

Date: October 26, 2023

From: Commissioner Jerdonek

To: FIERCE Committee

RE: Text Suggestion for Redistricting Recommendations Document

This memo includes some suggested text for inclusion in the introduction of the redistricting document that the FIERCE Committee is working on.

In the summer of 2022, when the Commission first started discussed redistricting, I had asked if reforms like proportional representation (PR) could be included in the scope of our future discussions. I was interested because PR can do a better job of representing communities of interest than single-member districts can. Also, depending on how PR is implemented, it could eliminate the need to draw district lines or at least reduce their importance. We had also just learned from some of our speakers that PR was studied and supported by the Elections Task Force that San Francisco voters created in 1994.

In response to my question, Commissioners felt we didn't have the time and bandwidth to include broader topics like this. However, Commissioners did suggest it could be included in the introduction of any document that the Commission comes up with. This way, people won't interpret its omission as meaning the reform isn't important.

Following that suggestion, here is my suggested text:

The Elections Commission's discussions on redistricting were limited to the process of drawing lines. The Commission did not consider broader changes like the number of districts, the number of supervisors to elect from each district, or the method of voting to elect those supervisors. This isn't because changes like these aren't worth considering. For example, electing supervisors using a system of proportional representation like Proportional Ranked Choice Voting (PRCV) — either at-large or from multi-member districts—could in fact do a better job of representing communities of interest than single-member districts can. This is because many communities aren't concentrated in any one district but instead are spread throughout the City. To consider broader election reforms like these, the Board of Supervisors could convene an independent Elections Task Force like the one San Francisco voters created thirty years ago in 1994. As another example, the City Council of Portland, Oregon convenes an independent Charter Commission every ten years, with their most recent one proposing several election-related reforms for voters to consider.

Thank you.