



# LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CALIFORNIA

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## LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CALIFORNIA ENDORSES CALIFORNIA VOTERS FIRST ACT INITIATIVE

**Remarks of Janis R. Hirohama, President**

**December 3, 2007**

The League of Women Voters of California is very pleased to support the California Voters FIRST initiative which will make the redistricting process one that is truly open and transparent and put the voters back in charge.

This proposal meets all the criteria that the League of Women Voters wants to see:

- An independent citizens commission that has members who are qualified, balanced among the major parties while providing for others to participate, and representing the diversity of our state's population.
- Clear criteria, in priority order, for establishing districts—not only abiding by the U.S. Constitution and the federal Voting Rights Act but also recognizing communities of interest and the political boundaries of cities and counties.
- An open and public process.

This reform will take redistricting out of the hands of the legislature, with its backroom deals, influence of special interests, and partisan battles.

Instead, redistricting will be debated in the open—with public hearings, sufficient notice to those who want to participate, committee deliberations in public and with all records posted on the internet. Proposed maps will be available for public review and comment prior to any decision. Every aspect of this process will be open to scrutiny by the public and the press.

The standards for drawing districts will ensure fair and effective representation that will not create safe seats for individuals or a party, or execute a deal created to protect incumbents. The interests of Californians of all backgrounds will be protected.

The California Voters FIRST Act is a crucial reform to the government process in California. League of Women Voters members around the state will work enthusiastically to help qualify this initiative and see that it is passed by the voters next November.