

**L.E.A.D Filipino**  
**San José based non-profit organization**  
**August 6, 2021**

**Testimony:**

Good afternoon members of the Redistricting Commission. My name is Camille Valerio and I am from LEAD Filipino, a local nonprofit organization based in San José. We are focused on advancing civic participation and civil rights within the Filipino/a/x American and broader communities. In the 6 years that we have been active, we spearheaded a coalition of 250 organizations and have helped thousands of FilAms in leadership, education, advocacy, and dialogue. In 2018, LEAD Filipino has led Census education and outreach efforts with the FilAm community in the City of San Jose's Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA) and we are continuing to advocate for our community's representation and visibility in this year's Redistricting.

Our community members have been living in areas of San Jose such as Downtown San Jose, Berryessa, North San Jose (Milpitas), and East Side San Jose (South White Rd., Tully Rd., Quimby Rd., Evergreen).

We ask that you keep our community together when lines are redrawn. Our community lives within San Jose City Council Districts 3, 4, 5, 7 and 8, connected together by small businesses, parks, community organizations, churches, and schools. The St. Francis of Assisi is an important church for the Catholic members of our community. We also have a demographic of FilAm students attending schools within the East Side Union High School District such as Independence, Silver Creek, and Evergreen Valley. There are also a large number of our community members living along with the housing near Independence High School, especially on Checkers Drive.

In addition, we have a huge area of business corridors located in Berryessa & Milpitas (connected by Landess) or at the Great Mall that members of our community from different districts would often travel to eat, shop, and socialize. In addition, Sam's BBQ Diner on San Felipe Rd. and Pinoy Lechon BBQ Grill on Tully Rd. are restaurants in which our community frequent.

The communities in which Filipino Americans live have shared needs and interests around transportation, public health & safety, housing, jobs, and education. Our community has shared policy concerns with other AAPI communities around these needs and interests and it would be best served if the areas in which they live are kept together within the districts.

Thank you.

**Marissa Martinez**  
**Resident of San José**  
**September 18, 2021**

Good morning. My name is Marissa Martinez and I've lived in San José for over 23 years. I grew up in the East Side San José around Evergreen and then moved to Downtown San José after finishing college at Santa Clara University. I am apart of L.E.A.D Filipino, a local non-profit focused on advancing civic participation and civil rights within the Filipino/a/x American and broader communities.

During my childhood, I would visit a lot of FilAm concentrated areas such as the Milpitas, Berryessa, and Alum Rock area. My family's favorite place to shop for groceries and other necessities was the Seafood City in Milpitas or Berryessa. I attended elementary school in the Overfelt area and attended mass at Most Holy Trinity Catholic Church on Nassau Drive because of the weekly Tagalog mass they had. Growing up, my brother and I would participate in different sports camps at Berryessa Community Center. Because of the widespread concentration of FilAms in San José, I ask that the Redistricting Commission keep the District 8 lines the same to ensure that our community is not split from other FilAms in East Side San José.

Other areas or schools of importance for the FilAm community in San José are St. Francis of Assisi Church Mount Pleasant High School, Presentation High School, Bellarmine College Prep Notre Dame High School, Matsumoto Elementary, Vinci Park Elementary School, and Challenger School.

Our community is also connected by occupations with many FilAms working service jobs such as teachers, nurses, food service workers, or non-profit employees. In addition, our FilAms in D3, D4, D5, and D8 care about issues such as affordable housing and support for unhoused community members, the opening of the Delano Manongs Park, access to education especially wireless internet connectivity, and tech equipment.

Thank you.

**L.E.A.D Filipino**  
**San José based non-profit organization**  
**September 11, 2021**

Good afternoon members of the Redistricting Commission. My name is Michelle Nelmda and I am representing L.E.A.D Filipino, a local nonprofit organization based in San José. We are focused on advancing civic participation and civil rights within the Filipino/a/x American and broader communities. In the 6 years that we have been active, we spearheaded a coalition of 250 organizations and have helped thousands of FilAms in leadership, education, advocacy, and dialogue. In 2018, L.E.A.D Filipino has led Census education and outreach efforts with the FilAm community in the City of San Jose's Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA) and we are continuing to advocate for our community's representation and visibility in this year's Redistricting.

Our community lives within San Jose City Council Districts 3, 4, 5, and 8 connected together by small businesses, parks, community organizations, churches, and schools.

We ask that you keep our community together when lines are redrawn. 50 years ago, Japantown used to have a large Filipino-American population. It was large enough to establish a Pinoytown in the area with FilAm owned businesses such as grocery stores and community spaces like the Filipino Community Center that is still on North 6th Street. This community center is the only Filipino American community space left from that time, however, our community has started Pinoytown tours to revive and sustain the historical knowledge of the area. Over time, a lack of resources and increased housing prices pushed our community into different areas of San José. There are Filipino American youth, ranging from middle school to high school students, who gather as the Filipino Youth Coalition at Northside Community Center on North 6th Street. It is also a center for FilAm seniors and veterans. The Cathedral Basilica of St. Joseph Church on South Market Street is an important church for the Catholic members of our community. We also have a demographic of FilAm students attending San José State University from various parts of San José such as Berryessa, Milpitas and East Side San José. There are also a large number of our community members living along 4th Street.

In addition, FilAm members of D3 utilize the FilAm business corridors located in Berryessa & Milpitas (connected by Landess) or at the Great Mall that members of our community from different districts would often travel to eat, shop, and socialize. In addition, Sam's BBQ Diner on San Felipe Rd. and Pinoy Lechon BBQ Grill on Tully Rd. are restaurants in which our community frequent.

The communities in which Filipino Americans live in have shared needs and interests around transportation, public health & safety, housing, jobs, and education. Our community has shared policy concerns with other AAPI communities around these needs and interests and it would be best-served if the areas in which they live in are kept together within the districts.

Thank you.

**Alan Gouig**  
**Resident of San José**

Written Testimony to the San José Redistricting Commission

Good morning. My name is Alan Gouig and I have been living in Downtown San José for over 5 years now. I moved to San José after my second year of undergraduate studies to be closer to San José State University. I have been a part of San José based organizations such as Akbayan SJSU, Malaya South Bay and L.E.A.D Filipino.

During my time living here in San José, I've enjoyed visiting Filipino American owned restaurants such as Tapsilog Bistro in Campell, the FIAM business corridors alongside Landess Avenue, the Great Mall, and Eastridge with other FilAm peers.

Overall, our community members have been living in areas of San Jose such as Downtown San Jose, Berryessa, North San Jose (Milpitas), and East Side San Jose (South White Rd., Tully Rd., Quimby Rd., Evergreen).

As a Downtown San José resident and Filipino-American community advocate, I ask that the commission keeps our community together when the lines are redrawn.

Thank you.

**Karen Manalac**  
**Resident of San José**

Written Testimony to the San José Redistricting Commission

Good morning. My name is Karen Manalac and I have been living in Downtown San José for over 3 years. I moved to San José after my second year of undergraduate studies to be closer to San José State University. Many Filipinx/o/a American college students like myself lived in the Gateway Apartments on 4th Street near the exit towards the 280, on 10th Street, or formed on campus. I have also been a part of San José based organizations such as Akbayan SJSU and L.E.A.D Filipino for over 5 years now.

During my time living here in San José, I've enjoyed visiting Filipino American owned restaurants such as Tapsilog Bistro in Campell, the FilAm business corridors alongside Landess Avenue, the Great Mall, and Eastridge with other FilAm peers.

Overall, our community members have been living in areas of San Jose such as Downtown San Jose, Berryessa, North San Jose (Milpitas), and East Side San Jose (South White Rd., Tully Rd., Quimby Rd., Evergreen).

As a Downtown San José resident and Filipino-American community advocate, I ask that the commission keeps our community together when the lines are redrawn.

Thank you.

**Robert Ragsac**  
**Resident of San José**  
**September 11, 2021**

Hello, my name is Robert Ragsac. I grew up in Japantown, San Jose, in the area of what used to be known as "Pinoytown", in the 1930s. The Filipino community was located in the blocks between Heinlerville Chinatown and the expanding Japantown before its residents were removed during WWII. I am a board member of the Filipino American National Museum (FANHS) in Stockton, California's "Little Manila Town", devoting my time to local history research and involvement with the local Filipino American community. I organized the first known formal walking tour of Pinoytown for local college students, as well as presentations on the FilAm history in San Jose to community members.

There is a FilAm community gathering spot that still remains in Japantown called the "Filipino Community Center" on N 6th Street. As a San Jose resident for over 80 years who has knowledge about the Filipino American community and their history, I ask that this Commission keep our community together when lines are redrawn.

Thank you.

**Dennis Lozano**  
**Resident of San José**  
**September 11, 2021**

Hello, my name is Dennis Lozano and I am currently a resident of Downtown San Jose (District 3). My family immigrated to reside in Redwood City from the Philippines. I work in the tech industry.

Growing up, my family and I went to Most Holy Trinity Catholic Church. Currently, my son goes there to attend CCD (religious education). The following areas are places that my family and I often visit: Eastridge Mall, Almaden Filipino American community group.

As a current resident of Downtown San Jose, I ask that this Commission does not divide our community.

Thank you.

**L.E.A.D Filipino**  
**San José based non-profit organization**  
**September 11, 2021**

Good afternoon members of the Redistricting Commission. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am from LEAD Filipino, a local nonprofit organization based in San José. We are focused on advancing civic participation and civil rights within the Filipino/a/x American and broader communities. In the 6 years that we have been active, we spearheaded a coalition of 250 organizations and have helped thousands of FilAms in leadership, education, advocacy, and dialogue. In 2018, LEAD Filipino has led Census education and outreach efforts with the FilAm community in the City of San Jose's Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA) and we are continuing to advocate for our community's representation and visibility in this year's Redistricting.

Our community members have been living in areas of San Jose such as Downtown San Jose, Berryessa, North San Jose (Milpitas), and East Side San Jose (South White Rd., Tully Rd., Quimby Rd., Evergreen).

We ask that you keep our community together when lines are redrawn. The Iglesia ni Cristo Church is an important church for the Christian members of our community. We also have a demographic of FilAm students attending schools within the East Side Union High School District such as Independence, Silver Creek, and Evergreen Valley. There are also a large number of our community members living along with the housing near Independence High School especially on Checkers Drive.

In addition, we have a huge area of business corridors located in Berryessa & Milpitas (connected by Landess) or at the Great Mall that members of our community from different districts would often travel to eat, shop, and socialize. In addition, Sam's BBQ Diner on San Felipe Rd. and Pinoy Lechon BBQ Grill on Tully Rd. are restaurants in which our community frequent.

The communities in which Filipino Americans live have shared needs and interests around transportation, public health & safety, housing, jobs, and education. Our community has shared policy concerns with other AAPI communities around these needs and interests and it would be best served if the areas in which they live are kept together within the districts.

Thank you.

## **Collection of COI Testimonies by L.E.A.D Filipino**

**Camille Valerio**  
**L.E.A.D Filipino**  
**September 18, 2021**

### **Testimony:**

Good afternoon members of the Redistricting Commission. My name is Camille Valerio and I am from LEAD Filipino, a local nonprofit organization based in San José. We are focused on advancing civic participation and civil rights within the Filipino/a/x American and broader communities. In the 6 years that we have been active, we spearheaded a coalition of 250 organizations and have helped thousands of FilAms in leadership, education, advocacy, and dialogue. In 2018, LEAD Filipino has led Census education and outreach efforts with the FilAm community in the City of San Jose's Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA) and we are continuing to advocate for our community's representation and visibility in this year's Redistricting.

Our community members have been living in areas of San Jose such as Downtown San Jose, Berryessa/ North San Jose, Milpitas, and East Side San Jose (South White Rd., Tully Rd., Quimby Rd., Evergreen).

We ask that you keep our community together when lines are redrawn by keep the boundary lines the same. Our community lives within several San Jose City Council Districts connected together by small businesses, parks, community organizations, churches, and schools. The St. Francis of Assisi is an important church for the Catholic members of our community. We also have a demographic of FilAm students attending schools within the East Side Union High School District such as Independence, Silver Creek, and Evergreen Valley. There are also a large number of our community members living along with the housing near Independence High School, especially on Checkers Drive.

In addition, we have a huge area of business corridors located in Berryessa & Milpitas (connected by Landess) or at the Great Mall that members of our community from different districts would often travel to eat, shop, and socialize. In addition, Sam's BBQ Diner on San Felipe Rd. and Pinoy Lechon BBQ Grill on Tully Rd. are restaurants in which our community frequent.

The communities in which Filipino Americans live have shared needs and interests around transportation, public health & safety, housing, jobs, and education. Our community has shared policy concerns with other AAPI communities around these needs and interests and it would be best served if the areas in District 4 in which they live are kept together within the district.

**Clarence Madrilejos**  
**Resident of San José**  
**September 18, 2021**

Hello, my name is Clarence Madrilejos. Throughout my life, I have lived all over Santa Clara County, including San José. I've specifically lived in Berryessa, but also know the Alum Rock, Japantown, and Evergreen (which holds a large Filipinx/o/a American population) area very well.

My father first came to San José to work in the farm fields while my mother came from the Philippines for work opportunities. During the 70s to the early 90s, we moved to different areas in San José depending on our family's job situation and the increasing housing costs.

I ask that the Redistricting Commission keep the same lines in District 4 to ensure our community stays within its boundaries.

Growing up in a Catholic household, we would attend church every Sunday at St. Victor's in Berryessa (D4) or Most Holy Trinity Church near Eastridge (D8). Other Catholic churches that were important to our community were Five Wounds Portuguese Church (D3) on E. Santa Clara Street and Lady of Guadalupe (D5) on E. San Antonio Street. Our Lady of Guadalupe had a large number of FilAms attend and living in the area because of the affordable housing available which was attractive to overseas Filipinx moving into the area.

Like a lot of my FilAm peers, I attended Ben Painter Elementary School (D5) on Rough and Ready Road, William Sheppard Middle School (D5), and Independence High School (D4). I also had cousins who attended Silver Creek High School (D8) on Silver Creek Road or Mt. Pleasant High School (D5) on S. White Road. My family would also visit anywhere that was a driving distance for recreational activities such as Fremont, Lake Elizabeth, Lake Cunningham, Raging Waters, and even relative's houses for gatherings.

Because the FilAm community is spread out, we would also travel along the 680 or towards Tully Road, McLaughlin, the center of Alum Rock, or along Story Road. We would also visit newer local FilAm restaurants such as Tapsilog Bistro.

Our community is connected by a series of issues such as more workplace protection workers for our FilAm frontline workers (especially at Regional Medical Centers where there is a large demographic of FilAm employees) and education. FilAms have the highest dropout rates in the Asian community and would like to see more disaggregated data to advocate for more resources for our community's students.

Once again, it'd be in the best interest of our FilAm community all over San José to have the lines stay the same to ensure we are not separated. Thank you.

**Justher Gutierrez**  
**Resident of San José**  
**September 18, 2021**

Hello,

My name is Justher Gutierrez and I have been living in North San José. I am a part of a South Bay grassroots organization called Malaya South Bay which seeks to broaden support for the cause of freedom and democracy in the Philippines.

My family has lived in in Santa Clara County for My grandparents came to the United States then petitioned my family over. Their first jobs here began in the electronic manufacturing industry in the Sunnyvale & Mountain View area. Growing up, I attended Our Lady of Peace in Santa Clara and also went to school in the area. We would travel all the way to the Great Mall and Seafood City in Milpitas for our groceries and other recreational activities. This area had lots of the ingredients my family needed to cook Filipino dishes or materials needed for our cultural events.

I ask that the redistricting commission acknowledge our community when the lines are being redrawn. It would be in the best interest of the FilAm community here in District 4 to keep us together by keeping the same boundary lines.

Thank you.

**Gabriel Young**  
**Resident of San José**  
**September 18, 2021**

Good morning. My name is Gabriel Young and I've lived in the Berryessa area for over 20 years now. I am the State Policy Advocate for L.E.A.D Filipino and a member of FIERCE, a statewide assembly of 20 FilAm community-based organizations (CBOs), nonprofits, grassroots, and student groups from across California.

As a San José resident, I ask that the Redistricting Commission keep the same boundaries lines to ensure our FilAm community along the D4 boundaries is kept with the rest of our FilAm community in D4. The neighborhoods alongside Miguelita, North Jackson, Pacheco, and Baton Rouge have a high percentage of FilAms living in the area, ranging from 14-30%. Our FilAm community in this area shares similar interests and socioeconomic status in comparison to the demographic of District 5 and Alum Rock.

Our community in D3, D4, D5, and D8 use the same churches, shared community spaces or businesses such as the old Seafood City in Berryessa, Tindahan Pinoy in Capital & Hostetter (Berryessa), Filipino Community Center in Japantown, the Jollibee and FilAm restaurants in Evergreen, Tapsilog and Toppings. Growing up, my family and I also attended mass at St. Victor which had a large FilAm congregation.

Geographically, our community in San José is connected by the 880 freeway which connects South San Jose to North San Jose, the Montague BART Station, White & Piedmont Rd., Ruby Rd., Empire & Jackson (where historic Filipino town used to be), Quimby & Tully Rd, the Ocala Area, & McLaughlin. These streets contain FilAm Business corridors, neighborhoods, and just frequently traveled by FilAms.

Keeping our communities together helps keep healthier relationships between parents and children, fills our community's intergenerational gaps, helps us protect our undocumented community, and creates intersectional relationships with other communities. Keeping our community together also gives us a voice to stand up to AAPI hate crimes and help reimagine public safety.

Thank you.

**James Binauhan**  
**Resident of San José**  
**September 18, 2021**

Hello,

My name is James Binauhan and I've lived in Milpitas for 15 years, but also know San José well. I am a part of L.E.A.D Filipino, which a non-profit based in San José. We are focused on advancing civic participation and civil rights within the Filipino/a/x American and broader communities.

The FilAm community in Milpitas is connected by its community spaces, businesses such as St. Elizabeth, St. John the Baptist and also the Evangelical Faith Communities, "PNC" Music Schools, Seafood City, Seasons Mall (the stage in the middle of the mall), Jollibee, The Pines (neighborhood, duplex, single-family homes) near Great Mall, and the Manong Mural at Milpitas Library. Due to its proximity, my family would also visit Berryessa often to visit the community spaces and businesses such as St. John Vianni, St. Victor, Valerio's Bakery, King Eggroll, L&L's, Olivera's Eggs, Berryessa Flea Market, Penitencia Creek County Park, Manila Oriental, and Seafood City (on McKee, before it closed).

I ask that the Redistricting Commission keeps our community within the District 4 boundary lines.

Thank you.

**L.E.A.D Filipino**  
**San José based non-profit organization**  
**August 6, 2021**

**Testimony:**

Good afternoon members of the Redistricting Commission. My name is Camille Valerio and I am from LEAD Filipino, a local nonprofit organization based in San José. We are focused on advancing civic participation and civil rights within the Filipino/a/x American and broader communities. In the 6 years that we have been active, we spearheaded a coalition of 250 organizations and have helped thousands of FilAms in leadership, education, advocacy, and dialogue. In 2018, LEAD Filipino has led Census education and outreach efforts with the FilAm community in the City of San Jose's Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA) and we are continuing to advocate for our community's representation and visibility in this year's Redistricting.

Our community members have been living in areas of San Jose such as Downtown San Jose, Berryessa/ North San Jose, Milpitas, and East Side San Jose (South White Rd., Tully Rd., Quimby Rd., Evergreen).

We ask that you keep our community together when lines are redrawn. Our community lives within several San Jose City Council Districts connected together by small businesses, parks, community organizations, churches, and schools. The St. Francis of Assisi is an important church for the Catholic members of our community. We also have a demographic of FilAm students attending schools within the East Side Union High School District such as Independence, Silver Creek, and Evergreen Valley. There are also a large number of our community members living along with the housing near Independence High School, especially on Checkers Drive.

In addition, we have a huge area of business corridors located in Berryessa & Milpitas (connected by Landess) or at the Great Mall that members of our community from different districts would often travel to eat, shop, and socialize. In addition, Sam's BBQ Diner on San Felipe Rd. and Pinoy Lechon BBQ Grill on Tully Rd. are restaurants in which our community frequent.

The communities in which Filipino Americans live have shared needs and interests around transportation, public health & safety, housing, jobs, and education. Our community has shared policy concerns with other AAPI communities around these needs and interests and it would be best served if the areas in District 5 in which they live are kept together within the district.

Thank you.

**Daniel Lazo**  
**Resident of San José**  
**September 18, 2021**

Hello,

My name is Daniel Lazo and I have lived in San José for over 23 years. My parents used to live in Milpitas and moved to the Alum Rock neighborhood. I am part of a local non-profit called L.E.A.D Filipino, focused on advancing civic participation and civil rights within the Filipino/a/x American and broader communities. I ask that the Redistricting Commission keeps our community within the District 5 boundary lines by keeping the lines the same.

Growing up my family would travel to the [FilAm business corridors](#) in the Berryessa/Milpitas/Commodore area such as Seafood City, Jollibee, Great Mall, Valerio's Bakery, and 7 Leaves Plaza. As a Catholic household, my family would attend church at St. Francis of Assisi which was alongside San Felipe Road and had a large FilAm congregation. For family picnics, we would gather at Lake Cunningham (D8), Cataldi Park (D4), and Welch Park (D8).

I'd also like to acknowledge the Filipinx/o/a elderly population in downtown San José (D3) the shares similar interests and concerns to our COIs in Berryessa. There's also a history of FilAms in Japantown represented by the Filipino Community Center which just celebrated their 88th Anniversary in August. This area had a rich history of Filipinxs and also contained Pinoytown before our community left due to the housing prices and lack of opportunities.

Geographically, the FilAm community is connected by Highway 101, 280 and 680. There is also FilAms living along White Rd. (connecting Evergreen to Berryessa). There are many schools along White Rd such as James Lick, Piedmont, Independence, Silver Creek, EB that educate many of our community's youth. Community organizations such as Filipino Youth Coalition (FYC). Transportation-wise, the 71 was my bus going from Piedmont Hills to Eastridge Mall and also home on White Rd

Thank you.

**Kevin Suarez**  
**Past resident of San José**  
**September 18, 2021**

Hello,

My name is Kevin Suarez. I am part of a local non-profit called L.E.A.D Filipino, focused on advancing civic participation and civil rights within the Filipino/a/x American and broader communities. I was born in San Jose and originally lived in Evergreen. I also resided in the Silver Creek area then moved to San Felipe. Currently, I am in Elk Grove, Sacramento with my family.

My mother immigrated to the U.S. in the 90s and worked in the manufacturing industry for military devices-- which was very common amongst the older generation of our community. During the years I've lived in District 8 with my family, my parents and I often went to several FilAm Businesses in the Berryessa/Milpitas/Commodore area in other city council districts such as Jollibee, Sam's BBQ, and Manila Oriental just to name a few. My parents also took ballroom classes at Mt. Hamilton Grange Hall along Aborn Rd.

Much of the FilAm community works in healthcare and in independently managed care homes. With that being said, there are neighborhoods with high populations of our community residing along McKee Rd and the schools of the East Side Union High School District.

As a current resident of Downtown San Jose, I ask that this Commission does not divide our community and keeps in mind the landmarks, businesses, and workplaces I have mentioned.

Thank you.

**Katherine Nasol**  
**Resident of San José**  
**September 18, 2021**

Hello,

My name is Katherine Nasol and I am an organizer, scholar-activist, and educator from Evergreen, San Jose. I am also a founding member and Policy Director of the Bulosan Center for Filipinx Studies and a UC Davis Mellon Public Scholar. My dad immigrated to Stockton in the 1930s, lived in San Francisco, then moved to the South Bay where I grew up.

I grew up going to Most Holy Trinity Catholic Church in East Side San Jose with my family, where I was baptized. I went to St. Francis of Assisi Church as well. Our community often travels all across the city of San Jose/Milpitas to go to popular business corridors. My family often goes grocery shopping at Seafood City Milpitas and likes to eat at the Filipino restaurants nearby such as Max's Restaurant, Jollibee, and Goldilocks frequently for birthdays and family parties.

I would like to mention that there was a huge population of FilAm workers in the semiconductor industry in the 1970s-1980s. Many pinays and Filipina women worked as factory workers and assemblers. In addition, there are many caregivers, airport workers, and nurses in our community. Importantly, Regional Medical Center on North Jackson Ave has many FilAm employees within the hospital and in dialysis and off-site clinics.

Keeping these areas in mind, I ask that this Commission keep our community together when lines are redrawn.

Thank you.