

From: [Lata Murti](#)
To: [CEO Redistricting RES](#)
Subject: public comment for Nov. 12 2020 Citizens Independent Redistricting Commission Meeting
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Please find my comment linked [here](#) and copied below.
Thank you!
Lata Murti

Thank you for allowing me to address all of you today.

As a professor of sociology, I understand the importance of diversity and making sure that all major demographic groups within a community are represented and heard. Groups labeled “minority,” “marginalized,” or “underrepresented” receive these labels not because they are small in number or commitment to local politics, but because, traditionally, they have had few if any opportunities to represent themselves, on their terms.

As a resident of Santa Barbara County, I am committed to making sure that the minority, marginalized, and underrepresented communities in our county do have an opportunity to be heard, on their terms. These communities include Santa Barbara’s Hispanic and Latinx residents, who make up 46% of the county’s population, but, so far, are not represented on the Citizens’ Independent Redistricting Commission. They also include Santa Barbara County’s female population, which, at this point, is represented by only one redistricting commissioner, Laura Katz, from the 1st District.

As the only Asian-American woman among the 45 most qualified candidates, I urge you to consider selecting and appointing at least one commissioner representing Santa Barbara County’s Hispanic/Latinx community; several more women; and at least one commissioner representing the 10% of Santa Barbara County residents who are Black, Indigenous, or Asian. Several of us represent two of these communities, including Amanda Ochoa, from my district (the 4th District); Jannet Rios, from the 5th District, Lupe Alvarez, from the 3rd District; and myself, Lata Murti.

I want to end by saying that I am making this public comment in support of the applications of all of the candidates for the redistricting commission who represent Santa Barbara County’s minority, marginalized, and underrepresented communities—particularly its women of color. These communities’ representation on the commission means much more to me than whether or not I am among those selected to serve. All of Santa Barbara County’s major demographic groups should have a voice on its redistricting commission.

Thank you very much.