

# SOUTHWEST VOTER REGISTRATION EDUCATION PROJECT

212 EAST HOUSTON ST., SUITE 401  
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS 78205  
AC/512-222-0224



## MEMORANDUM

TO: Willie Velasquez  
Choco Meza  
Bill Calderon

FROM: R.L. Rios, Esq. *RJR*

RE: San Patricio County

DATE: 6 AUG 1979

Pursuant to complaints you have received from voters in San Patricio County, you asked me to look into the County's election structure for possible voter rights violations. The litigation staff has completed its preliminary analysis:

### San Patricio

Population - 47,288 - (%) Spanish Surnames - 49.1%  
Spanish Surnames - County Commissioners - 1

Our findings suggest a possible violation of the one-man one-vote rule. Precinct 2 has a total population of 14,486, whereas precinct 3 has a population of 8,264.; top to bottom deviation from the ideal is 52.63%. The County Clerk told me the last time the County was reapportioned was in 1969.

Further, our fifth count data indicates that San Patricio County may be gerrymandered in such a way that the voting strength of the minority population is diluted. The precincts break down as follows:

<u>COMMISSIONER PRECINCTS</u>	<u>TOTAL POPULATION</u>	<u>SPANISH SURNAME</u>	<u>PERCENTAGE (%)</u>
1	13,919	8,316	59.74
2	14,486	5,841	40.32
3	8,264	5,724	69.26
4	10,619	2,702	25.44
TOTALS	47,288	22,583	47.75 %

ATTACHMENT I

It is my feeling that new districts could be drawn that would comply with the constitutional one-man one-vote rule and make it possible for the minorities of San Patricio County to elect two County Commissioners.

My recommendation at this point is that a meeting be arranged between the legal staff and the people from San Patricio County who have complained. At this meeting we can present our findings and the legal alternatives available.

CC: Joaquin G. Avila, Esq.  
517 Petroleum Commerce Building  
201 North St. Mary's Street  
San Antonio, Texas - 78205

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212 EAST HOUSTON ST., SUITE 401 SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS 78205, AC/512-222-0224

CHAIRMAN  
MACLOVIO BARRAZA

MEMORANDUM

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
WILLIAM C. VELASQUEZ

TO: Senator Carlos Truan  
Alonso Rodriguez  
Ruben Bonilla  
Jose Cano  
Dr. Hector Garcia ✓  
Raul Yzaquirre

FROM: William C. Velasquez, Executive Director

WCV

RE: San Patricio County

DATE: August 10, 1979

Enclosed please find an analysis of San Patricio County done by our Attorney and Director of Litigation, Rolando Rios.

Although we don't have enough maps to go around, the data are self explanatory. We want to have a meeting in the area to discuss the material and explore the different avenues of recourse that we have. We are suggesting that extra care be given to this area because there already is a Chicano County Commissioner and because it is a good sized county that is almost 50% Chicano.

Please let us know who we should deal with in the county and let us know your ideas on how we should proceed.

I will be out of the office the entire week of August 13th to August 17th. The contact person during this time will be Rolando Rios in our office.

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CHAIRMAN  
MACLOVIO BARRAZA

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
WILLIAM C. VELASQUEZ

August 10, 1979

Alonso Rodriguez  
Attorney at Law  
P.O. Box 237  
Sinton, TX 78387

Dear Mr. Rodriguez:

Enclosed please find a copy of our preliminary analysis of the commissioner precincts of San Patricio County (Attachment 1). Also, for your convenience, I have included a map of the commissioners precincts (Attachment 2).

As you can see, there may be a violation of the one-man one vote rule. The ideal district should have a population of 11,822, yet precinct 2 has a population of 14,486 and precinct 3 has a population of 8,264. This produces a top to bottom deviation of 52.63%.

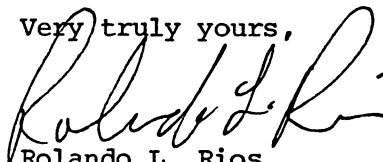
As you may know, case law permits at the most a 15% deviation.

Furthermore, observe that precinct 3 is 69.26% Spanish surname, but an anglo named Glen Dorris is the county commissioner. This same precinct, however, has the lowest population, 8,264; it deviates from the ideal by 30.1%. A reapportionment may be necessary to further strengthen the minority vote in precinct 3.

As I mentioned to you on the phone, upon closer scrutiny we may find out that the present plan works to the advantage of the Hispanic community. To find this out, when we have our meeting, I would like to focus on the following matters: 1) What are your opinions on the current plan? 2) Could better lines be drawn? 3) What do you see are the problems with precinct 3? 4) Do you feel a registration drive would be helpful?

I look forward to hearing from you on when I can meet with you and other local leaders.

Very truly yours,



Rolando L. Rios  
Attorney at Law

Enc.

CC: Willie Velasquez  
Executive Director  
Southwest Voter Registration  
Education Project

Joaquin G. Avila  
Attorney at Law  
Mexican American Legal  
Defense & Education Fund