

# CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE

STATE CAPITOL  
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA  
95814

June 2, 2015

Attorney General Kamala Harris  
California Department of Justice  
P.O. Box 944255  
Sacramento, CA 94244-2550

## **RE: Request for Amicus Brief in *Evenwel v. Abbott***

Dear Attorney General Harris,

I am deeply concerned with the U.S. Supreme Court's recent decision to revisit a long-standing principle of our constitution – “one person, one vote” – in the *Evenwel v. Abbott* case. This is a shocking development with dire implications for the political rights of millions of American residents.

Since it was first affirmed 51 years ago by Chief Justice Earl Warren's Supreme Court, “one person, one vote” has been a widely articulated and consistently upheld tenet of our nation's Constitution. Before that time, political districts across the nation were arbitrarily drawn and severely imbalanced – leaving millions underrepresented. Los Angeles County and its 6 million people, for example, had the equivalent voting power in our State Senate of a rural district with barely 14,000 people.

This challenge now is nothing more than a cynical and transparent effort to turn back the clock on decades of legal precedent and return an unjust, unequal system of redistricting that could greatly disadvantage diverse and urban communities and deprive millions of American residents, many of whom are either Latino or Asian, of political representation. Moreover, as noted in the U.S. District Court ruling in question (*Evenwel v. Perry*), the plaintiffs rely primarily on a legal “theory never before accepted by the Supreme Court or any circuit court.”

In California, overturning “one person, one vote” could lead to a system of political segregation that only counts three-fifths of our population and essentially ignores the rest. Make no mistake: we Californians believe that all people – not just adult registered voters – deserve equal protection under our laws and fundamental political representation.



Therefore, I respectfully request that you weigh in on behalf of the State of California, as its foremost legal advocate, to urge the Supreme Court to uphold legal precedent and protect the rights of millions of American residents.

Sincerely,

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Jim Beall

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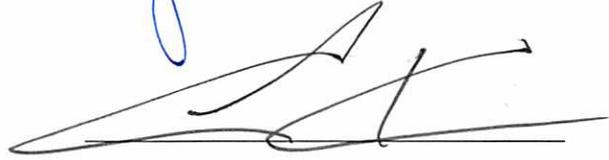
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