



Date: May 25, 2021  
RE: Public Comment – Opposition to Item #2  
Via email: [redistricting.lausd@lacity.org](mailto:redistricting.lausd@lacity.org)

Dear Honorable Commissioners,

Asian Americans Advancing Justice – LA writes to oppose Item #2, amending the Executive Director’s contract to include line drawing services for the LAUSD Redistricting Commission. Advancing Justice – LA is the nation’s largest legal and civil rights organization for Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders. Part of a national coalition, Advancing Justice – LA serves more than 15,000 individuals and organizations annually. Through direct services, impact litigation, and policy advocacy, Advancing Justice – LA focuses on the most vulnerable members of AANHPI communities while also building a strong voice for civil rights and social justice.

Last year, 30 local, state, and national organizations wrote to demand a fairer, more transparent, and independent process. One of the demands in that letter was to disqualify current and recent City Hall employees from serving on the Redistricting Commission’s staff.

Unlike the City Council Redistricting Commission, the LAUSD Commission has entirely disregarded common practice and hired a recent City Hall employee as its Executive Director. On top of this, the Commission intends to hire the very same conflicted person – who until recently worked as a senior aide to the former City Council President – to serve dual roles as both Executive Director and Line Drawer. Placing a recent employee (with almost two decades of experience in City Hall) in the role of Line Drawer easily allows for elected officials and staff to communicate with a key player while avoiding *ex parte* disclosure requirements. Thus far, the Executive Director has refused to publicly state who his other clients are, or whether any of them may present a conflict of interest.

Staff for the Commission should be screened for conflicts of interest before hiring – any ongoing or recent work on behalf of an incumbent City Councilmember, political party, or City-level political candidate should be disqualifying. Just as current/recent City officers and employees are prohibited from serving on the Redistricting Commission, they should also be prohibited from serving as Director or support staff.

Offering what amounts to a no bid contract to a longtime City Hall insider undermines the integrity of a transparent, independent process. We urge the Commission to reject Item #2 and issue an amended RFP for map drawing services.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
*Charles Evans*  
Supervising Attorney