

May 21, 2011

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**Illinois house redistricting committee members**

Dear members,

The Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (ICIRR) supports the proposed maps as an important step forward for the voting rights representation of the Latino, Asian, and Arab / Muslim communities of Illinois. We will ask for amendments to the proposed map to make adjustments in several areas.

The proposed map largely delivers on ICIRR's request that Latino, Asian, and Middle Eastern communities be fairly represented in Illinois. Specifically the proposed map:

- Protects Latino and Latino influence districts on the North Side, and adds one Latino Senate and House district in the Southwest Side / Cicero area,
- Creates strong Latino and Latino influence districts in Waukegan and the Franklin Park, Aurora, and Elgin areas,
- Unites important communities of interest like Chinatown and Little Village in single districts.

The map creates a Latino majority district that will probably be represented initially by the powerful House Speaker Madigan – and ICIRR believes that having such powerful political representation will greatly benefit Latino and immigrant interests in Illinois.

There are several areas where ICIRR asks for amendments to the proposal. These include:

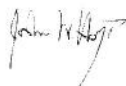
- Adjusting North side / Northern suburban district boundaries and Southwest suburban district boundaries to better ensure Asian and Middle Eastern communities of interest are united, and
- Increasing the Latino population percentages in the proposed 22 and 23 districts.

We will let the lawyers decide if the current proposed boundaries meet the legal requirements of the Voting Rights Act – we do not offer an opinion on this legal matter. However as a practical matter the proposed map is a significant step forward for the representation of the Latino, Asian, and Muslim communities of Illinois and this progress should be celebrated. ICIRR complements the United Community Congress, Asian American Institute, and Latino Agenda on their excellent work to design maps showing how fair boundaries are possible.

The Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights continues to work for the passage of the Illinois DREAM Act to advance the education of undocumented immigrant youth this legislative session; for appropriate addressing of immigrant needs in the Illinois budget; and for measures that limit the destruction of families through cruel deportations by the out of control "Secure Communities" program. ICIRR is the largest immigrant advocacy group in Illinois. ICIRR is 25 years old and has 138 member organizations.

This letter is also supported by the following ICIRR member organizations:

- Sincerely,
- Instituto del Progreso Latino**
  - The Resurrection Project**
  - Federacion de Michoacanos en Illinois (FEDECFM)**
  - Mujeres Latinas en Accion**
  - Latino Organization of the Southwest**
  - SouthWest Organizing Project**
  - Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community**
  - Council of Islamic Organizations of Greater Chicago**
  - Family Focus, Aurora**
  - Proyecto de Acción del Suroeste**



**Joshua Hoyt**  
Executive Director



**Artemio Arreola**  
Political Director

**Additional Submissions**  
**105**