

Democracy Again

All county residents owe an eternal debt of thanks to SLO County Citizens for Good Government for legally challenging the gerrymandered district map the former majority on the County Board of Supervisors adopted on December 15, 2021, now repealed.



Board of Supervisors
County of San Luis Obispo
San Luis Obispo, CA 93406
Sent via EMAIL: ad Board clerk@co.slo.ca.us

April 17, 2023

Re: Redistricting Item 35

Chair Peschong and Supervisors,

Your action today represents a monumental win for all the people of San Luis Obispo County. We urge you to further take steps to ensure the county's redistricting process in the future will be fair, nonpartisan, and secure from gerrymandering.

In 2021, ten years after the state of Wisconsin first earned its reputation as the worst example of gerrymandering in U.S. history, former Wisconsin state assembly member Penny Bernard Schaber addressed the Wisconsin Sierra Club: "What is the number one issue for us as environmentalists?" she asked. "Is it Clean Air? Is it Clean Water? Is it Biodiversity? Nope... it is fair maps and abandoning gerrymandering."

Wisconsin Republicans have maintained close to a permanent two-thirds majority, allowing them to enact an agenda far to the right of the state's electorate. As The Atlantic observed two weeks ago "[Make Wisconsin a Democracy Again](#)", the 2011 gerrymandering of Wisconsin's legislative districts ensured "that in a state more or less evenly divided politically, the GOP would maintain its grip on power regardless of how the voters felt about it."

California eliminated gerrymandering at the state level in 2010 by creating the independent [California Citizens Redistricting Commission](#). The 14-member Commission is made up of five Republicans, five Democrats, and 4 not affiliated with either party. The Commission must draw state and congressional district lines in conformity with strict, nonpartisan rules designed to create districts of relatively equal population that will provide fair representation for all Californians.

San Luis Obispo County has dodged a bullet, for which we thank you. Wisconsin is a cautionary tale. California has pointed the way. We urge you to act with all deliberate speed to give this county an independent redistricting commission.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Susan Harvey".

Susan Harvey, Chair
Conservation Committee
Santa Lucia Chapter, Sierra Club
susan@ifsusan.com