

SANTA CLARA

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INDIAN PUEBLO

ESPANOLA, NEW MEXICO
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OFFICE OF GOVERNOR

August 2, 2011

Co-Chairs of Legislative Redistricting Committee
Honorable Linda Lopez and
Honorable Mary Helen Garcia

Re: Honoring Santa Clara Pueblo Statement and Concerns during the August 3rd
Redistricting Hearing

Dear Senator Lopez and Representative Garcia

Good Morning. On behalf of Governor Walter Dasheno and the Santa Clara Tribal Council we thank you for this opportunity to express our statement and concerns during this legislative redistricting committee hearing in Indian country at the Pueblo of Acoma. I am Joe Baca, Intergovernmental Liaison and Public Relations Directors presenting on behalf of Santa Clara leadership who are in the throes of responding to the aftermath of the Las Conchas Fire which devastated 17, 038 acres of our forested and headwater lands. Our response also is to the possibility of flooding due the monsoon season that is upon us. This includes an evacuation plan of the Pueblo of Santa Clara from a potential 500 year flood which could swell to twice the size of the Rio Grande according to hydrologists.

Santa Clara Pueblo has formed a legislative committee which is becoming more involved in the political process. In recent years it has become more cognizant of the process of political participation. We actively support candidates in our congressional, house, and senate districts. This process of political participation historically has not been with discrimination within our precinct and the local county. This history has taught us that process is a political right and that right is simply manifested in numbers and organization. The more participants one has, the more the impact, control, and influence that group has.

We agree with the All Indian Pueblo Council that it is not a good idea to put all the tribes except one in the 3rd Congressional district. We believe that all tribes should have a right to be in two congressional districts if they chose to do so. One of our sister tribes has chosen to do so. We also agree with the AIPC that this committee should honor individual tribal request for inclusion in three congressional districts if they so choose. As such the Pueblo of Santa Clara clearly states that it will speak for itself and for what is in its best interest. Although we appreciate the input from our congressional, state, and

country legislators we the Pueblo of Santa Clara as sovereign nations will speak for and decide what is in our best interest politically and on other issues.

We believe that the redistricting process adhere to the Voter Registration Act and to the Indian Voting Right Act. It is the law. We are opposed to the notion or philosophy of competitiveness. This notion is not the law. Competitiveness does not adhere to the principal of community interest where communities who have a common structure, are adjoined, may have ethnic identity, and other factors in common are separated. It artificially splits up districts to achieve a veiled political goal. Santa Clara Pueblo is considering its options based on community interest to move from its current house district to another one. It is evaluating whether to remain in its current house district.

Finally, Santa Clara Pueblo and particularly, the Santa Clara precinct in Rio Arriba County have suffered discrimination in the past. Santa Clara precinct #7 has never been able to elect a Precinct officer until this year. State democratic rules were not followed and thus Santa Clara was denied participation in the precinct and the county political offices. We are happy to say that we have developed a better relation with Rio Arriba County and have elected officials to the precinct, to Rio Arriba County standing committees and Central Committee, and one person to the State Central Committee. The events can all be contributed to interaction with a receptive county political officials and Santa Clara Pueblo Community organization—we showed up in numbers at the Precinct and County conventions.

We have one specific request at this time. We would like to have the county place absentee voter registration site at Santa Clara Pueblo. It is one of the larger precincts in the county with a voting turn out of over 800 persons on a consistent basis. This is large for Rio Arriba County. We urge your influence to assist us with this request.

The Pueblo of Santa Clara thanks you for this opportunity to address this redistricting committee. God speed in your endeavors.

God Bless You and please accept this as our invite to come and help us celebrate our Feast in honoring our Pueblo and Saint Clare next Friday, August 12th.

Sincerely



Walter Dasheno
Governor

Cc: Santa Clara Pueblo Tribal Council
SCP Precinct Officers