

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR OF MEASURE W1

Who do you trust to create a fair district map: an independent panel of citizens or a group of politicians whose careers could be greatly influenced by drawing boundaries?

In 1986 Berkeley voters approved district elections. Every ten years since then the City Council has been required to redraw district boundaries to reflect population changes. Each time the redistricting process has been mired in political conflict. On two separate occasions citizens initiated a referendum petition to stop the district map. In 2014, the contested district boundaries even went to the ballot. Neighborhoods and communities of interest have felt left out and incumbents have been protected. It's a conflict of interest when politicians draw lines, picking winners and losers. It's clear that the current system of politicians drawing their own electoral boundaries is deeply flawed.

Measure W1 will create an independent Citizens Redistricting Commission, completely free of political influence. In 2008, California voters took the power of redistricting away from the Legislature and created an independent citizens commission. Since that time the California Redistricting Commission has been a success story in drawing fair boundaries free of politics. This measure is modeled after the successful state process.

This Commission is designed to be geographically diverse, independent of the Council, and ensure that fair districts are drawn that truly reflect Berkeley's neighborhoods and communities. If passed, the Commission will convene after the 2020 Census, creating a process that will be inclusive and transparent. This will ultimately save taxpayer money and end years of political bickering.

Break the cycle and give power back to the people. Measure W1 will create fair districts and empower citizens to have a voice in our democracy. Independent redistricting is good government and saves taxpayer dollars. VOTE YES ON MEASURE W1

s/Tom Bates
Berkeley Mayor

s/Deborah Malbec
President, League of Women Voters - Berkeley, Albany, Emeryville

s/Mansour Id Deen
President - Berkeley NAACP

s/Andre Luu
ASUC External Affairs Vice President

s/Shirley Dean
Former Mayor, City of Berkeley