

From: Lanthripe
Sent: Sunday, September 6, 2020 12:33 AM
To: ROV Communications <Communications.ROV@rov.sbcounty.gov>
Subject: Public Comment - Polling Place Assignments

To Whom It May Concern:

First, thank you so very much for considering, choosing and working hard at opening public polling places for the upcoming elections! I know this could have been a very difficult choice. Thank you! Trustworthy voting processes are essential for a republic. I am so proud of our county for affirming this by seeking to open polling locations! Please know that despite my concerns, which I do want to share, I am still very, very grateful to our county leaders for moving this direction. I also recognize that Governor Newsom has asserted power over much, so I desire only to address what the county truly can do despite Governor Newsom's overreach. My concerns are these:

1. "Essential businesses" have remained open this entire time, so why should we limit the most "essential" government business of trustworthy voting by reducing polling locations to half? Additionally, the right to protest has also been deemed politically essential during the time. However, nothing is more politically essential to a republic government (by that, I mean one that depends on election of representatives in government positions) than trustworthy voting. Mail-ballot voting is *not* trustworthy--just look at the abundant news stories of thousands upon thousands of mail-in ballots being thrown out in places such as Massachusetts, Michigan, Nevada, New Jersey, Detroit, Washington, D.C., and NYC. In-person voting best secures the trustworthiness of the election process. Given the clearly essential nature of trustworthy, in-person voting, why should *any* polling places be closed at all--when, again, ALL other essential businesses have remained open? Any pressure county officials are facing to shutdown polls is coming from hypocritical lips: In-person voting is at least as essential to our country as Amazon delivery.

2. If COVID-spread is a concern for in-person voting, then the solution to only open half of the polls is absurd. It is like saying, "I am concerned about getting alligator bites, so I am going swimming in a swamp." If our higher state officials truly are concerned about disease spread, the county should open twice as many polling locations as previous elections, to reduce the number of people interacting at each site--not *double* the number of people at locations by cutting them in half.

3. I understand that the above over-crowding problem is set to be addressed by extending voting days. I strongly discourage this. It is not easy to visit multiple polling locations in one day to fraudulently cast extra votes. (This is part of why in-person voting is much more trustworthy than mail-in ballots.) However, it is much easier to do this over a period of days. Extending the in-person voting period weakens the trustworthiness of in-person voting.

4. I am grateful that the county does not want to disenfranchise people by not giving a polling location within a distance people can reach. This makes sense to me. However, placing polls based on population density alone would fix this--at least better than picking 8 individual factors to value above all others in selecting whom will have the easiest, trustworthy voting experience. Some of these 8 factors are very arbitrary ("unregistered but likely to vote"). The problem with using specific and arbitrary factors is that it creates a value system for people--some constituents are more valuable or deserving than others--and it then takes things, like convenience, from those less deserving, in order to give it to the more valuable constituents. So I think that the solution the county is offering actually does exactly what the county is trying hard to avoid: potentially disenfranchising certain constituents based on individual factors. It would be more equitable to place polls simply according to population density.

Again, I realize that I have expressed deep concerns about the specific measures that the county is taking, but I wholeheartedly stand in agreement with and true pride in our county's leaders for the ultimate goal you have chosen! I have told my friends how fantastic San Bernardino County is for doing this. Thank you for helping your constituents have access to our Constitutional rights, and for upholding the essential voting practices of our government-by-representation!

Lanthripe

