



For Immediate Release  
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Media Contact: Molly Weedn  
415-209-4217 (cell)

## **California Voters FIRST Redistricting Reform Initiative Qualifies for November 2008 Ballot**

*Measure will help give voters a real voice and make elected officials more accountable*

Sacramento—AARP, The League of Women Voters of California, California Common Cause, The LA Area Chamber of Commerce and other proponents of the California Voters FIRST Redistricting Initiative announced today that the measure has qualified for the November 2008 ballot.

“The current system that allows legislators to draw their own district boundaries is a conflict of interest that harms Californians. It is time that we make politicians accountable to their voters by fundamentally changing this process,” Janis Hirohama, President of the League of Women Voters of California, said. “By passing this reform in November, voters have the opportunity to send a strong message to the politicians that it’s time to end the gridlock in Sacramento and instead work together to solve the problems in California.”

“Our state Legislature is plagued by partisan paralysis that keeps our elected officials from dealing with the problems Californians want to see solved. The time has come to get rid of the current system and replace it with a system that will make legislators responsive to the needs of their districts,” said Jeannine English, President of AARP of California. “California Voters FIRST is fair redistricting reform that will give voters a chance to participate and have a voice. Legislators will finally be accountable to the people who elect them.”

The California Voters FIRST Act will result in fair legislative districts and elections where voters can make real choices. Under the current system, state legislators draw their own district lines, resulting in 99% of incumbents being reelected. The California Voters FIRST Act will change this – giving voters a real voice and making elected officials more accountable.

The initiative — proposed by a bipartisan coalition of good government organizations, current and former elected officials, grassroots political groups, and business leaders from across California — will create a 14-person independent citizens commission to draw legislative districts. The commission will be comprised of five Democrats, five Republicans and four individuals not affiliated with either major party. Under California Voters FIRST, the redistricting process will be open and transparent with full opportunity for public input.

“We will do everything it takes to ensure that California Voters FIRST passes in November and voters are given the chance to be heard in Sacramento,” English concluded.



Broad-based and diverse proponents of the measure also include Governor Schwarzenegger, former Democratic State Controller Steve Westly, the National Federation of Independent Business/California, the ACLU of Southern California, and the Sacramento Asian Pacific Chamber of Commerce among many others. For more information please visit [www.cavotersfirst.org](http://www.cavotersfirst.org).

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