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November 19, 2021

[rluna@oaklandca.gov](mailto:rluna@oaklandca.gov)

Richard J. Luna  
Deputy City Administer  
City of Oakland  
Redistricting Commission  
1 Frank H Ogawa Plaza  
Oakland, CA 94612

SENT VIA EMAIL ONLY

### **Updated Testimony from the North Hills Community Association (NHCA) to the Redistricting Commission Regarding Redistricting Map Proposals**

As we wrote a couple of weeks ago, the NHCA serves approximately 10,000 people living in Oakland's North Hills communities, in an area roughly contiguous with Oakland Police beat 13Y. (See the [NHCA map](#).) We formed in response to the devastating October 1991 Tunnel Fire to support homeowners seeking to rebuild in their interactions with insurers and City agencies. Today, the NHCA continues to work on wildfire prevention and advocacy with the City, but as the Neighborhood Council also focuses on broader issues of community engagement around public safety, beautification, and representation. We understand the importance of the redistricting effort and of making sure that as Oakland's residents are represented fairly and equally by elected members of the City Council and School Board. We support the new process that is transparent and welcomes public participation and we would like to thank the Commission and its staff and consultants for embracing the input you've received regarding the isolation of the hills area into a single district.

### **NHCA's Views Regarding Map Options Currently in Discussion:**

Initially, when there were four maps under consideration, we favored Map A, were less enthusiastic about Maps B and C, and were very disappointed with Map D. While we have some common issues across the hills, especially concerning wildfire hazards, we are more diverse in population (race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, where we come from and how long we've been here) than many people assume. Many of us have chosen to live in Oakland because of the vibrant community and most of our interactions are down the hill from our homes rather than in the hills where there are few jobs, stores and restaurants, community centers or cultural activities. By living in districts that span the hills and the flatlands, we are more engaged with our immediate neighbors than those across the ridge.

We appreciate the Commission's instructions to the consultants to create four additional maps and now that we've had time to look at them, we'd like to give our feedback again. The Commission's request for Map E explicitly said, "Does not include a 'hills-only' district." It still isolates many hills residents from the rest of Oakland, though not as completely as G and H. Map F, in contrast, puts hills residents into relatively more diverse districts.

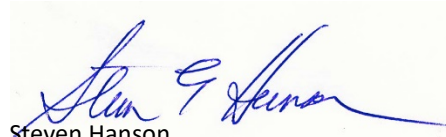
One of the traditional redistricting is compactness, the principle that people within a district should live as near to one another as possible. Looking at the new maps, G&H have one district, D4, stretching 10-12 miles, making it hard to get to a town hall during rush hour or Saturday office hours when there's limited public transportation during non-commute hours. E&F, on the other hand, make distance less of a barrier for fewer people to attend a candidate's forum or for officials to walk their districts.

At the most recent Commission meeting, the request was made for feedback about what we like in the new maps. We're pleased to see that each of the new maps puts our area in a district with a thriving commercial area, either Rockridge or Montclair. And as a Neighborhood Council for 13Y, we'll continue to be separate to some extent from either 13X or 13Z or both. We understand the need to change the districts and, like all residents, will have to adjust our advocacy strategies, but that's inevitable as population shifts occur.

**In Summary:**

We encourage you to continue to consider a map that will elect officials who bring people together in support of the entire Oakland community. Please don't segregate hills communities to be apart and separate from our flatland neighbors and consider our support for Map F, followed by Map E, with Maps G&H far behind.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Steven G. Hanson", is written over a light yellow rectangular background.

Steven Hanson  
Chair

cc: North Hills Community Association Board

