



To: Chairman Aquino and Chairwoman Hernandez, members of the Senate and House Redistricting Committee

From: Roberto Valdez, Latino Policy Forum

Date: August 26, 2021

Memo: Subject Matter On: Illinois communities and the potential adjustments to legislative boundaries.

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The Latino Policy Forum would like to thank Chairman Aquino, Chairwoman Hernandez and members of the Senate and House redistricting committee for taking the time to hear from the Forum and other advocates in response to input and recommendations for potential adjustments to the legislative boundaries.

The Forum is a statewide non-profit advocacy and policy organization. Part of the Forum's work to strengthen leadership includes ensuring there is a fair redistricting process that provides opportunities for the Latino community to elect the candidates of their choice. This also includes ensuring there are cohesive Latino communities of interest in the state legislature's mapmaking process, promoting equitable Latino representation in mapmaking proceedings, and advocating for a map that is reflective of the demographics of Illinois' Latino population.

The Forum provided oral and written testimony in multiple hearings from March through May of this year. Unfortunately, requests the Forum provided were not included when the legislative maps were released, including maps drawn to optimize the best opportunity for Latinos to elect the candidates of their choice and maps drawn with the strongest concentrations of Latino population possible. The drawing of the maps, therefore, contradicted the principles set forward by this committee of fairness, diversity, and equity.

Moreover, when the legislative maps were released in late May no racial/demographic composition of districts were made available preventing the Forum and others from providing feedback and input on the maps. With zero data available, zero analysis could be conducted.

However, three months later, here we are, with an opportunity to amend what was done back then and include the suggestions of community organizations and advocates. Again, the Forum asks for: legislative maps that truly reflect the diversity of our state; districts that provide the best opportunity for Latinos to elect candidates of their choice; districts that maximize the concentration of Latinos; a reasonable timeline that enables community input; and overall transparency of the process.

The Forum also joins other advocates in asking for more time to provide an efficient analysis of the 2020 Census numbers and to present a map to this committee that can be considered when making potential adjustments to legislative boundaries. The Forum strongly appreciates the support of this committee during the 2021 remapping, and we look forward to your continued work. Thank you so much for your consideration.