



August 18, 2025

**The Honorable Mike McGuire**

President Pro Tempore, California State Senate  
California State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**The Honorable Brian Jones**

California Senate Republican Leader  
California State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**The Honorable Robert Rivas**

Speaker of the California State Assembly  
California State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**The Honorable James Gallagher**

California Assembly Republican Leader  
California State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: Strong Opposition to Efforts to Overturn California's Independent Citizens Redistricting Process (AB 604, SB 280 & ACA 8)**

Speaker Rivas and Pro Tem McGuire:

We oppose political gerrymandering in every state, at every level of government. Whether in Texas, California, or anywhere else, manipulating the redistricting process to entrench political power, silence voters, or dilute representation is wrong. The deliberate disenfranchisement of voters through partisan map-drawing undermines the very foundation of our democracy, and we will speak out to support and defend the reforms put in place by voters of this state. California has been and should be a model for protecting voters' voices, not emulating the worst practices in other states.

California should lead the nation by continuing to defend voter-enacted reforms that created a fair, transparent, citizen-led redistricting. For more than a decade, California's independent redistricting system has been the national gold standard. Created by voters through Proposition 11 in 2008, expanded through Proposition 20 in 2010, and protected against repeal through the defeat of Proposition 27 that same year, our model has been tested at the ballot box multiple times—and each time, voters have chosen non-partisan citizen-led fairness over partisan and self-interested politics.

The People of California sent a clear message with the overwhelming rejection of Prop. 27, which sought to undo citizen redistricting of legislative district lines: citizens should have the power, *not* the politicians. The contrast could not be clearer:

- **Citizen-led redistricting** is transparent, accountable, and free from the conflicts of interest inherent in letting elected officials choose their own voters.
- **Politically driven redistricting** invites partisan manipulation, entrenches incumbents, and silences communities whose voices deserve to be heard in Sacramento and Washington, D.C.

As a supporter of the original reforms, it is especially troubling that many of the loudest proponents of this gerrymandering effort opposed the creation of the independent commission and supported the initiative that would have repealed it. Their newfound “support” for a so-called citizen process is not credible, given this history.

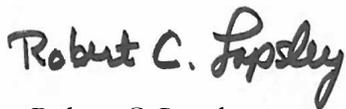
Californians wrote redistricting safeguards into the California Constitution at the ballot box—not once, but twice. Any changes to voter-enacted constitutional provisions must undergo rigorous analysis, transparent vetting, and a genuine public-participation process. Yet ACA 8, AB 604, and SB 280 were made public only hours ago and will have their first hearings set for 9:30 a.m. on Tuesday, August 19—less than 24 hours later. And let’s not forget that, unlike the citizen redistricting process, members of the public are severely limited in their ability to comment on or participate in legislative hearings. Aside from a handful of principal testifiers, members of the public can only give their names and their positions on the bills. This is not a robust public discussion and silences the views of countless constituents who are directly impacted by these new maps. To label this timeline or process robust and with meaningful public input is to deny voters the deliberation and participation they are owed. Rushing a constitutional change is incompatible with responsible governance.

Californians have made their position clear at the ballot box: they want maps drawn by citizens, not politicians. They want a public and transparent process and the ability to provide input on draft maps, allowing the citizens commission to respond to and correct concerns. Any move to reverse this choice would disenfranchise voters, dilute representation, and protect entrenched power.

The California Citizens Redistricting Commission has been upheld as a national model for fairness, studied and emulated in other states, and repeatedly validated by the courts. It has proven that democracy works best when the process is insulated from political self-interest.

We urge you to stand with California voters, reject any attempt to overturn independent redistricting, and defend the people’s right to fair maps drawn by citizens—not politicians.

Sincerely,



Robert C. Lapsley  
President, California Business Roundtable



Robert Gutierrez  
President, CalTax

cc: Members of the California State Legislature