**SD County Independent Redistricting Commission (IRC) Public Comment Template**

**PURPOSE:** Please help us give input as PANA staff on why the refugee and Immigrant communities should be kept together throughout the County, and uplift the PANA map! This is the FINAL post-mapping hearing before the County IRC votes to confirm a map on Dec 9th.

**ACTIONS:**

1. **Give Public Comment at the last remaining County Redistricting Hearing:**
	* Thursday December 2nd, 2021 at 5pm (public comment will likely begin at 5:30pm)
		+ Request to Speak Form: [online request to speak form](https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/redistricting/IRCrequest-to-speak.html) (must fill out)
			- Agenda Item: 8.2
			- Agenda Item Title/Subject: Receive Public Input
		+ WHERE: via Zoom or in Person
			- Zoom Meeting Info: [Join LIVE Meeting](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84601574108)
				1. Passcode: 717390
				2. Webinar ID: 846 0157 4108
			- In Person: San Diego County Office of Education: 6401 Linda Vista Rd, Room 401–402 San Diego, CA 92111
2. **Submit an eComment to the County Commission HERE:**
	* <https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/redistricting/IRCecomment.html>

**SCRIPT (1 minute maximum):**

* Good Evening commissioners, my name is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and I am a staff member/community member of PANA. Thank you for incorporating the PANA map into multiple iterations of the draft maps and considering our communities.
* I work closely with refugee and immigrant communities county-wide, **(Pick one)**
	+ and there are clear shared interests between residents of City Heights, La Mesa, Lemon Grove El Cajon, Paradise Hills, Spring Valley and Rancho San Diego, such as increased affordable housing, transportation services, and English language services
	+ and their mutual support networks, stretching from City Heights to El Cajon, must be reflected in a single supervisorial district to ensure that their shared needs are addressed, as federal funding for refugees is allocated by the county
* It is critical that these communities are mapped together to ensure that they receive the representation and services they desperately need for successful resettlement.
* I am in support of continuing to refine Draft Map 14, as it most accurately reflects the BIPOC, immigrant, refugee community and reflects a variety of community interests.
* *Additionally points to pull from to make your testimony unique:*
	+ While some leaders in local government expressed a preference for maintaining districts, and we understand their concerns, it overlooks the changing demographics in the last 30 years. Efforts to maintain districts–specifically East County–– disempower the growing voice of growing Black, Indigenous, People of Color, refugee, and immigrant communities in this region
	+ Many families who have historically called communities in City Heights and Encanto home have been pushed east into El Cajon, Rancho San Diego, and La Mesa in search of more affordable housing. And communities continue to worship in churches in Southeast San Diego, Mosques in City Heights, maintain community ties, and mom and pop shops in their old neighborhoods.
	+ Social Institutions. Thousands of Iraqi, Syrian, and Afghan refugees have resettled in the City of El Cajon, a community which has been dubbed as California’s “Little Baghdad.” City Heights has historically been referred to as “Little Mogadishu” due to its sizable Somali community. As a result, these neighborhoods have seen the growth of worship centers, ethnic based restaurants, grocery stores, and outlets that sell home goods and cultural products.
	+ Refugee Policy. San Diego County welcomes more refugees than any other California county. And the County determines allocation of resettlement funding. Therefore, refugees have a vested and critical interest in direct representation in county government so that they have a voice in shaping policies that will lead to welcoming and successful resettlement. This is more critical than ever given this particular moment in the world. It is very likely that our region will experience the second largest resettlement of Afghan refugees in the State.
* Thank you.