appointed by the Judicial Council, undoubtedly dominated by the incumbent Senator and incumbent Assemblymember who serve on the Council
- One is appointed by the President of the UC System, who undoubtedly will remember who approves the state budget for higher education
- One by the Governor, who may or may not appoint a reform-oriented Commissioner

The criteria are not effective:

- The language on city and county integrity is the same as what is in the California Constitution today, and we have seen its ineffectiveness
- The current criteria have been ignored under the guise of population equality; and this proposal not only adds to the strictness of population rules but increases their pre-eminence – even to the detriment of Voting Rights Act compliance.
- The community of interest criterion is irrelevant – it is so subjugated by population equality as to be meaningless

This Senate Leadership bill creates a legislator-controlled commission and allows the Commissioners to draw whatever districts they are instructed to draw. It does not even take the basic step of a ban on consideration of incumbents' home addresses.

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The Rose Institute is an academic institution that has studied redistricting for more than thirty years and compares redistricting proposals against the principles that its research has proved to be the most effective for reform.

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