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## redistricting: ensuring equal representation

CAUSE has established a six county coalition to ensure that the unique concerns of the communities on the Central Coast of California are heard in the redistricting process. CAUSE believes that there is a particular danger that poor and working class communities and communities of color in our region could be disempowered in the process by being divided, or combined into districts that are dominated by unrelated populations or areas outside of the Central Coast region.

Building from CAUSE's successful redistricting effort around the Ventura County Supervisorial redistrict process, over 2010 and 2011 we will be working with our many sister organizations in the region to organize a Central Coast Redistricting Coalition. The goal of the coalition will be to create a Central Coast state legislative districting plan that is fair to our most vulnerable communities. As part of this effort, CAUSE will educate the public through meetings, publications and online communication about the districting process and the potential impacts of districting on local political empowerment and community life. We will work with our coalition partners to build regional consensus on the proposed plan, and advocate for that plan through public hearings with the 14 member districting Coalition.

To get involved in CAUSE Central Coast Redistricting Coalition, sign up here , or call Chris Lanier, 805-658-0810, x205.

Every ten years, after the census is complete, California must draw new lines for state legislative districts. Historically, the drawing of these lines has been an intensely political process, done in "smoke-filled rooms" by political bosses, usually to make sure that elected representatives could continue to run for office in districts where the voting population would elect them. The result has been districts that were misshapen, as well as split cities, towns and logical geographic areas. Many communities have been marginalized by inclusion in districts where they would have less of an electoral impact. The result has also been an important lack of accountability for our elected representatives, allowing them to essentially "choose their voters" and making legislative elections far less competitive.

As a result, California voters passed Proposition 11 in 2008. This measure establishes a 14 member redistricting commission to draw state legislative districts, which is designed to be independent of the political process of electing representatives. The commission will attempt to map districts that have equal populations, that preserve communities, that don't discriminate (by disempowering minority populations protected by the Federal Voting Rights Act).