

ORAL TESTIMONY (AUGUST 4 OCBOS COI PUBLIC HEARING)

Hi, my name is Dulce Saavedra, I was born and raised in Santa Ana. I am part of Resilience OC. Resilience OC is an organization working to build leadership of color that works towards community transformation. We have worked for the past 10 years to bring attention to and tackle the issues that have plagued our communities through mentorship, leadership programming, participatory research, community organizing, and advocacy. As part of our organizing and advocacy, we are a member of the People's Redistricting Alliance, a coalition of 16 community-based organizations established to promote a greater community voice in statewide and local redistricting processes here in Orange County.

Our communities of interest include the Latinx community, disenfranchised communities of color, youth, first-generation immigrants, limited-English speakers, and low-income workers.

My community should be centered because we face challenges associated with social and economic status, access to affordable housing, and language access. Most of the youth population are children and teens who rely on free or reduced school lunches. In addition, our community lives in fear of law enforcement - dealing with issues such as deportation, detention, ICE, juvenile justice, and probation.

Our communities live in fear of law enforcement, immigration and the consequences of contact with the criminal legal system. According to the [Vera Institute of Justice](#), 4 out of 5 children have 1 immigrant parent in Santa Ana and 102,015 residents are vulnerable to deportation proceedings. Our communities face daily consequences by the entanglement associated with law enforcement and the immigration system such as Celia has been experiencing for the past decade:

Celia came in contact with law enforcement over a decade ago when she stepped inside a phone company to pay an overdue bill and ensure the services were not terminated. She left her twin infant daughters in the car for a moment, just enough time for a passerby to see the children unattended and call the police. As a result, Celia was arrested, released on bail, and then immediately apprehended by ICE and incarcerated in immigration detention, thus beginning her long battle for her freedom.

[*Voice of OC: Gonzalez and Anda: Community Members Continue to Support Celia's Fight to Remain Free!*](#)

According to the [Conditions of Children in Orange County](#) report, Santa Ana and West Anaheim have one of the largest dropout rates in OC, with both cities exceeding over 5%. Dropout rates for the 2019 school year continued to be highest among Black/African American students (9.9%), followed by Hispanic/Latino (7.2%), American Indian/Alaska Native (6.1%). Our communities are in need of competent culturally aware and transformative resources and representation to improve these outcomes. Youth with real representation could live, thrive, and transform their communities.

This redistricting process will move closer to equitable representation where community voices around the issues that we highlighted can create solutions such as access to public programs and supportive resources catered to our communities and our complex needs.

In conclusion, Santa Ana should be kept together in one supervisorial district to ensure access to public programs and supportive resources for immigrant communities. We believe a federal Voting Rights Act district is centered in Santa Ana. Thus, Santa Ana should be drawn with similar communities such as West Anaheim.

Thank you.