

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Alesandra Lozano

**Date Submitted:** 09/20/2022 04:02 PM

**Council File No:** 21-1472

**Comments for Public Posting:** September 21, 2022 TO: Honorable Council President Nury Martinez, Councilmember Mitch O’Farrell, Councilmember Joe Buscaino Transmitted via Office of the City Clerk Public Comment Form RE: Support for Motion to Place a Charter Amendment on the November 2024 Ballot to Create an Independent Redistricting Commission in the City of Los Angeles Dear City Council President Nury Martinez and Los Angeles City Council Members of the Rules, Elections, and Intergovernmental Relations Committee, California Common Cause is a nonpartisan, good-government organization dedicated to building a healthier and more inclusive California democracy at the state and local levels. We have played a key role in bringing fair redistricting to California communities by passing both statewide and local reforms to make redistricting more transparent, fair, independent, inclusive, and participatory. We write to express our strong and enthusiastic support for placing a charter amendment on the November 2024 ballot to create an independent redistricting commission (“IRC”) in the City of Los Angeles. On December 8, 2021, City Councilmembers Nithya Raman and Paul Krekorian introduced a motion, seconded by City Council President Nury Martinez, instructing the Chief Legislative Analyst (“CLA”) to submit a formal report to the City Council recommending options for a November 2022 ballot measure that would amend the City Charter and create an independent redistricting commission (“IRC”) for the City of Los Angeles. We are pleased to see that the City Council President, who also chairs the Council’s Rules Committee, has now placed this item on the Rules Committee’s agenda giving the full Council an opportunity to consider this item. On October 25, 2021, the Los Angeles Times Editorial Board ran a piece on how political meddling poisoned the redistricting process in Los Angeles City. This editorial noted: “it’s impossible for people to have faith in the process or trust the commission’s decisions...It’s time for Los Angeles to have a truly independent citizens redistricting commission.” Two days later on October 27, 2021, California Common Cause sent a lengthy letter to Los Angeles City public officials, including the City Council, outlining the specific ways in which the Advisory Redistricting Commission was exploited for political gain during the 2020-21 redistricting cycle. That letter was followed by a November 1,

2021 Los Angeles Times op-ed written by Fred Ali, the Chairman of the Los Angeles City Advisory Commission and a November 2, 2021 letter from twenty-five respected Los Angeles civic leaders also calling for an independent redistricting commission. The call to action from community leaders and Angelenos is clear. The City Council cannot wait any longer -- it must move now to rid the city of its broken redistricting process and replace it with a process and structure that residents of Los Angeles can trust. Using an IRC is one of the most concrete and effective steps a city can take to prioritize community voices and build public trust in local democracy. The best-functioning redistricting processes that California Common Cause monitored during the 2021 redistricting cycle, out of 60+ local jurisdictions, were run by independent commissions. These IRCs demonstrated consistent prioritization of community testimony over partisanship, ran redistricting processes that were transparent and participatory, and produced maps generally regarded as fair and representative of the constituents in their jurisdictions. Even when a jurisdiction is dominated by a single political party, such as in Los Angeles County, an IRC ensures that party infighting and personal agendas are averted in favor of honoring and prioritizing community testimony and substantively incorporating public input. We strongly encourage the City of Los Angeles to join the Counties of Los Angeles, San Diego, and Santa Barbara, the Cities of San Diego, Long Beach, Sacramento, Oakland, and many others, as well as the State of California, in establishing an independent redistricting commission by placing a charter amendment on the November 2024 ballot. Independent redistricting is not just well-established; it is a growing trend. Just this week, Governor Newsom signed three bills that will ensure the counties of Fresno, Kern, and Riverside use independent redistricting commissions in the 2030 redistricting cycle. California Common Cause would like to offer ourselves as a readily available resource for best practices on establishing an IRC as the City moves through this process. California Common Cause is also happy to provide templates for creating IRCs and the City can access a wide variety of research and tools, as well as an independent redistricting commission ordinance generator, on [localredistricting.org](http://localredistricting.org). Respectfully Submitted, Alesandra Lozano Voting Rights & Redistricting Program Manager California Common Cause



September 21, 2022

**TO:** Honorable Council President Nury Martinez, Councilmember Mitch O’Farrell, Councilmember Joe Buscaino

*Transmitted via Office of the City Clerk Public Comment Form*

Los Angeles City Hall  
200 N Spring St,  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**RE: Support for Motion to Place a Charter Amendment on the November 2024 Ballot to Create an Independent Redistricting Commission in the City of Los Angeles**

Dear City Council President Nury Martinez and Los Angeles City Council Members of the Rules, Elections, and Intergovernmental Relations Committee,

California Common Cause is a nonpartisan, good-government organization dedicated to building a healthier and more inclusive California democracy at the state and local levels. We have played a key role in bringing fair redistricting to California communities by passing both statewide and local reforms to make redistricting more transparent, fair, independent, inclusive, and participatory. We write to express our strong and enthusiastic support for placing a charter amendment on the November 2024 ballot to create an independent redistricting commission (“IRC”) in the City of Los Angeles.

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On October 25, 2021, [the Los Angeles Times Editorial Board ran a piece on how political meddling poisoned the redistricting process](#) in Los Angeles City. This editorial noted: “it’s impossible for people to have faith in the process or trust the commission’s decisions...It’s time for Los Angeles to have a truly independent citizens redistricting commission.” [Two days later on October 27, 2021, California Common Cause sent a lengthy letter to Los Angeles City public officials](#), including the City Council, outlining the specific ways in which the Advisory Redistricting Commission was exploited for political gain during the 2020-21 redistricting cycle. That letter was followed by a November 1, 2021 [Los Angeles Times op-ed](#)



[written by Fred Ali, the Chairman of the Los Angeles City Advisory Commission](#) and a [November 2, 2021 letter from twenty-five respected Los Angeles civic leaders](#) also calling for an independent redistricting commission. **The call to action from community leaders and Angelenos is clear. The City Council cannot wait any longer -- it must move now to rid the city of its broken redistricting process and replace it with a process and structure that residents of Los Angeles can trust.**

Using an IRC is one of the most concrete and effective steps a city can take to prioritize community voices and build public trust in local democracy. The best-functioning redistricting processes that California Common Cause monitored during the 2021 redistricting cycle, out of 60+ local jurisdictions, were run by independent commissions. These IRCs demonstrated consistent prioritization of community testimony over partisanship, ran redistricting processes that were transparent and participatory, and produced maps generally regarded as fair and representative of the constituents in their jurisdictions. Even when a jurisdiction is dominated by a single political party, such as in Los Angeles County, an IRC ensures that party infighting and personal agendas are averted in favor of honoring and prioritizing community testimony and substantively incorporating public input.

We strongly encourage the City of Los Angeles to join the Counties of Los Angeles, San Diego, and Santa Barbara, the Cities of San Diego, Long Beach, Sacramento, Oakland, and many others, as well as the State of California, in establishing an independent redistricting commission by placing a charter amendment on the November 2024 ballot. Independent redistricting is not just well-established; it is a growing trend. Just this week, Governor Newsom signed three bills that will ensure the counties of Fresno, Kern, and Riverside use independent redistricting commissions in the 2030 redistricting cycle.

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Respectfully Submitted,

*Alesandra Lozano*

**Alesandra Lozano**

*Voting Rights & Redistricting Program Manager*

California Common Cause

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Michael Draskovic  
**Date Submitted:** 09/21/2022 11:19 AM  
**Council File No:** 21-1472

**Comments for Public Posting:** I'm Michael Draskovic, CD2 resident and co-lead of Los Angeles for Democracy Vouchers, the Democracy Policy Network, and Represent Cal. I'm writing in support of independent redistricting. Thank you Councilmember Raman and Krekorian for organizing a comprehensive list that should be considered when creating a strong, independent, and fair redistricting commission. I am writing to submit three additional requests: (1) Any proposal ensures a minimum of 14 days notice for meetings as required of the state redistricting commission; (2) The City Clerk provide administrative support during the commission's creation, with oversight and decision making authority assigned to the city ethics commission; and (3) These potential charter reforms would be best handled by an independent, qualified, resident-led commission, selected by lottery — these proposals require a thoughtful discussion with the public, removed from the elected officials who will be directly impacted by them. As the 2021 cycle redistricting showed, an advisory commission cannot deliver fair maps. All of us saw elected officials meddling in the line drawing process at every stage of the process, which left us with both divided communities and a deeply divided council. Additionally, I'm writing to submit a second ask: Amend the motion to include options for council expansion. Independent redistricting without expansion is a half measure. We saw this with the independent redistricting commission tasked with redrawing the lines for the LA County Board of Supervisors. Without a larger city council, an independent commission would face nearly all of the same inherent limits this last commission faced. We cannot properly represent this large, diverse, and geographically vast city without expanding council. More districts makes redistricting easier, for example: (a) More neighborhoods can remain intact; (b) Increased ability to to tailor districts to more cohesive communities of interest; (c) Force fewer tradeoffs between the often competing interests of different voters and communities; and (d) Creating new opportunities for representation for one district would not require the dramatic relocation of council districts across the city. More districts makes for more effective government, for example: (a) Managing a district of 250,000 is an impossible job. We are setting our elected officials up for failure; and (b) Right-sizing our city council gives

our leaders a realistic ability to handle core functions like delivering constituent services and the ability to navigate the intensive work required to build permanent supportive housing. More districts means better representative government, for example: (a) Our city has struggled to ensure representation of various communities from women to Latinx. It's becoming increasingly difficult to ensure we can maintain representation of the African American community; (b) Larger districts lead to expensive campaigns in which incumbents rarely face a serious challenge, let alone a runoff; (c) and Council expansion would lower the barriers to entry for challengers and ensure a greater diversity of voices are heard through the electoral process. Finally, it's worth noting that the LA Times and 2021 LA City Council Redistricting Commission both agreed on the need for expanding City Council. Thank you.