

Date of Hearing: June 17, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON ELECTIONS

Gail Pellerin, Chair

SB 1414 (Reyes) – As Amended May 14, 2026

SENATE VOTE: 29-9

SUBJECT: County of San Bernardino Citizens Redistricting Commission.

SUMMARY: Creates an independent citizens redistricting commission (Commission) in San Bernardino County, as specified. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Establishes a 14-member Commission to redraw the county's supervisorial district boundaries in the year following the decennial census. Requires the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors (Board) to provide funding and staffing for the Commission, and to make a redistricting database and redistricting software available, as specified.
- 2) Establishes a commissioner selection process designed to reflect the county's geographic, political, and demographic diversity.
 - a) Requires commissioners' political party preferences to reflect the preferences of county voters.
 - b) Requires commissioners to be registered county voters with relevant analytical and impartial decision-making experience that demonstrates an appreciation for the county's demographics.
 - c) Prohibits a person from being a commissioner if the person, or an immediate family member, engaged in specified political activity in the eight years prior to applying, including holding or running for office, working for an elected official or candidate, serving as a political party officer, or working as a registered lobbyist.
 - d) Requires the county elections official to screen applicants and identify 60 of the most qualified applicants. Prohibits the elections official from communicating with the Board about applicants before publishing that list. Establishes a process for the Auditor-Controller to randomly select one commissioner from each existing supervisorial district, followed by a random selection of three additional commissioners.
 - e) Requires the eight selected commissioners to appoint six additional members from the remaining applicants, based on experience, analytical skills, and ability to be impartial, and to ensure that the Commission reflects the county's diversity, as specified.
- 3) Provides that nine members of the Commission constitute a quorum and requires at least nine votes for any official action.

- 4) Prohibits the Commission from retaining a consultant who would be disqualified from applying to the commission due to specified political activities.
- 5) Requires the Commission to comply with the state's open meetings law and prohibits commissioners from communicating about redistricting matters outside of a public hearing, except as specified. Makes commissioners subject to conflict-of-interest laws. Provides that Commission records are public records. Requires the Commission to create procedures for conducting orderly hearings and communication. Requires the procedures to address how the Commission will fill a vacancy on the Commission, and to establish a process for removing a commissioner, as specified.
- 6) Requires the Commission to establish single-member supervisorial districts using the criteria set forth in existing state law for local redistricting. Requires the Commission to prepare a report that explains how it complied with redistricting criteria. Provides that the adopted map is subject to referendum.
- 7) Requires the Commission to conduct at least 10 public hearings (7 before drawing a draft map, and 3 after).
- 8) Requires outreach efforts to encourage public participation, including providing live translation of hearings and translation of materials into applicable languages.
- 9) Imposes restrictions on the political activities of commissioners during and after their service, including a five-year prohibition on holding certain public offices, lobbying, or receiving no-bid contracts from the county.
- 10) Makes findings that a special law is necessary because of the unique circumstances facing San Bernardino County.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Requires the board of supervisors of each county, following each federal decennial census, to adopt boundaries for all the supervisorial districts of the county so that the supervisorial districts are substantially equal in population as required by the United States (US) Constitution, as specified. (Elections Code §§21500 et seq.)
- 2) Authorizes a local jurisdiction, including a county, to establish an independent, hybrid, or advisory redistricting commission by resolution, ordinance, or charter amendment, subject to certain conditions. (Elections Code §§23000 et seq.)
- 3) Establishes a procedure for a government of a county to adopt a charter by a majority vote of its electors voting on the question. Generally provides greater autonomy over county affairs to counties that have adopted charters. (California Constitution Article XI, §3, 4)
- 4) Provides that charter counties are subject to statutes that relate to apportioning population of governing body districts. (California Constitution Article XI, §4(a))

- 5) Establishes Citizens Redistricting Commissions in Fresno, Kern, Los Angeles, Merced, Orange, Riverside, Sacramento, San Diego, and San Luis Obispo counties, and charges the commissions with adjusting the boundaries of supervisorial districts after each decennial federal census, as specified. (Elections Code §§21520-21527, 21530-21535, 21540-21546, 21550-21553, 21554-21559, 21560-21565, 21570-21575, 21580-21588, 21590-21595)

FISCAL EFFECT: According to the Senate Appropriations Committee, by requiring San Bernardino County to create and operate a redistricting commission as specified, this bill creates a state-mandated local program. To the extent the Commission on State Mandates determines that the provisions of this bill create a new program or impose a higher level of service on San Bernardino County, the County could claim reimbursement of those costs (General Fund). The magnitude of these costs is unknown, but likely in the millions of dollars on a decennial basis.

COMMENTS:

- 1) **Purpose of the Bill:** According to the author:

SB 1414 requires the establishment of an Independent Redistricting Commission in the County of San Bernardino. This will create fair and equitable supervisorial maps for our community.

San Bernardino County is one of the most diverse and fastest-growing regions in California, and our communities deserve a redistricting process that is fair, transparent, and rooted in the voices of residents — not politics. This measure will help ensure that every neighborhood has an equitable opportunity to be represented, and that our district lines reflect the people who live here. An independent commission builds trust in our elections and strengthens our democracy for the long term.

Under current law, county boards of supervisors adjust district boundaries following each census. Several large California counties have already adopted independent commissions to oversee this process. This bill would bring San Bernardino County in line with these best practices by shifting redistricting authority to an independent, community-focused body. SB 1414 will empower the over 2.2 million people of San Bernardino County to reclaim their voting rights and strengthen our democracy.

- 2) **Redistricting Overview:** “Redistricting” is the process by which the boundaries of districts of a governmental body are adjusted. Redistricting generally occurs at the beginning of each decade following the decennial federal census, when new district lines are adopted based on the census data so that the populations of each district of a governmental body are roughly equal. Over the course of the decade, districts can become significantly unequal in population due to differential growth rates in various locations of a jurisdiction. Redistricting is the way this inequality is corrected.
- 3) **California Citizens Redistricting Commission:** Proposition 11, which was approved by the voters at the 2008 statewide general election, created the California Citizens Redistricting Commission (CCRC), and gave it the responsibility for establishing district lines for

Assembly, Senate, and Board of Equalization (BOE). Proposition 11 also modified the criteria to be used when drawing district lines. Two years later, California voters approved Proposition 20, which gave the CCRC the responsibility for establishing lines for California's congressional districts, and made other changes to the procedures and criteria to be used by the CCRC. The CCRC consists of 14 registered voters, including five Democrats, five Republicans, and four others, all of whom are chosen according to procedures specified in Proposition 11. The CCRC adopted district lines for the Legislature, Congress, and the BOE in 2011 following the release of 2010 census data, and again in 2021 following the release of 2020 census data.

- 4) **Local Redistricting Commissions and Previous Legislation:** Prior to 2017, state law generally permitted a county or a city to create an *advisory* redistricting commission (described in state law at the time as a "committee" of residents of the jurisdiction) but did not expressly permit local jurisdictions to create commissions that had the authority to establish district boundaries. Instead, the authority to establish district boundaries for a local jurisdiction generally was held by the governing body. While charter cities could establish redistricting commissions that had the authority to establish district boundaries, charter counties did not have that authority in the absence of express statutory authorization.

In 2016, however, the Legislature passed and the Governor signed SB 1108 (Allen), Chapter 784, Statutes of 2016, which permits a county or a general law city to establish a redistricting commission, subject to certain conditions. SB 1018 (Allen), Chapter 462, Statutes of 2018, built upon SB 1108 by allowing all local governmental entities to establish redistricting commissions, and by modifying some of the rules governing local redistricting commissions.

Separately, the Legislature has enacted a number of bills to require specified counties to establish redistricting commissions. SB 958 (Lara), Chapter 781, Statutes of 2016, required the establishment of a Citizens Redistricting Commission in Los Angeles County. Similarly, AB 801 (Weber), Chapter 711, Statutes of 2017, required the establishment of a Citizens Redistricting Commission in San Diego County. These commissions were in place for redistricting following the 2020 federal decennial census, and drew the district lines for those counties' supervisorial districts.

Since the 2020 redistricting process, the Legislature has enacted bills to create redistricting commissions in Riverside County (AB 1307 (Cervantes), Chapter 403, Statutes of 2022), Fresno County (AB 2030 (Arambula), Chapter 407, Statutes of 2022), Kern County (AB 2494 (Salas), Chapter 411, Statutes of 2022), Orange County (AB 34 (Valencia), Chapter 315, Statutes of 2023), Sacramento County (SB 314 (Ashby), Chapter 389, Statutes of 2023), San Luis Obispo County (SB 977 (Laird), Chapter 450, Statutes of 2023), and Merced County (AB 1441 (Soria), Chapter 730, Statutes of 2025). All those commissions will be created for the next redistricting process following the 2030 census. While there are some small differences, the rules governing the operation and formation of these commissions are broadly similar. This commission proposed by this bill is also broadly similar to those proposed in the prior legislation detailed above.

On two occasions, the Legislature has approved bills designed to take a more comprehensive approach toward independent redistricting commissions for local redistricting in the state. SB

139 (Allen) of 2019, would have required a county with a population of 400,000 or more to establish an independent redistricting commission to adopt the county supervisorial districts after each federal decennial census, as specified. Governor Newsom vetoed SB 139 noting that local jurisdictions were already authorized to establish redistricting commissions, and that requiring such commissions would constitute a reimbursable state mandate that should be considered in the annual budget process. More recently, AB 1248 (Bryan) of 2023, would have required a county or city with more than 300,000 residents, or a school district or community college district with more than 500,000 residents, to establish an independent redistricting commission to adopt district boundaries after each federal decennial census. AB 1248 was also vetoed by Governor Newsom. Similar to his veto message for SB 139, the veto message for AB 1248 noted concerns about the state mandated costs of the commissions required by AB 1248. Had either SB 139 or AB 1248 been signed into law, San Bernardino County would have been required to create an independent redistricting commission for future redistricting processes.

- 5) **2021 San Bernardino County Redistricting:** In November 2020, San Bernardino County voters approved Measure J, which made various changes to the county’s charter. Among other provisions, Measure J requires the Board to establish a county redistricting commission by ordinance. In March 2021, the Board adopted an ordinance to establish an advisory commission, consisting of 7 members and 5 alternates. Under that ordinance, five of the members are appointed by the Board—one member from each existing supervisorial district who was recommended and nominated by the Supervisor from that district (the same process applies to the appointment of the 5 alternates). The other two commissioners are appointed by the presiding judge of the San Bernardino County Superior Court.

According to information from San Bernardino County’s website for the 2021 redistricting process, the commission conducted 16 public meetings on redistricting in 14 locations throughout the county. The commission publicly examined and discussed five proposed supervisorial district maps submitted by the public, one map created by a commissioner, and three maps created at the commission’s direction. The commission referred three maps for recommendation to the Board. At its meeting on December 14, 2021, the Board adopted a version of one of the maps created at the commission’s direction, with some modifications made at the Board’s request.

- 6) **Translations of Redistricting Hearings and Materials:** This bill requires the Commission to translate all outreach materials, public notices, agendas, and website content into applicable languages. It also requires the Commission to provide live translation of its hearings into applicable languages upon request.

“Applicable languages” are defined as any language spoken by a language-minority group whose members make up at least 3% of San Bernardino County’s voting-age population. Based on the most recent data from the US Census Bureau, Spanish is likely the only language that currently meets this threshold in San Bernardino County, although recent US Census Bureau estimates suggest that the share of adults who speak Chinese (including Cantonese and Mandarin dialects) may be approaching 3%. Requiring translations of hearings and materials is intended to make the redistricting process more accessible to voters who are members of language minority groups.

- 7) **Partisan Make Up:** This bill requires the political party preferences of the commissioners to be as proportional as possible to preferences of San Bernardino County voters. According to the April 3, 2026, report of registration from the Secretary of State, 38.69% of registered voters in San Bernardino County are registered as Democrats, 30.58% are registered as Republicans, 22.07% are registered as having No Party Preference, and the remaining 8.66% of voters are registered with another party or are registered with a political body that is attempting to qualify as a political party.

While this bill provides that "the political party or no party preferences of the commission members are not required to be exactly the same as the proportion of political party or no party preferences among the registered voters of the county," in order to reflect these registration figures, a 14-member commission might be expected to have five or six Democrats, four or five Republicans, three members registered as having no party preference, and one member registered with other political parties or bodies. The ability for the San Bernardino Commission to reflect those registration figures could be limited based on the results of the random drawing to select the first commissioners.

- 8) **Technical Amendment:** To correct a drafting error, committee staff recommends a technical amendment to delete the words "an immediate" on page 3, line 40 and page 4, line 1 of the bill, and replace them with the word "a".
- 9) **Arguments in Support:** In a joint letter of support, the co-sponsors of this bill write:

California voters recognized long ago that redistricting should not be controlled by the very officials whose districts are at stake. In 2008, voters overwhelmingly approved Proposition 11, creating the state Citizens Redistricting Commission, and in 2016 the Legislature passed SB 1108 (Allen), which allows counties to establish their own independent redistricting commissions. Those reforms reflect a basic principle: people should choose their representatives, not the other way around. When incumbent supervisors draw their own district lines, the risk of self-interest is built into the process...

SB 1414 would bring those values to San Bernardino County. By requiring an independent citizens redistricting commission for supervisorial districts, the legislation will help promote fair maps, stronger transparency, and more meaningful public participation. Just as importantly, the bill uses a selection process designed to exclude people with likely conflicts of interest, mirroring safeguards adopted in recent FAIR Maps reform legislation to create a strong and credible county commission model.

For a county of more than 2.2 million people, the stakes are too high to leave redistricting in the hands of those with a direct political interest in the outcome. SB 1414 will help ensure that supervisorial maps are drawn through a process the public can trust and that San Bernardino County residents have a fairer opportunity to be heard and represented.

- 10) **Arguments in Opposition:** In a joint letter of opposition, opponents write:

In November 2020, San Bernardino County voters approved Measure J, establishing the County's current advisory redistricting commission. The 2021 redistricting cycle included 16 public meetings held across 14 locations in the County, all livestreamed to maximize accessibility. Multiple draft maps were considered by the commission, including those submitted by members of the public, and the County provided opportunities for public participation in person, virtually, and in writing, with engagement from stakeholders including labor organizations, business groups, nonprofit organizations, and community-based advocates. In fact, the County's process exceeded SB 1414's proposed minimum public meeting requirements. Notably, this process has not been subject to legal challenge, underscoring its defensibility and integrity. SB 1414 would override this locally adopted, transparent system and erode the voters' will.

SB 1414 is an unfunded mandate that presents significant fiscal and operational challenges. State reimbursement is not guaranteed, and implementation costs are expected to exceed \$2 million...

SB 1414's highly prescriptive structure, coupled with vague and open-ended requirements, creates significant uncertainty and potential costs for local governments, employers, workers, and taxpayers. These ambiguities increase administrative complexity and expose the County to ongoing operational and legal risks, while placing additional demands on public resources during a period of fiscal constraint.

The California Association of Clerks and Election Officials (CACEO) opposes this bill unless it is amended to make someone other than the county elections official responsible for screening Commission applications, and to ensure that any additional burdens on the elections official are fully funded. CACEO contends that having elections officials screen applicants could undermine public confidence in their impartiality and significantly increase their workload during an active election period

11) **Double Referral:** This bill is double referred to the Assembly Local Government Committee.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

California Common Cause (Co-Sponsor)
Inland Empire United (Co-Sponsor)
League of Women Voters of California (Co-Sponsor)
ACLU California Action
Courage California (prior version)
Inland Coalition for Immigrant Justice (prior version)
Inland Equity Partnership
Starting Over Inc.
Starting Over Strong

Opposition

Building Industry Association of Southern California, Inc.
California Association of Clerks and Election Officials (unless amended)
California Building Industry Association
California Business Properties Association
California Teamsters
Chino Valley Chamber of Commerce
City of Chino
City of Chino Hills
City of Fontana
City of Hesperia
City of Needles
City of Ontario
City of Upland
City of Yucaipa
Greater High Desert Chamber of Commerce
Greater Ontario Business Council
Hospital Association of Southern California
IBEW Local Union 477
Inland Empire Economic Partnership (IEEP)
Inland Valleys Association of Realtors
LIUNA Local 783
NAIOP Inland Empire Chapter
San Bernardino County
San Bernardino County Firefighters Local 935
San Bernardino County Sheriff's Employees' Benefit Association
San Bernardino County Sheriff-Coroner

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