

## David Richards

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**From:** Doris Bittar <doris.bittar@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, November 5, 2021 11:30 AM  
**To:** Redistricting  
**Subject:** Redistricting City of El Cajon Will Uplift Arab Communities

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Dear Redistricting for El Cajon,

I am Doris Bittar, a resident of San Diego County for 36 years. I am also a committed Arab community leader and published author on discrimination and erasure of Arab communities in San Diego County.

I frequently shop in the Arabic food stores, and engage with the Arab community in El Cajon. I even received my COVID vaccines in El Cajon last April. From 2006 to 2009 my two sons learned how to read and write Arabic in the City of El Cajon. In 2017 I created a literacy program, Teach and Learn Literacy-TaLL for newly arrived refugees from Syria. Most of our pupils lived in the City of El Cajon and some were in the City Heights neighborhood of San Diego. I am especially concerned about empowering a community that is particularly vulnerable if it continues to be ignored and left out of the political process. El Cajon is composed of immigrants and refugees, Arabic speakers, mostly renters, English learners, large families, and many are in need of affordable housing, English Language services, public transportation, safety, and educational opportunities are urgent priorities for this vulnerable community.

- **El Cajon's Arab Americans are a distinct Community of Interest with shared values and must be constitutionally recognized as such.** The underserved Arab communities in El Cajon are especially and egregiously excluded from the city's decision making processes. We urgently declare our community as a unified voting bloc and should not be erased again. We strongly urge you to consider alterations to the current map to represent the Arab community in 2 districts. Currently, it is unfairly, discriminatingly diluted and perhaps unconstitutional.

- **Our community participation, engagement, feedback and deep understanding has been present at every hearing along with a coalition of concerned citizens who support our demands.** I participated in the community mapping session hosted by the Majdal Center and support the Arab community map submitted by the Majdal Center, because it responsibly represents viable and fair inclusion of our community.

- **Our demands include redrawing the lines for the sake of solidifying our voices, voting power, representation and safety.** The following changes must be reflected in the district draft maps. Our Community of Interest can be identified within these general boundaries:

. **Broadway to the North**

. **North 2nd Street and Jamacha Rd to the East**

**. East/West Chase Ave to the South**

**. North Johnson Avenue and Emerald Avenue to the West**

We are not represented in the current maps. Redrawing the districts will uplift our community of interest into acknowledged consideration, constitutional fulfillment and engagement. Work with us to redraw the district lines. Do not move forward with the existing map approved in 2017.

Thank you for your consideration of our urgent concerns.

Doris Bittar

American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee-ADC

California Organizer

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