

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
CALIFORNIA STATE AUDITOR'S OFFICE (CSA)

In the matter of:

2020 CITIZENS REDISTRICTING COMMISSION (CRC)
Applicant Review Panel (ARP) Public Meeting

621 Capitol Mall, 10th Floor
Sacramento, California 95814

MONDAY, MARCH 16, 2020

8:58 A.M.

Reported by:
Peter Petty

APPEARANCESMembers Present

Ryan Coe, Chair

Angela Dickison, Vice Chair

Ben Belnap, Panel Member

Staff Present

Christopher Dawson, Panel Counsel

Yvonne Le Tellier, Executive Secretary

Applicants

Louise Gulartie

Isra Ahmad

Steven Boilard

John Rolph

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1 Legislature and the Governor's Office.

2 As of this moment there are no travel
3 restrictions in California and CSA employees continue to
4 travel on state business. Under the latest guidance from
5 CalHR, the meetings of the Applicant Review Panel are
6 essential and low risk.

7 You know, if you're an applicant and you are at
8 low risk, and you feel confident, we'd like to go ahead
9 with your in-person interview as scheduled.

10 But we are also putting into place a contingency
11 plan that will allow applicants to participate in
12 interviews remotely, with a minimum of travel. I don't
13 have any details, but as soon as that plan is in place I
14 will inform each of you.

15 In the meantime, I want to assure anyone,
16 everyone that we will do what needs to be done to meet our
17 legal duty while protecting the health and safety of
18 everybody involved. Thank you.

19 CHAIR COE: Okay, thank you, Counsel.

20 At this time we'd like to welcome Louise Gulartie
21 --

22 MS. GULARTIE: Thank you.

23 CHAIR COE: -- for her interview. Welcome.

24 Thank you for being here.

25 And I'd like to turn the time back over to Mr.

1 Dawson for the standard five questions, please.

2 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Ms. Gulartie, I'm going
3 to ask you five standard questions that the Panel has
4 requested that each applicant address. Are you ready,
5 ma'am?

6 MS. GULARTIE: I am.

7 MR. DAWSON: The first question. What skills and
8 attributes should all Commissioners possess?

9 What skills or competencies should the Commission
10 possess collectively?

11 Of the skills, attributes and competencies that
12 each Commissioner should possess, which do you possess?

13 In summary, how will you contribute to the
14 success of the Commission?

15 MS. GULARTIE: Thank you. I believe that all
16 Commissioners ideally should possess the three legally
17 mandated attributes of relevant analytical skills, ability
18 to be impartial, and appreciation for California's
19 diversity.

20 In addition, if I were to choose I would like
21 each member of the Commission to have integrity,
22 transparency, and time availability. I would like them to
23 have good communication skills, either written or oral. I
24 would like each Commissioner to have the ability to
25 navigate conflicts over difference of opinion and the

1 ability to work as part of a team.

2 Finally, I would like each Commissioner to have
3 the ability and willingness to set aside their personal
4 desires, beliefs, and agendas to prioritize performing the
5 work of the Commission with excellence, diligence, and in a
6 manner that protects the integrity of the overall process.

7 I possess all of the enumerated skills.

8 I believe that some members of the Commission
9 must possess a good ability to interface with the public at
10 hearings and have a good skill set regarding the
11 technology, the ability to do map drawing, and the ability
12 to mine databases.

13 I believe we should have on the -- for at least
14 some of the Commission members the ability to understand
15 potential future legal challenges, and how to bullet proof
16 the Commission's work so that such challenges are not
17 successful.

18 I believe that some members of the panel should
19 have the ability to recognize what gerrymandering patterns
20 exist historically and how to avoid them.

21 I believe that other members should have good
22 time management skills and the ability to forecast
23 appropriate time deadlines.

24 The areas I will find more challenging will be
25 the technical, computer, and hardware skills -- software

1 skills, excuse me.

2 I envision my role in the Commission as being
3 based on five strengths, areas of strengths. The first is
4 what I call individual task strength. I am good at
5 organizing and breaking up large problems into small,
6 doable task components.

7 I am good at thinking outside the box to figure
8 out ways to obtain information that is not readily thought
9 of as accessible. I can ingest large amounts of data and
10 sift through it for relevant information, putting it into
11 manageable and useful form. I have superb written and oral
12 communication skills, regardless of who it is that I'm
13 speaking to.

14 Finally, under the individual task strength
15 flexibility in roles. I can take a leadership position or
16 I can act as a support for someone else. I can talk to the
17 public or I can do research and analyze. I can assess
18 where the Commission has a need in a given day, week, or
19 month and switch position to fill in the holes and shore up
20 the gaps.

21 My second area of strength, I believe, is the
22 ability to recognize that the Commission must become an
23 organic entity, a being that works with one accord, one
24 will in cooperative harmony to accomplish the work that
25 needs to be done.

1 My third area of strength is to be able to take
2 the temperature of the public when we are at hearings.
3 Different groups of people will present in different ways,
4 and those ways where they're coming from need to be
5 assessed.

6 Finally, I have the ability to interface between
7 the Commission and the public during the times that we're
8 working together.

9 My last area of strength is that I can keep one
10 eye focused on the task at hand, but I can keep the other
11 eye consistently focused on bullet proofing the
12 Commission's work against a successful future legal
13 challenge.

14 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Question two. Work on
15 the Commission requires members of different political
16 backgrounds to work together. Since the 2010 Commission
17 was selected and formed, the American political
18 conversation has become increasingly polarized, whether in
19 the press, on social media, and even in our own families.

20 What characteristics do you possess, and what
21 characteristics should your fellow Commissioners possess,
22 that will protect against hyperpartisanship?

23 What will you do to ensure that the work of the
24 Commission is not seen as polarized or hyperpartisan and
25 avoid perceptions of political bias and conflict?

1 MS. GULARTIE: Thank you. First, let me note
2 that no matter what any member of the Commission does there
3 will always be someone disgruntled in the public who will
4 use the claim of hyperpartisanship to attempt to discredit
5 the Commission's work. I do not believe the Commission
6 should be bullied or afraid of such threats, but I do
7 believe that there are things the Commission can do to
8 prevent such threats from being made. These fall into
9 three categories, comportment, demeanor, and authenticity.

10 Comportment. If each Commission member comports
11 themselves in a way to listen with respect and works to
12 understand every other member of the Commission and the
13 public, it communicates an undeniable message to the other
14 person that their position and their message are taken
15 seriously. That message can't be mistaken and it will go a
16 long way to diffuse the claim of hyperpartisanship.

17 Demeanor. By demeanor I mean not speaking or
18 communicating the emotions of anger, scorn, ridicule,
19 contempt, irritation or impatience with another human
20 being. A Commissioner should not be abrasive or dogmatic.
21 And if either of those things are part of their core
22 personality, they should make a special effort not to bring
23 it to this job. If a Commissioner comes to work and
24 they're having a bad day because of external life events,
25 they should have the ability to check it at the door so it

1 doesn't spill over into the public and provide a ground for
2 the claim of hyperpartisanship.

3 Finally, there's a huge difference between
4 disagreement and division. Commissioners should learn how
5 to disagree with somebody without appearing divisive.

6 Authenticity. There's a world of difference
7 between professional politeness and authentic interest.
8 The former is a veneer that is easy to slip on, much like
9 we put on a uniform. The latter is harder because it
10 requires genuine engagement. But when we engage genuinely
11 with the public or with other Commissioners it helps defeat
12 the claim of hyperpartisanship because they sense we
13 genuinely care. We care about them, we care about their
14 message, and we're not just furthering our own agenda.

15 I have these attributes.

16 Finally, there's a fourth component to this
17 answer which is how to diffuse a claim of hyperpartisanship
18 once it has been made. That way is documentation.
19 Everybody should make contemporaneous notes at each meeting
20 about what was done, said, and why. This will give the
21 Commission and legal counsel the armament necessary to
22 diffuse claims of hyperpartisanship. Thank you.

23 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Question three. What is
24 the greatest problem the Commission could encounter, and
25 what actions would you take to avoid or respond to this

1 problem?

2 MS. GULARTIE: I believe that the greatest
3 problem the Commission could face would be to draw district
4 lines in such a way as to permit the judiciary an opening
5 to hijack the Commission's work product and step into the
6 position of redrawing its own concept of appropriate
7 district lines. This would happen if a successful legal
8 challenge were sustained.

9 I say this because what I have learned during my
10 historical review of the Voting Rights Act and what has
11 happened with case law since it was enacted in 1965.
12 During the 1971 round of redistricting the California
13 Supreme Court was put in charge, eventually, of the
14 redistricting plan. They appointed a special master to
15 draw the lines, but the special masters they hired were the
16 same ones, the same experts who had been hired by the
17 Republican Party to draw the district lines. Needless to
18 say it was not an independent district line drawing.

19 The same thing had happened in 1991, in a
20 slightly different way. While the responsibility for
21 giving -- for drawing district lines was given to the
22 California Supreme Court that court had been packed by the
23 removal of the three liberal Supreme Court Justices and the
24 replacement with five very conservative court justices.
25 So, again the court-drawn district lines were favorable to

1 one party, unfavorable to the other.

2 When courts are given the opportunity to redraw
3 district lines we not only have a greater possibility of
4 gerrymandering, but we don't have the advantage of the
5 intense pressure, the competitive argument, the give and
6 take, and the intense amounts of time that the Commission,
7 as an independent group of people, are able to put into the
8 process. And so, when courts take over the decisions, the
9 district lines being drawn are drawn in a hurry, they rely
10 heavily on the use of experts, they're generally one sided,
11 and for that reason I would consider it to be a serious
12 problem.

13 The actions I would take to avoid this problem
14 are as follows: Keep an eye on the integrity of the
15 Commission's process as it goes along to make sure that it
16 is proceeding along lines that would help defeat a legal
17 challenge to court intervention.

18 Second, good documentation at all stages of the
19 process about the reasons that everything is done. This
20 will address the intent element, as well as the effect
21 element.

22 Accomplishing the Commission process with an
23 understanding and remembering of the legal jurisprudence
24 that acts as boundaries to circumscribe what the Commission
25 does is also something that I would be able to give to the

1 Commission, and I would be ready, willing, and able to
2 explain to other members when a specific case decision is
3 likely to impact their decision so they can adequately
4 evaluate the risks and the options.

5 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Question four. If you
6 are selected, you will be one of 14 members of the
7 Commission which is charged with working together to create
8 maps of the new districts. Please describe a situation
9 where you had to work collaboratively with others on a
10 project to achieve a common goal.

11 Tell us the goal of the project, what your role
12 in the group was, and how the group worked through any
13 conflicts that arose.

14 What lessons would you take from this group
15 experience to the Commission if selected?

16 MS. GULARTIE: Thank you. There was a period of
17 time where I was sitting on a board of directors for a
18 school, a Lutheran high school. The goal at one point in
19 my time with the board was to -- we were trying to come to
20 a decision as to how to maximize student safety on campus
21 in a cost effective manner, while minimizing the disruptive
22 effect on the learning environment, and ensuring that the
23 solutions reached were legally permissible. This had to do
24 with the issue of guns on campus and drugs on campus.

25 My role in the process that ensued was number

1 one, as a compromise negotiator and, number two I was one
2 of two consensus builders on the board.

3 The lessons that I took from this group
4 experience were one, keep your eye on the end prize.
5 Number two, never lose patience with the people involved in
6 the process or how long it takes for them to go through
7 their processing of the issues.

8 Number three, most important remember that I do
9 now have a monopoly on knowing what the right outcome is.

10 How our group worked through conflicts. First
11 and it took six to eight months. It was a slow process.
12 We educated everybody on the board as to the issues, the
13 laws that govern, and the various options.

14 Number two, we let everybody express their
15 opinions and their emotions at each of the meetings.

16 Number three, we had lots of group discussions
17 where people could vent and then we would withdraw, and let
18 people think things over and we'd come back in two weeks
19 and have another meeting. So, there was cooling off and
20 reflection periods so people could digest what they had
21 heard, and reevaluate their positions.

22 And then, finally we would regroup for a
23 discussion of the individual problem areas and eventually
24 we took a vote. By the time we took the vote, I think it
25 was eight months later, we were able to come into

1 unanimity. It was not a big board. I think it was a nine-
2 person board.

3 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Question five. A
4 considerable amount of the Commission's work will involve
5 meeting with people from all over California who come from
6 very different backgrounds and a wide variety of
7 perspectives.

8 If you are selected as a Commissioner, what
9 skills and attributes will make you effective at
10 interacting with people from different backgrounds and who
11 have a variety of perspectives?

12 What experiences have you had that will help you
13 be effective at understanding and appreciating people and
14 communities of different backgrounds and who have a variety
15 of perspectives?

16 MS. GULARTIE: I'm going to consolidate those
17 into one answer. My proficiency is based on a practice of
18 law and communications with thousands of people over 40
19 years. People from different backgrounds, different
20 ethnicities, different agendas, different life experiences,
21 and different perspectives. Plus, talking to all the
22 friends and the family I have all over the state about what
23 is going on in their lives, what is important to them in
24 the geographic area they live in, and the frustrations they
25 feel about California, and the government, and what is

1 going on with them.

2 So, collectively, those two sets of experiences
3 have given me a wide range of ability to talk with anybody
4 about anything.

5 MR. DAWSON: Are you done? Thank you.

6 So, at this time we will go to Panel questions.
7 Each Member of the Panel will have 20 minutes to ask his or
8 her questions. And we will begin with the Chair, Mr. Coe.

9 CHAIR COE: Thank you, Mr. Dawson. Good morning
10 again, Ms. Gulartie.

11 MS. GULARTIE: Good morning.

12 CHAIR COE: I'd like to, I think, start with
13 something you were speaking of just now as part of the
14 final question Mr. Dawson posed. In your experiences with
15 working with and communicating with diverse groups of
16 people --

17 MS. GULARTIE: Yes.

18 CHAIR COE: -- what have you most learned about
19 the perspectives that those different groups of people
20 bring to the table?

21 MS. GULARTIE: That mostly their perspective
22 about what they want is shaped by, first and foremost, a
23 desire to feel that the person they're talking to
24 understands them, first. Second of all is like them to the
25 fullest extent possible. And third, takes them seriously.

1 CHAIR COE: Would that apply to demographic
2 differences, groups of different demographics, as well as
3 groups from different geographic regions?

4 MS. GULARTIE: Absolutely. The amount of
5 diversity that I've experienced in talking to people during
6 the practice of law, we have thousands and thousands of
7 different types of people based upon education, where they
8 live, how they grew up, their experiences, where they came
9 for, their gender identity. There's -- it's like a
10 thousand-colored rainbow and I've seen all thousand colors
11 here. There may be more, but I've seen lots of them.

12 CHAIR COE: Can you possibly give us an example
13 of a time where maybe you had to adjust your approach a
14 little bit based on the background that somebody was
15 bringing or perspectives they were bringing to a particular
16 situation?

17 MS. GULARTIE: Sure. So, one time I was picking
18 a jury and there was somebody on the jury who just kind of
19 struck me as having a different set of life experiences,
20 and I felt that it was important to the case that I was on
21 for that really to be articulated. So, when I queried him
22 as to his job, he said he was a driver. And this was a
23 gentleman who was clearly from another country, was very
24 big, very buffed out. And I had the impression he was
25 irritated with having to be in the courthouse and in the

1 jury process.

2 So, I inquired and asked him what he thought
3 about spending a week of his time involved in the jury
4 process. It turned out he was a driver for the Russian
5 mob. And he said in no uncertain terms, I think it's a
6 huge waste of time. We should just take your client out in
7 back of the courthouse and shoot him, and be done with it.

8 That is a perspective I don't encounter often.
9 But again, it gives you an idea of the variation that's out
10 there and how we need to be alert at all times. His
11 experiences made him feel that was appropriate because he
12 had grown up in really hard conditions. And he grew up in
13 a world where violence was the appropriate response to
14 whatever legal challenges or problems in life one faced.

15 CHAIR COE: Okay, I'd like to move to something
16 you mentioned in one of your essays.

17 MS. GULARTIE: Yes.

18 CHAIR COE: In the essay you mentioned having the
19 ability to identify the conscious and unconscious biases
20 and assumptions of a listening audience.

21 MS. GULARTIE: Yes.

22 CHAIR COE: Can you expand on that a little bit?

23 MS. GULARTIE: Sure. Everybody has some degree
24 of what we call bias, I call likes and dislikes. Most
25 people when you ask them really try hard to be fair, they

1 want to be fair, they'll tell you they can be fair. But to
2 get to the issue of the unconscious bias you have to phrase
3 the question not in terms of can you be fair, but to start
4 asking them questions in a way that reframe the issue. So,
5 you start talking to them about the fact like, well, did
6 you ever have anybody in your neighborhood who was of a
7 different race than you are? When you see somebody at your
8 door at midnight, ringing the doorbell, what is your
9 response if they're a different skin color than you are?

10 When you reframe the issues away from the
11 emotionally charged term of fair and unfair, you start to
12 get to the truth. And then you help people understand that
13 even though they didn't realize it, they might have a like
14 or a dislike that influences them. And that's all an
15 unconscious bias is.

16 CHAIR COE: Those sample questions that you
17 mentioned, are those things that you have used in practice?

18 MS. GULARTIE: Yes.

19 CHAIR COE: In what environment?

20 MS. GULARTIE: In the jury trial environment, uh-
21 hum.

22 CHAIR COE: Okay. I'd like to stick with your
23 impartiality essay for a moment.

24 MS. GULARTIE: Yes.

25 CHAIR COE: In that essay you described

1 practicing impartiality during your time as an attorney and
2 also while sitting on the board of directors I think you
3 maybe mentioned earlier.

4 MS. GULARTIE: Yes.

5 CHAIR COE: Can you provide us -- I know you've
6 talked about the group dynamics of that board of directors
7 already, but can you provide us with a specific example of
8 when you had to exercise impartiality and where maybe you
9 had to set aside your self-interest in a decision?

10 MS. GULARTIE: Well, I think I -- in my essay I
11 talked about having to vote to expel my son's best friend
12 during high school and that was hard because he was in and
13 out of my house a lot. He and my son were obviously close.

14 But another time where impartiality became an
15 issue had to do with -- had to do really with the issue of
16 watching people take time to go through the process of
17 deciding how they were going to handle major expenditures
18 on the part of the school. Because it was a small, private
19 school there was always the issue of what can we do to make
20 the school more cost effective without raising the price
21 for basically working class people who were paying private
22 school fees.

23 And just to navigate the issue of whether or not
24 to put in LED lighting to replace the mercury ballast
25 lighting we had was a process that one would think should

1 not take very long but it, in actuality, took 11 months.
2 It took 11 months because people were slow to perceive the
3 need for change and the fact that in a year the prices were
4 going to go up, so to speak. I had to set aside all my
5 feelings about how long it took people to process that
6 information and be willing to engage in change just to keep
7 step in rhythm with them, yes.

8 CHAIR COE: Okay, thank you. One of the biggest
9 tasks in front of the Commission is identifying communities
10 of interest throughout the state. Some of those things,
11 some of those communities are going to be more difficult to
12 find and maybe they're not as civically engaged as others.
13 How do you think the Commission should go about identifying
14 communities of interest and, particularly, how should they
15 go about identifying those communities that are perhaps
16 harder to locate?

17 MS. GULARTIE: Okay. Well, I don't -- my belief
18 is that the problem is not really correctly categorized as
19 difficulties in finding the hidden communities. By way of
20 an example, I sent an email to a good friend of mine, who's
21 an ER trauma physician. He lives in Santa Ana. And I
22 said, doctor so and so, what hidden communities of interest
23 exist in your territory, how would you access them, and who
24 do they talk to?

25 And in the space of three paragraphs, in less

1 than 24 hours he sent me a response that identified all of
2 the hidden communities, and there were nine, who they
3 accessed, and how I could talk to them. In other words, I
4 wouldn't be able to go in and talk to them directly, but he
5 said if you ask houses of worship, your first responders,
6 your mental health and your social resource people, you're
7 going to quickly access the hidden communities because all
8 of those people in the community already work with those
9 hidden communities.

10 So, for us the job is to reach out to the people
11 on site, who can then provide an introduction and bring the
12 hidden community to us.

13 The real difficulty is figuring out the size and
14 the parameters, and boundaries of the community of interest
15 first and then, secondly, deciding what weight to give that
16 hidden community of interest.

17 CHAIR COE: So, once you've located them --

18 MS. GULARTIE: Yes.

19 CHAIR COE: -- some of them may not be entirely
20 comfortable with engaging in the process --

21 MS. GULARTIE: Correct.

22 CHAIR COE: -- for one reason or another. How
23 could the Commission go about making certain communities
24 comfortable to come forward and share their perspectives on
25 the process?

1 MS. GULARTIE: I think that the Commission has to
2 engage the services of the people that that particular
3 community is comfortable with. That person or persons,
4 liaison persons have to participate in identifying what's
5 the best way to reach this community. Is this a social
6 media, is this a word of mouth community? Are they -- do
7 they require interpreters? And also, they should be
8 utilized, their skill set, in helping draw people in and
9 they should be present during the public hearings. So that
10 people, when they come, will see faces that they're
11 familiar with, and they're comfortable with, and they can
12 help educate the Commission members as to what customs are
13 normal, what can we do, if anything, to make that group
14 feel more comfortable in terms of talking to us.

15 CHAIR COE: Okay, thank you. If you were to be
16 appointed as a Commissioner, which aspects of that role do
17 you think that you would enjoy the most? And I know you
18 mentioned struggling with computer software.

19 MS. GULARTIE: Yes.

20 CHAIR COE: But outside of that what aspects of
21 the role do you think you might perhaps struggle with a
22 little bit?

23 MS. GULARTIE: Struggle with or enjoy the most?

24 CHAIR COE: Both of them, it's a two-part
25 question.

1 MS. GULARTIE: Okay. So, the parts that I would
2 enjoy the most. I would most enjoy talking to the public
3 and figuring out how to find the hidden communities that we
4 just talked about. I would also really enjoy helping
5 interject for the Commission's benefit, where appropriate,
6 what I call the warning flags of jurisprudence that would
7 impinge upon what they're, the decision they're getting
8 ready to make.

9 The other parts that I would have more difficulty
10 with, and I don't think it would be a lot, but I'd have to
11 be on the lookout for it, aside from the technical skill
12 set would be if somebody on the Commission tries to
13 dominate the proceedings, tries to dominate the other 13
14 people, I would be less tolerant of that. And I would have
15 to work not to let my intolerance of the dogmatism or the
16 bullying, or whatever tactic they used show.

17 CHAIR COE: How would you approach that?

18 MS. GULARTIE: I would look for ways to -- well,
19 first of all I wouldn't do anything until I had my emotions
20 well in check and diffused my anger at their behaving so
21 badly. Because I think by the time you get to this level
22 you should have really good emotional self-control.

23 But once I had gotten to that stage I would --
24 there's always an opening where you can deflect and
25 redirect a person. And I would watch for those openings

1 and then I would use those openings.

2 If necessary, I would try and get other
3 Commissioners, who probably had similar feelings, to also
4 help redirect the person off of the bad behavior and to
5 refocus them on the end goal of the Commission. If we keep
6 our eyes on the end goal, it's going to help keep us
7 steered straight so to speak.

8 CHAIR COE: Okay, thank you.

9 MS. GULARTIE: Uh-hum.

10 CHAIR COE: No further questions. Ms. Dickison.

11 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Good morning. Thank you
12 for meeting with us today.

13 Okay. One of the things I want to talk -- to
14 touch on was you talked about the ability to take large
15 amounts of data and break it down into smaller pieces.

16 MS. GULARTIE: Yes.

17 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Can you expand on an
18 experience in which you've had to do that in the past?

19 MS. GULARTIE: Sure. Oftentimes in the course of
20 trying a case to a jury we utilize experts. And the
21 experts are very good at technical study, a tremendous
22 education, very complicated fields. I've used forensic
23 experts in psychiatry. I've used forensic experts in
24 arson. And forensic experts in -- psychiatry, arson, and
25 what was the third one? It will come back to me in a

1 minute.

2 What you have to do in order to make that
3 comprehensible to a jury is master the field of territory
4 that the expert is going to be talking on, and then you
5 have to figure out a way to break it down into bite sized
6 components and then reformulate the wording of it so that
7 it becomes comprehensible and understandable to a lay
8 person who does not have that equivalent degree of
9 education.

10 Then, you have to train your expert not to stare
11 straight ahead and talk in this mystical language, but to
12 turn to the people that are making the decision, take your
13 time, talk slowly, make eye contact. If you see you're
14 losing them, slow down and reformulate what you've just
15 said. So, it's a two-step process.

16 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Okay, thank you. So,
17 you're in Los Angeles?

18 MS. GULARTIE: I am.

19 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: And you've -- have you
20 practiced law in Los Angeles for the 40 years?

21 MS. GULARTIE: Yes, I went to law school down
22 there. And actually, I live in Tujunga, which is an
23 unincorporated portion of Los Angeles County. It's kind of
24 its own wilderness land.

25 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: So, based on your knowledge

1 of that area can you talk to us about maybe the concerns of
2 the communities in that area, and describe what binds those
3 communities together?

4 MS. GULARTIE: Tujunga's an interesting area
5 because it started out as a place where the rich people of
6 Los Angeles would come in the summertime to get away from
7 the bad air quality of Los Angeles, because we're tucked
8 right up against the Angeles Forest. And we're on a wind
9 tunnel corridor to the high Mojave Desert.

10 So, you initially had a group of people who took
11 over a bunch of rich people's summer homes. Then what
12 happened was you had the outlaw element, a lot of meth
13 people move in. And a rebellious element. And that
14 element is still there to some extent, but starting to age
15 out.

16 After that what came in were a lot of foreign-
17 born immigrants who liked the fact that the streets are
18 small and reminiscent of the streets in Europe. I think 60
19 percent of the population in Tujunga was not born in the
20 United States. Recently, it's been a large Armenian
21 community. That's about 20 percent. But Asians comprise
22 about 63 percent of the foreign-born population. So, we
23 have a lot of European and African ancestry, Asian
24 ancestry, as well as Hispanics.

25 And their concerns are very different than the

1 people who've lived, were born and raised in the United
2 States. Their concerns are law and order, protecting and
3 preserving privacy, and making sure that the homeless
4 problems, which tend to create -- they tend to associate as
5 being the creation of the wildfire problem in our area is
6 taken care of. We have a huge homeless population. They
7 like to hide out in the wilderness area.

8 And so, interfacing between those two and how
9 those two groups of communities interact is probably the
10 single biggest problem that Tujunga faces today.

11 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: How do you think those
12 challenges or concerns will differ as you go through the
13 various regions of the state and what can you pull from
14 your background to kind of identify what each community may
15 be looking for?

16 MS. GULARTIE: So, I think that there are many
17 areas of the state where we have a large population of
18 people that are not born in the United States. And in
19 addition to the same concerns that I previously identified,
20 some percentage of that population are going to have
21 concerns about immigration issues, the effect of their
22 showing up to vote. All those kinds of things that I don't
23 really see in my area because a lot of the immigrants have
24 become U.S. Citizens.

25 The difference between concerns with the homeless

1 in the area that I live in versus the area, for instance,
2 of downtown Los Angeles, when a homeless person starts a
3 fire in Tujunga because of the fact that it's cold, it's a
4 huge risk. You remember the Station Fire, thousands and
5 thousands -- we've had multiple fires. I've been evacuated
6 five times. You go to downtown Los Angeles, they may have
7 a problem with homeless, but it's usually typhus, rats and
8 fleas. It's not everybody's house is going to burn down.

9 So, you have to think about the homeless do not
10 just present one set of challenges for a neighborhood, they
11 present different -- some challenges are common, such as
12 the disease, integrating them into society, finding them
13 shelter. Other challenges are unique to the geographic
14 area.

15 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: So, in your impartiality
16 essay you talk about your ability to set aside personal
17 agenda and biases as a trial lawyer.

18 MS. GULARTIE: Yes.

19 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: And then, at the very end
20 you say that you're committed to the integrity of the
21 process, not the achievement of personal desired outcomes.

22 MS. GULARTIE: Right.

23 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: What are your desired
24 outcomes for the Commission?

25 MS. GULARTIE: Okay. My desired outcome for the

1 Commission is to be able to address the hard question of
2 whether or not to adjust the hard Census data that exists
3 and to what extent. To be able to determine -- to be able
4 to set a course that encompasses not only what California
5 will look like during the first year that the district
6 lines are drawn, but to accommodate the changing
7 demographics of the voting age population for the next nine
8 years because this work has to last until 2030,
9 essentially. To be able to, with accuracy and reliability,
10 decide how the soft data should impact and factor into the
11 hard data, and to be able to do that in a way that when the
12 process is done there's no room for what I call a judicial
13 hijacking of the Commission's work product.

14 I would like all of that to be done with
15 integrity, excellence, reliability and in a way that
16 comports with giving shape to the one person/one vote
17 standard.

18 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: You've also talked about
19 working with experts. Just a little bit ago we talked
20 about that. And it had to do with expert testimony and
21 data. Given your legal background and the fact that the
22 Commission will have attorneys and work with them, what
23 experience do you have working with and taking legal advice
24 from other attorneys?

25 MS. GULARTIE: Well, I work for an agency called

1 Alternate Public Defenders, which is essentially a county
2 law firm of about 200 lawyers that was the counterpart to
3 the public defenders. We took the overflow and the
4 conflicts.

5 APD, because of its small size, is very much a
6 family county organization. And I would take legal advice
7 all day long from anybody in the organization who knew more
8 about a particular approach, legal problem, or had tried a
9 case of a kind that was unfamiliar to me. I don't find
10 that threatening. I find it very helpful. I don't have to
11 reinvent the wheel. But I really think that it's important
12 to go to people who know more in a given area than you do,
13 and to rely upon their expertise whether it's legal, or in
14 some other area. There's not much of a difference for me.

15 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you. In your
16 impartiality essay and in your diversity essay you talk
17 about the different types of people that you've interacted
18 with over the years. What did you learn from these
19 interactions that will assist you in the work of the
20 Commission?

21 MS. GULARTIE: Everybody's different. We often
22 want the same things. What we primarily disagree on is how
23 to get there and what methods of -- what methods should be
24 utilized to get there. So, most people, they want to be
25 able to raise up their children so that their children have

1 a better life than they did.

2 Oftentimes when I talk to people, they're primary
3 concern would not be so much their own legal welfare as the
4 concept of I have children at home. If I take this option,
5 if I go into drug rehab, I'm going to be separated from
6 them. There's not going to be anybody to provide for my
7 wife or for my husband. Those experiences are common
8 across the board to all mankind.

9 And I think that understanding the other
10 concerns, beyond the basic humanitarian type concerns that
11 I think are common to all of us are what I would take from
12 the legal work that I did. Because everybody has them and
13 if you don't find out what they are, and you don't address
14 them, you're never going to be able to meet the major
15 issue. Because people always have collateral concerns that
16 impact their decision making.

17 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you. There's a
18 public comment from your son that talked about you being a
19 single, working mom.

20 MS. GULARTIE: Yes.

21 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: How has that -- how did
22 that experience influence your perspective on the needs of
23 people and the role a representative should play?

24 MS. GULARTIE: I learned that much of our
25 government, I believe, has functioned and been selected and

1 chosen along the model of an intact nuclear family, with
2 the father being the primary breadwinner, and the person in
3 political office, or being in charge, or responsible for
4 our government leadership being the male adult role model.

5 But based on my experience, that's not really an
6 accurate picture for California anymore. There are many,
7 many households where the female is alone and she's having
8 to both work and set a role model for the children of the
9 house, and she's having to make decisions about what type
10 of representation will best work for her. Those are really
11 different models.

12 I don't know that I would have had such empathy
13 and understanding of the role of -- or the needs for women,
14 and women in terms of government representation if I hadn't
15 personally lived through it.

16 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you. So, one of your
17 letters talked about not only would you help your clients
18 in court proceedings, but you also directed them to
19 services and programs to help them overcome many obstacles
20 that they were facing. How did you determine what services
21 your clients might need?

22 MS. GULARTIE: Well, you can't really ask them
23 because they all start out saying I don't need any help.
24 They're not necessarily people with good judgment. But
25 here's what I found. If I sat and just talked to people

1 without an agenda, without having a tight timeframe, but
2 talking in a relaxed manner where they felt that they could
3 just start to unburden, within the space of half an hour,
4 40 minutes you would quickly come to hear what was going on
5 in their life. And from there it was pretty easy, you'd
6 go, you'd figure out, oh, there might be some mental health
7 issues, talk about prior hospitalizations, or law
8 enforcement contacts.

9 The more difficult ones would be the children
10 who'd been taken away from the parents because they didn't
11 really want to talk about that.

12 The people who had developmental disabilities.
13 We have a high proportion of developmentally disabled in
14 California. And oftentimes the families don't recognize
15 that and the adults that I saw had never gotten any help.
16 Those took more time. You really have to listen carefully
17 and start measuring differences between what they say and
18 what you're seeing, and then go digging for hints that
19 perhaps they're developmentally disabled in history.

20 But basically, if you just sit and talk to people
21 they'll start to tell you, and they'll tell you about the
22 things that bother them the most. And then you have to
23 look at it and go what is this showing me here. And then,
24 you sound them out and see if they're interested and
25 willing to talk to a mental health nurse. We had a

1 liaison, a full time liaison in the courthouse. And you go
2 from there.

3 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you.

4 MS. LE TELLIER: Five minutes.

5 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you. How would the
6 knowledge and the ability that you learned through doing
7 that, how would that assist with the work in the
8 Commission?

9 MS. GULARTIE: Well, it would assist in this way,
10 any time you want to go into a given geographic area I
11 believe that you have to reach out to all of the -- I call
12 those people social resource people. You have to reach out
13 to the social resource people and you have to find out from
14 them what the hidden communities are. I believe they're in
15 the position to know that. If you talk with them, there's
16 a common language. Each of those resource people has
17 common buzz words that if you use them, will tip them off
18 that you know what you're talking about. They'll let their
19 barriers down and they will start to access, and give you
20 information, and trust you.

21 As soon as that door is open, then you can use
22 their help and my feeling is most people are more than
23 willing, and glad to help if you explain to them my goal is
24 to accomplish hearing from all of California, not just the
25 people who traditionally vote.

1 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you. So, the first
2 eight Commissioners are selected randomly and then they're
3 required -- they'll select the remaining six. What would
4 you be looking for in the remaining six?

5 MS. GULARTIE: Well, first and foremost
6 diversity. I think that we should look at what
7 characteristics and strengths the first eight have and see
8 what we're missing. And then, I think we should look at
9 the rest of the remaining people and see if any of those
10 people have those characteristics. And I'm assuming,
11 because they're in the position that they're in, that they
12 also have the requisite, the legal mandated requirements of
13 ability to be impartial, and relevant analytical skills.
14 So, I would do that first.

15 And then, I would ask that the Commissioners have
16 a discussion about which of the people that are left that
17 they think have those, the ability to shore up the
18 deficiencies, and then start voting on panels of six.

19 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you. I don't have
20 any further questions right now, Mr. Chair.

21 CHAIR COE: Okay, thank you Ms. Dickison. Mr.
22 Belnap?

23 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Thank you for being here.

24 MS. GULARTIE: Yes.

25 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: I'm curious about your

1 preparation for this interview. You're obviously prepared.

2 MS. GULARTIE: Yes.

3 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: So, can you tell me about
4 your process for preparing for today's interview?

5 MS. GULARTIE: Yes, uh-huh. And I did, I
6 prepared as extensively as I could. So, what I did was as
7 soon as I realized that I was going to be interviewed I
8 ordered a bunch of books. There were two books in
9 particular that had been written in anticipation of this
10 year's Census data. One is called Race, Redistricting and
11 Partisanship. And the other is a manual for redistricting,
12 citizens, analysts and commissions.

13 I outlined both of those books because it's
14 pretty weighty material and, frankly, this is all new to
15 me. I had no prior exposure to it.

16 So, I outlined the important portions of those
17 books and then I took the questions that I knew would be
18 asked and I compared the two. And I go, what have I
19 learned from these books, my research that addresses this
20 issue? So, for instance my initial feeling about not
21 adjusting hard Census data underwent a total revision as a
22 result of what I learned from reading those books. And it
23 became a big question mark in my mind. That was the first
24 step.

25 And, of course, I've rewritten it several times

1 and you can see I have strikeouts. You know, we're always
2 reevaluating.

3 But then, the second thing I did was I had some
4 time before this -- today's interview to watch interviews.
5 I think I watched four interviews. And I took what seemed
6 to me to be the recurring themes from those interviews and
7 then I asked myself how would I respond to this question?
8 You have to understand that we have a saying as a trial
9 lawyer, every minute in court should be supported and
10 should be the distillation of one hour of preparation
11 outside of the courtroom. And that's true. It really is
12 true. I used the same process for this interview.

13 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay, thank you. So, what
14 situations make you nervous?

15 MS. GULARTIE: Talking to strangers. I know that
16 sounds odd, but the best trial lawyer I ever knew told me
17 that -- and he'd been trying cases, at the point in time he
18 told me this for almost 40 years, and he was a legend in
19 the field of criminal trial lawyers. He said, to this day
20 I still throw up 15 minutes before I walk into the
21 courtroom. And he said and that's a good thing for you
22 never to lose your nervousness because it means you will be
23 honest, and you will be not complacent, and you will really
24 listen and pay attention.

25 So, I'm still nervous when I -- I don't know if

1 you can hear the shaking in my voice, but it's definitely
2 there.

3 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: So, you spent over two
4 decades as a public defender and before that you were in
5 the private practice of --

6 MS. GULARTIE: Yes.

7 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: -- defending criminals.
8 Why did you decide to focus your career on criminal
9 defense?

10 MS. GULARTIE: I didn't. I wanted to be a
11 business lawyer. And what happened was oftentimes, the
12 saying that man proposes and God disposes. So, the only
13 place after a year of interviews that I could get a job was
14 a small, two-person law firm. And as I was ready the Daily
15 Journal one day there was a sign -- an advertisement that
16 said the trial attorney program was just starting and was
17 having its first school session. And it was a pilot
18 project whereby they were going to take brand-new
19 attorneys, who had no courtroom experience, put them
20 through six weeks of training that was compiled by Hastings
21 College of Law in conjunction with the District Attorney's
22 Office. And if you did the six weeks of training and
23 volunteered two weeks of your time for the DA's office, you
24 could do it for free.

25 And this sounded wonderful to me because I was

1 interested in courtroom work. That's how I got sidelined
2 into criminal law. And two weeks after I came back, one of
3 my two bosses was an Arab American, and this was right
4 after the hostage crisis. And he walked into my office and
5 he threw a file on my desk, and he said our client is a 40-
6 year-old man who is charged with sexually assaulting a 14-
7 year-old, blond-haired, blue-eyed WASP in Laguna Niguel.
8 His only hope is that you're a female. Try this case.

9 And honestly, from that point forward doors kept
10 opening up. People kept training and teaching me. I had
11 opportunities which I just kept taking and taking, and
12 that's how I got into criminal law.

13 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right, thank you. So,
14 as a public defender and in criminal defense your job is to
15 represent your client. But how does being a public
16 defender demonstrate your ability to be impartial?

17 MS. GULARTIE: Well, you can't represent your
18 client if you can't set aside your personal feelings about
19 what your client is charged with. There are -- and there
20 are many situations that are difficult, whether you're
21 dealing with somebody who's accused of child molestation,
22 or a young man who has stabbed his 18-year-old girlfriend
23 on camera 32 times within the course of a minute, or things
24 of that nature. Men who like to beat up on women. These
25 are extremely painful and difficult charges for anybody to

1 deal with.

2 And you have to be impartial in the sense if you
3 have to say it doesn't matter what my client is charged
4 with, I can set aside every one of my personal feelings in
5 order to look with full diligence at the law, the facts,
6 and his situation or her situation, and to determine what
7 the best possible outcome I can either negotiate for them,
8 or try -- or obtain as a result of trial for them. Yes.

9 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right, thank you. So,
10 you mentioned in your application and you've said it today,
11 I just want to read a sentence here: I recognize legal or
12 factual weaknesses. I can take steps to prevent successful
13 factual/legal challenges.

14 So, what are some of the steps the Commission
15 should take to prevent successful legal challenges?

16 MS. GULARTIE: Well, again, and this is based
17 upon the very limited knowledge of research I've been able
18 to do to date. So, my understanding is that the successful
19 legal challenges will focus to some extent on the intent of
20 the Commission, but more upon the effect of the district
21 lines in terms of their actual outcome with respect to the
22 voting population.

23 The steps that the Commission can take to prevent
24 those successful legal challenges number one is
25 documentation at every step of the way. Not everybody has

1 to be a documenter, but certainly you need a couple.

2 Number two, you need to be able to recognize the
3 existing standard patterns of gerrymandering, whether
4 that's packing and cracking, or hijacking, or stacking, or
5 tacking, or any of those. I think there's six that I
6 identified in the work that I've done.

7 Third, you have to have the ability to keep in
8 mind the big picture because you have the equal population
9 rule that has to be evaluated. And that's where the issue
10 of the under counted, under represented populations becomes
11 very critical.

12 So, to the extent that the Commission, if it does
13 decide to adjust the Census data, the hard Census data,
14 they have to be in a position where they can justify that
15 sufficiently to avoid a legal challenge. Uh-hum.

16 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right, thank you. And
17 one last question. So, if you are not randomly selected in
18 the first eight, why should those eight select you to be
19 one of the remaining six?

20 MS. GULARTIE: Number one is my flexibility
21 because I can play so many roles without being offended in
22 any of them. So, if they want somebody who's primarily a
23 public speaker, I can do that. If they want somebody who
24 really just does a lot of research and delves through data,
25 I can do that. Flexibility is one of the reasons.

1 The second reason that I think is because I have
2 -- I have a vision for the Commission that I can
3 communicate to them. And that vision is that the
4 Commission has the responsibility to decide whether and to
5 what extent it's going to be satisfied with the freeze-
6 frame snapshot of what the Census population -- the Census
7 data reveals about California in 2020, or whether it's
8 going to be able to grow and envision what is California
9 going to metamorphosis into, in 2025, in 2028, all of those
10 issues. A lot of people don't have vision. They're in
11 touch with the day-to-day stuff.

12 The other reason is that I have a long-standing
13 pattern that demonstrates commitment to representing and
14 empowering the hearing of the minority voice. And many
15 people want to acknowledge the minority voice, but in
16 criminal defense we represent the minority voter every --
17 the minority voice every day. We represent the client
18 against the majority, which is the DA side.

19 But on every jury I have ever selected, I have
20 always included and made room for the person who isn't
21 white, the person who isn't male, the person who doesn't
22 have a lot of money and doesn't have a lot of education.
23 Because those people are the voters, too. They're the
24 minority voters.

25 And what I've done for 40 years is identify who

1 that minority voter is and teach them in advance, if
2 they're going into the jury room, how to give voice to
3 their vote regardless of what the majority does. And the
4 process of empowering that minority voice is the same for
5 the Commission, it's just done in a different place. It's
6 done in the public hearings and it's done at the ballot
7 box.

8 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay, thank you. No
9 further questions.

10 CHAIR COE: Okay, Mr. Dawson.

11 MR. DAWSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

12 Ms. Gulartie, I'm going to ask you a couple of
13 follow-up questions. And I apologize in advance if I sort
14 of jump around.

15 You mentioned that one of the challenges that the
16 2010 Commission faced was what I will call AstroTurf
17 witnesses, which were folks who were coming to public
18 meetings and pretending to be part of the local community,
19 but maybe had a political reason to be there.

20 What would you be looking for? What would you be
21 listening for to root out folks like that?

22 MS. GULARTIE: This is going to be something
23 that's difficult to explain. Every trial lawyer has a gut
24 instinct. It tells us what people are not verbalizing.
25 And you can feel it tangibly in the air, as they speak,

1 like a ripple in the stomach just before you have an upset
2 stomach. You can feel it and it signals to you that
3 there's something they're trying to hide when they're
4 talking to you. I have never in 40 years had it go wrong
5 in terms of the instinct. And so, I would use that as my
6 primary mechanism. I know it's not very scientific, but it
7 has proven itself out.

8 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. You mentioned in your
9 essay on California's -- the appreciation for diversity,
10 that you were born abroad -- I was born abroad and my
11 mother was an impoverished immigrant for whom English was a
12 second language. Because I observed her struggle with
13 language, schooling, family and culture difference I
14 appreciate some of the special challenges faced by
15 California's immigrant population.

16 Could you expand on that a bit? What perspective
17 does that bring you to the Commission?

18 MS. GULARTIE: The perspective it brings to me is
19 that what native born English speakers bring to the table
20 in terms of their understanding of the process of
21 government, how to interact with it and, most importantly
22 how not to be afraid of it is, generally speaking, absent
23 from immigrant people. They feel oftentimes feel
24 inadequate because for them English is a second language.
25 They oftentimes come from backgrounds where government has

1 been not so consumer friendly.

2 My mother grew up under the cloud of Hitler, so
3 to speak. And she was aware and acquainted of what it
4 looked like to have to present travel -- to carry travel
5 documents with you at all time to identify who you were,
6 whether you were of Jewish persuasion, things like that.
7 She was well acquainted with Fascism and the things that --
8 the hardships that it created just in terms of basics like
9 finding food and not being bombed out while going to
10 school.

11 Most people who are foreign born have similar
12 problems. They come to this country because there's
13 something wrong with the government in the place that they
14 live, but they also bring their fears. And it takes many
15 years for them to believe that they're not going to be
16 rounded up. That it is safe for them to talk to the
17 government. That they really have a voice. That people
18 really care. And that their vote really matters.

19 Teaching them is part of what the Commission has
20 to do every time it engages with the public.

21 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. This is kind of related
22 and it's also related to an answer that you gave relating
23 to relying upon the hard data, if I understood you
24 correctly, of the Census. There is always a possibility
25 that the Census will miss folks who live in the state.

1 Can you identify for us who you think those folks
2 are likely to be and what the Commission can do to allow
3 for that?

4 MS. GULARTIE: Sure. The Census under counts
5 populations, more so for some racial and ethnic groups than
6 other racial and ethnic groups. For instance, Hispanics
7 traditionally are under counted because of concerns about
8 immigration, citizenship.

9 The traditional long form decennial Census data
10 before 2010 sampled a one in six household population. The
11 ACS that is now in use, from 2010 forward, samples a one in
12 forty population. So, every -- you have to account for the
13 margin of error. You have to interpret it properly because
14 what we're dealing with now are estimates. The estimates,
15 if they're not handled properly will cause an inaccuracy in
16 the adjustment.

17 The Census traditionally underestimates the
18 voting age population because the ACS estimates for black
19 groups are based on data collected over a five-year period.
20 The ACS does not account for aging of the population. So,
21 it creates what they call the static age rule. Once a
22 person is counted in the ACS estimate, they stay that age
23 for purposes of the Census data and the estimate for a
24 five-year period, even though the next year a 17 year old
25 becomes 18. And people who in the first year were not

1 eligible to vote have increased and are now eligible to
2 vote.

3 That appears to systematically bias the
4 citizenship composition of the voting age population, most
5 notably for Hispanics. And the reason is they typically
6 exhibit higher rates of citizenship amongst juveniles, not
7 adults.

8 Age standardization is something that has to be
9 accomplished to allow an apples-to-apples comparison among
10 the difference between Latinos and Anglo voting. All of
11 those things come into play. And those are the primary
12 areas where I believe we're going to see under counts. We
13 also may have under counts in the homeless population as
14 well.

15 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. How about homeless
16 people?

17 MS. GULARTIE: I said we might have under counts
18 in the homeless population. The difference is this year
19 the homeless people have many more advocates in the
20 community groups. And those advocates, generally speaking,
21 have a really good handle on the number of homeless people
22 that show up every week for getting food.

23 MR. DAWSON: Uh-hum.

24 MS. GULARTIE: We have one church in the Sunland
25 area, about two miles from where I live that has been

1 working with the homeless community for ten years. And the
2 leader of that group, the leader of the church group that
3 spearheads the community effort, they know all the
4 homeless people. They know which ones are interested in
5 voting and which ones aren't. They have a good idea on the
6 size. They know where they live, where they hang out.

7 So, there are people now, because of the interest
8 in homelessness, who can give us the information as to the
9 homeless group. Otherwise, we would never find out about
10 it.

11 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. And then, finally,
12 incarcerated persons. They are not under counted, but the
13 question is where will they be counted to?

14 MS. GULARTIE: Right. So, the difficulty with
15 the incarcerated population and I haven't done a lot of
16 study on this, I've just become aware of the issue, is that
17 they are geographically concentrated at point A in time in
18 the prison where they are located.

19 And I think that for accuracy what you have to do
20 is you have to count them within that geographic
21 distribution at the time of the Census, regardless of where
22 they may go after that. Because at least this way you'll
23 get an idea of their numbers, even if they disburse out to
24 different portions of the state.

25 And the reason it doesn't so much matter where

1 they disburse to is because California uses a tiered system
2 prison, a tiered system for prison placement. So, a person
3 goes to a prison based not upon the county that committed
4 them, but the severity of their crime. Is this a level
5 two, three, or four prison population? And so, in any
6 given prison there are people from all over the state.

7 MR. DAWSON: Just another follow up. But is
8 there not the possibility of over counting for some -- for
9 example, Del Norte County, which I believe has a Supermax
10 prison. And I don't think that most of those folks are
11 from Del Norte County originally.

12 MS. GULARTIE: Correct. Yes, but are they going
13 to be voting in Del Norte County? That's the real issue.
14 And so, I would think that technically, given the computer
15 systems that are available to California Department of
16 Corrections, they should be able to provide us with the
17 information at any given time that tells us how many of
18 their current prisoner populations will still be resident
19 at the time of the elections.

20 MR. DAWSON: All right.

21 MS. GULARTIE: I think they can do that.

22 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. I have no more, further
23 questions. Does any of the Panel Members?

24 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: I do not.

25 CHAIR COE: Mr. Belnap?

1 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: I do not.

2 CHAIR COE: I also do not have any follow-up
3 questions.

4 MR. DAWSON: Well, we have 24 minutes remaining
5 in the 90-minute period. And I realize that maybe this is
6 something you've heard before, but would you like to make a
7 closing statement?

8 MS. GULARTIE: Now, you should know when you ask
9 a trial lawyer if they want to make a closing statement,
10 they're going to say yes.

11 The nice thing about the 24 minutes is I won't
12 take it all up and I can talk slow.

13 I realize that I have already touched on some of
14 this during my earlier questions, but I'm going to go
15 through with the original opening statement that I --
16 closing statement that I wrote because what it reveals to
17 you is my heart and soul, and I think that's important.
18 I've given you lots of data. Obviously, I've given you the
19 results of research that I've done, but there's another
20 part to me, too.

21 The call that I envisioned for the Commission is
22 that as the Commission begins its work it has to decide as
23 a group what role vision and innovation will play in that
24 work. I say this because the California that we have today
25 bears little relationship to the California of 10 years

1 ago, or 20 years ago, or 50 years ago.

2 The California population has grown considerably
3 since the last Census, but it has not grown evenly in terms
4 of its demographics. And we'll have discover -- the
5 Commission will have to discover where the uneven areas of
6 growth are.

7 A true and accurate picture of the California
8 that needs to be identified after the release of the Census
9 data is not something that any Commissioner will have a
10 clear picture of when they first begin this work. It will
11 be the Commission's responsibility to find it, to see it
12 with as much accuracy as possible, and to translate that
13 picture to comply with the voting standards mandated by the
14 State and Federal Voting Rights Acts and the case law that
15 has been decided.

16 This will be a challenge because California is
17 evolving rapidly and in ways that we probably can't
18 envision as we sit here now. California's quite possibly
19 moving into a new paradigm that has never been seen before
20 in the United States.

21 Not only does the Commission have to identify
22 where this new California is, it has to address the
23 question of whether it needs to identify and account for
24 the shifts that California will make over the life of this
25 particular Commission's work. In other words, what

1 California will look like for the next ten years.

2 I believe the Commission has to ask itself that
3 question and decide hopefully as a group, with unanimity,
4 whether it is going to do that or whether it is simply
5 going to rely on the freeze frame snapshot principle.

6 If the Commission comes to the conclusion that
7 part of its responsibility is to account for the changes
8 that will inevitably occur during the ten-year period, it
9 will have to be prepared to tackle hard questions about how
10 to do that, what forms of hard data to rely on, and how to
11 adjust or tweak that data to meet the needs of the ten-year
12 time frame, while still ensuring a high level of accuracy
13 and reliability.

14 Complicating the picture will be two factors.
15 Deciding to what extent and how the soft data should impact
16 the hard data. Second, making sure that when all of the
17 process is done the result still leaves no room for
18 judicial hijacking of the Commission's work product.

19 Against the backdrop of what I envision the
20 Commission's call to be is the second issue of why I should
21 be selected to be part of that process. We've already
22 covered the skills sets I bring to the table. But many of
23 the lawyers that you have interviewed and are interviewing
24 have great skill sets.

25 The forum in which the skill sets were developed,

1 however, is a distinguishing factor. A criminal defense
2 trial lawyer interacts with human beings day in and day
3 out. We have up close and personal contact with every
4 variety of human being imaginable in terms of age, gender,
5 gender identification, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity,
6 education, economic status, immigration status, and the
7 languages spoken. We listen to people and we discern what
8 their true needs are and the true issues are, then we find
9 ways to address those needs.

10 Often that means acting as a mediator to bring
11 multiple people of opposing interests into agreement. The
12 client has one agenda, the judge has another, the district
13 attorney has a third agenda. Sometimes, at a second level
14 of importance, there's the victim's family, the client's
15 family, social and health resource professionals.

16 If we're successful in doing this type of
17 mediation, we wind up with plea agreements and no need for
18 a trial. Those same forums, and that process is not
19 accomplished by civil lawyers or appellate lawyers, or even
20 lawyers who clerk for judges.

21 The second issue is the trial process. The
22 results that follow at the conclusion of any trial allow
23 all criminal trial lawyers to see and understand quite
24 clearly the results of the decisions we make, the impacts
25 on other people's lives. Notably our clients, but also

1 witnesses, and the judge, and all the experts. Because how
2 we treat those people, how we deal with them has long-
3 lasting impact.

4 In this context, the role of the district
5 attorney and the defense lawyer are vastly different. The
6 district attorney represents the majority voice. The
7 defense, as I said, represents the minority voice. We
8 represent the voice of the disenfranchised who
9 traditionally have little or no say in society.

10 For more than 40 years my life's work has been to
11 give those disenfranchised people a voice. I have
12 championed those who exist in hidden communities, who had
13 no one else to speak for them. I have identified and
14 presented their voices to multitudes of the majority, for
15 the majority to take cognizance of and listen to.

16 It is not just the client who has the minority
17 voice. It is also the minority juror that is on the panel,
18 there because I've placed them there. Because one of the
19 things that I've learned is that the more people you have
20 who are different from each other on the jury, and the more
21 you have people who are willing to stand up for whatever it
22 is they believe in, and you give them the strength and the
23 empowerment to vote according to their conscience, the
24 better the result will be. You will achieve social justice
25 and that benefits us all in the long run.

1 The empowerment principle is the same whether you
2 accomplish it in the courtroom or whether you accomplish it
3 at the ballot box and in public hearings. You still are
4 empowering the minority voice and the result is greater
5 social justice than if you'd never allowed them to speak at
6 all. Thank you.

7 CHAIR COE: Okay, thank you, Ms. Gulartie. Thank
8 you for being here this morning.

9 MS. GULARTIE: Thank you.

10 CHAIR COE: Our next interview is scheduled to
11 start at 10:45, so we will be in recess until 10:44.

12 (Off the record at 10:15 a.m.)

13 (On the record at 10:44 a.m.)

14 CHAIR COE: Okay, I'd like to reconvene the
15 meeting at 10:44.

16 I'd like to welcome Mrs. Ahmad to the table for
17 her interview, and turn the time over to Mr. Dawson for the
18 five standard questions, please.

19 MR. DAWSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

20 Ms. Ahmad, I'm going to ask you five standard
21 questions that the Panel has asked each of the applicants
22 to respond to. Are you ready, ma'am?

23 MS. AHMAD: Yes.

24 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. First question. What
25 skills and attributes should all Commissioners possess?

1 What skills or competencies should the Commission
2 possess collectively?

3 Of the skills, attributes and competencies that
4 each Commissioner should possess, which do you possess?

5 In summary, how will you contribute to the
6 success of the Commission?

7 MS. AHMAD: Well, first of all, thank you so much
8 for having me here today. It's quite a journey to get to
9 this point, so I appreciate that.

10 To answer your question, the Commission
11 collectively should possess the ability to be independent
12 from political influences, competent in a variety of
13 analytical skills, such as understanding basic statistics,
14 and data interpreting, and applying relevant laws and
15 regulations, the basics of mapping and spatial reasoning.
16 Lessons learned from experiences that display authentic
17 community engagement and appreciation for the diversity in
18 California, including but not limited to racial, ethnic,
19 genders, sexual orientation, economic and geographic
20 diversity.

21 Commissioners should also evidence their
22 interests and expertise in the importance of California's
23 democratic processes, such as voting, and elections,
24 redistricting, the goals of redistricting and the purposes.
25 The history of gerrymandering broadly, California's role in

1 gerrymandering and, more recently, California's leading
2 role in ending gerrymandering and partisan redistricting.

3 The Commission should also possess skills needed
4 to interact with a diverse community across California,
5 such as language diversity, knowledge of resources for
6 community members, and the ability to reassure and advocate
7 for the process of redistricting under the Voters FIRST
8 Act.

9 I personally possess a variety of these skills
10 and attributes. I've earned my master's degree from UC
11 Berkeley in epidemiology and biostatistics. During my
12 academic training I learned the importance of social
13 epidemiology and how systems and structures in our
14 environment can impact health, including our political
15 systems.

16 Earlier this year I enrolled in a community
17 college course to further enhance my understanding of
18 spatial reasoning and mapping best practices. The course
19 focuses on using ArcGIS, understanding map design,
20 dissecting topographic and Isoline maps, and creating
21 qualitative and quantitative thematic maps, which are often
22 used for population-based indicators such as voting
23 patterns and population density.

24 I've spent quite some time traveling up and down
25 California and I -- for my volunteer work and leisure

1 commitments. But it wasn't until I started traveling
2 outside of California that I truly began to appreciate what
3 we have here at home. The vast diversity in backgrounds,
4 cultures, foods, language, music and upbringing is what
5 makes our state the golden state of America.

6 In terms of skills, interacting with diverse
7 communities. I've had ample experience through my
8 volunteer and public service work interacting with diverse
9 and some of our most vulnerable and underserved
10 populations.

11 For example, as a manager of a Second Harvest
12 Food Bank site I served an economically underserved
13 neighborhood in East San Jose. I organized hundreds of
14 pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables that would be
15 delivered to a local elementary school, and worked with
16 volunteer mothers from the community to distribute this
17 food.

18 I developed a relationship with the mothers of
19 the community, who made up the largest proportion of my
20 volunteer group on any given distribution day. The mothers
21 of the community often coached me on my Spanish-speaking
22 skills, and we all laughed together as I stumbled upon
23 incorrect conjugations of various words.

24 Now, as a public servant at Santa Clara County
25 Public Health Department I've increased my area of service

1 to jurisdictions within the county, particularly in the
2 realm of tobacco control. As a public health issue that
3 impacts communities of color and low socioeconomic
4 neighborhoods at disproportionate rates, I work to
5 understand and disseminate the most up to date research and
6 impacts of use of tobacco products.

7 I'm also fluent in Hindi, Urdu, Punjabi, and I'm
8 continuing to learn my Spanish skills conversationally.

9 In summary, I will contribute to the success of
10 the Commission by bringing all of my lived and professional
11 experiences as considerations and input into the planning
12 and executing of a cohesive and inclusive Commission to
13 ensure that our Californian communities feel heard and
14 represented.

15 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Question two. Work on
16 the Commission requires members of different political
17 backgrounds to work together. Since the 2010 Commission
18 was selected and formed, the American political
19 conversation has become increasingly polarized, whether in
20 the press, on social media, and even in our own families.

21 What characteristics do you possess, and what
22 characteristics should your fellow Commissioners possess,
23 that will protect against hyperpartisanship?

24 What will you do to ensure that the work of the
25 Commission is not seen as polarized or hyperpartisan and

1 avoid perceptions of political bias and conflict?

2 MS. AHMAD: The characteristics that I possess
3 that will contribute to alleviating the increasingly
4 polarized political conversation are the important, yet
5 very underappreciated skills of active listening, open
6 mindedness, and understanding. Oftentimes listening to
7 someone who may have differing opinions or views than
8 yourself can create an avenue of mutual understanding
9 between previously misunderstood parties. I think it's
10 important to listen to listen, instead of listening to
11 respond.

12 Keeping an open mind will also prove to be
13 helpful. In my own family there are some very strong
14 opposing political viewpoints, but one thing we can all
15 agree on is the importance of ensuring every person has
16 equitable access to the basic human needs. It's just the
17 avenue to get to that goal that creates the sense of
18 partisanship.

19 I'm sure that there will be times that the
20 Commissioners will have differing viewpoints as to how to
21 approach a situation or tackle an obstacle. However, I
22 will bring an open mind, evaluate the circumstances, look
23 at the data, and give my informed opinion and suggestion on
24 how to move forward. And I would expect nothing less from
25 my fellow Commissioners as well.

1 If other Commissioners have a better idea than my
2 own, I will gladly step aside and support the best idea
3 because in the end we all have the same goal.

4 To make sure that the work of the Commission is
5 not seen as polarized or hyperpartisan, I'll make sure that
6 I play my role in following the guidance of Bagley-Keene
7 and work to ensure that the public is well informed of all
8 the steps that the Commission takes. In doing so, similar
9 to this application process, the public will be able to
10 make assessments on their own and bring forth any issues or
11 concerns for consideration to the Commission.

12 On similar fee, I have some experience in my
13 current position to show my understanding of similar laws
14 and regulations in the applicability of the Brown Act to
15 ensure that the public has ample opportunities to share
16 their opinions and/or concerns over issues that may impact
17 them.

18 For example, when working on tobacco control
19 policies and policies that are being discussed at the board
20 of supervisors' meetings, my team and I work to send out
21 informational letters to retailers and those businesses
22 that may be impacted by such policies. Oftentimes these
23 business owners and retailers will provide public comment
24 and make their voices heard at these meetings.

25 It is with these experiences that I'm confident

1 that the Commission will not be seen as hyperpartisan or
2 polarized.

3 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Question three. What is
4 the greatest problem the Commission could encounter, and
5 what actions would you take to avoid or respond to this
6 problem?

7 MS. AHMAD: I think the greatest problem that the
8 Commission will encounter is elevating this important work
9 within the context of our lived reality. We are for sure
10 in unprecedented times in our politics, but now we are also
11 living through a pandemic. The Commission will have to
12 work to meet legislative deadlines, outreach to
13 communities, and travel up and down California while
14 maintaining new and fast changing guidelines and
15 recommendations from the California Department of Public
16 Health, the CDC, and local government agencies in the
17 communities that we visit.

18 We're already seeing the impact of this pandemic
19 on outreach for the Census and the urgency for competing
20 priorities in our communities. And when the Commission
21 convenes in August, they will have to assess fully what the
22 context in California looks like.

23 To respond to this problem, I would recommend
24 that we start Commission work by assessing the complete
25 social and economic picture of Californian communities to

1 ensure that our work can be framed in the context of our
2 new lived reality. We'll have to ask ourselves questions
3 like how will we outreach to communities? Will we hold
4 online meetings? How will we ensure that communities of
5 interest have access to these online meetings?

6 Completing a full evaluation of where
7 Californians are at the inception of the Commission can
8 play a role in alleviating some of the concerns that
9 communities may have going into this important work.

10 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Question four. If you
11 are selected, you will be one of 14 members of the
12 Commission which is charged with working together to create
13 maps of the new districts. Please describe a situation
14 where you had to work collaboratively with others on a
15 project to achieve a common goal.

16 Tell us the goal of the project, what your role
17 in the group was, and how the group worked through any
18 conflicts that arose.

19 What lessons would you take from this group
20 experience to the Commission if selected?

21 MS. AHMAD: Well, the most recent example that
22 comes to mind is when I was activated for a number of days
23 to report to the Medical Joint Health Operations Center at
24 Santa Clara County Public Health Department. The goal of
25 the Public Information Officer's team, which is the team

1 that I served on, is to share the most up to date and
2 accurate information regarding COVID-19. I specifically
3 worked on responding to public inquiries, directing emails
4 to the call center if necessary, and developing a
5 presentation for the board of supervisors' meeting.

6 The group was working long hours and the sense of
7 urgency to gather information, get it approved, and
8 disseminated was nothing like I've ever experienced in my
9 professional career thus far.

10 The types of conflicts that arose were more along
11 the lines of deadlines and timelines. Since there is and
12 continues to be an urgency to disseminate up to date and
13 accurate information, multiple avenues as to how to achieve
14 this goal were often presented. We discussed the options
15 as a group at our daily check-ins, and discussed the pros
16 and cons of any given approach.

17 Given the diversity in experiences of the group,
18 we were able to come to creative solutions that would best
19 address the growing concerns in our community.

20 There are several key lessons from this
21 experience that I will carry with me on my future
22 commitments, including the Commission if I were selected.

23 One, as a government employee and as an extension
24 of the State of California via the Commission, it's of
25 utmost importance to continuously remind oneself of our

1 purpose. I went into public service to help people and to
2 help those communities that are disproportionately impacted
3 by our social, economic, and political structures and
4 systems.

5 While serving at the operations center, I was
6 often reminded of this when engaging with a member of the
7 public or when interacting with other team members on this
8 very important and critical public health issue.

9 Second, no one wins if one group member loses.
10 And what I mean by this is that when we're working towards
11 a common goal it's absolutely critical that every member of
12 the team has a clear understanding of the goal and purpose.
13 Without this we lose efficiency, cohesiveness, and quality
14 of the end product. It's okay to take the time to make
15 sure everyone understands and it's also okay to stand up
16 and say that you don't understand.

17 Third, communication is key. Reiterating
18 statements, rewording questions back to the asker, thinking
19 openly and loudly can all serve as agents to efficient and
20 high quality work. This can also get team members thinking
21 in different ways and potentially produce an idea that
22 would otherwise be left unheard.

23 I fully intend on taking these reminders and
24 lessons learned with me, if I were called upon to serve
25 California via this Commission.

1 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Question five. A
2 considerable amount of the Commission's work will involve
3 meeting with people from all over California who come from
4 very different backgrounds and a wide variety of
5 perspectives.

6 If you are selected as a Commissioner, what
7 skills and attributes will make you effective at
8 interacting with people from different backgrounds and who
9 have a variety of perspectives?

10 What experiences have you had that will help you
11 be effective at understanding and appreciating people and
12 communities of different backgrounds and who have a variety
13 of perspectives?

14 MS. AHMAD: Sure. Some skills and attributes
15 that would make me effective at interacting with people
16 with different backgrounds are the skills of knowing when
17 and how to show empathy, active listening, public speaking,
18 and cultural humility.

19 For example, as a lecturer for an undergraduate
20 epidemiology course at San Jose State University I
21 exercised all of these skills. Each semester I taught
22 about 30 students. My students were from a variety of
23 racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, gender identity, political,
24 geographic, age, and developmental ability backgrounds.

25 I was tasked with the goal of measuring the

1 retention of learning outcomes among my students. Each
2 class I made sure to set aside time at the beginning to
3 check in with my students. There were times when I would
4 spend a few minutes opening the course and other times when
5 much longer discussions had to be had, given the current
6 events happening in my students' lives.

7 Taking this time to make sure that I was even
8 toned and supportive of all my students, regardless of
9 their backgrounds was absolutely imperative to their
10 success in my course.

11 I had students for whom English was a second
12 language. I've had students with learning barriers.
13 Students who came to class after working two jobs.
14 Students who drove from Elk Grove to get to class. Other
15 students who walked five minutes to get to class. There
16 were students who were just getting by in class and
17 students who were excelling beyond expectation for the
18 course.

19 My students taught me the importance of
20 unconditional support and challenged me to unlock a new
21 level of professionalism.

22 These experiences will allow me to be effective
23 at understanding and appreciating communities of different
24 backgrounds in my work with the Commission.

25 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. All right, at this point

1 we will go Panel questions. Each Panel Member will have 20
2 minutes to ask his or her questions. And we will begin
3 with the Chair, Mr. Coe.

4 CHAIR COE: Thank you, Mr. Dawson. Good morning,
5 Ms. Ahmad. Thank you for being here.

6 You mentioned that you're taking a course in
7 mapping and spatial reasoning?

8 MS. AHMAD: Uh-hum.

9 CHAIR COE: Where was that through?

10 MS. AHMAD: I'm taking it through Foothill
11 Community College.

12 CHAIR COE: Okay. And is that ongoing or have
13 you completed it?

14 MS. AHMAD: It will be finished next week.

15 CHAIR COE: Next week, okay. Since you're right
16 at the tail end of it, have you garnered things from that
17 class that you think would be particularly helpful to work
18 on this Commission? And if so, what would those be?

19 MS. AHMAD: Yes. I think one of the biggest
20 things I've learned in the class is the display of data in
21 a unique way, namely maps. As a researcher by training, I
22 often make tables, and charts, and those sorts of things.
23 But this class has taught me that there is a different way
24 to present data. There's a way that we can detect patterns
25 in unique ways and I think that will be very important to

1 the work of the Commission considering that these maps are
2 maps. And they're based on geography, they're based on
3 clusters of humans, and I think that will be really helpful
4 towards the work of the Commission.

5 I actually signed up for the course specifically
6 because of this process.

7 CHAIR COE: You mentioned finding patterns in the
8 data.

9 MS. AHMAD: Uh-hum.

10 CHAIR COE: Are you guys using Census data as
11 part of that or what type of data are you looking for
12 patterns in?

13 MS. AHMAD: So, the use of data is open to the
14 students. Students can source whichever data that they
15 feel they're interested in. I personally have used Census
16 data and Census Tract data, namely looking at Santa Clara
17 County area, just because I'm familiar with that
18 jurisdictional layout, but using Census data, demographics,
19 and such.

20 CHAIR COE: Okay, thank you.

21 MS. AHMAD: Uh-hum.

22 CHAIR COE: In your application you mentioned
23 that you were a mentor for -- I'm not sure if it was an
24 organization, a group called Getting Into Graduate School.

25 MS. AHMAD: Uh-hum.

1 CHAIR COE: Can you tell us a little bit about
2 what Getting Into Graduate School did or does?

3 MS. AHMAD: Yes. So, the program, Getting Into
4 Graduate School, also called GIGS, is a program at UC
5 Berkeley. And students are chosen, graduate students are
6 chosen to be mentors during their time while in their
7 academic study. So, I'm no longer a mentor for that
8 program since I have graduated.

9 But that program is designed to help
10 undergraduate students pursue graduate school. And
11 primarily, those students who are underrepresented in
12 graduate school. So, students of color, students with
13 physical or mental disabilities, students with a history of
14 not having access to education.

15 So, I was paired up with my mentee, who was
16 really interested in going to medical school. She's a
17 first generation college student. She didn't have
18 resources at home to pursue that avenue. So, my goal and
19 my purpose in that program was to sort of guide her in
20 different programs that are available, different
21 scholarship opportunities that she can look into. Kind of
22 guide her in the skills of informational interviewing and
23 networking, those sorts of things. And she eventually
24 ended up going to graduate school.

25 CHAIR COE: So, in your role, you're assigned a

1 single mentee --

2 MS. AHMAD: Uh-hum.

3 CHAIR COE: -- in their goal to reach graduate
4 school?

5 MS. AHMAD: Yes, yes. So, there are some folks
6 who were assigned multiple, depending on the need. And
7 that particular year that I signed up to be a GIGS mentor I
8 was assigned one mentee.

9 CHAIR COE: So, just one for the year? Did you
10 only have one in your role there?

11 MS. AHMAD: Uh-hum. Yes, yes.

12 CHAIR COE: Okay. Is there anything that you
13 learned from that process that you think would be helpful
14 to this Commission?

15 MS. AHMAD: I think something that I learned from
16 that process that I can apply to this Commission would be
17 just the idea of storytelling. Listening to my mentee talk
18 about her experiences, talk about her struggles, and her
19 vision, and her goals for the future really gave me a sense
20 of motivation, a sense of urgency to go out and help her
21 find these resources to get to where she wants to go.

22 I think that can be transferred directly to the
23 work of the Commission as we will be going out to different
24 communities. And these communities will have a vision of
25 what they want California to look like. And I feel like it

1 would be our responsibility as a Commission to translate
2 that vision into reality for them.

3 CHAIR COE: Okay, thank you. In your
4 impartiality essay and a little bit earlier you referenced
5 your role with the Santa Clara County Public Health
6 Department. And in your essay specifically, describe your
7 participation in public meetings to gather the insight of
8 community members and other stakeholders.

9 Can you provide us with an example of a time that
10 you were provided with information from community members
11 during these meetings that caused you to maybe change your
12 approach or change your mind on a particular issue?

13 MS. AHMAD: So, I can speak to tobacco control,
14 since that's my day-to-day job, and in the context of why I
15 attended some of these public meetings.

16 The most recent example that comes to mind was
17 attending a City of San Jose priority setting session with
18 their city council, in which different issues were being
19 voted on to be prioritized within the city. And one of
20 those issues is flavored tobacco use.

21 There was quite a few folks who showed up for
22 either side of the issue. And listening to these stories,
23 listening to folks who would be impacted by such a policy
24 really opened my eyes that we, as public servants, have to
25 take into consideration everyone's opinions and viewpoints.

1 Tobacco control, believe it or not, is still a
2 very contested issue. The facts are out there. The
3 research is out there. There's no more research needed to
4 determine that tobacco control -- or, tobacco use is
5 harmful to folks' health.

6 So, it just really sparked an interest in myself
7 to kind of figure out what creative solutions can we have
8 when such policies may impact someone's livelihood. And as
9 a government agency and folks who work for the people, it's
10 our responsibility to do that.

11 CHAIR COE: In your essays and a little earlier
12 you were referencing the diverse groups of people that you
13 have worked with in one capacity or another. What is it
14 that you have learned from the perspectives of these
15 different groups of people that would assist you on this
16 Commission?

17 MS. AHMAD: I think one of the biggest things
18 I've learned, in addition to everything I've mentioned, is
19 that I'm not always right. And it's a really humbling
20 thought to carry with myself. As someone who's had the
21 privilege and honor to be a product of California's public
22 school systems, from K through 12, to community college, to
23 the CSU, to the UC system, we are taught that, you know, we
24 are educated, that we have a toolbox of knowledge.

25 However, that's one type of knowledge. Listening

1 to diverse populations has taught me that letters behind
2 your name doesn't necessarily mean that you know what's
3 best for a community.

4 And going into this work I think that's the idea
5 that I will carry with me first and foremost is that, yes,
6 this Commission was compiled around some skill sets that
7 were desired to do the actual work, but we are not the
8 experts. The community is the experts. The community will
9 tell us where their populations of interests are and what
10 issues that they're facing, where they would like to see
11 change. And it would be our responsibility to take that
12 information wholeheartedly and open-mindedly.

13 CHAIR COE: So, speaking of communities, one of
14 the biggest roles the Commission is going to play in their
15 work is to identify communities of interest throughout the
16 state. And some of those communities are easier to find
17 than others.

18 MS. AHMAD: Uh-hum.

19 CHAIR COE: How would you have the Commission go
20 about identifying communities of interest, particularly
21 those that may be harder to identify and locate?

22 MS. AHMAD: So, that job just got exponentially
23 harder given our current climate. I think where we need to
24 go to find communities of interest are those nontraditional
25 avenues. So, we need to go faith-based leaders. We need

1 to go to synagogues, we need to go to temples, churches,
2 mosques. We need to go to where the people are.

3 So, day-to-day jobs, we need to go to grocery
4 stores, we need to advertise community meetings at local
5 libraries and community centers.

6 There's a concept in statistics of selection bias
7 and the folks who are going to show up to our community
8 meetings will show up. It's the folks who are not in the
9 room that we need to be able to find and locate.

10 So, we have a starting point, which is the folks
11 who will show up to the meetings. I would suggest that we
12 ask the folks in the room which voices are missing? Which
13 voices are not here? Which voices couldn't make it to this
14 meeting for whatever reason and start from there.

15 CHAIR COE: So, once you've found the
16 communities, some may not be comfortable for one reason or
17 another actually coming and engaging with the Commission,
18 and sharing their perspectives on various issues. How
19 would you go about having those particular groups feel
20 comfortable to open up and provide perspective to the
21 Commission?

22 MS. AHMAD: So, I think we're going to have to
23 get creative in this manner. And I think I have a sense of
24 what you're alluding to. For folks who are not a hundred
25 percent comfortable coming into this type of environment,

1 more likely than not they have a leader or a community
2 leader, a community role model that is comfortable coming
3 into such an environment, or who is familiar with this type
4 of environment.

5 I would suggest that we tap into that person. We
6 make sure that that person understands that our goal is to
7 make sure everyone's voices are heard. And asking that
8 person to play the role of community leader and make sure
9 that we hear the voices that couldn't make it to the space.

10 CHAIR COE: So, hearing your talk and thinking
11 about your educational background as an epidemiologist, and
12 within the current context of life today, do you think that
13 considering the way things are currently, the current
14 situation, that if you were to serve on the Commission you
15 would have a unique responsibility given your expertise, in
16 how they go about the business?

17 MS. AHMAD: I think so. And I would hold that
18 true to the rest of the Commissioners as well. As a public
19 servant and as someone who's held community meetings,
20 attended community meetings for a number of years, we never
21 go into these community meetings with just our agenda item.
22 We also come in with resources that community may need.
23 Oftentimes the public doesn't know where to contact and
24 what agency to contact for mental health services, or
25 services for food, or those sorts of things.

1 So, I think my particular commitment to public
2 health is going to play a unique role in this Commission,
3 in the work moving forward. The way things are going is
4 scary and I understand the public concern around it. And I
5 think my role will have to also be able to communicate with
6 the public that yes, there are some uncertainties moving
7 forward. We are doing the best job. Folks are working
8 around the clock. There are precautions that we've
9 outlined. There are best practices that we know our local,
10 and federal agencies, and state agencies as well are taking
11 action. And kind of elevate that how this work can relate
12 to potentially preventing or alleviating any future,
13 similar situation. And I believe that this work is
14 directly linked to that.

15 CHAIR COE: Okay, thank you. If you were to be
16 appointed to the Commission, which aspects of that role do
17 you think that you would enjoy the most and be very
18 successful at? And, conversely, which aspects of the role
19 do you think you might perhaps struggle with a little bit?

20 MS. AHMAD: I think the part that I would enjoy
21 the most is listening to stories. I would love to go out
22 into different communities, learning about California,
23 learn how different things operate. Being from the Bay
24 Area, I can call an Uber. I was listening to another
25 interview last week, and he mentioned that there's only one

1 Uber and that kind of shocked me a little bit.

2 So, I think I would really enjoy moving around
3 California and looking, and learning from different
4 communities to see how other folks live. And recognize
5 that these folks and these communities are a fabric of
6 California and they're what make California California, and
7 the best state in the country, in my opinion.

8 CHAIR COE: Okay, thank you. I don't have any
9 additional questions.

10 Ms. Dickison?

11 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Good morning, Ms. Ahmad.

12 MS. AHMAD: I didn't mention the thing that I
13 would struggle with.

14 CHAIR COE: Oh, you're right about that. I
15 apologize.

16 MS. AHMAD: Sorry. Similar to what we were
17 talking about previously, I think what I would struggle
18 with is elevating this work and the importance of this work
19 in the context of our reality, and also being able to
20 balance sensitivity. We will be going into communities
21 that will still be facing the impacts of what is happening
22 today. So, recognizing where we would have to step up and
23 recognizing where we need to take a step back, and what
24 role we're going to play in community healing moving
25 forward.

1 CHAIR COE: Okay, thank you. Now, we'll turn the
2 time over to Ms. Dickison.

3 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Good morning, Ms. Ahmad.
4 In your first essay you talked about your grandmother's
5 experience. And you talk about how the journey led to
6 mistrust in the political system and shed light on the
7 corruption and greed that was entrenched in that.

8 How will your grandmother's experience -- how has
9 that -- her experience influenced you?

10 MS. AHMAD: It's influenced me immensely. She --
11 because of the political system from where she grew up, she
12 never really had a home. The only home she knew, she was
13 removed from.

14 So, when I think about her experience and I think
15 about where I am as a California native, if someone were to
16 come to my door and say you can't live in California
17 anymore, I would be absolutely brokenhearted.

18 So, I think the years -- and my grandmother lived
19 with me her whole life -- or, my whole life, I should say,
20 since she came to the states. And I think what I took from
21 the countless stories and obstacles that she's had to face
22 is that we're not too different from her reality. There
23 are still people out here in California who are fearful of
24 whether they're still going to be here tomorrow. There are
25 people who don't trust the government. There's people who

1 don't think we're doing the best that we can do.

2 And a part of my choosing to be a public servant
3 was to correct that misperception. And I think being in
4 the position that I am in now, I'm able to talk to my
5 community and say, hey, I work for the government and this
6 is what we're doing to help communities. And kind of
7 alleviate some of that tension, some of that mistrust.

8 I don't know how the future will look like moving
9 forward from current events. But I do know that I myself
10 can play the role that I have been playing in kind of
11 bridging that gap between community and government. And I
12 would expect my fellow Commissioners, by virtue of being
13 interested in this opportunity also would do that.

14 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: You also talked about your
15 own experience as a first generation Muslim American woman
16 of color living with multiple sclerosis. So, how has your
17 own experience influenced your perspective on the needs of
18 communities and their preference for a representative, and
19 what role their representatives should play?

20 MS. AHMAD: I think my intersectional identities
21 have definitely shed light on that. And it's been more of
22 a stepwise approach to understanding this concept in my
23 mind. So, I mean I was born this color, so I've always
24 experienced living in this color. I was born a woman. I
25 identify as a woman. So, those certain experiences have

1 followed me throughout life.

2 Some of these things are more recent. I'm
3 recently practicing hijab. I was diagnosed with MS in
4 2016. And just the differences in our culture that I have
5 been sometimes fortunately, and sometimes unfortunately
6 exposed to for folks who have different backgrounds.

7 And I can draw on one example specifically with
8 MS. Under some guidance in the laws it's considered a
9 disability, but clearly I walked in here. So, there are
10 some nuances into how on paper I would be categorized
11 versus how I live my life. And I think that this has shed
12 a light in terms of what communities may need, if they're
13 also experiencing something that may be invisible.

14 There are certain leadership qualities that
15 they're looking for. There are certain folks who they
16 would get behind, who would advocate for people who are
17 experiencing things that may not be visible to the naked
18 eye. I know that has definitely changed my perspective on
19 who I would support and who is actually cognizant of the
20 differing backgrounds of communities.

21 So, I expect that my learning will definitely
22 continue throughout the years. I would hope so and I would
23 want that moving forward. But to this date, my
24 intersectional identities follow me and I will carry that
25 into the work of the Commission to understand that I may

1 not know the whole picture just by looking at someone, and
2 walking in with that mindset.

3 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you. You mentioned a
4 while ago that you've traveled for your volunteer work, I
5 believe you said.

6 MS. AHMAD: Uh-hum.

7 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: And that some of those
8 experiences helped you appreciate California's diversity
9 even more. Can you talk a little bit about what experience
10 it was that made you appreciate California?

11 MS. AHMAD: So, it was actually when I travel
12 outside of California. So, I visited internationally.
13 I've been to Baksan, which is where my parents are from,
14 and Malaysia. I've done some work with the Truth
15 Initiative, which is a DC-based nonprofit, and their
16 service area is the whole of the United States, in the
17 realm of tobacco control. So, I traveled quite a bit with
18 them to different states.

19 And it's the feeling of when the plane lands in
20 San Jose Airport and I'm like, ah, I'm home. And that
21 feeling became more and more apparent as I traveled across
22 the country. California is just a unique place. We have
23 so many different types of people here. We have different
24 types of backgrounds, cultures, food, language, music. We
25 are the state of innovation. We are the state of -- and we

1 birth new technology.

2 I haven't seen the progress that I would like to
3 see in various social, economic, cultural areas that I have
4 in California anywhere else. Yes, we have our issues. No
5 state is issue free. But time and time again we're just
6 ahead of the game.

7 And this process, this work proves that once
8 again we're ahead of the game.

9 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you. So, you also
10 talk about advocacy that you do for health equity, and
11 you've talked about advocating for different groups. What
12 do you see the role of the Commission in advocacy and in
13 adjudication?

14 MS. AHMAD: So, in education, I can tackle that
15 one first. I think the role of the Commission, in the
16 context of our work we would be tasked with educating the
17 public on the basics of gerrymandering. The basics of, you
18 know, cracking and packing, and the concepts within drawing
19 lines and how that would influence the individual person.

20 I think there's still a sense of confusion about
21 what this all means, why this work is important, and why
22 this work came to the people and left the Legislature. And
23 I think we as a Commission would have to do our part in
24 educating the public in this.

25 And I see multiple reasons as to why. One, just

1 so that our communities are educated and they're aware that
2 this is how California does things and they can, you know,
3 domino effect educate their people as well.

4 And then, also, as an avenue to think about the
5 future. In ten years this is going to happen again and
6 what a better time to advocate and educate the public about
7 this process, than when we're completing the process. And
8 so, I think those are some important areas that I would
9 advocate and educate in.

10 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: So, based on your answer
11 your -- that you believe the Commission's role in advocacy
12 has to do with the process, advocating for the process?

13 MS. AHMAD: Yes, advocating for the process.
14 Advocating for engagement from the public in the process,
15 and trusting the process, and trusting the people that you
16 all select for completing the project.

17 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Okay, thank you. In your
18 other relevant material you also talked about your
19 participation will inspire people like you to be active in
20 the government systems. And then, you also talked about
21 that you intend to use social media to increase awareness
22 of the Commission and its goals.

23 What do you think the appropriate amount of
24 social media use for the Commission would be?

25 MS. AHMAD: I think, personally, I would leave my

1 opinions out of it. I think that's just a virtue of
2 serving on the Commission is to leave personal opinions out
3 of it. When I say using social media, I'm thinking more
4 along the lines of advertising community meetings,
5 communicating if there's cancellations, scheduling changes,
6 advertising the websites in which we would be posting
7 updated information, those sorts of things. So, less of
8 like personal opinions and more of informational.

9 I do believe that there is a population that gets
10 their information from social media and it would be a
11 mistake if we weren't readily available and present on that
12 platform.

13 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Okay, thank you. Can you
14 tell us about some of the different concerns in the
15 communities within the Central Coast or Santa Clara County
16 that you're aware of?

17 MS. AHMAD: Yeah. So, I actually have family out
18 in Fresno and the Merced area, so I have some exposure to
19 the inland. And then, Central Coast area should be South
20 Bay. I think one of the biggest community concerns right
21 now is probably the housing crisis, availability of
22 affordable housing, access to that housing. There's also a
23 concern of gentrification occurring. In the Bay, they're
24 often referred to as transplants, so folks who came from
25 elsewhere for job opportunities, primarily in the tech

1 industry, and the displacement that's occurring for
2 communities that have been in the area for generations.
3 That concern exists. But there's also an appreciation for
4 the new technology, the new ways in which our innovation is
5 bettering lives in our area as well. So, I think there is
6 definitely, you know, some concerns, but there's also an
7 appreciation for what's changed in our community.

8 Does that answer your question?

9 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: So, you also mentioned
10 Fresno. So, thinking about housing in Santa Clara versus
11 Fresno --

12 MS. AHMAD: Uh-hum.

13 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: -- do you think those
14 concerns would be the same, would be different?

15 MS. AHMAD: I think -- this is just based off of
16 the family that I have, so it's not inclusive of everyone
17 in that area, in the Fresno Inland area. I think there are
18 some similarities and there's also some differences in the
19 concerns related to housing.

20 From the South Bay Area it's primarily even
21 having access to housing, finding housing. And then an
22 added layer on top of that would be the prices and the
23 affordability of housing.

24 From what I've heard from my family in the
25 Fresno/Merced area, there's more availability of housing,

1 but they have different socioeconomic issues that that
2 community is dealing with that can impact overall
3 attainment of housing.

4 MS. LE TELLIER: Five minutes.

5 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you.

6 So, just based on this conversation that we have
7 just had, what do you believe are some of the influences
8 that are -- that can influence someone's preference when
9 they're looking for representation and how do you think
10 that's going to differ in the various regions throughout
11 the state?

12 MS. AHMAD: I think some of the things that would
13 influence preference for folks' representation is -- or,
14 are the issues that are present in their community.
15 Oftentimes we all look for leaders who speak to us.
16 They're speaking to the whole, but we want to feel like
17 they're speaking to us and the issues that matter to us.

18 In terms of the second part of your question, you
19 asked differences, right?

20 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Yeah, how do you think
21 that's going to differ for the various regions throughout
22 the state?

23 MS. AHMAD: I think depending on what the issue
24 is, the social issue within a given community, it's
25 definitely going to differ. For the Bay Area, again it's

1 probably something around housing, livable wages, those
2 sorts of issues.

3 For the Inland area, it might be something
4 completely different related to access to water, access to
5 agricultural goods. So, I expect it to differ amongst
6 different communities and I'm looking forward to learning
7 from the communities.

8 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Okay. The first eight
9 Commissioners are selected randomly and then they select
10 the second -- or, the next six. What would you be looking
11 for if you were one of the first eight and you were tasked
12 with selecting the next six, what would you be looking for
13 in those Commissioners?

14 MS. AHMAD: So, as an evaluator, my evaluator hat
15 goes on. I would look at the pool of the eight randomly
16 selected Commissioners. I would evaluate the skills and
17 attributes that those eight have, identify where the gaps
18 lie. And then, look at the remaining six spots to be for
19 those folks who would fill those gaps. All the while
20 considering the original criteria that the Voters FIRST Act
21 outlined, so diversity in gender, diversity in
22 socioeconomic status, diversity in racial ethnic
23 backgrounds as well. So, that's where I would start.

24 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Uh-hum. What would you
25 ultimately like to see the Commission accomplish?

1 MS. AHMAD: I think ultimately I would love to
2 see the Commission accomplish the goal of mapping fair and
3 equitable maps that are created with the input of
4 community. Maps that we can stand behind, and support, and
5 confidently say that these maps represent California and we
6 were able to get input from Californians for these maps.
7 That would be the gold standard outcome for this work.

8 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you. I don't have
9 further questions right now.

10 CHAIR COE: Thank you. Mr. Belnap?

11 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Yeah, thank you for being
12 here. How many years have you been with the Santa Clara
13 County Public Health Department?

14 MS. AHMAD: I will be four years in August.

15 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay. And what's your
16 role?

17 MS. AHMAD: I am the research and evaluation lead
18 for the Tobacco Free Communities Program.

19 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay. So, what are some of
20 the things that you've done in that role that demonstrate
21 your ability to be impartial?

22 MS. AHMAD: Well, as a tobacco control advocate
23 clearly I have a bias. Clearly there's a stand that I take
24 when it comes to tobacco control issues.

25 However, being in a public serving role there is

1 still a sense of listening to community, and hearing
2 community. So, every day is a balance between my own
3 personal opinions on this issue and impartiality. I think
4 that's something that we all have to carry as government
5 employees.

6 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: So, your personal opinion
7 on the issue is that people shouldn't smoke? Is that --

8 MS. AHMAD: Yes, my personal opinion is that
9 tobacco should not exist.

10 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay.

11 MS. AHMAD: Yeah.

12 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: And your job is to try to
13 get tobacco use to go down?

14 MS. AHMAD: Yes. My job is more to educate and
15 inform the public on the harms related to tobacco use. We
16 respond to jurisdictions who come to the county level
17 asking for either data or information related to use rates
18 of different types of tobacco products in their
19 communities.

20 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Yeah. And that brings me
21 back to so who in the community are you listening to where
22 you're having to balance and be impartial, who -- what are
23 you talking about?

24 MS. AHMAD: These are the people who would be
25 impacted the most financially, which are retailers, and

1 clerks. These folks come to community meetings. They come
2 to city council meetings and express their concerns about,
3 you know, the current policies that may be on the table of,
4 you know, prohibiting the sale of flavored tobacco
5 products, or increasing the age to 21 to purchase tobacco
6 products.

7 I think that there is validity in some of these
8 arguments in which their livelihood will be impacted if
9 such a policy goes through. So, practicing the
10 impartiality of being able to listen to these comments,
11 understand these comments, and look at the issue as complex
12 as it is in our society clearly displays my ability to be
13 impartial.

14 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Don't you want their
15 livelihoods to go away or at least that portion of their
16 livelihoods, this selling of tobacco to go away?

17 MS. AHMAD: I mean I would -- ideally, I would
18 like it that their livelihood is not impacted at all. That
19 they find another alternative product like an apple, or
20 fruits and vegetables, or those sorts of things that can
21 supplement the loss that they may feel from the
22 restrictions of selling tobacco products.

23 In California, we are hovering around a 10 to 11
24 percent adult tobacco use rate of combustible cigarettes.
25 We're at the all-time low in recorded history for our

1 state. In talking to clerks, which we do quite often,
2 we've been yelled at many times. And the opposite of like,
3 yes, keep up this work. All from clerks or owners of
4 retail shops.

5 I think there is a place where we can come
6 together and help our communities thrive without the use of
7 tobacco products and without the sale of these harmful
8 products.

9 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay. So, looking over
10 your -- thinking to your work experience, also your life
11 experience, your volunteer experience, can you think of any
12 other examples where you've had to exercise impartiality?

13 MS. AHMAD: Yes. So, as an instructor, I'll hone
14 in on a very memorable example from my teaching days.
15 There were two students who were in conflict with one
16 another in a group project. And as the instructor, I
17 cannot, and I could not find it in my heart to take one
18 side over another because both students were feeling hurt
19 and unheard.

20 So, my role was to listen to both of these
21 students. So, what I did specifically was meet with each
22 of these students individually to hear their side of the
23 story. And then, based off of their stories I was able to
24 identify where there was a very apparent miscommunication
25 that occurred.

1 So, then I asked each of those students if it was
2 okay to meet as a group, and they both agreed. So, the
3 three of us, myself and my two students, we met as a group.
4 And I highlighted that, you know, this whole issue came up
5 because of XYZ that had occurred in the communication
6 channel between you two. And in reality, there's no
7 conflict here. You all just didn't receive the information
8 the way the other person intended.

9 They didn't end up being best friends after the
10 course, but they were able to successfully complete the
11 group project, which I was really proud of them for.

12 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay. So, in your work you
13 prepare evaluation reports. What's an evaluation report?

14 MS. AHMAD: So, it's a little different than the
15 academic setting of a research report. So, an evaluation
16 report, the intention is to look at a type of program, or
17 policy and see if it's actually working.

18 So, in my specific role at the county, an example
19 would be a smoke-free, multi-unit housing policy that had
20 passed in Sunnyvale, California. So, my role was to look
21 at the impacts of this policy. So, before the policy was
22 adopted and enforced I hired volunteers to go out and do an
23 impact assessment of different multi-unit housing
24 complexes. So, gathering data on where there's tobacco
25 litter, where there's signage before the policy was

1 enforced and adopted.

2 And then, once the policy had been in place for
3 six months these same volunteers would go out to the same
4 multi-unit housing complexes to measure the same
5 indicators. And then, we would look at the pre/post to
6 determine if the policy was having an impact.

7 Of course there's a lot of confounding factors
8 that may play a role. There's culture that plays a role.
9 There's weather of the time of measurement. There's, you
10 know, political will at that time. So, there's a lot of
11 different factors that would play a role in the outcome.
12 But essentially the evaluation report would encompass all
13 of these different things that could influence the outcome,
14 as well as the actual evaluation of such a policy.

15 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: So, your job in that
16 particular element of it is to analyze whether particular
17 tobacco cessation policies are working or not or --

18 MS. AHMAD: Yes, uh-hum.

19 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: -- to what level they're
20 working. Okay. You mentioned that you incorporate public
21 input into those reports.

22 MS. AHMAD: Uh-hum.

23 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Why is that necessary and
24 then how do you obtain that public input?

25 MS. AHMAD: So, in our county we actually have a

1 Tobacco Free Community Coalition. And this coalition is
2 made up of representatives from different CBOs, community-
3 based organizations, as well as community residents.

4 So, prior to the submission of any report we
5 would bring that report to these Tobacco Free Coalition
6 meetings for input from the folks at the meetings. And
7 sometimes, you know, it depends on the folks who show up
8 for that particular meeting. Sometimes there's very little
9 input. Sometimes there's things that I even hadn't thought
10 of that need to be incorporated in the report. So, based
11 off of the feedback I would take it back, make edits,
12 revise, bring it back to the coalition for final input
13 before submission to the state.

14 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay, thank you.
15 Submission to the state. Who does it go to?

16 MS. AHMAD: California Tobacco Control Program.

17 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: And is that with the
18 Department of Public Health?

19 MS. AHMAD: Yes. Yeah.

20 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay. All right, that was
21 it, just curious.

22 The California Youth Advocacy Network, I saw you
23 refer to that in your application. What is that group?

24 MS. AHMAD: So, it's a tobacco education and
25 advocacy group based out of Sacramento. And they work with

1 college students to increase advocacy and awareness of
2 tobacco related issues in California, specifically.

3 During my time with CYAN I was at San Jose State
4 University. I worked with them to help adopt and educate
5 our San Jose State community about the harms of tobacco
6 control. I also had the opportunity to go out to Long
7 Beach for the CSU Board of Trustees meeting to present to
8 all of the presidents of the CSU system. And their overall
9 objective is to continue to increase awareness and
10 education about this issue in California, specifically.

11 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: And are you a volunteer or
12 are you representing Santa Clara Public Health Department?
13 Like what's your role in that?

14 MS. AHMAD: Within CYN?

15 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Yeah, how did you get into
16 the network?

17 MS. AHMAD: Oh, yeah.

18 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Is it through your work or
19 through volunteer.

20 MS. AHMAD: So, this was pre my working days.

21 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay.

22 MS. AHMAD: This was when I was still an
23 undergraduate student. I found an announcement for an
24 internship opportunity at San Jose State University, so I
25 applied for that internship opportunity. And through that

1 internship CYAN was -- I'm getting into the weeds of this.
2 CYAN was contracted by Santa Clara County Public Health to
3 do tobacco control-related projects in the county. So,
4 that's how I found them.

5 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay.

6 MS. AHMAD: Once my commitment with the
7 internship ended, an opportunity opened up at CYAN to
8 continue the work.

9 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay. Are you still with
10 CYAN?

11 MS. AHMAD: No, I'm not.

12 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: No, okay.

13 MS. AHMAD: I have aged out.

14 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay. And you mentioned
15 some of your travels. I didn't hear, I didn't catch them
16 all. But how much did you travel as part of CYAN?

17 MS. AHMAD: Within California specifically?

18 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Yeah, within California.

19 MS. AHMAD: So, I would travel to different
20 college campuses. So, Sacramento, Fresno, Long Beach. I
21 think we went to L.A. This was quite some time ago. And
22 that was in -- all in the realm of tobacco control with
23 CYAN.

24 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: And mostly folks in the
25 college campus environment?

1 MS. AHMAD: Uh-hum, yes, it was college campuses.

2 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right, I want to return
3 to a statement you made that I was interested in hearing
4 more about. I think it might have been on the tail end of
5 one of your answers to Mr. Coe's question. I want you to
6 expand on how the Commission's work is linked to
7 communities being prepared for public health crises?

8 MS. AHMAD: So, this Commission will be tasked
9 with drawing these lines and all based off of the Census.
10 And as I'm sure you all know, the implications of the
11 Census and federal funding, and how that feeds into drawing
12 these lines, and how that will directly feed into funding
13 at the local level. And funding is being cited as one of
14 the biggest barriers and obstacles in what we are seeing
15 today. I should say lack thereof funding.

16 So, I think drawing that link between the work of
17 the Commission and how this will directly impact our
18 ability as public health officials to alleviate something
19 in the future can help elevate the importance of this work
20 in a community that may be very much so concerned with
21 other things.

22 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Yeah.

23 MS. AHMAD: Yeah.

24 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right, thank you. I
25 have no further questions.

1 CHAIR COE: Okay, Mr. Dawson.

2 MR. DAWSON: Thank you, Mr. Coe.

3 Ms. Ahmad, just sort of following up on Mr.
4 Belnap's question. It brought to mind a question for me.
5 As you know, the Census work is about to begin. What
6 impact, if any, do you think that the COVID-19 situation
7 might have on the Census work?

8 MS. AHMAD: So, I have been monitoring just my
9 own social media channels. And I tend to -- isolate one
10 social media channel for all my like political stuff. And
11 two weeks ago I was seeing a lot of Census outreach and now
12 that's been varied. And COVID-19-related news stories and
13 headlines.

14 I think because the Census is online and folks
15 are home there should be an extra incentive to just, you
16 know, complete it.

17 However, given, you know, the back and forth
18 about the Census at the federal level and what we saw
19 earlier related to certain types of questions being
20 included, there may still be a fear from that aspect in
21 taking the Census.

22 I think we're in an uphill battle. A battle
23 that, you know, as public servants we've seen many times
24 before. So, I'm not afraid of that. But there's
25 definitely going to be a lot of work to educate and inform

1 communities that although we're in the midst of a pandemic,
2 we still have to take the Census. It's of utmost
3 importance for the future of our state and of our local
4 communities.

5 MR. DAWSON: So, you talked a little bit about
6 the possibility of distrust of government institutions and
7 programs, and you talked about your grandmother's
8 experience. Does the Commission have a role in improving
9 public trust in government institutions?

10 MS. AHMAD: I think the Commission does, as we
11 are extensions of the government. I think our work is
12 dependent, if not led by communities of interest and
13 communities across California. If the Commission were an
14 all-star commission, we'd go out in a community and there's
15 no trust from that community and nobody shows up, or nobody
16 provides public comment it makes our work significantly
17 harder.

18 So, I think we would have a role in kind of
19 building that bridge between us as the Commission and the
20 community, and help understand -- help folks understand
21 that the whole reason this Commission exists is because the
22 people wanted it to exist. And kind of highlighting that
23 although we are an entity of the government, we're an
24 extension of the government, by far, you know, the best one
25 in the country, we are here because you asked us to be

1 here. And I think that's what we need to highlight moving
2 forward.

3 MR. DAWSON: Do you mind if I ask you, how did
4 you get interested in tobacco as a public health concern in
5 the first place?

6 MS. AHMAD: It was an accident. Tobacco control
7 found me. And this was back when I was still at community
8 college. I didn't really get involved much. I think I was
9 a political science tutor for two quarters at De Anza. But
10 aside from that, I didn't really know what we're supposed
11 to do after high school. And I ended up at community
12 college because that's what my friends were doing. My
13 parents don't have a college education. My brother, older
14 brother dropped out. So, I was the first in my family to
15 go on this adventure.

16 And I made a promise to myself that if I am one
17 of the ones chosen to be accepted to San Jose State, I
18 would make most of that opportunity. And within that was
19 to apply for different internships.

20 And when I applied for the tobacco control
21 internship at San Jose State, I learned more about the
22 topic, got really invested in it. And since then, doors
23 have just been opening in that area and I'm super blessed
24 for that.

25 MR. DAWSON: Okay, thank you. I wanted to ask

1 you a couple questions. In your essay on impartiality you
2 talk about going to public meetings as representing the
3 health department. You say: Oftentimes at community
4 meetings there are folks present who express political
5 ideas and affiliations I personally disagree with.
6 However, we're gathered at these community meetings with a
7 common goal. The common goal serves as a reminder of the
8 purpose of the meeting.

9 I'm not really sure, what is the common goal of
10 the meeting?

11 MS. AHMAD: So, it depends on which meeting. So,
12 if it's a community meeting where we have different
13 community-based organizations or just community members
14 come out, when -- in our particular program we would ask
15 the group what is the goal of this meeting, what is the
16 purpose. And really try to authenticate a community-driven
17 effort.

18 So, in those particular meetings folks might say,
19 you know, I've been experiencing an uptick in smoke
20 drifting into my apartment and I want this meeting to focus
21 on that issue and how we can address that issue. So,
22 that's just an example of that type of setting.

23 When it comes to city council meetings or board
24 of supervisor meetings obviously those are predetermined.
25 And in those cases it's listening to public comments from

1 the community members related to the issue that I work in
2 and being able to digest all of those comments.

3 And more recently I've been really exploring this
4 idea of how public comments are what the communities and
5 public are concerned about. And if they're concerned about
6 it maybe there's gaps in research, and maybe there's areas
7 that we can improve on to answer those questions or
8 concerns before folks even come to the microphone.

9 MR. DAWSON: You talked about being yelled at by
10 clerks. I assume in a store. Have you ever been yelled at
11 in a public meeting?

12 MS. AHMAD: No, I have not.

13 MR. DAWSON: And if you were to be yelled at in a
14 public meeting, how would you handle that?

15 MS. AHMAD: I think we're in a very unique time
16 where there's lots of training material online about how to
17 handle yourself in a public meeting and as a government
18 employee. So, I think I would walk in with the
19 understanding that the person who is yelling at me through
20 this microphone is really upset, and they're really upset
21 about something. And I'm choosing to be in this seat where
22 I have made a commitment to help this individual.

23 So, I think the first step would just be
24 recognizing and helping that person recognize that I'm
25 listening and you will be heard by me. And then, moving

1 forward from there. Oftentimes that moment is out of fear,
2 or out of concern for something deeper than what we just
3 see on the surface level. And everyone deserves to be
4 heard, even if their tone is a little bit more elevated.

5 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. One final question. In
6 one of your responses to one of the standard questions, you
7 used a term that caught my ear, cultural humility.

8 MS. AHMAD: Uh-hum.

9 MR. DAWSON: I was wondering if you could define
10 that term and expand on how that would inform your work on
11 the Commission, if you're selected?

12 MS. AHMAD: Yeah, so cultural humility is a
13 concept in which one recognizes different cultures and how
14 different cultures interact and interplay in our
15 communities, and in our systems.

16 So, I think where I would take that concept into
17 the different communities is in the realm of understanding
18 that I'm not going to be a familiar face to everyone in the
19 room. My cultural practices, the way I choose to live my
20 life is not going to be identical to everyone else in the
21 room and vice-versa.

22 MR. DAWSON: Uh-hum.

23 MS. AHMAD: So, understanding that, you know,
24 folks have different approaches, different ways to handle
25 things, to communicate is going to be really imperative as

1 we move forward.

2 So, for example some cultures don't handshake.
3 They'll put their hand on their heart and kind of bow. So,
4 understanding that that's not in any way, shape or form
5 being disrespectful to someone whose culture is to
6 handshake, and understanding those differences going into
7 these very diverse communities is going to be very helpful.
8 Now, everyone's culture in regards to handshakes should be
9 elbows.

10 MR. DAWSON: Okay. We have 16 minutes left in
11 the 90-minute period. Do any of the Panel Members have any
12 follow-up questions?

13 CHAIR COE: Ms. Dickison?

14 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: I do not.

15 CHAIR COE: Mr. Belnap?

16 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: I do not.

17 CHAIR COE: I have no follow-up questions.

18 MR. DAWSON: Okay. Ms. Ahmad, at this point I
19 would like to ask you if you'd like to make a closing
20 statement?

21 MS. AHMAD: Sure. So, I heard about this
22 opportunity to apply through the radio. And when I heard
23 it, the way the advertisement was framed, as in Shape
24 California's Future, it really caught my eye. And that's
25 because California's future is actually my future. It's a

1 future that hopefully one day I may raise children in.
2 It's the future that my parents will age in. It's the
3 future that my friends, family, neighbors are going to live
4 and thrive in. So, I'm just very humbled and honored that
5 I've made it this far in this process. And it would be an
6 absolute honor to serve California in this manner. So,
7 thank you.

8 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

9 CHAIR COE: Okay, thank you, Ms. Ahmad for being
10 here today.

11 Our next interview is scheduled to begin at 1:15
12 p.m., so we'll be in recess until 1:14.

13 (Off the record at 12:00 p.m.)

14 (On the record at 1:14 p.m.)

15 CHAIR COE: I'd like to bring this meeting back
16 to order.

17 At this time I'd like to welcome Mr. Steven
18 Boilard to the table for his interview. I'd like to turn
19 the time over to Mr. Dawson for the five standard
20 questions, please.

21 MR. DAWSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

22 Mr. Boilard, I'm going to ask you five standard
23 questions that the Panel has asked each applicant to
24 respond to. Are you ready, sir?

25 MR. BOILARD: Yes.

1 MR. DAWSON: The first question. What skills and
2 attributes should all Commissioners possess?

3 What skills or competencies should the Commission
4 possess collectively?

5 Of the skills, attributes and competencies that
6 each Commissioner should possess, which do you possess?

7 In summary, how will you contribute to the
8 success of the Commission?

9 MR. BOILARD: Well, thank you for the questions
10 and thank you for the opportunity to speak with you all
11 this afternoon.

12 Certainly, you know, there's a range of
13 competencies that you would expect and require on the part
14 of the Commission, but I'd want to focus on -- and four is
15 particularly important.

16 One is that the Commission collectively should be
17 able to cover the range of interests and backgrounds of all
18 Californians. This is something, of course, that would be
19 from a collectively quality of the entire Commission and
20 not of any one individual.

21 Secondly, I think there really needs to be an
22 understanding of the principles underlying the decennial
23 Census and that would include an appreciation for
24 democratic values, and an understanding of the diversity of
25 California's population. Really, overall, an appreciation

1 for why the Commission's work matters.

2 Thirdly, I think there needs to be an ability to
3 work collectively, together, on the part of the Commission
4 to be able to see common goals, and to compromise, and
5 collaborate, and listen to one another. So, really the
6 Commission needs to be able to work as a team.

7 And finally, I think the Commission needs to have
8 strong analytical capacity to process the data that it
9 would have to work with, either from the Census, or public
10 input, or other sources.

11 I believe I contribute towards all of these
12 requirements. I have a broad set of lived experiences as a
13 native Californian. I've lived in many different parts of
14 the state, in Northern California, Central, Southern
15 California, both in the Central Valley and more towards the
16 coast. So, I certainly don't check all of the boxes just
17 in terms of geographic range, but I think I have an
18 appreciation for how much difference there is in different
19 parts of this state.

20 I have a very strong commitment to democratic
21 principles. I've -- concern of democracy really
22 characterized my work throughout my career. I studied
23 democratic mechanisms formally in college. I have a PhD in
24 political science. I've taught extensively about public
25 interest, about pluralism, about representation. And the

1 organization I headed most recently, the Center for
2 California Studies at Sacramento State, has as its core
3 mission strengthening California's democracy.

4 Thirdly, on the idea of collaboration that's been
5 very characteristic of the work that I've carried out
6 throughout my career. I spent 14 years at the Legislative
7 Analyst's Office, which is very much structured around
8 teamwork. No individual is ever responsible for any
9 particular analysis or recommendation that comes out of
10 that office. Instead, it's developed as teams. People
11 acting as devil's advocates and challenging one another,
12 contributing their own areas of expertise. So, it's a very
13 team-focused environment. And I think that's why the
14 work's so well respected.

15 Finally, I'm exceptionally strong analytically.
16 I've taught courses in research methods and in use of data.
17 Again, I think the LAO experience is relevant here, which
18 is an office that really focuses on using data to drive
19 analysis and conclusions, to set aside bias and go straight
20 to that data focus.

21 So, overall, I think I'd be able to contribute to
22 all four of these kind of key aspects of what the
23 Commission needs.

24 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Question two. Work on
25 the Commission requires members of different political

1 backgrounds to work together. Since the 2010 Commission
2 was selected and formed, the American political
3 conversation has become increasingly polarized, whether in
4 the press, on social media, and even in our own families.

5 What characteristics do you possess, and what
6 characteristics should your fellow Commissioners possess,
7 that will protect against hyperpartisanship?

8 What will you do to ensure that the work of the
9 Commission is not seen as polarized or hyperpartisan and
10 avoid perceptions of political bias and conflict?

11 MR. BOILARD: Yeah, I mean the work of the
12 Commission is inevitably working within a partisan
13 environment and there's a lot of people with very strong
14 partisan views that care an awful lot about the
15 Commission's work. So, it's an inevitable part of, again,
16 of the environment that the Commission's going to have to
17 be working in.

18 And in addition to that, of course, you know, ten
19 of your Commissioners are going to have a formal
20 affiliation with either the Democrats or the Republicans.
21 So, I don't think that the partisanship in itself is
22 inherently problematic. I think the key is, as you were
23 talking about hyperpartisanship.

24 So, Commissioners of whatever political
25 background, ideological background need to be able to look

1 past that and see what are the greater -- what is the
2 greater good of California? What are the greater interests
3 of California? They must be able to work towards a common
4 goal irrespective of their partisan background.

5 The Commission, I think, needs to keep being able
6 to return to what are the needs and interests of
7 California's people. Not just their ideological
8 backgrounds, but what are the challenges, desires, concerns
9 held by people of California. And those are what should be
10 driving the process, rather than partisanship.

11 I think both by disposition and professionally
12 I'm nonpartisan. I'm especially well-suited in that regard
13 to be able to look past partisanship. I've very
14 comfortable working with members of -- people of any party.
15 I've done that throughout my life. Certainly, at the
16 Legislative Analyst's Office where we staffed for both the
17 Republicans and Democrats, from both the Assembly and the
18 Senate.

19 And at the Center for California Studies, where I
20 was more recently, part of our job was to place Fellows in
21 political offices. These are college graduates that we put
22 in one-year paid fellowships. And members of the
23 Legislature rely on that as a part of their staffing.
24 These are really something they care very much about being
25 able to get. So, we were scrutinized pretty strongly by

1 both Republicans and Democrats, looking at how are we
2 allocating resources between those two parties. And so,
3 I've been very sensitive to being able to work
4 cooperatively and in a very fair fashion in dealing with
5 both of those parties.

6 So, overall, I think if I were selected to serve
7 on the Commission I'd be able to work as a trusted
8 colleague for all members of the Commission, irrespective
9 of their partisan background.

10 And another key part of your question was about
11 perception of bias. And I think, you know, that's
12 something that we have to be very attentive to. That
13 irrespective of how well the Commission works together, how
14 is the outside going to view this process. Are they going
15 to see the Commission's work as overly partisan, or not.
16 And I think the best remedy for that is just by continually
17 turning back to what does the data say, to have an open,
18 transparent process that is fair and not hewing to any
19 particular ideological background.

20 And I'd be relentless in keeping the Commission
21 focused in that direction.

22 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Question three. What is
23 the greatest problem the Commission could encounter, and
24 what actions would you take to avoid or respond to this
25 problem?

1 MR. BOILARD: I've thought a lot about this and I
2 really think there's two very related problems, but I think
3 they're both quite challenging. One is the seemingly
4 simple matter of defining communities of interest. That in
5 a pluralistic society how do you come up with a mutually
6 exclusive group of communities in order to create a map.
7 There are these cross cutting cleavages where individuals
8 can simultaneously belong to more than one interest group.

9 So, I think data would help, but it won't result
10 unquestionably in a mutually exclusive set of districts.

11 And a related issue, I think, is there is tension
12 among the various requirements that the Commission is going
13 to face on creating compact, geographically contiguous
14 districts, on hewing to the Voting Rights Act, and the U.S.
15 Constitution, other laws, respecting municipal boundaries,
16 and doing all this while keeping intact these communities
17 of interest.

18 So, the Commission's work, I think, could hang up
19 on either or both of these challenges. Certainly, there's
20 a need for legal counsel and statistical expertise as part
21 of the way of trying to overcome these. But I really think
22 that it's more important to be able to get in and
23 understand the socioeconomic, social interests of the
24 people of the state.

25 There's a concept that my wife introduced me to.

1 She worked at Toyota for -- 30 years ago. That Toyota has
2 this term called Genchi Genbutsu, which means go and see.
3 And the concept there is that you can't just rely on your
4 armchair learning on your research, but you need to go out
5 and experience, in the case of Toyota what's going on at
6 the production lines, or how are the cars operating in a
7 real environment.

8 So, in this case I think it's clearly a case
9 where the Commission needs to be able to get out into the
10 communities, to meet with the people to understand their
11 challenges or interests, and what they're expecting and
12 needing from the government.

13 So, I think ultimately that's the way that you
14 can get at overcoming those two challenges of really
15 developing a set of maps that are honoring all of those
16 different requirements.

17 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Question four. If you
18 are selected, you will be one of 14 members of the
19 Commission which is charged with working together to create
20 maps of the new districts. Please describe a situation
21 where you had to work collaboratively with others on a
22 project to achieve a common goal.

23 Tell us the goal of the project, what your role
24 in the group was, and how the group worked through any
25 conflicts that arose.

1 What lessons would you take from this group
2 experience to the Commission if selected?

3 MR. BOILARD: When I came to the Center for
4 California Studies as its Executive Director, the previous
5 -- they had been drifting for a couple of years. The
6 previous director had passed at an early age and the center
7 had kind of limped along under a series of interim
8 directors. And during that time the staff, which is not
9 large, it's about 12 people, were really having
10 disagreements about what are the priorities for this
11 organization and where should we be heading.

12 There was a strategic plan that had been put in
13 place, but it was a 10-year plan, and we were now on year
14 12, so it had, you know, formally expired.

15 So, when I arrived there I saw that there was,
16 you know, again, a lot of political factionalism, a lot of
17 disagreement, low morale. And I felt like recreating a new
18 strategic plan could be very helpful, particularly if it
19 were done in a collaborative way. I was new to the
20 organization, the other people had been there longer than
21 I, so I don't think it would be an appropriate response for
22 me just to put in place some kind of a set of goals for the
23 organization.

24 So, what I did was I had a several day retreat
25 for the organization. It was offsite to kind of get away

1 from people's own areas of turf. I brought in a outside
2 facilitator to lead the group through a number of exercises
3 to really get at what are -- what is it this organization
4 does, what works and what doesn't.

5 We broke into small groups, ensuring that
6 everybody had a voice in contributing towards that and,
7 ultimately, that everyone had ownership over what the final
8 product was.

9 I thought that was a very effective exercise.
10 That the strategic plan that we ended up developing was a
11 very robust one, had a very clear vision for the
12 organization, and I believe that we really excelled
13 afterwards. People had a greater sense of belonging to the
14 organization.

15 So, I think the lesson in there has to do with
16 giving voice to different members of the group,
17 communication and dialogue. And those are principles that
18 I would think would be important to bring back to the
19 Commission.

20 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Question five. A
21 considerable amount of the Commission's work will involve
22 meeting with people from all over California who come from
23 very different backgrounds and a wide variety of
24 perspectives.

25 If you are selected as a Commissioner, what

1 skills and attributes will make you effective at
2 interacting with people from different backgrounds and who
3 have a variety of perspectives?

4 What experiences have you had that will help you
5 be effective at understanding and appreciating people and
6 communities of different backgrounds and who have a variety
7 of perspectives?

8 MR. BOILARD: So, this is one of the most
9 important issues I think the Commission's facing, that
10 you're facing in putting together a Commission. How can
11 the Commissioners get to fully understand the diverse
12 communities of interest it's charged to giving political
13 voice to? And I think this involves both hearing and
14 understanding the perspective of the different people of
15 the state.

16 My own skills in this regard, I see three.
17 Empathy that comes from the range of experiences that I've
18 had in the state throughout the years. I think I have
19 broad cultural literacy.

20 Secondly, respect for individuals. I enjoy
21 getting to know people. I see the good in people.

22 And thirdly, I'm told, always been told I'm a
23 good listener, an ability to get people's stories. I think
24 people, you know, trust me.

25 So, these are the qualities I bring. You asked

1 about relevant experiences. I spent five and a half years
2 at the Center for California Studies, whose purpose is
3 really looking at a better understanding of what California
4 is about. It's charged with improving California's
5 governmental system, but also better understanding what is
6 California, who are the people of California.

7 And in that regard I put together a number of
8 programs, such as every year we'd have an annual conference
9 on some topic. When I was there we did conferences on
10 agriculture, on transportation, on the wine industry. And
11 in each of those I tried to think about what -- who are
12 voices or communities that you don't normally hear from in
13 these kinds of meetings.

14 So, on the agricultural segment, for example, on
15 the conference on agriculture, we brought in as a keynote
16 speaker Mas Masumoto, who's a Japanese American farmer
17 whose family had been interned during World War II. We
18 also brought in an African American farmer which, again, is
19 a voice you don't hear from as much, but a very real part
20 of the fabric of California's agriculture.

21 When we talked about the wine industry we tried
22 and successfully found a couple of female business owners
23 to hear from. This, again, is not well represented in a
24 lot of these kinds of meetings and conferences.

25 So, on housing, we brought in a homeless

1 individual.

2 So, these are just examples of being attuned to
3 the need to bring in voices and hear from those
4 individuals, and understand from those individuals as part
5 of these larger issues that we don't always examine the
6 less common voices.

7 More personally, I've had a number of one-on-one
8 discussions in my work with a whole range of individuals.
9 I would have office hours. I called them office hours. I
10 had open time at Ambrosia, the café down on K Street, when
11 our Fellows could come drop by and just talk to me about
12 what are their goals with their fellowships, and afterwards
13 what were they planning to do.

14 This program was set up to try and expand the
15 range of new faces to bring into California government.
16 And we worked very hard to find these individuals, all of
17 whom -- many of whom would never have really found their
18 way to Sacramento without this program, where we connect
19 them to the offices and we provide the money for them.

20 So, I got to hear their stories and it was very
21 eye opening to find out about how few of these individuals,
22 until they'd run into this program, thought that they even
23 had a way to break into California government.

24 We also would run a grant program for a number of
25 these individuals who maybe wouldn't have money to put

1 together a wardrobe or deal with transportation to get up
2 to Sacramento. And I would sit on a very small group to
3 hear from those, to interview those individuals on what are
4 their challenges and what are their needs.

5 So, I feel like over time, with these different
6 conversations, and meeting one-on-one with individuals that
7 I've come to appreciate and have a larger grasp for the
8 range of challenges that are felt by, in this case
9 particularly, young people in the State of California.

10 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. At this point we'll go
11 to Panel questions. Each Panel Member will have 20 minutes
12 to ask his or her questions. And we will begin with the
13 Chair, Mr. Coe.

14 CHAIR COE: Thank you, Mr. Dawson.

15 Good afternoon, Mr. Boilard.

16 MR. BOILARD: Good afternoon.

17 CHAIR COE: Thanks for being here. Just a point
18 of clarification. You've been speaking to work in
19 Sacramento, but you currently are located in Los Angeles
20 County, is that right?

21 MR. BOILARD: That's correct. I had worked in
22 Sacramento until about two years ago and then I retired,
23 and I've moved down to Southern California.

24 CHAIR COE: Okay, great. I want to talk about
25 something that you mentioned in your application. You

1 referred to the California Consortium on Public Engagement,
2 which you cofounded?

3 MR. BOILARD: Uh-hum.

4 CHAIR COE: I'd like to hear a little bit about
5 what that organization did and what motivated you to be a
6 cofounder on that organization.

7 MR. BOILARD: Sure. When I left the LAO and came
8 to Sacramento State to take over this organization, Center
9 for California Studies, and that's the one where I was
10 telling you about the strategic planning, et cetera, it
11 really felt to me like one of the key areas that we should
12 be working on to promote California democracy is
13 strengthening the connection between people and their
14 government. I think there is even more so today, but back
15 then, five, six, seven years ago I think there was a sense
16 of alienation.

17 And so, we were trying to think about, yeah, how
18 do we promote better engagement by California's residents.
19 And I was -- when I took the job I started meeting with a
20 variety of other people who worked in other nonprofit
21 organizations that had some connection to California's
22 government. And I ran into a woman named Sarah Rubin, who
23 was working with the Institute for Local Government. And
24 she and I were both kind of excited about this topic. And
25 we said, you know, there's actually -- we put our heads

1 together and said there's actually a number of
2 organizations that have some hand in this issue of
3 democratic engagement, of public engagement in California.

4 And so, we brought together a group of
5 individuals and we said let's just have a -- we called it a
6 gathering of like-minded friends. And we talked about how
7 organizations, all fairly small, promoted this theme and
8 how could we perhaps work together. And we ended up
9 creating a consortium of these organizations. It wasn't
10 any formal overlay, it was an informal network.

11 This group ended up sponsoring legislation with
12 Assembly Member Eggman. It did not ultimately pass, but
13 that legislation was focused on new programs to encourage
14 public engagement, to get more information in the hands of
15 people and how they could become publicly engaged.

16 So, again, the short answer to your question is
17 just simply it was a loose confederation of similar
18 organizations that cared about this topic.

19 CHAIR COE: And what role did you serve?

20 MR. BOILARD: As Executive Director of one of the
21 founding organizations, I was a participant, a member of
22 this group. I mean the informal role I played was creating
23 it and bringing together, kind of initiating meetings. But
24 I didn't hold any formal authority.

25 CHAIR COE: Okay, thank you. In your essays you

1 describe a trip that your family took to Mount Vernon.

2 MR. BOILARD: Yes.

3 CHAIR COE: And the effect that had on you, which
4 you, I think, referred to as a turning point --

5 MR. BOILARD: Uh-hum.

6 CHAIR COE: -- in your perspective, in terms of
7 your appreciation for the revolutionary era in our nation's
8 history and the democratic ideals that were put in place
9 during that era.

10 I'm curious about what struck you. If there was
11 one or two things in particular that kind of struck that
12 chord for you?

13 MR. BOILARD: Yeah, I'm not -- I struggle to
14 really understand what it was about that trip that was so,
15 you know, impactful. And I think I mentioned in the essay
16 that as a lifetime Californian, you know, history seems to
17 start in 1849 or 1848, and I just never learned that much
18 about revolutionary history. And there's a museum there
19 that recently opened, that I think just very powerfully
20 told the story of the revolution. And how I think, as the
21 creators of the exhibits would have wanted and expected, I
22 came through that feeling really both inspired and kind of
23 struck by how unique and how never predestined that this
24 experiment that we call democracy was going to be.

25 So, I remember very distinctly standing there in

1 the rain at Mount Vernon, talking to my son who was five
2 years old at the time, he was six years old at the time,
3 and trying to explain why, you know, this is really
4 something amazing that this country adopted this form of
5 government.

6 And I remember thinking on the way home what is
7 it about -- why do we take -- why do people take this for
8 granted? Why does the country take this democratic system
9 for granted? And I realized that, you know, I'm one of
10 those people that takes it for granted. So, again, without
11 overplaying this, I think that was a turning point where I
12 really realized I had a passion and drive to do something
13 more on promoting democracy.

14 And the world I was working in was Sacramento and
15 California, so that's kind of where I ended up placing my
16 focus.

17 CHAIR COE: I see. And was that kind of a
18 motivating factor for applying for this Commission?

19 MR. BOILARD: In the long run, yes, it is. I
20 mean that's been part of my drive since that time. As I
21 said, both -- I was at LAO at the time and I really felt
22 very committed to that role of trying to help inform the
23 policy process in Sacramento with nonpartisan analytical
24 data, to proof that process. We also worked at LAO on the
25 voter's guide, the voter's pamphlet to try and help people

1 better understand what are the initiatives that they're
2 facing.

3 So, you know, it's moved through stages. At
4 Center of California Studies I largely tried to recast or
5 refocus that organization really on democratic governance
6 and public participation.

7 And so now, as a retired guy I'm saying, well,
8 now how can I be applying my drive, and my interests, and
9 my background, and this came to my attention as something
10 that I think I'd be uniquely suited to do.

11 CHAIR COE: Okay, thank you. I want to talk
12 about your impartiality essay for a moment. You described
13 the different roles you've had during your life that
14 allowed you to practice impartiality. Your LAO career that
15 you've spoken about. Your work with the Center for
16 California Studies. And during graduate school where you
17 practiced the scientific method.

18 Can you describe a time where you ended up maybe
19 switching your view after getting additional input that was
20 contrary to what you initially had decided, or a course of
21 action that maybe you changed your mind on as a result of
22 getting input from others, or new information?

23 MR. BOILARD: Sure. One big one, when I was at
24 the LAO I headed the unit on higher education, so that was
25 my area of focus at the LAO. And at the time, the time I'm

1 thinking about, 2009, 2010, a major recession and the
2 state's looking to how do we come up with more money? How
3 can we make cuts, you know, is very much where the
4 government was focused at the time.

5 And so, in my little piece of the -- you know,
6 one of the exercises we were asked to run is, right, in
7 your particular area, in my case higher education, how can
8 we save money? What can we cut?

9 And I remember thinking that one of the easiest
10 places to go would be to increase tuition, because tuition
11 at the time was very, very low in California. And we have
12 financial aid programs that ensure that anybody financially
13 needy would have help. So, we'd really be charging more
14 money for people who by definition could afford it.

15 So, that was kind of how I was feeling about
16 this. But as I mentioned, the approach we take at LAO is
17 we want to hear from a lot of different perspectives before
18 we develop a recommendation. And I talked to a lot of
19 student groups.

20 And what I ended up understanding from talking
21 with the student groups is, sure, formerly there were these
22 financial aid programs that in theory are going to take
23 care of anyone who's financially needy. But there's a
24 number of other requirements besides just financial need.
25 And these extend to whether you're here, legally present,

1 or not. This is before we changed a number of our
2 financial aid programs. Some of them have to do with do
3 you have a criminal record or not. Some of them have to do
4 with how long you've already been in school or how old you
5 are.

6 And so, I came to understand we have a lot of
7 holes in our financial aid system. And for that reason, I
8 did end up throttling back on our recommendations for
9 tuition increases.

10 CHAIR COE: I see, thank you. In your essays and
11 in some of your answers this afternoon you've discussed
12 having worked with, or met, or represented people of
13 diverse backgrounds. I'd like to know what you think
14 you've learned about the perspectives of the people from
15 these diverse backgrounds and how that can inform your work
16 as a Commissioner.

17 MR. BOILARD: Sure. I mean it partly depends on
18 the person that I met. One that's sticking out in my mind
19 right now is -- I mentioned I'm retired and one of the
20 things I've been doing is quite a bit of volunteer work.
21 And in a community near me, San Pedro, working with a class
22 of community south of Los Angeles, I've been doing
23 volunteer work with the Boys and Girls Club.

24 And one of the things I did last year was serve
25 on a interview panel for selecting somebody for the Youth

1 of the Year Award among the participants at the local Boys
2 and Girls Club. And I interviewed I guess it was six
3 finalists. And in the process of talking with those
4 people, again this is Southern California, this is a lot of
5 infrastructure, a lot of people, you know, a lot of very
6 wealthy communities down there. And one student, one of
7 these youth in particular was telling me about how she
8 comes home to her home, she's in high school, her mother's
9 away at work and she has to prepare dinner for her siblings
10 and for her mom, when her mom gets home. And she was
11 worried that if she were selected for this Youth of the
12 Year, which is going to end up providing her with a
13 scholarship and the ability to go off to college, who was
14 going to take care of the family.

15 And I realize it's a -- you know, it's a one data
16 point, but I guess I ended up with a much more visceral
17 understanding that people don't have a lot -- there's a lot
18 of people that don't have a lot of built in safety nets.
19 And in their cases, and in thinking about this in terms of
20 the Commission and the work of the Commission, that people
21 look to help from the government, they look for programs,
22 they look for assistance as a way to help just get by on a
23 day-to-day basis.

24 So, for whatever reason this particular student I
25 was talking to just really personalized how there are these

1 families that are really very much on the edge.

2 And so, what I would bring to the Commission is a
3 appreciation for how that translates into political needs
4 that need to be represented in the government.

5 CHAIR COE: I want to talk a little bit about
6 something you've already brought up and that's communities
7 of interest. That's going to be a big task in front of the
8 Commission.

9 You mentioned one of the challenges of the
10 Commission being how to define a community of interest.
11 Once that definition has been settled amongst
12 Commissioners, how would you go about finding them,
13 particularly those that might be harder to find? Some
14 communities are not as civically engaged. How would you go
15 about finding those communities of interest?

16 MR. BOILARD: Well, a couple of thoughts. First
17 of all, you know, you say once the Commission's able to
18 kind of settle on a definition. I think that definition
19 would probably be iterative that, you know, you kind of
20 come up with a working definition. You'd go out into the
21 communities, you might end up having to say, you know, we
22 weren't thinking that clearly about this part of the
23 definition. So, I think there's a back and forth that
24 would go on there.

25 You talk particularly about communities of

1 interest that are harder to find or maybe harder to
2 convince that they should be coming out, and meeting, and
3 sharing with us. This partly calls into question the
4 Census and, which I guess is going to be starting fairly
5 quickly now, and how is that going to be -- how
6 successfully is that going to run and what kind of
7 information and data would be made available from that.

8 I go back to this thought of getting into the
9 communities, the Genchi Genbutsu I was talking about
10 earlier. The Commission has to, I think number one think
11 creatively about where they meet these individuals. It
12 can't just always be in a government building in a formal
13 conference room.

14 I don't know what kind of restrictions, legal
15 restrictions there are around these meetings or even the
16 practical side of it, but I would sure hope we could meet
17 in community spaces that are comfortable, where a whole
18 range of individuals would feel comfortable coming where
19 they've come before.

20 I think at the same time the Commission has to
21 have an outreach campaign that gets the word out, not just
22 through a formal notice in the newspaper, but through local
23 community groups and other mechanisms.

24 It's really, I think, turning around the thinking
25 from what do we need to do in terms of our meetings to what

1 do the communities require from us to meet them and hear
2 their stories.

3 MS. LE TELLIER: Five minutes.

4 CHAIR COE: Thank you. Once you've found them,
5 those communities that may not -- there are some
6 communities that may not be comfortable bringing forth
7 their perspectives for one reason or another, I think it
8 was in question five you referred to some skills you have
9 in terms of empathy and listening. How would you use these
10 skills to elicit perspectives from groups that may
11 generally not feel comfortable, you know, participating in
12 governmental, you know, programs --

13 MR. BOILARD: Right.

14 CHAIR COE: -- or associating, or communicating
15 with government officials. How would you go about making
16 them feel comfortable enough to provide that input?

17 MR. BOILARD: Yeah. I don't have all the answers
18 on that, yet, but I sure believe that, you know, what
19 you're talking about is trust. That there's a lot of
20 misinformation out there about government and about what
21 governments are going to do with information and with data.
22 And so, this is clearly -- I think, you know, there's a
23 parallel track with the Census kind of running into a lot
24 of these same questions, I think.

25 So, what can we learn from -- I think we want to

1 watch very closely, you know, what's going on in that
2 regard and what can we learn from the Census.

3 But off the top of my head I'm thinking in
4 addition to garnering trust by being clear about how that
5 information's going to be used, and helping people
6 understand that this is in their own interest to be heard,
7 and allow us to strengthen their voice in government. I
8 think beyond that it's going to be small things. How do we
9 act around these people? Do we listen to them? Are we --
10 I'm sure we've all been to public meetings where a
11 government official is on their phone, or taking -- or, you
12 know, looking at something else or talking to their
13 neighbor, rather than listening to somebody speak. So,
14 really illustrating that this is -- that we really want to
15 hear from them.

16 I think you also build a track record over time.
17 That if those initial steps into communities are well
18 received maybe representatives from those communities could
19 be enlisted to help spread the word that, you know, this
20 worked really well and these people are for real.

21 So, it's going to have to be a whole range of
22 things. But it's about trust, it's about being genuine,
23 it's about clear information.

24 CHAIR COE: Okay, thank you. Do I have time for
25 one more?

1 MR. DAWSON: Two minutes.

2 CHAIR COE: Okay. If you were to be appointed as
3 a Commissioner which aspects of that role do you think that
4 you would enjoy the most and which, conversely, which
5 aspects do you think you might struggle with a little bit?

6 MR. BOILARD: The ones I would enjoy the most is
7 getting into the communities. I think I'm really kind of
8 excited about that part.

9 While I have, I think -- I'm very comfortable
10 working with data and I'm very comfortable performing
11 analysis, I think that's an area that is less exciting to
12 me. So, if I had to focus on one versus the other, even
13 though I think we'd all to some extent play every role, but
14 if I had to choose one over the other I'd want to focus
15 more on engaging with the communities.

16 CHAIR COE: Okay, no further questions.

17 Ms. Dickison.

18 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Good morning --

19 MR. BOILARD: Good morning -- or afternoon.

20 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Good afternoon, Mr.
21 Boilard. So, you've talked a little bit about your work
22 with the Capital Fellows Program and that you do
23 recruitment for that?

24 MR. BOILARD: Uh-hum.

25 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: What have you learned in

1 doing the recruitment for that, that would help in the work
2 with the Commission?

3 MR. BOILARD: A couple of things. One is I
4 remember in particular a meeting -- one thing that the
5 Center for California Studies would do is we had formal
6 relationships with college campuses all around the state.
7 And that our main source of Fellows is students who are
8 graduating from college, so we meet them on college
9 campuses. Generally through the career centers we would
10 arrange kind of a formal presentation, or you go with a
11 PowerPoint and you explain what the Capital Fellows Program
12 is, and then you ask for any questions.

13 And what I found was the first couple of times I
14 would go out and, again, we had everyone from the office
15 would go out at various times, but I felt like I should be
16 -- again, go and see. I wanted to get a feel for what was
17 going on in the communities. I realized that we didn't get
18 a lot of people turning out to these presentations and
19 those who did, near the end would say, okay, well, so this
20 isn't a permanent job? And, you know, no, it's not, it's a
21 one-year fellowship. And it was just clear to me that we
22 weren't -- we weren't getting the word out either broadly
23 enough or clearly enough about what we really were.

24 Because when you think about it, these
25 fellowships are actually very -- once people understand

1 what they are, they're very highly sought after for a
2 variety of reasons I don't need to go into right now. But
3 I realized we weren't marketing this very well.

4 And so, what I ended up doing is I changed my
5 approach for when I would go to these campuses. And at the
6 career centers, for example, rather than have a formal
7 presentation that students could come to, I would instead
8 go to faculty in courses where I thought students would
9 have an interest in government. Political science
10 primarily, economics to some extent. And ask, can I have
11 five minutes of your time at the beginning of class just to
12 tell students what this is about, and then invite the
13 students to come meet with me either later that day, or to
14 give me a phone call, or whatever.

15 And I found that that really ended up getting
16 much more interest because I was going to where the
17 students were, rather than expecting them to come to this,
18 you know, kind of formal presentation offsite.

19 So, I don't know if that's the kind of
20 illustration you were looking for.

21 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: I think so. So, what you
22 basically did was change the approach so that you were more
23 targeting of those that you thought would have an interest
24 in that type of program.

25 MR. BOILARD: Yeah. Yes.

1 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Okay. How do you think
2 that change in an approach would work for seeking out
3 communities of interest?

4 MR. BOILARD: I think there's -- you know, in the
5 case that I'm -- from the Capital Fellows Programs, you
6 know, we were offering something to these individuals. We
7 were offering them a pathway into new possible career
8 direction, exposure, building up the resume, those kind of
9 things. There were some kind of tangible rewards.

10 I think where this wouldn't translate as well to
11 the Commission is there's really not a tangible reward.
12 There's kind of this more amorphous idea of an appeal to
13 civic virtue, an appeal to helping your community in kind
14 of a more amorphous sense. So, it's not as much a you as
15 an individual are going to get a direct benefit. I think
16 the appeal has to be more towards the community, as
17 representative of the community.

18 That said, I think that the lesson of going out
19 to where the people are, rather than expecting them to come
20 to my meeting would be an important one for outreach on the
21 part of the Commission.

22 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Okay. Thank you.

23 MR. BOILARD: Uh-hum.

24 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: In your letter of
25 recommendation, your first letter of recommendation the

1 writer mentioned that you spent five years as an assistant
2 professor in Kentucky.

3 MR. BOILARD: Yes.

4 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: What did you learn from
5 that experience that would help or benefit the Commission?

6 MR. BOILARD: Sure. When I was doing my PhD,
7 that was in UC Santa Barbara, and I did my -- so, my first
8 teaching I was doing in Santa Barbara. And again, I'm a
9 product of the University of California system. I have a
10 great, strong pride in the UC system.-

11 But that said, I did find a lot of the students
12 that I would encounter at UCSB were kind of viewing college
13 as a right, rather than a privilege. They were kind of
14 expecting that they would graduate and go on to well-paying
15 jobs. Which is, you know, fine so far as it goes.

16 But what I found when I went to Kentucky is the
17 majority of my students were first generation college
18 students. And they took a very different approach to their
19 education where they were viewing it like, hey, I've been
20 given an opportunity here and I better not blow it. Their
21 parents were paying good money that maybe they couldn't
22 afford as much to get their kids into college that they had
23 not been able to experience.

24 And so, I think that what I learned from that
25 experience is that when there's an appreciation for

1 education, in this case, the students work much harder and
2 were committed to that work. And I, frankly, enjoyed
3 working with those students much more than I had enjoyed
4 the earlier teaching.

5 So, your question I think was just, you know,
6 what did I learn from that experience, which I've just
7 mentioned. Trying to think about how that applies to the
8 Commission's work, again I think there's a lesson in there
9 about working with -- helping these groups of people,
10 particularly harder to find groups understand that there is
11 -- this is a real opportunity to be able to help share your
12 perspectives on what we in this government need to do on
13 improving our electoral system.

14 And maybe that goes back to the earlier question
15 from Mr. Coe about how do we convince these groups that
16 they should be helping us in this work. Because again,
17 ultimately it's an opportunity for them.

18 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Also, in your second letter
19 of recommendation they discuss that you do a daily blog, or
20 you did one for your exploration of Highway 50.

21 MR. BOILARD: Yes. And there's nothing secret
22 about this. You could look it up if you want.

23 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Uh-hum.

24 MR. BOILARD: One of the things I've undertaken
25 in my retired life has been a lot of road trips. And I've

1 always enjoyed, again exploring, particularly meeting
2 people. And so, every time I go on one of these trips, as
3 a way to help myself process what I'm seeing is I end up
4 writing up each day a segment about who I saw, and what I
5 did, et cetera.

6 So, one of my first goals in retirement has been,
7 again like all of you, I've seen that sign on Highway 50
8 that says Ocean City, Maryland 3,073 miles. And I said,
9 I'm going to drive that 3,073 miles. Highway 50 it turns
10 out, you know, once you get out of Placer County is just a
11 little two-lane road that goes across the country. And you
12 meet a lot of -- Highway 50 turns into the main street for
13 many of these communities.

14 So, I really just developed this. I took that
15 trip, it's one of the first things in retirement. I just
16 developed this love of going out and exploring, and meeting
17 with these people. And since then I've done a number of
18 additional trips. I've gone across the U.S. on Highway 60
19 and Highway 70. I'm kind of collecting them all, which are
20 also these little two-lane roads.

21 And in California I've taken Highway 395 along
22 the Eastern Sierra. And that goes through like Manzanar,
23 which I'd never been to before, the former Japanese
24 internment camp which is, you know, a very powerful
25 experience just spending a day there.

1 And then, later this week I'm going to drive
2 Highway 33, which starts in Ventura and goes all the way up
3 around the -- close to this area.

4 So, again, I think probably, I can't remember
5 which recommender that was, but I think what they were
6 trying to get at there is I do really enjoy, going back to
7 Mr. Coe's question, being able to meet with people and
8 learn about their background and their stories.

9 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: What did you learn in
10 meeting with these people that you think would help when
11 you're reaching out for public comment or dealing with the
12 public during the meetings?

13 MR. BOILARD: Yeah. I mentioned earlier that I
14 do think I'm good at listening. I do think that people --
15 people have -- people have a way of knowing whether you're
16 being genuine, whether you're listening, whether you care
17 about them or not. I really believe that. And I think,
18 you know, you mentioned the travels. I think, I find
19 myself getting into lots of conversations with people when
20 I'm stopping to get something to eat, or when I'm visiting
21 a museum or, you know, whatever it might be.

22 I think that what I am able to do is extract --
23 get people to let their defenses down and share with me.
24 So, I think that that is something I would be able to take
25 to these community meetings and other opportunities to meet

1 with folks.

2 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Okay. On the subject of
3 blogging, do you see this as a method the Commission should
4 use in its work and, if so why?

5 MR. BOILARD: That's an interesting question. I
6 don't know about blogging per se. I'm sure you have a lot
7 of -- you'd have a number of concerns about privacy and,
8 you know, mentioning people's names. So, it's something
9 you'd want to spend a lot of time thinking about initially.

10 But clearly, the broad range of tools of social
11 media, you know, whether it's blogging, or whether it's
12 Tweets. I know you've done a very good job on the
13 Commission's website, both the previous Commission's
14 website, as well as your website now for this process of
15 integrating videos so people can see what's going on these
16 hearings. Again, making the process very transparent.

17 But I think social media's going to have to be
18 part of the outreach strategy. Increasingly that is where
19 people get their information. And I am not an expert in
20 that area so I don't know what specifically would work or
21 not, but I would sure want to talk with the experts and
22 make that part of the outreach strategy.

23 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Okay, thank you. One of
24 the things you mentioned in your first essay, that the
25 Commission's work is important on its face because fair,

1 competitive districts give all Californians, including
2 historically under-represented communities the opportunity
3 to elect representatives who will protect their interests.

4 My question goes to the idea of competitive
5 districts. So, how would competitive districts rank among
6 communities of interest neighborhoods, cities and counties?

7 MR. BOILARD: I'm sorry, --

8 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: How would that rank in
9 importance among communities of interest.

10 MR. BOILARD: Oh. Yeah, I was actually -- I've
11 actually given more thought to this since writing that
12 essay, and probably the least important of those. In fact,
13 I don't even think that's in the formal charge to the
14 Commission.

15 I think that probably a better way to think about
16 the importance of those districts is less about competitive
17 and more about creating possibilities for that community to
18 effectively exercise -- use its voice to select a
19 representative that understands their interests. So,
20 again, the short answer to your question is it would not --
21 competitiveness would not be a consideration against those
22 others.

23 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Great.

24 MS. LE TELLIER: About five and a half minutes.

25 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you. So, you

1 mentioned that you've been a -- you lived in Sacramento up
2 until a couple of years ago.

3 MR. BOILARD: Yes.

4 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: So, thinking about the
5 different concerns between the communities in Sacramento
6 and those in the Los Angeles area, can you describe kind of
7 what might bind those communities together and what might
8 drive their preference for the type of representation
9 they're looking for?

10 MR. BOILARD: When you say bind them together,
11 you mean what binds the people of Southern California, like
12 Los Angeles together, and what binds the people --

13 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Or different communities
14 within those areas.

15 MR. BOILARD: Okay. You know, both Sacramento
16 and Los Angeles, probably more so Los Angeles, have some
17 very stark dividing lines between communities, whether that
18 -- I think there's both some very focused racial and ethnic
19 communities in L.A., but also -- you know, we talked of
20 cross cutting cleavages. Also, socioeconomic communities.
21 There are some, you know, some very wealthy enclaves where
22 you kind of cross the street and there's a very, you know,
23 poor enclave.

24 So, I think part of what creates or, you know, to
25 use your term kind of binds some of these communities

1 together is a shared place on the socioeconomic ladder.
2 You have groups that are -- you know, maybe don't have an
3 opportunity for one parent to be at home, or who don't have
4 -- rely on public transportation, which is I think a great
5 concern in a number of areas in Southern California.

6 In Sacramento I think they're less stark, but you
7 still have defined regions where the -- well, I think back
8 to something just before I left Sacramento that was -- I
9 was reading a lot of about was, say, gentrification around
10 Oak Park. And, you know, there you have a community that's
11 changing and you have long time residents who maybe have
12 really felt and consider this home. They're paying their
13 rent, they've got their kids in school and now they're
14 feeling that rent's gong up because the area's gentrifying,
15 or they're kind of losing access to some of their parks or
16 whatever it might be.

17 So, communities get bound together around their
18 shared concerns about these kinds of prosaic, daily
19 challenges. Again, whether it's school, or whether it's
20 jobs, the economy, as well as just affinity among say
21 language groups that would bind a community together.

22 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Okay. One last question.
23 If you're selected as one of the first eight Commissioners
24 which are selected randomly, they are tasked with selecting
25 the next six Commissioners. What would you be looking for

1 in those six Commissioners?

2 MR. BOILARD: Well, that would all depend on what
3 was in the group of eight. I think, you know, the statute
4 gives some directive in terms of the kinds of breadth and
5 diversity that needs to be within that group, as well --
6 within the 14, as well as their partisan makeup.

7 So, you'd look at where the holes were in terms
8 of the demographics, racial, ethnic, geographic. But I
9 think you also want to look at the areas of expertise.
10 Where are the people that are, again, some of the stuff we
11 talked about earlier, who are the -- do you have people who
12 are really strong on messaging and can be thinking about
13 how do we do outreach? Do you have people that are really
14 strong on working with the data, et cetera.

15 MS. LE TELLIER: Just under one minute.

16 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you.

17 MR. BOILARD: So.

18 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you. No further
19 questions from me right now.

20 CHAIR COE: Okay, thank you.

21 Mr. Belnap?

22 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Good afternoon.

23 MR. BOILARD: Hi there.

24 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: I'd like to ask you a few
25 questions about your years with LAO.

1 MR. BOILARD: Uh-huh.

2 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Now, you spent 14 years
3 there, 11 years as a Director of Higher Education. What
4 does that role do, what does that position entail?

5 MR. BOILARD: Sure. Partly, as Director of
6 Higher Education I think there were four of us, a change
7 between three and four over time, but it was a very small
8 group of individuals that covered the entire waterfront of
9 higher education issues. And that's for the public
10 universities, for the community colleges, Student Aid
11 Commission.

12 And my role was twofold. One is I had regular
13 analytical responsibility for one part of that budget area.
14 And mine changed over time, but I focused on community
15 colleges for a while, and for another period of time I was
16 the Cal State person. So, I had a chunk of the higher
17 education landscape that I was specifically responsible for
18 as an analyst.

19 But then, my director role is I was also
20 responsible for everything that came out of that unit. So,
21 I had colleagues who would focus on the other parts of the
22 state budget and I would -- when the time came I would help
23 hire them, I would mentor them, and train them, and then I
24 would review their work and ultimately, you know, edit that
25 work and make sure that it ended up getting published.

1 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: How much data analysis did
2 you perform in that role?

3 MR. BOILARD: The data analysis I performed was
4 primarily for my own segment of the budget, so largely
5 community colleges. And we were a very budget focused
6 office, so a lot of this has to do with spending
7 projections or revenue forecasts. Some of it had to do
8 with, you know, workload estimates. So, I did that
9 analysis generally for myself.

10 We did have a separate economic forecasting unit
11 that if anything got especially complicated, there's some
12 linear regression that, you know, we'd look to someone else
13 to do.

14 But generally analysts were able to handle --
15 each analyst, including myself, was able to kind of take
16 care of their own data work to drive their analysis on the
17 budget.

18 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: And what part of your --
19 the things that you did, did you enjoy the most at the LAO?

20 MR. BOILARD: Yeah, I hesitate to say this but,
21 you know, virtually everything I did there I enjoyed very
22 much. I have very positive feelings about that job.

23 I guess the two things I enjoyed the most were
24 working with my colleagues. I mentioned earlier this is a
25 very collaborative process. And there's something -- the

1 folks at the office all had a very similar mindset, which
2 is -- and, you know, some are Republican, some are
3 Democrats, everyone had some kind of ideology of their own.
4 But we'd all been trained to come to these problems
5 objectively in trying to see where the data goes. There's
6 something that's just a lot of fun about -- it's almost
7 like being in grad school again, and working with others on
8 a puzzle, and working collaboratively to solve that puzzle.
9 So, that's one thing I enjoyed a lot.

10 The other part I really enjoyed was the back end,
11 where we would work with Legislators and their staff in
12 order to explain our findings, to make recommendations.
13 And that could be testifying at hearings or that could be
14 working behind the scenes with legislative staff. It was
15 enjoyable to be part of the policy process and to be able
16 to offer something I think that was very valuable to it.

17 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: So, what was more difficult
18 working at the LAO?

19 MR. BOILARD: What was the most difficult part or
20 --

21 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Or, most or more difficult.
22 It doesn't have to be number one.

23 MR. BOILARD: One of the difficult things, you
24 know, being a nonpartisan entity in a partisan world can be
25 very difficult. And, you know, technically we worked for

1 all 120 members of the Legislature. But the committee
2 you'd be before had a chair from one party or the other.
3 And sometimes those chairs really were looking to the LAO
4 to be helping them with their -- where they wanted the
5 discussion to go.

6 Now, of course, you know, the Legislative
7 Analysts that I always worked with, whether that's
8 Elizabeth Hill or Mac Taylor, were very clear that we don't
9 want you bending your analysis to satisfy anybody. And we,
10 Mac or Liz, will take the heat if you end up getting it.
11 But, still, it can be uncomfortable sitting in a hearing
12 where it's clear that the chair or some other legislator
13 really disagrees with your analysis and tries to discredit
14 it publicly. So, that's probably the least enjoyable
15 aspect of the job.

16 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: I was hoping you were going
17 to go there. Because this is probably one of the key
18 aspects of your demonstration of impartiality is your time
19 at the LAO. So, what I want to know is how do you -- or,
20 how did you resist that pressure to push your analysis
21 towards either the indirect or direct pressure you're
22 receiving from the external entities?

23 MR. BOILARD: You know, there's two answers to
24 that. One is -- I can't remember if I mentioned this or
25 not, but I think I have a very academic disposition. I've

1 worked -- that's one of the things that attracted me about
2 LAO. I was a former college professor and this environment
3 I think is a very academic one. I talked about working
4 together with the other staff in solving the puzzles, a
5 very academic kind of set up.

6 So, part of it is, you know, academics can be
7 very contrarian and I think are good at withstanding
8 political pressure, so that's maybe part of it.

9 But the other part is whenever I was feeling
10 pressure from one party I'd remember, but I'm also working
11 for that other party. And my credibility and the
12 credibility of the office depends on, you know, not just
13 this particular moment but, you know, we're going to spend
14 a lot of time working with many other different people so
15 we need to preserve that credibility.

16 So, I think keeping an eye on the long game made
17 it easier. Again, it doesn't make it -- it doesn't turn it
18 to an enjoyable exercise to find yourself in a kind of
19 uncomfortable situation, but it does provide the resolve
20 not to buckle under.

21 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay, thank you. You
22 mentioned in your application, but also in your testimony
23 today that you worked on voter information pamphlets or
24 guides?

25 MR. BOILARD: Yes.

1 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Can you provide a specific
2 example of one that you prepared that demonstrates your
3 ability to be impartial?

4 MR. BOILARD: Sure. I'm trying to think. You
5 know, one that comes to mind right now was there was an
6 initiative, I believe it was put on the ballot by the
7 Legislature, for a bond to fund stem cell research. And
8 this is something that was -- I can't remember how large it
9 was. It was like a billion dollars, a very large amount of
10 money. Maybe not a billion, but it was a lot of money that
11 was going to fund stem cell research.

12 And again, as an academic this is going to
13 provide a lot of money for the University of California who
14 was going to get a big chunk of this money. And part of me
15 I think felt like, you know, stem cell research has a lot
16 of promise. This could be something incredibly valuable
17 for the state.

18 But the job of the LAO, in doing these voter
19 write-ups, these write-ups for the ballot pamphlet is to
20 equip the voter to make their own decision. And so, you
21 don't want to be leading them one way or the other.

22 And I think, you know, something that helps, you
23 know you asked earlier about how do you keep yourself, you
24 know, objective in these kinds of situations. The LAO, on
25 these ballot pamphlet write-ups frequently would come under

1 a legal challenge when we put it out for public display.
2 You know, one side or the other could come at us and say
3 this is biased. So, you know that's coming and you want to
4 write this as airtight as possible.

5 So, in the case of the stem cell research, I
6 really made an effort to talk to those people who run the
7 no campaign. And, you know, explain to me why you don't
8 think this would be a good thing. Well, there's one fairly
9 obvious that it's going to cost a lot of money and, you
10 know, it increases the debt for the state.

11 But there were arguments being made as well that
12 the University of California was not necessarily the best
13 place to be sending this money. Or, there were other, more
14 promising areas of research that we ought to be funding
15 instead.

16 So, that helped inform my analysis and ultimately
17 I feel comfortable that what we put in that voter pamphlet
18 was the information necessary for a voter to make their own
19 informed decision. We weren't leading them one way or the
20 other.

21 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right, thank you. So,
22 now I want to ask you a question about your time with the
23 Capital Fellows Program. You talk about in the
24 application, your application that you tried to pull in
25 Fellows from California's diverse population. How did you

1 do that? How did you make the attempt to pull in from a
2 diverse population?

3 MR. BOILARD: That's something we spent a lot of
4 time thinking about. And every year we would look at the
5 data on what the application pool looked like the year
6 before and think about, all right, where do we need to work
7 to improve it. So, again, this is another one of these
8 iterative things.

9 We would -- for example, this is a program that
10 historically would get a lot of applicants white and male,
11 by and large in the very early iterations. And that was,
12 frankly, you know, that reflected the staff that was in
13 Sacramento. And I think, you know, people see pictures of
14 who's working in Sacramento and they kind of judge for
15 themselves like is this a place where I belong or not.

16 So, that changed over -- by the time I got there
17 that had changed in quite a bit, where we were actually
18 bringing in a fairly diverse pool. But we continued to be
19 attentive to this fact where we want to bring in more
20 women, more people of color. We also made an effort to
21 bring in people with disabilities, LGBTQ. We would really
22 just try and think about who is not represented among
23 staff?

24 Because, frankly, some of these Fellows that we
25 brought in ultimately went on to become regular fixtures in

1 Sacramento and some went on to be Legislators. So, if you
2 want to change the way government looks, you change who you
3 bring in this program. And as you say, you change who you
4 reach out to in the first place.

5 So, the methods we would use is once we had
6 alumni who had been through the program, who had a good
7 experience in the program, if they were a person of color
8 we would send them out into that recruiting mode that we
9 were talking about earlier, that I would sometimes go into.

10 We would reach out to legislators in Sacramento,
11 you know, current legislators who had had good experiences
12 with their Fellows. Particularly legislators, we looked
13 for a diverse range of legislators to put on our pamphlets
14 and to actually speak to -- like have a town hall in their
15 district and encourage people to apply.

16 So, there's a range of ways we -- enlisting alum,
17 enlisting legislators and going out -- again, going out to
18 the communities. I keep coming back to that again. As a
19 matter of fact, we held interviews both in Southern
20 California and in Northern California, in Sacramento,
21 because we recognized that there were a lot of people in
22 Southern California who would have a hard time taking a day
23 off or -- you know, we would pay for their travel. But
24 still, taking a day off to come up to Sacramento, it would
25 be much easier to come to them.

1 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right, thank you. No
2 further questions.

3 CHAIR COE: Mr. Dawson.

4 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

5 Dr. Boilard, what was your PhD dissertation on?

6 MR. BOILARD: It was on -- do I have three
7 minutes to tell the story behind this?

8 MR. DAWSON: Sure.

9 MR. BOILARD: When I decided to do my PhD, this
10 is the mid-1980s and it was, you know, the Reagan era, and
11 we were in the middle of the cold war. And the balance of
12 nuclear arms was one of the big issues. And I convinced
13 myself that this was like one of the most important
14 existential issues facing the world today is
15 Soviet/American relations.

16 And I told myself, you know, I really want to go
17 on with academia. I knew I wanted to get a PhD. But I
18 thought, you know, this Soviet foreign policy is probably a
19 really critical area to be studying and contributing to.
20 So, I enrolled in the program under a Soviet foreign policy
21 PhD. I learned Russian, I visited the Soviet Union. I
22 learned about the throw weights of nuclear weapons.

23 And the day I got my diploma, almost to the day
24 was the day the Soviet Union ceased to exist. It seemed
25 like a good idea at the time. But my whole area of

1 expertise kind of disappeared. So, that's how I ended up
2 reinventing myself as a budget analyst for the State of
3 California.

4 MR. DAWSON: That's great. Thank you. I wanted
5 to ask you about the California Consortium on Public
6 Engagement. It's a three-part question. How do you define
7 engagement? How do you measure it? And how to you improve
8 it?

9 MR. BOILARD: I define engagement as individuals
10 interacting with their government. And that could be --
11 you know, voting's one of the most obvious and, you know,
12 kind of common examples of that. It's responding to a
13 survey. It's sending a letter or email to a legislative
14 representative. It's working in your local community on a
15 fundraising campaign. Or, I'm sorry, on a petition drive,
16 say. There's lots of ways the public can be engaged. But
17 I'm talking about connecting with the government in some
18 way or another.

19 How do you measure that? I mean a traditional
20 way, people just look at voting rates, which tells part of
21 the story, but I don't think enough. I think the best way,
22 you know, PPIC, the Public Policy Institute of California
23 does a public engagement survey. They look at
24 -- they interview people and ask, you know, when is the
25 last time -- over the last year have you done this, or

1 this, or this, like the list of things I just mentioned.
2 So, surveying people is probably one of the best ways to
3 measure it.

4 How do you improve it? I think that's one of the
5 great questions that I certainly struggled with over the
6 last five years I was at the Center for California Studies.
7 I keep feeling that it's -- to a large extent it's we need
8 to change the way that government is structured. We need
9 to change the way we make government accessible to the
10 people.

11 And an example I keep thinking of is when we
12 would -- when I was at the LAO and we attended budget
13 hearings every spring, these hearings were held in the
14 Capitol building in Sacramento. And there would be groups
15 that would come up to Sacramento, and groups of students
16 would come in for the financial aid hearings and go to the
17 microphone. But, you know, boy, talk about a by and large
18 inaccessible way to influence the budget process.

19 Now, fortunately we have legislators that are
20 spread throughout the state and people can meet with their
21 legislator in the district. It's a little easier but,
22 still, I think there's a lot of -- a lot of people just
23 don't feel that that's -- either they don't know where that
24 office would be or they don't feel like, you know, they're
25 allowed to. It just feels kind of like going to Mount

1 Olympus.

2 So, to increase participation I think we both
3 need to change the access points we create, and we talked a
4 little bit about social media where, I think you know, you
5 can certainly get more of a connection with the people.
6 But it's also working with community leaders and having
7 those community leaders, trusted community leaders model
8 and encourage their other members of the community about
9 the importance of participation and explaining to them how
10 to do that. Give them that literacy on how you can connect
11 to government.

12 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. I noticed from your
13 application and I think you've said yourself, you have a
14 very academic background, and even bent and style. But
15 your motto is go and see. Is that a reminder to yourself?

16 MR. BOILARD: It is, actually. As I say, I think
17 that there's a big place for desk research and analysis.
18 Again, I've spent much of my life doing that. And data
19 tells us a lot. I mean I think it's what I've learned over
20 those years is it doesn't tell the whole story.

21 MR. DAWSON: Uh-hum.

22 MR. BOILARD: And when you're faced with a task
23 like the Commission's faced with which, again, as I
24 mentioned during I think the third question, or second or
25 third question about the challenges the Commission will

1 face and part of it is how do you define a community of
2 interest, especially in a pluralistic society with these
3 cross-cutting cleavages. The data's not going to give you
4 the whole answer. And so, I don't think there's a
5 disconnect between that idea of data and academic approach
6 and then this kind of soft side of personal interaction and
7 experience.

8 MR. DAWSON: All right, thank you. We have
9 roughly 11 minutes left in the 90-minute period. Are there
10 any follow ups from the Panel?

11 CHAIR COE: Ms. Dickison?

12 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: I do not have any.

13 CHAIR COE: Mr. Belnap?

14 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: I don't.

15 CHAIR COE: I have no follow-up questions.

16 MR. DAWSON: Dr. Boilard, would you like to make
17 a closing statement to the Panel?

18 MR. BOILARD: Well, sure. Well, I very much
19 appreciate your time today and the opportunity to be
20 considered for service on the Commission. I appreciate the
21 gravity of the Commission's task. You've had a very
22 thorough process here that's of course ongoing. You've
23 looked at I guess over 2,000 applications, and now you're
24 in the midst of these over 100 interviews.

25 So, I'm confident that at the end of this process

1 you will be able to assemble a very capable and effective
2 Commission. I'm humbled to be considered as an applicant
3 for this, as a potential member of that team. And I can
4 just promise you that if I were selected, I would do my
5 utmost to ensure that the product that comes out of the
6 Commission, the ultimate set of lines will be such that
7 they really create a very robust, strong opportunity for a
8 full voice to be heard by all of California's diverse
9 community. I thank you for your time.

10 CHAIR COE: Okay, thank you for being here this
11 afternoon.

12 Our next interview is scheduled to start at 3:00
13 p.m., so we'll be in recess until 2:59.

14 (Off the record at 2:34 p.m.)

15 (On the record at 2:59 p.m.)

16 CHAIR COE: Okay, I'd like to bring this meeting
17 back to order.

18 At this time I'd like to welcome Dr. John Rolph
19 to the table for his interview.

20 Mr. Dawson, would you please ask the five
21 standard questions.

22 MR. DAWSON: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

23 I'm going to ask you five standard questions that
24 the Panel has asked that each applicant respond to. Are
25 you ready, sir?

1 MR. ROLPH: Yes, I am.

2 MR. DAWSON: First question. What skills and
3 attributes should all Commissioners possess?

4 What skills or competencies should the Commission
5 possess collectively?

6 Of the skills, attributes and competencies that
7 each Commissioner should possess, which do you possess?

8 In summary, how will you contribute to the
9 success of the Commission?

10 MR. ROLPH: I'd just like to note that before
11 coming in I looked through these questions, so I may be
12 paraphrasing prepared answers, but I'll do the best I can.

13 First of all, Commissioners should have the
14 temperament needed to participate in effective group
15 decision making. Second, all should be quantitatively
16 literate. And by that I mean they should be comfortable in
17 interpreting numbers and reasoning from them.

18 There are other skills and attributes that are
19 needed on the Commission, but not necessarily all
20 Commissioners need to have them.

21 In terms of collective skills and competencies it
22 seems to me there's a variety of expertise and perspectives
23 that are needed across all 14 Commissioners. First,
24 analytic ability. The five -- sorry, seven criteria for
25 drawing maps have to be traded off against each other. And

1 that's not a trivial problem, as I look at it. They are
2 difficult to balance. And to do this, I think the
3 Commission will collectively need several analytical
4 abilities.

5 First, quantitative reasoning, specifically being
6 able to understand the implications of data analyses.
7 Second, geographical reasoning. Analyzing maps of
8 districts together with data on their demographic
9 characteristics of the districts. And third, the Voting
10 Rights Act, which means the Commission is going to need to
11 understand how minority representation is affected by the
12 demographic make of the particular district they're looking
13 at.

14 More broadly, it seems to me that the
15 Commissioners and the Commission must be able to make
16 tradeoffs and compromises because these seven criteria are
17 not ones which for obvious reasons can necessarily all be
18 satisfied.

19 Second, the Commission needs a collective ability
20 to work together towards common goals. Specifically, to
21 say perhaps the obvious, they need to be able to listen to
22 one another, and they need to be able to question each
23 other respectfully, or respectfully. And they should be
24 able to speak up but, hopefully, not having individuals
25 that really hog the floor.

1 Now, what about my own competencies? As you can
2 see from my application my background is I've spent a
3 career in statistics and data analysis. I'm basically
4 trained as a statistician. And I believe that I have the
5 analytic expertise to be helpful to the Commission in terms
6 of analyzing candidate maps and making decisions about
7 them.

8 Secondly, over the course of my career I've been
9 a member of a number of different groups that have
10 collectively had to reach consensus decisions. And this
11 experience, combined with my own personal traits I think
12 will make me a helpful member of the Commission in terms of
13 moving discussions along and reaching conclusions.

14 And then, I think the last part of your question
15 was sort of in summary, how would you hope to contribute to
16 the success. And I guess I've sort of said it already, but
17 I'll say it one more time. I would be hopeful that my
18 analytic background, together with my ability to work to
19 collaboratively with other people should contribute to the
20 success of the Commission.

21 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Question two. Work on
22 the Commission requires members of different political
23 backgrounds to work together. Since the 2010 Commission
24 was selected and formed, the American political
25 conversation has become increasingly polarized, whether in

1 the press, on social media, and even in our own families.

2 What characteristics do you possess, and what
3 characteristics should your fellow Commissioners possess,
4 that will protect against hyperpartisanship?

5 What will you do to ensure that the work of the
6 Commission is not seen as polarized or hyperpartisan and
7 avoid perceptions of political bias and conflict?

8 MR. ROLPH: Well, I believe that I possess and I
9 believe that all Commissioners should possess the ability
10 to actually focus on the charge of the Commission,
11 specifically. And this charge explicitly excludes
12 partisanship.

13 Hyperpartisanship, as I understand it, is really
14 ideological. That said, you do not want ideologues on the
15 Commission. And that if you did have ideologues on the
16 Commission, I would expect that to impede making decisions
17 through a reasoned dialogue back and forth.

18 And so, I guess my main message would be try to
19 avoid the appointment of ideologues on the Commission to
20 help protect against hyperpartisanship.

21 Secondly, I think social norms are really -- can
22 work to discourage members from being abusive or behaving
23 in otherwise unacceptable ways. And social norms can be a
24 powerful deterrent to personal attacks that can occur when
25 tempers get heated.

1 So, in sum, the Commissioners should encourage
2 one another to put aside partisan viewpoints during
3 deliberations. And, indeed, it would seem to me that's the
4 reason that California moved to having a Citizen's
5 Redistricting committee as opposed to -- or Commission,
6 rather, as opposed to having the Legislature do the
7 redistricting.

8 The second part of your question was what could I
9 do. I'm not sure I have any really good ideas to be honest
10 with you. Other than personally for me, and the Commission
11 as a whole to work impartially without reference to
12 partisan advantage.

13 You asked also about perceptions of the
14 Commission's work, so they are not seen as hyperpartisan or
15 polarized. And it seems to me, based on the 2010
16 Commission, that's going to require some fairly effective
17 outreach. And this will, I believe, require engaging
18 consultants or other experts to design and help do this
19 outreach.

20 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Question three. What is
21 the greatest problem that the Commission could encounter,
22 and what actions would you take to avoid or respond to this
23 problem?

24 MR. ROLPH: Well, difficult to predict problems.
25 But from what I read about the work of the 2010 Commission

1 here are two candidates that sort of sprung out at me. The
2 first one would be how to determine and define communities
3 of interest. As I understand from reading about it, the
4 2010 Commission primarily relied on public comments at
5 meetings and they were overwhelmed by just the sheer volume
6 that they needed to absorb, to structure, and then to act
7 on in order to define communities of interest.

8 So, to avoid this potential problem one
9 recommendation would be that the Commission be given
10 guidance early on, at the very beginning, in both defining
11 what a community of interest is and a structured way of
12 acquiring and digesting information from the public on what
13 are valid communities of interest.

14 The critiques I've read of the 2010 Commission
15 suggested that the Commissioners got insufficient help in
16 essentially absorbing and using public input. So, that's
17 potential problem one.

18 Potential problem two, I think particularly given
19 where we're sitting today in the Coronavirus situation is
20 getting timely and complete Census data to use to begin the
21 district mapping process. Census data releases do tend to
22 slip and in this environment may slip even more. The
23 Commission may need -- in order to combat this, the
24 Commission may need to use data that's not current to
25 basically set up the mapping software, test it, and prepare

1 to be able to use the mapping software when they finally
2 get the current data.

3 Another issue, related issue is, as I understand
4 it the 2010 Commission did not have any opportunity to use
5 social and economic data. And the 2020 Commission, the one
6 that you're recruiting for right now, may well want to do
7 this.

8 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Question four. If you
9 are selected, you will be one of 14 members of the
10 Commission which is charged with working together to create
11 maps of the new districts. Please describe a situation
12 where you had to work collaboratively with others on a
13 project to achieve a common goal.

14 Tell us the goal of the project, what your role
15 in the group was, and how the group worked through any
16 conflicts that arose.

17 What lessons would you take from this group
18 experience to the Commission if selected?

19 MR. ROLPH: Well, one example is a project which
20 I worked collaboratively on as a multi-disciplinary
21 National Academy of Sciences Study Panel. The goal of the
22 study was to identify valid methods for measuring and
23 understanding the effects of race-based discrimination.
24 So, first off, defining what racial discrimination is, is a
25 non-trivial task.

1 What we used was, one, differential treatment on
2 the basis of race that disadvantages a racial group. And,
3 two, differential effect. That is treatment on the basis
4 of inadequately justified racial factor -- sorry, let me
5 start over. Inadequately justified non-racial factors that
6 disadvantages a racial group. So, that's the definition.

7 So, the panel's charge was what? It was to
8 critically evaluate methods for measuring racial
9 discrimination. And the group was defined as -- defined by
10 about I want to say 15 or 20 experts from the fields of
11 criminal justice, law, economics, sociology, psychology
12 public policy and finally statistics. That was me. There
13 were a couple of us statisticians.

14 And this diversity, as you might guess, ensured
15 creative debates and also difficulties on agreeing to
16 conclusions. Specifically, some members basically wanted
17 to do case studies of racial discrimination and then
18 advocate public policy solutions. There's nothing wrong
19 with that, but that wasn't the charge of this group.

20 The charge of this group was to -- an analytical
21 one to identify valid measures and invalid measures, and
22 explain their use.

23 So, what was my role? Well, basically as one of
24 the statisticians there what I did, and in fact both of us
25 did, was to encourage and focus discussion on what the

1 panel's charge was, as opposed to things that were outside
2 of it.

3 The panel had heated conversations. Indeed, at
4 one point there were threats of resignations, threats of a
5 minority report. Fortunately, we got to know each other
6 well enough so tempers sort of cooled and we eventually
7 were able to restrict our attention to the study's charge
8 and come up with analytical conclusions that actually were
9 valid, and spoke to how you could measure racial
10 discrimination and how you could not.

11 And I guess I would say -- well, I think that
12 summarizes it, actually.

13 So, what lessons would I take from this? Well, I
14 picked this as an example because it's the kind of conflict
15 that people tend to have really strong feelings about, and
16 they certainly did in this panel. And this type of
17 conflict may occur in the Commission if some of the
18 Commissioners are not able to put aside partisan views and
19 focus on the actual charge of the Commission itself.

20 And secondly, well, what are the specific
21 lessons. I guess number one to listen attentively and
22 carefully to what other fellow Commission members say. And
23 number two to try to calmly and persuasively bring the
24 conversation back to the Commission's mandate, which is to
25 create districts which conform to a set of legal

1 requirements, basically. Let me stop there.

2 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Question five. A
3 considerable amount of the Commission's work will involve
4 meeting with people from all over California who come from
5 very different backgrounds and a wide variety of
6 perspectives.

7 If you are selected as a Commissioner, what
8 skills and attributes will make you effective at
9 interacting with people from different backgrounds and who
10 have a variety of perspectives?

11 What experiences have you had that will help you
12 be effective at understanding and appreciating people and
13 communities of different backgrounds and who have a variety
14 of perspectives?

15 MR. ROLPH: Okay. Well, in terms of myself, I
16 think I'm a patient and attentive listener. And I work
17 hard to understand the points of view of people I'm talking
18 to. And then, I try to respond to them in a way that will
19 be understandable and nonconfrontational.

20 And over my lifetime I've worked with and taught
21 a variety of people with quite different backgrounds. And
22 so, you asked for specific experiences. Well, okay, I've
23 had a -- I've had sort of several professions. Policy
24 analyst, professor, consultant, and currently a farmer.
25 And I've learned the skills that are needed to effectively

1 interact with a mix of different folks across the State of
2 California.

3 As a teacher, I've learned to listen carefully to
4 questions and respond to students in a way that is
5 understandable and supportive. And my students over the
6 years have come from a variety of educational, racial,
7 ethnic backgrounds, as well as different economic and
8 cultural circumstances.

9 Secondly, working as a consultant you really need
10 to understand and relate to clients, and to others. And in
11 that role I've learned to effectively engage people with
12 varied perspectives and backgrounds. As an expert witness,
13 I've actually traveled around the state.

14 In fact, let me back up a little. As you can see
15 from my application, I spent some time as an expert
16 witness, basically defending various jurisdictions on their
17 system for selecting and seating jurors in the courts. And
18 so, I've traveled around the state to a number of different
19 jurisdictions. And so, I've been exposed to different
20 people in different regions.

21 And then third, what I've been doing lately is a
22 farmer, which I've done for almost 20- years now, actually.
23 And I've related to a mixed group of agriculturalists.
24 They include, one, grape growers, which is what I do, dry
25 farm nut growers, cattle ranchers. And as you can probably

1 guess, these folks have quite different perspectives than
2 those of my colleagues in former professions. And I spend
3 my days, or many of my days anyway, working directly with
4 field workers who are mostly of Mexican heritage. So, it's
5 a quite different set of people than what I was exposed to
6 when I was, say, working professionally as opposed to
7 farming. Yeah.

8 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. At this point we will go
9 to Panel questions. Each of the Panel Members will have 20
10 minutes to ask his or her questions. And we will begin
11 with the Chair, Mr. Coe.

12 CHAIR COE: Thank you, Mr. Dawson.

13 Dr. Rolph, welcome.

14 MR. ROLPH: Yeah.

15 CHAIR COE: Thank you for being here this
16 afternoon.

17 MR. ROLPH: Good to be here.

18 CHAIR COE: In your application you discuss the
19 relationship you had with the United States Census Bureau
20 during the 1980s and the 1990s. You served on a panel
21 advising the Bureau on methodologies for the 1990 Census.
22 And you were once on the short list for appointment as
23 Census Bureau Director.

24 I just want to start with how does one get on the
25 short list for being the United States Census Bureau

1 Director?

2 MR. ROLPH: I'm not sure how one gets on it, but
3 I can tell you how I got on it. Basically, I was a member
4 and then chair of a group called the Committee on National
5 Statistics, which is out of the National Academy of
6 Sciences. And its role is to advise the statistical
7 agencies of the United States Government on various
8 methodological problems. One of those, the biggest agency
9 or, yeah, biggest agency is the Census Bureau. That said,
10 just to sort of go backwards a little bit, in 1992 there
11 was a change in administration from Bush one to Clinton.
12 And so, at that point they were looking for a new Census
13 Bureau Director. So, my background is working on this
14 committee and one of its charges was basically helping the
15 Census Bureau get ready for first the 1990 Census, for the
16 first panel I was on, and then subsequently other Censuses.

17 And as I also mentioned, or I guess I said in my
18 application, I basically was an expert witness in the trial
19 that was looking to decide whether or not to make a
20 statistical adjustment to the 1990 Census to account for
21 the differential undercount. That is more than you wanted
22 to know, but the Census tries to count everybody but
23 doesn't necessarily get them all. And there's some pretty
24 strong statistical evidence that the people that are
25 undercounted are not just uniformly across the population.

1 So, the answer to your question is sort of that
2 background, several people were -- suggested my name. I
3 actually interviewed with the, I guess he would be the
4 majority leader of the subcommittee that -- Tom Sawyer was
5 this Congressman's name. Ultimately, somebody else was
6 selected, but that was sort of how that happened.

7 CHAIR COE: When you were on the panel advising
8 the Census Bureau on methodologies, can you tell us a
9 little bit more about that? What kind of methodologies --

10 MR. ROLPH: Sure.

11 CHAIR COE: -- were you -- that had to do with
12 outreach and to getting people to participate or what were
13 you involved in there?

14 MR. ROLPH: Okay, let me not turn into a
15 professor and get into a lot of technical stuff, but let me
16 try to give you the sort of the broad outline, okay.

17 You take -- you take the Census and you try to
18 get every person in the country. What the Census Bureau
19 also does, and has done since 1970 I believe, is they take
20 a survey after the Census, independent survey. They take
21 the results of the independent survey, the results of the
22 Census and then match them up to see where -- ideally, they
23 would overlap perfectly, right. But of course they don't.

24 And so, you use that non-overlap and you
25 essentially use statistical methods to make an estimate of

1 how many were missed in various parts of the country.

2 And so, the issue for the first panel I was on
3 was whether to make a statistical adjustment in the 1990
4 Census. And our panel essentially advised the Census
5 Bureau statisticians and others, sort of what methods to
6 use or, even more to the point, critique the methods they
7 were planning to use. And then, ultimately, as it turned
8 out, not part of your question but you may be curious, the
9 court ultimately, after the trial, decided not to adjust
10 the Census, but that was the way it was.

11 CHAIR COE: So, they didn't take your
12 recommendation, is that what that means?

13 MR. ROLPH: Yes. Well, that means --
14 specifically what it means is that -- we're getting into
15 sort of legal stuff, which I'm not a lawyer, but
16 essentially the ruling was that the Secretary of Commerce,
17 who oversees the Census Bureau, had the authority to make
18 his own decision on whether or not to do the adjustment
19 regardless of the merits of whether you would have a better
20 count with the adjustment or a less good count with the
21 adjustment.

22 CHAIR COE: Okay, thank you. With all of your
23 experience with the Census Bureau do you think that you --
24 what aspects of that experience and knowledge do you think
25 you would be uniquely qualified to bring to this

1 Commission, to assist the work of this Commission?

2 MR. ROLPH: I'm not sure I'm unique to be honest
3 with you. I mean I think I have a pretty good
4 understanding of the products that the Census Bureau
5 generates, specifically the decennial Census. I have used
6 that in my work, specifically in my jury -- I worked for
7 jurors to try to essentially advise the Los Angeles Court
8 how to allocate jurors to different court locations.

9 Just as a sort of a little bit of a tangent, but
10 hopefully not too much of one, L.A. has 36 different court
11 locations. About half of the demand for jurors is
12 downtown. Half of the population does not live downtown.
13 And as Ross Perot I guess said, there's this big sucking of
14 trying to get jurors from the suburbs into downtown. So,
15 you can't send every juror to the court that's nearest him
16 or her.

17 And so, basically, in order to do this you use
18 Census Bureau data because, as you probably know, we are
19 required by law to have juror pools which are
20 representative of the area served by the court. And what
21 that means ends up getting a little complicated in the case
22 of Los Angeles. But I guess the bottom line, to get away
23 from the specifics, is we use Census data to essentially
24 evaluate different methods that we came up with for
25 allocating jurors to the different court locations.

1 Because we wanted to make sure if you're summoned to a
2 particular court location you -- the demographics of who's
3 summoned is not skewed in one way or another. I guess, to
4 sort of oversimplify a little bit.

5 CHAIR COE: Okay, thank you. I wanted to talk a
6 little bit about the panel with the national -- the
7 National Academy Study Panel that you were on, that you
8 spoke about earlier, that was charged with critically
9 evaluating methods used to measure racial discrimination.
10 Was there any outreach into the community of different
11 individuals who may have had experience, personally, with
12 some type of discrimination? Or, was it mostly kept within
13 the panel, conversations within the panel?

14 MR. ROLPH: I guess I'd answer that in two ways.
15 The first way is the National Academy, when they form
16 panels try to put together a diverse group of experts in
17 the area. Not necessarily somebody who has experienced
18 racial discrimination, but somebody who is an authority on
19 one aspect or another of it.

20 So, in that sense there was no real outreach to
21 the public, other than all of the Academy's panel meetings
22 are public. So, people can come. And I think as you have
23 in your rules, you -- well, actually we'd give them more
24 than three minutes. But anyway, they've have an
25 opportunity to speak if they wanted to.

1 And usually for Academy panels there is not that
2 much public participation. You didn't ask this in your
3 question, but I'll just mention one where there was, that I
4 was chair of, was we were doing a study of whether to have
5 a national ballistics database. That is of all guns in the
6 United States. A public meeting, open meeting. Not
7 surprisingly, the National Rifle Association representative
8 was there and so forth. There was -- I think about the
9 only panel I served on I can think of where there was a
10 significant issue in terms of responding to and managing
11 public interaction.

12 CHAIR COE: Okay, thank you. Okay, sticking with
13 the concept of diversity for a second.

14 MR. ROLPH: Uh-hum.

15 CHAIR COE: You, through that panel and other
16 experiences have talked about having met or worked with
17 many different groups of people. What have you learned
18 from your work with those people about the perspectives
19 they bring and how that's going to inform your work as a
20 Commissioner?

21 MR. ROLPH: Well, let's talk about maybe
22 perspectives first, which I know more about. And I'm doing
23 more guessing in terms of work of a Commissioner.

24 Certainly, the perspectives, I mean we have to
25 focus on who we're talking about here. But certainly, what

1 I've discovered over the years is whether you're talking
2 about -- well, let me talk about where I am right now.
3 Maybe that's a good example.

4 I live now in a fairly rural area. It is, shall
5 we say, unlike much of the State of California in terms of
6 its party registration, and set of beliefs. It's a fairly
7 significant Libertarian viewpoint, fairly significant --
8 well, a number of different viewpoints than you would find
9 if you were living in the L.A. area, and I suspect here in
10 Sacramento, too.

11 That said, I guess my -- as I think I said a few
12 minutes ago, well, I guess my approach with any of this is
13 to listen really carefully, try to size up where the
14 person's coming from and then respond in a way that is, on
15 the one hand not backing away from what I believe, but on
16 the other hand is not confrontational. And you can learn
17 from it. I mean, look at what's going on now with the
18 Coronavirus thing. I mean I think if you start talking to
19 people out in the street you get a wide variety of
20 viewpoints as to whether this is an overreaction in terms
21 of what was announced, I guess just today, or not an
22 overreaction.

23 And I guess your question is how do you deal with
24 that sort of thing in talking to people. And I don't
25 really have an answer other than listening carefully, being

1 respectful of what people say, and try to respond in a way
2 that they can understand and I can understand and,
3 hopefully, we can, depending on what we're talking about we
4 can reach some sort of an agreement so that we can move
5 forward.

6 How to do that as a Commissioner? Beyond my own
7 personal characteristics, I'm not sure I can give you much
8 more of an answer than that, actually.

9 CHAIR COE: Okay. I'd like to talk a little bit
10 about communities of interest.

11 MR. ROLPH: Okay.

12 CHAIR COE: I think you mentioned that earlier.
13 An important task in front of the Commission is to identify
14 these communities of interest throughout the state, some of
15 which may be easier or more difficult to identify and
16 locate. How do you think the Commission should go about
17 identifying these communities of interest, particularly
18 those that may be harder to identify and locate?

19 MR. ROLPH: I think that's a really hard problem.
20 And I think, as I said in sort of my initial response when
21 the communities of interest came up, I think the Commission
22 is going to need -- from reading about the first
23 Commission, I think the Commission is going to need a lot
24 more help in doing this than the first Commission had. I'm
25 not being critical of their work, but from everything I've

1 read there's -- you've probably read it, too, there's a
2 long piece that was I guess commissioned by the League of
3 Women Voters. It sort of went through and talked a lot
4 about communities of interest and how difficult it was for
5 the Commission to sort of identify them.

6 And I just think you've got to get out there and
7 you've got to be welcoming. I don't claim that my level of
8 expertise is, or area of expertise is how you include other
9 groups, but I think it has to be done.

10 I was struck, as an example, on the last
11 Commission as I'm sure you're well aware, you had a former
12 Census Bureau Director on it, Vince Barabba. And I read an
13 interview of him recently. And he was saying, you know, I
14 sort of thought all my expertise in Census data was going
15 to be my big contribution to this, and that would be a lot
16 of what the Commission learned. But I was surprised that
17 we learned much -- not much more. We learned a lot by
18 these public meetings.

19 And the example he gave that was -- maybe speaks
20 to your question is, well, not far from here, in
21 Marysville. I didn't know this. There was apparently a
22 big Sikh community in Marysville. And that didn't really
23 come out, according to what he said in his interview,
24 initially, until somebody sort of asked a question from the
25 back of the room, and then the Commissioners sort of

1 followed up on it. They discovered there was a large Sikh
2 community and that, as a result, they took that into
3 account as a community of interest.

4 So, I guess all I would say is it's obviously a
5 really, really important issue. And how to do it I think
6 is a tough problem.

7 CHAIR COE: So, that example you gave about the
8 2010 Commission and the situation in Marysville where
9 finding a community that wasn't apparent to them.
10 Sometimes some communities are less engaged. They don't
11 come forward and share their perspectives with government
12 entities all that often, for one reason or another. But as
13 a Commissioner, how would you encourage these groups that
14 may be less engaged, may be concerned about engaging the
15 government in some way to come forward and share their
16 perspectives to inform the work of the Commission?

17 MR. ROLPH: Well, I think of two parts of your
18 question, at least the way I think of your question. One
19 would be how does the Commission itself encourage members
20 of a particular group to actually come forward. Because
21 basically you come to a meeting, as I understand it from
22 the earlier Commission, people would get two or three
23 minutes to speak at the meeting. They may have to travel a
24 ways to get there. So, how you actually encourage them
25 sort of seems to me similar to what the Census Bureau has

1 to do to encourage people to take place in the Census. You
2 try to get out there. You have good publicity and you try
3 to be encouraging, and so forth.

4 Once you have people there, as a Commissioner I
5 would hope I and the other Commissioners, if I were chosen
6 to serve, would essentially when something -- if somebody
7 comes up, particularly if it's a group that you've never
8 heard of that you actually try to follow up, and see what
9 you can do to learn whether this is legitimate as opposed
10 to -- let's just say not legitimate, I guess, as there's
11 not something political behind everything.

12 But I don't really have a good answer to your
13 question, other than I think it's a hard problem.

14 MS. LE TELLIER: Four minutes, please.

15 CHAIR COE: Thank you.

16 If you were appointed to the Commission, which
17 aspects of that role do you think that you would enjoy the
18 most and, conversely, which aspects of that role do you
19 think you might perhaps struggle with a little bit?

20 MR. ROLPH: Good question. As you can guess from
21 my answers already, the part I think I would enjoy the most
22 is the actual analytical work. Actually not -- as you can
23 see from my application, I spent over 20 years as a policy
24 analyst at the Rand Corporation working on various
25 problems. Not necessarily similar to this, but with

1 analytical challenges that are similar to this.

2 So, I would expect what I would like the best
3 about this is actually addressing the problem, and getting
4 in and working on it.

5 What would I like the worst or least like? My
6 guess is, just having sat in board of supervisors'
7 meetings, where I now live, on occasion, public meetings
8 where you have successive people saying the same things
9 for, you know, 5, or 10, or 20 times. And you as a
10 supervisor in that case, or in this case as a Commissioner,
11 you have to listen carefully. You have to basically make
12 sure you take in if there's new information. But that can
13 get to be pretty wearing. So, I think, quite honestly,
14 that would probably be the most challenging part of it.

15 CHAIR COE: Okay, thank you. No additional
16 questions.

17 Ms. Dickison?

18 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you. Good afternoon,
19 Mr. Rolph.

20 MR. ROLPH: Good afternoon.

21 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: So, I want to first touch
22 on your experience with the Census data and that type of
23 thing. There is some concern that there's going to be
24 under counting in the current Census. Based on your
25 knowledge and work you've done in that area, how will that

1 help the Commission, what benefit would that provide to the
2 Commission on what they can do with the Census data or not
3 do with it?

4 MR. ROLPH: I think you're asking is -- well, let
5 me make sure I clarify your question. Is your question how
6 would the potential under count affect how the Commission
7 would use the Census data?

8 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Yes.

9 MR. ROLPH: Okay. I guess a little bit of
10 history, first. 1980 had a substantial differential under
11 count. 1990 not as bad, but still substantial. 2000 much
12 better. 2010 much better.

13 That all said, where's the under count
14 concentrated? To answer, obviously homeless is tough. But
15 more generally, less well educated, less economically well
16 off.

17 And partisan-wise, why this suit take place in
18 1990 was, surprise, surprise, people in those categories
19 are more often Democrats than Republicans, so that you
20 found the plaintiffs in the case being cities and states
21 that were worried about Democrats being under counted, and
22 so forth, and so on.

23 And to answer your question, I think specifically
24 you've got to take into account, and probably the homeless
25 would be the most -- the best example, the fact that the

1 Census numbers you get are probably going to be lower than
2 what is actually the case.

3 Okay, having said that, as I understand it and
4 may be Mr. Dawson, the lawyer, can correct me, but as I
5 understand it we're pretty much constrained to working with
6 Census data. So, even if we believe there's an under
7 count, I believe, correct me if I'm wrong, but I believe
8 the Commission really has to go with the Census data. I
9 mean it obviously has to go with Census data in terms of
10 getting populations of the districts being approximately
11 equal to one another.

12 If you were to depart from that, I would think
13 that would not be allowed. So, I'm not sure what you could
14 do about it is my guess, my bottom line, other than be
15 aware of it.

16 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you. So, you've
17 touched a little bit on how you've gone from being an
18 analyst at Rand, to academia, and then to farming. You've
19 talked about it a little bit. But what I would like to
20 know is how will these different experiences assist you in
21 understanding the communities in the various areas
22 throughout California and the various regions?

23 MR. ROLPH: Okay. Let me sort of broaden your
24 question a little bit. As you may have noted from my
25 application, I was raised in the Bay Area. I spent much of

1 my working, much but not all of my working career in the
2 L.A., greater L.A. area. And then, have lived for the last
3 roughly 20 years up in Central California, Central Coast.

4 I've done different -- had different roles, as
5 you mentioned in your question. My role as a teacher I
6 think has been in some ways the most informative to me
7 because you really are engaging with people on a one-on-one
8 basis and you have to understand where they're coming from
9 in terms of responding, and answering whatever question,
10 concern, misunderstandings they have.

11 I don't have a broader answer for you beyond
12 saying I have encountered and worked with a variety of
13 different types of people over the years. Certainly, in
14 the case of teaching it tends to be younger. In the case
15 of farming it tends to be older, less well educated.
16 People very frequently Hispanic, and more specifically from
17 Mexico, with not necessarily really strong English skills,
18 and different cultural backgrounds, different sets of
19 beliefs.

20 So, I think I've gotten used to being able to get
21 in a conversation with a person, assess where they're
22 coming from, and learn from them what's on their mind and
23 try to respond appropriately. And beyond that, I'm not
24 quite sure where to go with the answer.

25 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: What made you go into

1 farming after a career as a -- at Rand and at the UC?

2 MR. ROLPH: Be happy to. That's actually
3 relatively personal in the following sense. My wife and I
4 were both analysts at Rand, before I went back to academia
5 at USC. And she really wanted to retire early and wanted
6 to raise olives, for olive oil. And as I like to tell
7 friends, I didn't have a farming bone in my body, but after
8 30 years it was going to be hard to find another wife, so
9 we took a crack at it.

10 And we went up. One of the first things we did
11 was go to a day-long seminar on raising olives for olive
12 oil. And discovered that if you do a really good job at
13 it, you won't lose too much money. So, we ended up going
14 into grapes.

15 And as it turned out life has evolved over that
16 period of time. I now do all the grapes and she, we now
17 have 50 or so olive trees, chickens, horses, dogs, bees,
18 fruit orchard. I'm probably leaving something else, and
19 she does all of that.

20 So, the answer to your question basically is we
21 were looking for a place to retire to and it turned out --
22 for me it turned out to be more of a second career than a
23 retirement, actually.

24 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Okay. So, if you were
25 selected as one of the first eight Commissioners, you would

1 be tasked with selecting the next six. What would you be
2 looking for in those Commissioners?

3 MR. ROLPH: That's a good question. Well, I
4 guess let me first say the obvious ones. The obvious ones,
5 as I think about it, just analogously to other groups I've
6 been on when we've been trying to -- say it's a research
7 study, or it's a board of directors of the Performing Arts
8 Center in San Luis Obispo, you're trying to cover a number
9 of bases.

10 What are the bases? Typically, you're going to
11 want people with various ability. You probably want at
12 least one attorney on it. You probably want somebody from
13 the accounting profession. You probably want somebody from
14 the - essentially the, well, I guess I'll just call it the
15 raising money profession.

16 You probably want some people, in this case
17 analytically, as I indicated in my answer to this for the
18 set questions. I think you really want to make sure you
19 have that base covered pretty well. And that would be not
20 only data analysis, but also familiarity with maps and
21 drawing maps, and assessing -- or not assessing, but
22 understanding the implications of maps. So, my first
23 answer would be sets of abilities.

24 Then, my second part of it was going to be it
25 seems to me you want to have one, or two I guess in the

1 second one, geographical diversity. That is, I think you
2 want to make sure that you have some representation across
3 the various areas of the state. You only have 14 people,
4 so you can only do so much. But it seems to me,
5 particularly with respect to communities of interest, to
6 the extent you can have Commissioners that bring some sort
7 of personal knowledge to it, I think that would be helpful.

8 And then, finally, in terms of perspectives,
9 we've talked about this before, I think you want to have a
10 variety of cultural, economic, racial and financial
11 perspectives.

12 I hope you're okay.

13 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: I have allergies.

14 All right, thank you. One last question. What
15 would you ultimately like to see the Commission accomplish?

16 MR. ROLPH: Well, I guess I'd first say I admire
17 what the first Commission accomplished. I think it really
18 opened up a lot of races so that they were competitive,
19 whereas in the past they had not been. So, I think that's
20 one of the aspects you're looking for, obviously, is to
21 have districts which essentially, as the charge says, I
22 guess the very last part of the charge is does not favor
23 any incumbents, candidate, or political party. That's the
24 main thing.

25 The second thing is I would hope this one would

1 -- essentially, we could learn from what the first
2 Commission accomplished. And to the extent the critiques
3 that have been done since then, because it's now been
4 almost ten years, we could essentially improve on it. I
5 mean I think they did a really good job. But I'm sure,
6 like almost anything, you can improve on it.

7 And I'm guessing, but I don't know this for sure,
8 because I haven't really studied it carefully, that
9 probably the communities of interest would probably be the
10 area where you could get the most improvement. But that's
11 really a bit of speculation on my part.

12 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you. I don't have
13 any further questions at this moment.

14 CHAIR COE: Okay, Mr. Belnap.

15 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay. Good afternoon.

16 MR. ROLPH: Good afternoon.

17 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: So in essay -- in your
18 essay number one you indicated that California now has some
19 of the most competitive districts in the nation. Do you
20 believe that this outcome was a byproduct of removing
21 partisanship from the process in California or was this an
22 end goal that the 2010 Commission was striving for?

23 MR. ROLPH: I don't know.

24 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay.

25 MR. ROLPH: I don't know.

1 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: So, let me give you this
2 question then. As a Commissioner, would you be striving
3 for competitive districts and, if so, how?

4 MR. ROLPH: I mean the short answer to that is no
5 because you're striving to meet the seven criteria. The
6 last criteria is a general one, which I guess you could
7 interpret as competitive districts, but not directly. So,
8 in that sense I think the competitive districts would be a
9 byproduct of doing their job properly. I would hope it
10 would be.

11 But as I understand it, trying to draw districts
12 explicitly so they're competitive would be a violation of
13 the seventh -- you're not supposed to be taking that sort
14 of thing into account. You're precluded from taking it
15 into account. So, you hope it would come out that way, or
16 at least I would, but I don't see how you're going to --
17 that would be -- I don't see how that's part of your job I
18 guess is what I'm saying.

19 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right, thank you. So,
20 you indicated that something you would enjoy if you were on
21 the Commission was to focus on the data analysis, and
22 that's part of the value that you see in being on the
23 Commission.

24 Do you think that you could also be effective in
25 meeting with citizens from rural areas because of your

1 experience as a farmer?

2 MR. ROLPH: Yes, I'm perfectly -- I'm quite
3 comfortable and, as I said, I have been doing this for many
4 years. That said, I don't want to -- I'm not a chameleon.
5 And so, I mean, obviously, I come -- I'm well educated. I,
6 you know, come out of a background that's different than
7 most of my colleagues in the farming industry. But that
8 said, I've been able to relate to them, you know, quite
9 well. I, as a small business person, end up negotiating
10 grape contracts, and so forth, and so on, and I seem to --
11 I'm comfortable with it. They seem to be comfortable with
12 it. And we seem to get along pretty well.

13 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay, thank you. So,
14 there's going to be 14 members on this Commission. In your
15 opinion, how many of those Commissioners should be data
16 experts, people -- all of them need to have analytical
17 abilities. That's not the issue. But how many of them
18 need to be, essentially, data experts?

19 MR. ROLPH: Good question. Okay, one, everybody
20 as you said should have basic quantitative reasoning
21 skills, quantitative literacy let me call it. You're going
22 to be talking about trading off maps. I would think you'd
23 have to have at least -- I'd like to have at least three,
24 or four, or five that were really -- you could talk about
25 the -- you could get down into the weeds if you had to, and

1 talk about what's the effect of this line being here versus
2 there? Oh, if I move it here, well, that's going to affect
3 this district over here, et cetera, et cetera.

4 Certainly not everybody because you really need
5 some Commissioners, and I'm not sure how many, but several
6 that can articulate in a nontechnical way what the
7 implications are of particular candidate maps. And
8 particularly, when you're looking at making a change how
9 that's going to affect not only that district, but other
10 districts.

11 So, I guess I would answer your question -- I
12 hadn't thought about it until you asked it just now, I
13 would want to see -- let me just say, I'd like to see at
14 least four, okay.

15 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay, thank you. There's
16 going to be eight Commissioners randomly selected and then
17 six will be chosen by those eight. And if you weren't
18 randomly selected, why should those eight pick you to be
19 one of the remaining six?

20 MR. ROLPH: Good question. I think, putting
21 myself in their shoes, it goes back to the question you
22 just finished asking me, which is particularly if among the
23 eight there was a shortage of analytical expertise that
24 would be needed for drawing the maps, I think that would be
25 the main reason they would choose me, or want to choose me.

1 Whether they chose me or not, want to.

2 And then, secondarily, obviously they'd want to
3 make sure they're not appointing somebody to the Commission
4 that's going to be difficult to work with. So, they'd want
5 to look into my background, maybe -- I don't know, I
6 actually don't know how the process worked, whether they
7 actually interviewed people or whether they just sort of
8 looked at their applications and made a choice. But I
9 would think those would be the two things they'd look at
10 for me.

11 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right, thank you. No
12 further questions.

13 CHAIR COE: Okay, Mr. Dawson.

14 MR. DAWSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Dr. Rolph, in
15 your answer to standard question one you talked about one
16 of the things that would be important for the Commission
17 and the Commissioners to do is to balance criteria, and
18 that there would be tradeoffs and compromises. And these
19 are not mathematical considerations. They're -- so, my
20 question is do you feel comfortable in sort of this more
21 qualitative versus quantitative balancing?

22 MR. ROLPH: Well, absolutely. I mean I think
23 you're right, they're not mathematical. They're set, as I
24 read it, in order of priority. And there's language like
25 as much as practicable doing this. I guess the example

1 that comes to mind is having two Assembly districts wholly
2 within one Senate district. Having, to the degree
3 possible, Congressional districts made up of these sub-
4 districts, if you will.

5 MR. DAWSON: Uh-hum.

6 MR. ROLPH: So, yes, I understand what you're
7 saying and I don't see it at all as being strictly
8 mathematical. What I do see it is when you're making
9 tradeoffs you're going to look at the demographic makeup
10 and other characteristics of this set of candidates versus
11 that set of candidates, both of which look like they
12 satisfy the seven criteria. But absolutely there's some
13 underlining -- I don't even call it -- think I'd call it
14 math. I'd really just call it numbers.

15 MR. DAWSON: Uh-hum.

16 MR. ROLPH: Which you look at and then you make,
17 you've got to make some value judgments, obviously, and
18 you've got to be guided by what the charge again is. That
19 was why I chose the Racial Discrimination Measurement Panel
20 as an example to answer the set question was because you
21 basically had to get people back to going to the charge,
22 and get rid of other things that we may all -- you know,
23 people care about.

24 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. You talked about the
25 Census undercount and then the survey, and you try to true

1 those up. Based on your experience, who do you think are
2 the Californians who are most likely to be missed in the
3 2020 Census?

4 MR. ROLPH: Well, I think it's -- I think it --
5 putting aside the Coronavirus issues, which I have no idea
6 how that's going to come out.

7 MR. DAWSON: Uh-hum.

8 MR. ROLPH: I think that I would expect it to be
9 similar to what's happened in the past. I would think you
10 would miss -- you would tend to miss less well educated,
11 poorer people, people with -- not necessarily homeless, but
12 tend to move from place to place that are semi-homeless, if
13 you will.

14 MR. DAWSON: Uh-hum.

15 MR. ROLPH: Actually, in that trial I was the
16 representative of the State of California and the City of
17 L.A.'s contribution to the experts to that trial. And as I
18 recall, looking at California data, and this is now a
19 couple of decades ago, basically it was what I've just
20 said. I don't know, myself, that there's been any
21 appreciable change, at least in general pattern in terms of
22 who gets missed.

23 I mean the Census Bureau has updated their
24 procedures. This year, in this Census it's going to be
25 much more internet-based, so that's going to be a real

1 challenge.

2 MR. DAWSON: Uh-hum.

3 MR. ROLPH: And exactly how that comes out, I
4 think if I thought about it for a while I might have some
5 ideas, but I don't have any right off the top of my head.
6 But I would expect it to be similar to the past.

7 MR. DAWSON: Well, given the current political
8 climate, do you think it might be made up in some part of
9 undocumented folks, or families with mixed immigration
10 status?

11 MR. ROLPH: Yes, I think there's a real -- I mean
12 maybe what you're getting at is the whole controversy that
13 went on as to whether or not to put a citizenship question
14 on the short form, not the long form. It's already on the
15 American Community Survey. And quite a number of former
16 Census Bureau Directors and other statisticians, actually,
17 who have actually studied this said undoubtedly,
18 undoubtedly. And I believe them. I think that's
19 absolutely the case, yes.

20 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. You mentioned you're a
21 professor of statistics -- oh, currently you're a farmer.

22 MR. ROLPH: Yes, currently I'm a farmer.

23 MR. DAWSON: You were a professor of statistics.

24 MR. ROLPH: Yeah.

25 MR. DAWSON: You say you're not a lawyer. But I

1 noticed that you were assigned as an adjunct at Gould, at
2 the School of Law. And what were the circumstances there?

3 MR. ROLPH: Well, I'll ask you a question, then
4 I'll answer yours. Did you ever take any statistics when
5 you went through law school?

6 MR. DAWSON: I did not.

7 MR. ROLPH: Okay. Well, USC, when they hired me
8 wanted, the law school wanted to put in a statistics for
9 lawyers course. And so, when they hired me, I was hired
10 into the business school, which was where the main place
11 where the statisticians were at that time, and still is,
12 actually. And I was very much interested in doing that.
13 And so, part of the package that they put together for me
14 was an adjunct appointment in the law school, and I guess
15 also adjunct appointment in the math department because
16 there were some statisticians there, too.

17 But my role and interest was to develop a
18 statistics course there. As a result of that I ended up
19 going to a number of their seminars. I actually gave at
20 least one talk myself. Ultimately, I think, I guess an
21 economist and a psychologist did -- put in the statistics
22 course with some help from me, because I ended up agreeing
23 to be a department chair and that sort of got in the way.
24 But anyway, that's why.

25 MR. DAWSON: Okay. Well, thank you. Well, that

1 answers all my questions. We have roughly 32 minutes
2 remaining in the 90-minute period. Do any of the Panel
3 Members have any follow-up questions?:

4 CHAIR COE: Ms. Dickison?

5 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: I do not.

6 CHAIR COE: Mr. Belnap?

7 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: No, I don't.

8 CHAIR COE: I do have one, Dr. Rolph. I think
9 it's clear from talking with you and listening to speak
10 that kind of the clear strength and comfort that you bring
11 is on the analytical side, working with data, quantitative
12 analysis.

13 There's this whole other part of the work of a
14 Commissioner that has to deal with data that's a little bit
15 more squishy. It's perspectives, it's feelings, it's
16 experiences of citizens throughout the state. How would
17 you go about blending those together in order to make
18 decisions as a Commissioner?

19 MR. ROLPH: Good question. And I guess it comes
20 back, as I think about it anyway, in part to the whole
21 question of public input to the Commission, which as I
22 understand, as I already mentioned, was somewhat
23 overwhelming for the first Commission.

24 And I certainly am capable and have in studies,
25 where you have to take into other considerations, whether

1 you're talking about studying health insurance, or studying
2 fire protection, or a number of others that I've done over
3 the years, non-numerical considerations. I guess in the
4 fire case it would have to be how much you trade off
5 workload for firemen against having an extra minute shorter
6 in responding to a structural fire would be an example.

7 So, I think I've had experience of that sort of
8 thing. I won't claim that that's my expertise, but I
9 certainly have had experience. And I've been, I think,
10 successful in doing it. I mean the products that we've
11 come up with, in terms of recommendations, we've pretty
12 much without exception that I can think of at the moment,
13 have been accepted by the decision makers, or whoever the
14 stakeholders have been.

15 And I'm perfectly comfortable with that. But I'm
16 not quite sure how to answer the question other than to be
17 sort of sensible and cognizant of what's going on. And
18 when you make recommendations, taking that into account. I
19 mean that would be an example of a tradeoff. But as you
20 point out, it's not a quantitative tradeoff. It's a little
21 squishier, I guess, to use your words.

22 CHAIR COE: Okay, thank you.

23 I'll give one more opportunity for members of the
24 Panel to ask any follow up?

25 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: No.

1 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: No.

2 CHAIR COE: No, okay. Well, thank you very much
3 for --

4 MR. DAWSON: Oh, I'm sorry, we'd like to give --

5 CHAIR COE: Oh, yeah, yeah. Sure, go ahead.

6 MR. DAWSON: -- Dr. Rolph an opportunity to make
7 a closing statement to the Panel.

8 MR. ROLPH: Okay, I guess I talked too fast if
9 we're getting done early. Actually, I want to say two
10 things in a closing statement. First of all, if I'm
11 selected I would plan to learn as much as I can from the
12 2010 Commission. And the purpose would be to apply lessons
13 learned from that Commission to improve the process for the
14 2020 Commission.

15 And whether I'm selected or not, I hope to the
16 degree you folks can help this along, I just hope that this
17 new Commission really does look hard at what happened with
18 the first Commission and learn from it as best they can.

19 I'm not saying that the initial Commission did a
20 bad job. It did a good job. But apparently, from what
21 I've read there were, you know, various roadblocks and
22 problems came up that could be addressed.

23 And then I guess finally, since I guess I've
24 answered already your question, I'd hope, actually, if I
25 were appointed that my analytic background, combined with

1 having worked with groups similar to this, not with as much
2 public outreach granted, would make me an effective
3 Commissioner.

4 And I guess I'd just like to thank you for the
5 opportunity to be considered.

6 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

7 CHAIR COE: Okay, thank you, Dr. Rolph. Thank
8 you for being here this afternoon.

9 MR. ROLPH: Thank you.

10 CHAIR COE: Our next interview is scheduled for
11 9:00 a.m. tomorrow morning, so we will be in recess until
12 8:59 a.m. tomorrow morning.

13 (Thereupon, the Applicant Review Panel meeting
14 recessed at 4:01 p.m.)

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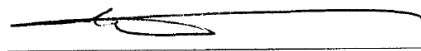
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