

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

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 3, 2020

9:00 A.M.

Reported by:
Jacqui Denlinger

APPEARANCES

Members Present

Ryan Coe, Chair

Angela Dickison, Vice Chair

Ben Belnap, Panel Member

Staff Present

Christopher Dawson, Panel Counsel

Shauna Pellman, Auditor Specialist II

Applicants

Christopher Bettinger

Jeffrey Chang

Jagoree Roy

Angela Vazquez

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PROCEEDINGS

8:59 a.m.

CHAIR COE: Okay, it being 8:59 a.m., I'd like to bring the meeting of the Applicant Review Panel back to order.

Just a few reminders. For those in the room, please silence all cell phones and devices and take any calls outside the room, if necessary, in the hallway. Restrooms are out the door to the left. And in case of emergency, please follow the instructions of the State Auditor's Office staff.

I see that I've got Mr. Belnap with me.

Ms. Dickison, are you on the line? Can you hear us okay?

VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Yes, I can.

CHAIR COE: Great. Thank you.

At this time, I'd like to welcome Dr. Christopher Bettinger for his interview.

Sir, can you hear us?

DR. BETTINGER: I can. And, please, Chris or Mr. Bettinger is fine.

CHAIR COE: Okay. Understood, Mr. Bettinger. And thank you for being so flexible to reschedule this interview for us. We appreciate that.

1 I'd like to turn the time over to Mr.
2 Chris Dawson, who will begin the interview with the
3 five standard questions.

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

5 Mr. Bettinger, I will read you five
6 standard questions that the Panel has requested
7 each applicant respond to. Are you ready, sir?

8 MR. BETTINGER: Yes.

9 MR. DAWSON: First question: What skills
10 and attributes should all Commissioners possess?
11 What skills or competencies should the Commission
12 possess collectively? Of the skills, attributes
13 and competencies that each Commissioner should
14 possess, which do you possess? In summary, how
15 will you contribute to the success of the
16 Commission?

17 MR. BETTINGER: So thanks for that
18 question and for forwarding them ahead of time.
19 I've given some thought to this. And I'm not sure
20 that I think that there's any single skill that all
21 Commissioners have to possess; right? I think of
22 the Commission as a team and teams are made of
23 people with complimentary skills and attributes.
24 So, you know, as a dumb example, if you have five
25 Steph Curries, you're not going to win the NBA

1 championship. If you have a dozen Liana
2 Harutyunyans, you're not going to have a very good
3 opera; right? You need complementary skills. I
4 think there are probably attributes that all
5 Commissioners need to possess.

6 But in terms of skills, you know, what
7 every Commissioner, I think, needs to have is an
8 appreciation of the, sort of you know, large
9 categories of skills that are necessary for doing
10 the Commission's work. So I'll come back to
11 attributes in a second.

12 But the way I think about the work of the
13 Commission, it seems like there's kind of five
14 coherent categories of things that Commissioners
15 need to know about; right? And one is just
16 technical skills of cartography, what it means to
17 draw a map, how human geographies are organized
18 based on socioeconomic characteristics, but how
19 that also kind of tends to coincide with physical
20 geography. And they should have -- the Commission
21 should have at least a couple people, right, who
22 know things about how the Census Bureau works, the
23 geographies that they -- you know, the standards
24 create at bloc and the bloc group and tract level -
25 -

1 (Teleconference service announcement is made.)

2 MR. BETTINGER: -- (indiscernible) and how
3 these coincide with political boundaries of the
4 state, how there's consultation between the Federal
5 Census Bureau and the states in drawing those
6 lines.

7 Someone should know like, you know, GIS-
8 specific stuff, about projections, and how these
9 projections can move lines. They should know -- be
10 able to explain to other Commissioners the
11 difference between a vector and a raster map. They
12 should be able to do things like give a realistic
13 timeline of how long it's going to take to produce
14 a map, understand ways that maps can be
15 communicated with the public, especially in new
16 technologies, like ESRI's ArcGIS Online that would
17 allow the public to kind of play around with maps.
18 So that's one big bucket.

19 And then there's another bucket of, you
20 know, sort of legal knowledge and legal skills that
21 people on the Commission need to have. A couple of
22 Commissioners, I think, in general need to have
23 some legal training. This came out in the report
24 from the last Commission; right? They had, I
25 think, two lawyers on the Commission. And that

1 proved to be very useful.

2 So, yeah, just being able to understand
3 the statutory obligations of the Commission,
4 Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act, and being able to
5 understand what constraints the Voting Rights Act
6 puts on the drawing of boundaries, how the 2013
7 ruling in Shelby County v. Holder effects the VRA's
8 impact, some knowledge about the office of the
9 Attorney General, its relationship to the
10 Commission. And then knowledge about how to assess
11 law firms that might be hired by the Commission,
12 things having to do with, you know, what legal
13 expertise will we actually need. Somebody who
14 could walk us through that would be, I think,
15 pretty useful.

16 So those are the two big buckets; right?
17 The technical skills and the legal skills.

18 But then it seems like there also needs to
19 be somebody with government knowledge who
20 understands the workings of California State
21 Government well, who understands the Bureau of
22 State Audits and its relationship to the
23 Commission, maybe also the Secretary of State's
24 office, hiring and contracting rules of California,
25 has some awareness of how the legislature operates

1 and how best to communicate with them, that would
2 be quite useful.

3 There's a bucket of skills having to do
4 with communication and presentation of information.
5 Ability to communicate with a broad range of
6 audiences, to take kind of, perhaps, esoteric or
7 complicated geographic information and make it
8 understandable to a broad public that's pretty
9 useful.

10 More, you know, kind of marketing things,
11 like how to advertise meetings, how to make
12 information as widely available as possible, how to
13 use synchronization -- synchronous possibilities of
14 engaging the public.

15 And I think maybe also prepping
16 Commissioners who might not be used to being
17 publicly criticized and disliked, right, prepping
18 them for that possibility.

19 And then a final set of skills that I
20 think has to do with internal team; right? How is
21 the Commission going to be led? You know, are all
22 these ideas from the previous Commission about
23 rotating chairs and stuff? And, you know, how will
24 the team be built? What sort of initial trainings
25 do all the Commissioners have to go through? You

1 know, that sort of stuff. Some of the
2 Commissioners have to have kind of an ability to
3 take charge of that, and also take charge of things
4 like the hiring of the executive director, other
5 staff that they need.

6 So I think the Commission as a whole needs
7 to have those attributes. Obviously, not every
8 Commissioner is going to have all of those skills;
9 right?

10 In terms of general personality, I think
11 every Commissioner probably has to be able to take
12 in a lot of information and process it rapidly.
13 That's probably the most necessary skill.

14 There's also probably a need for the
15 Commissioners to assess what needs are and to ask
16 for resources, if needed. That seemed, in the last
17 report, to have been pretty important.

18 Patience definitely seems to a virtue.
19 And having thick skin, those things, I think, are
20 the most important kind of personality
21 characteristics.

22 And what do I bring?

23 You know, my main set of skills is in the
24 geospatial realm. I can draw a decent set of maps;
25 right? And I'm pretty familiar with GIS routines

1 and data analysis. I work with the Census Bureau
2 quite a bit, so I know things that might be
3 relevant to the Commission, like why adjustments
4 are being done to population counts, what do we do
5 about undercounts, things of that nature. I'm
6 pretty confident in my ability to get the
7 Commission to understand those issues.

8 So, you know, I study racial and ethnic
9 conflict, so the Voting Rights Act is, you know,
10 something I read about quite a bit. And I do know
11 about its impact on the drawing of district lines.
12 What I'm less aware of is how, you know, Shelby v.
13 Holder is going to affect the work of this
14 particular Commission? That's something I need to
15 kind of have legal help to understand. So that's
16 kind of the main stuff I bring.

17 I also have, you know, pretty good
18 knowledge of technology tools that are used to
19 reach out to the public. Since the last Commission,
20 there's been a slew of technology tools that have
21 developed that probably would address many of their
22 issues that they raised about public meetings. It
23 would probably solve because I'm pretty decent at
24 putting together graphics and presentations and
25 posters and things of that ilk.

1 Public speaking is not my forte. Like
2 most professors, I tend toward the longwinded.
3 But, you know, that's probably something other
4 Commissioners can help with.

5 I understand the structure of California
6 State Government but I certainly don't work with
7 state agencies all that much, aside from the
8 Department of Education around data. So I'm, you
9 know, not familiar with the BSA or with working
10 with the legislature. And I'm, you know, a very
11 decent team member, I think. I work in teams all
12 the time. Some of them are more functional than
13 others. And, you know, I do think I have some clue
14 about what makes a good team and how to be a good
15 team member.

16 And I should -- the last Commission seemed
17 really functional. They seemed to have really
18 bonded. And I was kind of amazed that only one
19 Commissioner had to resign along the way. They
20 seemed to have a very good team built, so
21 replicating that would be very good.

22 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

23 MR. BETTINGER: Oh, and then you asked
24 about summarizing all of the -- so, you know, how
25 am I going to contribute to the success of the

1 Commission, you know, by bringing in knowledge of
2 Onlines and have it done, explaining all of that to
3 other Commissioners, but also translating it to the
4 public, I can do that pretty well. I can translate
5 public input into mapping directions. I can make
6 map nuances clear to the public. And then, you
7 know, I have a decent understanding of the legal
8 and governmental context in which this occurs. And
9 those are the main skills I bring.

10 MR. DAWSON: All right. Thank you.

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

18 What characteristics do you possess and
19 what characteristics should your fellow
20 Commissioners possess that will protect against
21 hyper-partisanship? What will you do to ensure
22 that the work of the Commission is not seen as
23 polarized or hyper-partisan and avoid perceptions
24 of political bias and conflict?

25 MR. BETTINGER: So this question, it

1 really depends what you mean by hyper-partisanship.
2 So I fundamentally believe that the Commission
3 needs to have on its strong partisans, yet you need
4 to have people who are really strongly committed to
5 the Republican platform and to the Democratic
6 platform. And you want that because that exists in
7 California and you want the Commission to reflect
8 Californian's political sensibilities.

9 You don't necessarily want this Commission
10 to be a group of people who have no particular
11 political interest; right? And that's because when
12 the Commission goes and meets in a very, very
13 staunchly Democratic place, you want a very
14 partisan Commissioner, Democrat, right, who's on
15 the Commission who is able to address that group
16 and say, yeah, hey, you know what? I agree with
17 you guys politically. And these maps, right, they
18 reflect our sensibility. And you want a Republican
19 Commissioner to be able to stand up in front of a
20 hyper-partisan Republican crowd and say the same
21 thing; right?

22 But findings from political science
23 resource is that strong partisans really believe
24 that, in a fair contest, their ideas are going to
25 win out. In the context of the Commission, right,

1 a strong partisan is going to be believe that,
2 look, if we draw these lines fairly, if we do our
3 work properly, then, you know, Republican ideas are
4 going to win out or Democrat ideas are going to win
5 out. That's what a partisan believes. They think
6 gerrymandering is what the other side wants to do
7 to protect, right, a political interest that's not
8 supported by the public.

9 You know, I think what would guard against
10 hyper-partisanship on this Commission, well, what
11 will guard against it is having strong partisans on
12 the Commission and having open and honest
13 discussions about our politics on the Commission,
14 that the real disaster scenario is having people on
15 the Commission who fundamentally don't believe in
16 the work of the Commission, right, people who are
17 cynical about the process and, you know, kind of
18 want to skew things in a particular way. That's
19 that partisanship; right? And that's somebody
20 who's embracing gerrymandering. That's the only
21 thing you really have to guard against. You don't
22 have to guard against strong political fields.

23 And there's also a secondary danger of, if
24 Commissioners don't know what's another's politics
25 and we haven't discussed politics with one another

1 previously going into public forum, then -- one of
2 the things that can happen is in the middle of
3 these public presentations, Commissioners could
4 come out with, you know, political views that would
5 surprise the rest of the Commission. And that
6 tends to tear up the fabric of group strength,
7 bonding and all of that, and tends to damage the
8 work that's being done.

9 MS. PELLMAN: We have 13 minutes, 10
10 seconds remaining.

11 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

12 Question three: What is the greatest
13 problem the Commission could encounter and what
14 actions would you take to avoid or respond to this
15 problem?

16 MR. BETTINGER: I'm going to change the
17 rules of your question here and actually say
18 there's sort of two categories of problems that the
19 Commission could encounter, those internal to the
20 Commission itself and its workings and external
21 problems.

22 So internal problems would have to do with
23 conflicts between Commissioners that become severe
24 or Commissioners being unable to fulfill their
25 obligations. And the external problems would be

1 litigation and severe conflicts with California
2 government agencies or legislatures that kind of
3 delays mapping and delays with drawing the lines.

4 Those are both very real possibilities. I
5 hear kind of hints of them in the last Commission's
6 report in terms of the internal problems. The last
7 Commission seemed to engage in a lot of kind of
8 almost unintentional group building activities at
9 the beginning. This is through the trainings they
10 had about introducing them to state government
11 process and other things that Commissioners seem to
12 kind of commiserate with and, therefore, bond with
13 one another.

14 I think this Commission will probably go
15 through something similar. And having good kind of
16 team leaders on the Commission would help build
17 that kind of comradery that will carry the
18 Commission through to the end of its work.

19 External problems, like litigation, are --
20 they're going to come up and it seems impossible to
21 avoid. The last Commission seems to have, because
22 they were thrown into things later than this
23 Commission will be, had to scramble to come up with
24 solutions and answers to litigation that was
25 happening.

1 This Commission has the luxury of time,
2 you know, there's planning to be done here,
3 acquiring good legal advice, making contact with
4 government agencies early and finding, you know,
5 contact people with whom we can communicate
6 regularly, that's going to be an important part of
7 the early work that the Commission does and should
8 minimize the problems that are going to come up.

9 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Question four: If
10 you are selected you will be one of 14 members of
11 the Commission, which is charged with working
12 together to create maps of the new districts.

13 Please describe a situation where you had
14 to work collaboratively with others on a project to
15 achieve a common goal. Tell us the goal of the
16 project, what your role in the group was, and how
17 the group worked through any conflicts that arose?
18 What lessons would you take from this group
19 experience to the Commission, if selected?

20

21 MR. BETTINGER: So I work on -- in the
22 university. And part of what we did at the CSU is
23 try and coordinate the curriculum to match up with
24 California community colleges and UCs so that it's
25 kind of smoothed out; right? There was a big push

1 for this in the early 2000s because the system was
2 so inefficient and it was taking students so much
3 longer than they necessarily had to take to earn a
4 bachelor's degree. And so there was this effort,
5 not just in sociology, but lots of disciplines, to
6 create kind of a streamlined curriculum and
7 curriculum that kind of allowed students to go from
8 community college to CSU or UC seamlessly.

9 So I was part of the faculty that helped
10 create this curriculum, articulated with community
11 colleges and so on and so forth. It was kind of
12 like the Commission's work in that, you know, there
13 was a public comment period. There were outside
14 entities that had parameters under which we had to
15 operate, right, not just the CSU and California
16 community colleges but, you know, directives from
17 the state, like Senate Bill 1440.

18 And so I was one of the faculty members
19 who helped put this together. And the major
20 conflict that arose came from not all the faculty
21 understanding the constraints under which we had to
22 create this new curriculum.

23 So, you know, there was this Senate Bill
24 1440 that dictated certain things about how courses
25 had to be able to be transferred and such. And

1 many of us on the faculty panel weren't aware of
2 this and kind of had our backs up about this.
3 There were a lot of, not pointless, but discussions
4 of academic freedom that were clearly not going to
5 go anywhere, right, because there was this legal
6 requirement. So the group, in some ways, wasted a
7 lot of time talking about, you know, how to get
8 around things rather than addressing the work that
9 we were to do head on.

10 So that problem, that major delay, that's
11 the number one lesson I take from that group
12 experience and would bring to the Commission.
13 Preparation is really, really important.
14 Understanding, right, the very complicated lay of
15 the land prior to engaging in the work of drawing
16 lines, I think that's fundamentally important to
17 this Commission. And that, you know, work of
18 getting prepped for this -- you know, has the
19 secondary benefit of kind of building group
20 cohesion.

21 MS. PELLMAN: We have six minutes
22 remaining.

23 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

24 A considerable amount of the Commission's
25 work will involve meeting with people from all over

1 California who come from very different backgrounds
2 and a wide variety of perspectives.

3 If you were selected as a Commissioner,
4 what skills and attributes will make you effective
5 at interacting with people from different
6 backgrounds and who have a variety of perspectives?
7 What experiences have you had that will help you be
8 effective at understanding and appreciating people
9 and communities of different backgrounds and who
10 have a variety of perspectives?

11 MR. BETTINGER: So I work at San Francisco
12 State which is and was one of the most diverse
13 campuses in the U.S. And I also work with a group
14 called Project Rebound that serves the formerly
15 incarcerated. In both those entities, I work,
16 therefore, with people who come from a variety of
17 walks of life, have had experiences like
18 incarceration. I meet and work with their
19 families. I also, you know, meet and work with a
20 quite wealthy donor class, right, that supports
21 these entities. So in that sense, I have contact
22 with Californians of a lot of different
23 socioeconomic and racial backgrounds.

24 One of the things about me that I think is
25 relevant here is that my dad was in the Army and so

1 I grew up an Army brat. And my dad's, you know,
2 Irish-German and my mom is Japanese. And so -- and
3 the nature of being an Army brat and mixed-race kid
4 is constantly trying to comprehend different
5 perspectives. And so I kind of -- I think I'm a
6 little bit naturally inclined that way. And then
7 being a sociologist, right, social scientists do a
8 lot of listening, to perspectives that are
9 radically different from our own and trying to
10 understand them. So, you know, my academic life
11 and my life in general, I think, makes me a little
12 more open to the vast variety of experiences in
13 California than most folks.

14 I've lived in a lot of different settings
15 but not in California. One of the things that does
16 worry me about my own preparation here, my
17 experience in California is completely urban. I've
18 never lived in rural California. I did, you know,
19 live and work in a rural setting in Washington
20 State. I farmed in eastern Washington for a while.
21 And so I know the kind of very serious division
22 between the rural and urban interests in the West
23 Coast; right? But I haven't experienced that
24 within California, so I would want to pay
25 particular attention to rural constituencies and

1 trying to get, you know, the Commission to have
2 meetings in places that are sometimes considered
3 (indiscernible).

4 MR. DAWSON: All right. Thank you.

5 At this point we will go to panel
6 questions. Each Panel member will have 20 minutes
7 to ask his or her questions. And we'll start with
8 the Chair. Mr. Coe.

9 CHAIR COE: Thank you, Counsel.

10 Good morning again, Dr. Bettinger. In
11 your application, you indicate that you are not
12 much of a partisan and that you are not a member of
13 any political causes, though you have attended
14 numerous marches that might loosely be termed
15 political gatherings over the last 25 years.

16 My question is: What were these gatherings
17 and what motivated you to attend them?

18 MR. BETTINGER: I don't have a
19 comprehensive list. But just off the top of my
20 head, I attended the Women's March, the San
21 Francisco Pride Parade, and I'm sure there are a
22 number of others. But those are the things that
23 kind of pop out in my head.

24 The Women's March, you know, I was, you
25 know, motivated to go to that event, largely

1 because of what was happening politically at the
2 time. It did seem a moment where, you know, the
3 status of women in the United States generally was
4 kind of on shaky terrain. And my daughter at the
5 time was just four years old. So, you know, I had
6 a profound sense that, you know, the gains that
7 women had made over the last part of the 20th
8 century couldn't deteriorate here in the early 21st
9 century.

10 The Pride Parade, I had friends who were
11 in the parade and largely got sucked into attending
12 that and to see them and support them. I did work
13 with the Gay and Lesbian Historical Society Museum
14 here in San Francisco and they had, you know,
15 bigger events around Pride, as well, so that's my
16 involvement there.

17 CHAIR COE: Thank you.

18 I'd like to move to your essay on
19 impartiality that you provided. And in that essay
20 you discuss how honest disclosure of thoughts and
21 feelings helps to foster impartiality in a team. I
22 wonder if you could expand on that? And how does
23 it foster impartiality on a team? And why do you
24 think it fosters impartiality on a team?

25 MR. BETTINGER: So organizational

1 psychologists, right, do these interesting little
2 experiments where they take small hundreds of
3 people and put them to task. It can be just, you
4 know, building something or coming up with a
5 coherent statement, something like this. And then
6 they play around with the variables. One of the
7 people in the group is an associate of the
8 experiment; right? They're part of the
9 experimental team. They're not a true participant.
10 And in some of the variants, right, these people
11 will do or say things that cause suspicion in the
12 rest of the group.

13 And, you know, the very strong finding is
14 that that suspicion destroys group cohesion and
15 leads to much poorer outcome. They take longer to
16 build the widget, they draft a less coherent essay.
17 It's just damaging to the group effort.

18 The interpretation of organizational
19 psychologists is that trust is fundamental to group
20 work. And, you know, a lot of this work was done in
21 the post-World War II era in the 1950s and it's
22 largely what's responsible for all the ropes
23 courses and kind of team-building routines that we
24 see today.

25 If you've been through anything like that,

1 you know that a lot of ropes courses emphasize kind
2 of trusting members and trusting yourself, right,
3 even though you're engaged in what, on the surface,
4 it looks like around, there's still the activity of
5 climbing a tree or something. It has this kind of
6 profound impact on the team because people
7 understand one another. They think that their
8 fellow team members are being honest in trusting
9 them and they want to reciprocate.

10 So in the context of the Commission, here
11 you have people who are drawing political lines
12 that we all know have an impact on people's
13 political lives and the possibilities of different
14 people being elected to office. If anyone makes up
15 a pretense of not understanding that of, you know,
16 kind of saying, well, you know, we can just kind of
17 ignore that and not be partisan and everything will
18 come out okay, and that's going to damage, I think,
19 the team dynamic and the work that the Commission
20 is to do; right?

21 I think if people come out strongly and
22 say, hey, here are my political opinions, right,
23 and then we look at drawing these lines and saying,
24 okay, well, you know, if we draw the line this way
25 or this way, it's going to enhance, you know, one

1 party or the other's likelihood of winning this
2 district. But let's look at other criteria about,
3 well, okay, what's this section that we're arguing
4 about? Who lives there? How are they tied to
5 these other communities; right?

6 If we're up front about that, yes, there's
7 going to be arguments, there should be arguments,
8 but what's going to come out is a decision that I
9 think is rational and principled and can be
10 explained to any partisan of any party. And they
11 may not agree with the decision about where the
12 line is drawn but they will understand the basis on
13 which it was drawn.

14 CHAIR COE: Okay. Thank you.

15 Can you give us a time where you had to
16 make a difficult impartial decision that involved
17 setting aside your preference or your self-interest
18 on an issue?

19 MR. BETTINGER: A recent one was a hiring
20 decision for a position at San Francisco State. I
21 had an acquaintance who I had a great deal of
22 respect for who was one of the final three
23 candidates. I actually asked if I could be recused
24 from the committee when he, you know, was found to
25 be one of the last three candidates but I didn't

1 have a legal obligation to recuse myself, so they
2 told me I had to stay on the committee.

3 So, you know, along with the rest of the
4 committee, I listened to the presentations, went
5 through the records, and we had a pretty frank
6 discussion about the strengths and weaknesses of
7 all three candidates. And, you know, the rest of
8 the people on the committee knew that I had a
9 relationship with this person and thought a lot of
10 them. And, you know, I did lay that on the table
11 by explaining that, you know, I thought a lot of
12 his work.

13 With that said, you know, in the
14 discussion with the other members, it did seem like
15 the other candidate, one other candidate, who is
16 the person we hired, was the superior candidate for
17 San Francisco State at this particular moment in
18 time. And that, I am confident, is the right
19 decision. And it wasn't easy for me to not vote
20 for my acquaintance but it was the right decision
21 to make. And I did appreciate the other people on
22 the team, you know, listening to my pitch for the
23 strengths of the person I was supporting. And I
24 think their openness to that led me to be a little
25 bit more open to coming around to the idea that,

1 yeah, this other person was the superior candidate.

2 CHAIR COE: I'd like to hear a little bit
3 more about your work at Project Rebound. You
4 mentioned it earlier.

5 And what was your specific role in your
6 work with Project Rebound? And why did you choose
7 to get involved?

8
9 MR. BETTINGER: That was a long, strange
10 question -- or the answer to it is long and
11 strange.

12 Project Rebound was a program started at
13 San Francisco State by a guy named John Irwin.
14 Irwin had been convicted of several felonies and
15 done time in Soledad Prison. And when he got out,
16 he finished his education, got his PhD, and came to
17 San Francisco State. And after State he started
18 Project Rebound which is a program that helps folks
19 who are incarcerated think about entering into
20 higher education as they approach their time of
21 release.

22 And it's operated for going on 50 years
23 now and, you know, it's had its ups and downs.
24 Irwin ran it for the longest time just on his phone
25 and did a fantastic job with it. But he retired in

1 the early 1990s. And the program kind of
2 languished.

3 Now the program was at San Francisco
4 State, based on the strength that, you know, John
5 Irwin was a prominent faculty member, was there
6 when he retired, university council quite recently
7 kind of began to worry about the relationship of
8 this entity to the university, about liability
9 involved for the university in supporting the work
10 that Rebound did, all of those kinds of things
11 that, you know, university councils are supposed to
12 worry about.

13 So Project Rebound was going to be shut
14 down unless it could find a faculty home and
15 faculty support. So a fellow faculty member, Luiz
16 Barbosa, and I kind of took this on and created an
17 umbrella for Rebound for a couple years. They
18 hired a new Executive Director, Jason Bell, who has
19 been magnificent. And he's the one who got Project
20 Rebound spread from San Francisco State to being a
21 CSU-wide model. It's now part of the California
22 State Budget. And he just does a fantastic job.

23 My goal with Rebound has been kind of
24 whatever they need at the moment. So I did a lot
25 more work early on in terms of getting simple

1 things for them, like staffing offices, equipment,
2 that sort of stuff. Later on, as they were
3 applying for the grants, I did the analysis of the
4 data. I'm the person who picked out that their
5 graduation rate was much, much higher than the
6 university graduation rate in general, and helped
7 them apply for grant applications and money from
8 local agencies.

9 And then when the Opportunity Institute
10 started to kind of contact them about spreading
11 statewide, I was the person who helped design their
12 assessments to see how the different local Rebound
13 programs run, the CSU would -- or assess how they
14 were operating, whether they were being successful
15 in getting students in and graduating them.

16 There's a lot of sundry other stuff, fund
17 raisers, you know, meeting with donors. I teach a
18 class for them every year, all those sorts of
19 things.

20 CHAIR COE: So you mentioned in an answer
21 to one of the standard questions -- I believe it
22 was standard question five that through that work
23 you worked with a variety of diverse individuals
24 from a number of backgrounds. And so what did you
25 learn from that experience or any experience you've

1 had with people from diverse backgrounds that would
2 make you an effective representative for them on
3 this Commission?

4 MS. PELLMAN: Quick time check. We have
5 five minutes, five seconds remaining.

6 MR. BETTINGER: The -- you know, with
7 regard to this Commission, you know, one of the
8 things that you learn about Rebound students is
9 they're from a really diverse set of backgrounds.
10 The incarcerated in California come from a range of
11 different socioeconomic backgrounds and their
12 routes to prison are kind of seemingly each
13 individual story.

14 But all of the folks in Rebound, you know,
15 kind of tell me over and over that they don't
16 represent the vast majority of people who are
17 incarcerated. And I have come to learn that, you
18 know, through Project Rebound, that Rebounders
19 tend to view themselves as kind of the lucky few,
20 right, who have opportunities coming out of prison.
21 And their attention and worry is toward many who
22 are released who have, you know, really, no
23 realistic chance to enter higher education, and not
24 much of a desire to often times, but the
25 opportunities afforded to those folks are quite

1 slim.

2 And so I've, you know, I've come to
3 understand that issue much more profoundly than I
4 would have otherwise. And this is a much larger
5 set of folks who are being released. The
6 requirements, often times, of their probation role
7 dictate where they can live.

8 And so, you know, when you're drawing
9 districting lines and you have a large prison and
10 you have to decide which side of a line that some
11 prison resides in, it's pretty important that you
12 pay attention to the, you know, inmates of that
13 prison, what sorts of possibilities are open to
14 them, depending upon how you draw that line. It's
15 not that the line is all-important but it does have
16 an impact on their lives and you should think about
17 that to some degree.

18 CHAIR COE: Thank you. Could I get one
19 more time check please?

20 MS. PELLMAN: Yes. Two minutes, twelve
21 seconds remaining.

22 CHAIR COE: In the interest of time, I'm
23 not sure I have enough time to ask any other
24 questions, so I will turn the time over to Ms.
25 Dickison.

1 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you.

2 Good morning, Mr. Bettinger.

3 MR. BETTINGER: Good morning.

4 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: So Mr. Coe just
5 asked about what you learned about the Rebound
6 students that would make you a good representative
7 on the Commission.

8 I want to take a little twist on that. Do
9 you think a Commissioner with the background of a
10 Rebound student would bring a needed perspective to
11 the Commission?

12 MR. BETTINGER: That's a very interesting
13 question. My first reaction is, yes, that this is
14 a constituency that is often not heard from in our
15 usual discussions of politics. And their
16 particular interests and issues aren't necessarily
17 known to most of us. So having a Rebound student
18 on the Commission, I think, would be a pretty good
19 idea.

20 And I should be clear here. You know, I'm
21 not a Rebound student and I'm not someone who knows
22 these issues as intimately as they do. I'm
23 definitely an outsider here. I think this is a
24 constituency that is so often not heard from that
25 that concerns me. And I do have some clues about

1 how to listen to them. But that's much different
2 than having, you know, the experience.

3 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Do you think the
4 experience that you do have in working with them
5 would enable you to maybe connect with people in
6 those communities in the public setting?

7 MR. BETTINGER: I think so, to a degree.
8 I think I would have some advice, probably, to the
9 Commission about how we might approach any given
10 meeting. You know, if we were to hold it, let's
11 say, at Hunters Point, here in San Francisco, the
12 area that has the highest incarceration rate, you
13 know, there are ways in which we could advertise
14 what we're about and what we're doing that make the
15 Commission more relevant to the -- lives people in
16 Hunters Point. You want to kind of speak to your
17 crowd in that sense.

18 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Okay. You also
19 mentioned prisons and being about those when you're
20 drawing lines.

21 What are your thoughts on inmates that are
22 incarcerated, should they be counted in the prison
23 where they're located or maybe counted in the
24 communities where they come from and may return?

25 MR. BETTINGER: Okay. So this is a

1 complicated question and it's one that resides, in
2 part, at the Census Bureau level. So the Census
3 Bureau has to struggle with this all the time. You
4 know, when we have institutional populations, like
5 a prison or, you know, dormitories on a university
6 campus for that matter, where should we count those
7 people? And the Census Bureau, to a degree, has
8 gone back and forth on this a little bit.

9 For the 2020 enumerations, the Census
10 Bureau is leaning heavily in the direction of
11 counting, you know, institutional populations as
12 being from their last residence, right, so the
13 permanent home address of students and the last
14 residence of inmates before they were incarcerated.

15 Now with prisoners, that, because of the
16 recordkeeping and the tentative nature of a large
17 number of the incarcerated, that still leaves
18 somewhere around half of the population that is in
19 prison whose, you know, whereabouts wouldn't be
20 able to be determined. So they would still be
21 counted in the place where the prison is located.

22 So, you know, ideally, you would kind of
23 want to figure out, on release, where are those
24 formerly incarcerated people going to be? And to
25 have those places be drawn in boundary maps that

1 kind of are sensible to them. That isn't going to
2 be possible in large part because of this data
3 deficit.

4 So then you're left with this problem of,
5 okay, so we have a large chunk of people here. You
6 know, if we move this line, then that prison
7 population is part of this entity, we move it over
8 here, it's part of this entity, how do you make
9 those decisions?

10 Well, this is where, you know, you have to
11 look at what's the relationship of the surrounding
12 communities to the prison? Where are the major
13 flows of people coming from in terms of visitation
14 to the prisons? That information, we do have. And
15 that's quite relevant to drawing a sensible line as
16 to where to put this population that is not
17 otherwise categorized.

18 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Okay. So in your
19 first essay you were talking about the last
20 Commission. And you mentioned that the only
21 complaints you heard are, in a few cases, that it
22 pitted political allies against one another when
23 the districts they represented were merged. And
24 you said that's a real problem. What about that is
25 a problem?

1 MR. BETTINGER: When I said that, you
2 know, these are the only cases I know of, I'm
3 talking about from popular press reports, right. I
4 don't know about any of this from Commissioners or
5 anything like that and I don't have any insider
6 knowledge like that.

7 But, yeah, you know, there were these
8 reports about people who had represented these
9 districts and now the districts have shifted and,
10 thereto, you know, political incumbents who have
11 real ties and have done well, seemingly, in their
12 duties and served their constituencies well, and
13 now they're in the same district so only one of
14 them is going to be the assembly representative or
15 whatever the position is.

16 That's a problem in the sense of, you
17 know, people have elected officials who they have
18 relationships with and they develop ties to and
19 they have ways of doing things with them, they have
20 good working relationships with them. You know, it
21 seemed, from at least the press report that, you
22 know, often times these politicians weren't
23 politicians who were going to be voted out of
24 office. It wasn't the ground flow of discontent
25 with the job that they were doing. But, you know,

1 one of them was going to retain the position and
2 the other one wasn't.

3 So in that sense, it's a problem. It's
4 not a problem in the grander scheme of, well, you
5 know, that's how politics works; right? But it is,
6 you know, not a great thing to lose good working
7 relationships if you're an organization that has a
8 politician who you work well with.

9 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Okay. So based on
10 certain reports, California could lose a
11 congressional district after this next census.

12 Keeping in mind that then the lines are
13 going to have be redrawn, obviously, somebody is
14 going to lose a seat, how do you think that's going
15 to affect the Commission and its work?

16 MR. BETTINGER: Well, that issue, I think,
17 is one that punches the partisan button pretty
18 hard. You know that one fewer congressional
19 district will probably mean that Southern
20 California, probably the L.A. area, will be carved
21 up slightly differently, but just my guess. And,
22 you know, the -- Southern California is, because of
23 the density of the population, you know, small
24 changes in the map make large differences in terms
25 of the political outcomes; right?

1 So you want to think, I think, as a
2 commission about, you know, what the principles on
3 which you're drawing these maps and how are you
4 dealing with the demographic shifts and expressing
5 those, you know, in boundary lines? And you want
6 to be clear about that with one another and up
7 front about it before you go about, you know,
8 looking at this map of Southern California.
9 Because, honestly, you can carve up things there in
10 any number of ways that are probably going to end
11 up with more Republican seats or more Democrat
12 seats, right, depending upon small things you do.

13 This is one of those areas where I really
14 think that it helps the Commission to be up front
15 about their politics right from the beginning and
16 to engage in kind of a team building that
17 establishes general principles for how we're going
18 to do our work before that work starts.

19 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Do you believe
20 politics or parties should be a consideration for
21 the Commission?

22 MR. BETTINGER: In the sense of should --
23 how many registered Democrats or Republicans,
24 should that be a criterion for drawing lines? No.
25 That's actually not the way the Commission is

1 supposed to work.

2 But should politics play a role in the
3 sense of, you know, a Commissioner saying, hey, I'm
4 a staunch Republican, a staunch Democrat, you know,
5 let's do this work so that my party can get as many
6 seats as possible, that, I think, should be part of
7 the conversation. Because if a fellow Commission
8 who is a staunch Democrat or staunch Republican
9 says that to me, I'm going to say, great, so let's
10 come up with a good fair way of drawing these lines
11 because, right, if you do that, I mean, you know,
12 you're a staunch Republican, you're a staunch
13 Democrat, you know, if we draw the lines fairly,
14 you're going to have a fair contest and your ideas
15 will win out. I don't necessarily agree with them,
16 right, but that's, you know, what a strong believer
17 in this party platform believes.

18 So if we can have that conversation up
19 front and say, okay, this is how we're going to
20 draw these maps, these are the criteria upon which
21 we're going to draw these maps, everyone's agreed,
22 we go about and do it, I think both -- partisans of
23 both major political parties will be quite
24 satisfied.

25 Now, obviously, the reality that turns out

1 in the future might be that one party or the other
2 wins more seats. That can happen, right, and that
3 going to happen, but it shouldn't be viewed as the
4 result of gerrymandering.

5 MS. PELLMAN: We have --

6 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you for
7 clearing that up.

8 MS. PELLMAN: -- we have 4 minutes, 52
9 seconds remaining.

10 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Oh, thank you.

11 Can you describe an analysis of the census
12 in a -- of the census and analytic data that -- oh,
13 I'm sorry, of the census data you've done?

14 MR. BETTINGER: I looked largely at racial
15 segregation and income segregation. So, you know,
16 often times what my analyses engage in is taking
17 census tracts which are, you know, areas kind of
18 analogous to a neighborhood, about 5,000 people,
19 and seeing how -- you know, what percentage of the
20 population in those tracts is of Asian descent or
21 White or African American, et cetera, et cetera,
22 and then how separated are they from one another,
23 how this coincides with income levels in the area,
24 poverty rates? And then extending from that,
25 things like city services, seats in public schools,

1 et cetera, et cetera. So it's really looking at
2 residential segregation at the tract level and
3 tying it to other social outcomes.

4 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Do you think this
5 skill set will be a benefit to the Commission?

6 MR. BETTINGER: I do. I think the, you
7 know, the Commission has to understand how the
8 Census Bureau does its work, and also about the,
9 you know, nature of social demographics in the
10 state of California. Often times, Californians
11 kind of misperceive just how much of one group
12 resides in an area. If you think about San
13 Francisco, San Franciscans have this idea of the
14 Mission District as, a primarily, the
15 (indiscernible) district, Bayview-Hunters Point is
16 a primarily African American district, and both
17 those groups are minorities in both those areas;
18 right?

19 And there's kind of, often times, a
20 fundamental misunderstanding that leads people to
21 say, you know, oh, this area has to be considered
22 part of, you know, this boundary. If you look at
23 the hard data, that -- those arguments are often
24 undercut.

25 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Okay. Thank you.

1 Can I get a time check?

2 MS. PELLMAN: One minute, fifty-four
3 seconds remaining.

4 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Okay. I don't have
5 time for my next question, so I yield my time.

6 CHAIR COE: Okay. Thank you, Ms.
7 Dickison.

8 Mr. Belnap?

9 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right.

10 Good morning, Mr. Bettinger. Most of my
11 questions have been asked and answered. I do want
12 to return to a concept that Mr. Coe asked you
13 about.

14 In your essay on impartiality, you
15 indicate that you have learned that the honest
16 disclosure of biases is the key to groups operating
17 with impartiality. And you've already discussed
18 your reasons for believing that and the purposes
19 behind that kind of disclosure.

20 But my question is, is what's the
21 appropriate situation or forum for these types of
22 disclosures?

23 MR. BETTINGER: With regard to this
24 Commission in particular?

25 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Yes.

1 MR. BETTINGER: So I think it begins with
2 the ramping up that Commissioners have to do. The
3 last Commission's report alluded to, you know, a
4 number of trainings that Commissioners had to go
5 to, to make them aware of state agencies, how they
6 were supposed to relate to that. There were ones
7 on legal expertise and things having to do with the
8 Open Meetings Act, PRA, et cetera, et cetera.

9 Those trainings and those moments, you
10 know, they provide an opportunity to talk a lot
11 about politics; right? And it's nice for
12 Commissioners to talk about, you know, our personal
13 lives and our kids and our dogs and et cetera, et
14 cetera. But I think it's important to also talk
15 about our politics there, right, so, you know,
16 learning how people politically lean, how we think,
17 you know, how a Commissioner who's a Democrat or a
18 Republican asks me, you know, how can you be
19 nonpartisan at a time like this? I think that's a
20 good question that I would want to talk through
21 with the rest of the Commissioners so they can
22 understand where I'm coming from. And you're doing
23 this in the situation where you're all kind of
24 going through the same technical training and, you
25 know, you're commiserating.

1 So that has to, in my mind, happen early
2 on in the Commission. And this is why I think, you
3 know, people who are good at being group leaders,
4 who are good at fostering these kinds of
5 discussions, right, who are good at turning kind of
6 the classic small-talk chatter that we all engage
7 in and making it more meaningful, I think they're
8 going to be really important to have on the
9 Commission, at least a couple people like that.

10 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: So those trainings
11 likely were public meetings. I don't know for sure
12 but I'm assuming that they were public meetings.
13 And I'm not sure how many people will be in
14 attendance but I think the cameras would have been
15 on. Do you think that would affect the way the
16 Commissioners disclose their biases in that
17 situation?

18 MR. BETTINGER: Yeah. I -- so here, I'm
19 going to actually plead a little bit of ignorance.
20 My impression of the trainings was that they were
21 just -- they weren't public meetings, they were
22 just trainings that -- like the BSA did for the
23 Commission and say, hey, here's what we do, here's,
24 right, who to contact about this, who to contact
25 about that. I don't think that falls under the

1 Open Meetings Act. I could easily be wrong about
2 this. But reading through the document, it didn't
3 seem like those were open meetings.

4 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: So let's --

5 MR. BETTINGER: Yeah, I think --

6 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: -- let's assume --
7 let's talk about if they were public meetings,
8 would that change the dialogue in your in your mind
9 at all?

10 MR. BETTINGER: Yeah, it would. And
11 that's -- you know, I alluded to this kind of
12 nightmare scenario earlier. If the first time
13 you're learning about one another's politics is in
14 a public meeting where there's, you know, other
15 people with, you know, partisan viewpoints in the
16 audience and, you know, that's a poor place to have
17 this kind of open discussion of our views. And the
18 reason it's a poor place is because it's not just
19 the Commission, it's this public, that is in this
20 meeting, part of the group. And so, right, it's
21 more easy for things to fall on partisan lines and
22 the Commission do not really experience any bonding
23 during that time.

24 What I'm talking about is a group that is
25 a team having to share with one another what our

1 viewpoints are so that the team can cohere to one
2 another --

3 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Um-hmm.

4 MR. BETTINGER: -- even before going into
5 public meetings, not to change one another's minds
6 about our politics or anything but so that when we
7 go into public meetings and we know one another's
8 viewpoints and we're not surprised by any of that.
9 And because we've been up front about this, we
10 aren't surprised if someone says, yeah, I actually
11 disagree about where this boundary was drawn, you
12 know, maybe, you know, we've got somebody in the
13 audience who can say more and give me more
14 ammunition here in the community.

15 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right. Thank
16 you. That does help me understand your viewpoint
17 better.

18 Do you feel like you would have any strong
19 preferences, or even biases, that you would feel
20 like you need to disclose to your fellow
21 Commissioners if you were selected?

22 MR. BETTINGER: Oh, certainly. You know,
23 I'm not a strong partisan but I'm not apolitical.
24 I have, you know, definite political opinions about
25 different things but I prioritize different state

1 efforts as in things that are near and dear to my
2 heart and things that I'm a little farther away.

3 You know, just an example, my work with
4 project rebound, my concerns about the incarcerated
5 population, my concerns about reassignment and
6 release of inmates, you know, those are all things
7 that I don't expect most other Commissioners to
8 kind of have at the forefront of their minds.

9 And I think it's important to understand
10 that anyone working with me, you know, what my
11 thoughts on that are and why I might pay attention
12 to that. It's useful even if, you know, somebody
13 disagrees with that to know that, okay, you know,
14 Chris has got this particular fixation on the
15 inmate population, well, you know, I know that so,
16 you know, maybe I can kind of work with that. If I
17 think he's going too far off, maybe I can talk him
18 off the ledge, knowing this about him.

19 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right. Thank
20 you. I appreciate the answers to my questions. I
21 don't have any further questions.

22 CHAIR COE: Mr. Dawson?

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

24 Mr. Bettinger, I just wanted to follow up
25 on a couple of things that you said.

1 In your response to standard question two,
2 which is about bias, you said something that
3 actually surprised me. You talked about how the
4 Commission really needs to have strong partisans,
5 that we didn't want Commissioners with no
6 particular political bent. The Commission is
7 intentionally made up to be balanced between five
8 Democrats, five Republicans and four nonaffiliated.

9 In this structure, how do you see the role
10 of the nonaffiliated members?

11 MR. BETTINGER: So the nonaffiliated
12 members, the easiest way to conceptualize them is
13 kind of like the swing votes on the Supreme Court;
14 right? Now which way is Kennedy going to go on
15 this? That's an easy way to kind of conceptualize
16 the composition of the team, where you have the
17 Republican wing and the Democrat wing, and then
18 you've got these kind of swing votes in between. I
19 actually don't think that's a great frame for the
20 Commission. And the reason I don't think it's a
21 great frame for the Commission is because, you
22 know, then it kind of becomes internally divisive
23 and, you know, the two political wings are trying
24 to win over the four votes in the middle.

25 I actually think that the role of the

1 nonpartisan members is really to get the full
2 Commission to engage with one another. You know,
3 my ideal is that the strong Republican and the
4 strong Democrat partisans on the Commission talk to
5 one another and say, look, if we do this, you know,
6 your guy is going to win. No, if you do this, our
7 person is going to win. Get them to talk through
8 that and to facilitate that by saying, okay, well,
9 you know, look, what are the principles that we all
10 agree on that are important to constituting
11 communities and for respecting the drawing of
12 boundary lines?

13 And, you know, if you have that
14 conversation and people are open to having that
15 conversation honestly, right, with political
16 interests in mind, I do think you get to a place
17 where Commissioners will be able to say, okay,
18 yeah, I agree. You know, based on these
19 principles, I think we can all live with this.

20 That's the role of the four in the middle;
21 right? It's not to be the swing vote. It's to
22 facilitate a conversation between all of the
23 Commissioners.

24 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. That was the only
25 thing I wanted to follow up on. And noticed that

1 some of the Panel members might have a follow-up.

2 So, Mr. Chair, if you have a follow-up?

3 CHAIR COE: Ms. Dickison, do you have any
4 follow-up questions?

5 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: I do not. Thank
6 you.

7 CHAIR COE: Mr. Belnap?

8 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: I do not.

9 CHAIR COE: I don't have any follow-up
10 questions at this time.

11 MR. DAWSON: Oh, all right.

12 Well, then, Madam Secretary, could I have
13 a time check please?

14 MS. PELLMAN: Yes. We have 13 minutes, 52
15 seconds remaining.

16 MR. DAWSON: Oh, thank you.

17 So, Mr. Bettinger, with the time
18 remaining, I'd like to offer you the opportunity to
19 make a closing statement to the Panel, if you wish.

20 MR. BETTINGER: Well, like I said at the
21 beginning, I'm fairly longwinded, so I don't want
22 to tax you here. So let me just say thank you to
23 all the staff meeting together. It's been
24 remarkably smooth. So whatever you had to do to
25 scramble to do all of this, your efforts are much

1 appreciated.

2 And I want to thank the -- you all on the
3 Panel for the interview questions. I enjoyed the
4 discussion. I hope you're able to tease your way
5 through my kind of weedy answers there.

6 Just in closing, I do want to say that I
7 really am a believer in California's way of
8 redistricting. As I mentioned in my essay when I
9 first applied to be a Commissioner, I was in
10 Michigan prior to moving to California. And, you
11 know, Michigan is kind of the poster child of bad
12 gerrymandered districts. And the damage that that
13 did to the state and continues to do to the state
14 is quite measurable. I think the state is worse
15 off for having what is broadly recognized as
16 grossly gerrymandered districts.

17 California doesn't have that. And
18 California needs to avoid that, you know, for a lot
19 of the reasons that you all kind of point to in
20 your questions about hyper-partisanship.

21 So I very much welcome the chance to be
22 part of that effort and look forward to talking to
23 you all in the future.

24 CHAIR COE: Okay. Thank you, Dr.
25 Bettinger, for being here today. Our next

1 interview is scheduled at 10:45, so we'll be in
2 recess until 10:44.

3 (Thereupon the Panel recessed at 10:18 a.m.)
4
5
6

7 10:44

8 CHAIR COE: It being 10:44, we'll go ahead
9 and bring this meeting back to order.

10 I'd like to welcome Mr. Jeffery Chang for
11 his interview today.

12 Mr. Chang, can you hear us okay?

13 MR. CHANG: I can. Can you hear me?

14 CHAIR COE: I can. Yes, I can. Thank you
15 very much and thank you for being flexible enough
16 to reschedule this interview, we really appreciate
17 that.

18 Going ahead to turn the meeting over to
19 Mr. Chris Dawson to ask the five standard
20 questions.

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

22 Mr. Chang, I'm going to ask you five
23 standard questions that the panel has requested
24 that each applicant respond to.

25 Are you ready, sir?

1 MR. CHANG: I am.

2 MR. DAWSON: First question. What skills
3 and attributes should all commissioners possess?

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

6 Of the skills, attributes, and
7 competencies that each commissioner should possess,
8 which do you possess?

9 In summary, how will you contribute to the
10 success of the Commission?

11 MR. CHANG: First of all, I'd like to
12 thank the panel, and the panel's staff for all of
13 your hard work, especially during these really
14 difficult circumstances. I've had a number of
15 contacts with panel staff and everybody's been very
16 friendly and helpful, which I think has aided in
17 the entire process, at least for me. And so that's
18 important.

19 Anyway, getting down to your questions,
20 what skills and attributes should all commissioners
21 possess? I think the skills and attributes that
22 each commissioner should possess are different than
23 the skills and competencies of the body as a whole.
24 I believe that you are trying to build a team. If
25 that's correct, you will need a team of players,

1 ones with differing perspectives, experience, and
2 skills. Most importantly, you don't want 14
3 quarterbacks.

4 The panel selection process, in my view,
5 has already identified candidates with the basic
6 skills that you're looking for, such as the ability
7 to work in a group, to listen to others, and to
8 analyze complicated data, et cetera. All of the
9 candidates that have reached this level, frankly,
10 are very accomplished individuals and members of
11 our communities. However, I've been thinking about
12 this, and I think there's some important aspects of
13 the basic skills and attributes that really need to
14 be focused on and emphasized.

15 Not only must each Commissioner be able to
16 listen, he or she must be able to listen with
17 patience and empathy. We should listen to one
18 another and to the public without trying to make a
19 point or win an argument. We should listen so that
20 we can fully appreciate other's points of view.
21 This is absolutely critical to the success of the
22 Commission's work.

23 Many candidates are truly brilliant and
24 accomplished in their fields of endeavor, no doubt
25 about it. Everyone who has been highly recognized

1 in their field must have a certain degree of self-
2 confidence. We need this. However, the panel must
3 select individuals who can control their desires to
4 dominate a meeting or discussion. We're not trying
5 to see how one or a few of us can by force of
6 intellect or will drag along the rest of us.
7 Instead, in my view, we are a team of mountain
8 climbers all tethered together whose ultimate
9 success requires all of the team to reach the
10 summit together.

11 All commissioners must not only be
12 friendly and accessible, they must be willing to
13 quickly develop rapport with the others. And,
14 unfortunately, they may have to do it through video
15 conference. That can be a challenge and I think
16 it's going to require special effort on people who
17 may be a tad bit standoffish or uncomfortable with
18 -- with communicating this way.

19 Let me turn to what skills and
20 competencies should the Commission possess
21 collectively. As a collective body, the Commission
22 needs to fulfill its legal mandates in a timely
23 manner. It should also be able to defend its
24 actions against challenge. To do this, the
25 Commission must be able to quickly organize itself

1 and take advantage of the special skills or
2 attributes of the commissioners.

3 Not only will we need to learn about one
4 another's strengths, but we will need to ensure
5 that everyone is on the same page as to our mission
6 and its legal framework. So we have to be really
7 cognizant of getting on the same page and making
8 sure we all understand, we have the backgrounds, we
9 have the education, we have the training, and stay
10 on the same page, particularly if our
11 communications are going to be more distant.

12 The Commission must learn to act like a
13 team and not like a group of players all trying out
14 for the same positions. I think, again, here's an
15 issue of, you know, being able to, if you will,
16 mitigate or control the -- the ego or self
17 confidence and work like a team. I think that's
18 the most important thing for a Commission, we're
19 not a group of individual players.

20 The summary report of the last Commission
21 noted a number of areas that needed improvement.
22 And I think the new Commission needs to learn from
23 the experience of the first Commission and figure
24 out how to get ahead of the curve on many of the
25 time sensitive issues and problems that the last

1 Commission identified. As I'll address later on in
2 my comments, given -- given what we're facing, this
3 is particularly important to study and understand
4 some of the longer term issues, the ones that we
5 need to jump on right away in order to so called,
6 stay ahead of the curve.

7 Which of these skills and competencies do
8 I possess? I believe I have a strong empathy for
9 others. Because of that, I want to know what's
10 bothering them and how I can help. I don't have to
11 be the quarterback. I know how I can fit into the
12 team wherever it needs me. I've worked in many
13 professional settings, both in the trenches, and in
14 leadership roles.

15 As my application indicates, I have about
16 35 years of working on various trade association
17 and professional organizations, committees,
18 subcommittees. And I've served in all of the roles
19 and I understand what it means to kind of work your
20 way up and do, if you will, the -- the work in the
21 trenches before you assume a leadership position.
22 And I understand the position of -- the importance
23 of all of those positions, and then working
24 together and the respect that you need to have for
25 all of the various roles.

1 I have the ability to make strong
2 professional relations -- relationships quickly
3 because I want to learn about others. I'm good at
4 analyzing the needs of others and discussing
5 complex issues in a down-to-earth manner.

6 Summarizing, what will I contribute to the
7 success of the Commission? My 40 years practicing
8 as an employee benefits attorney I think has
9 prepared me to tackle the work of the Commission in
10 several ways. I am constantly analyzing and
11 advising employers about how they can provide
12 differing benefits for various employee groups
13 without violating applicable statutory and
14 regulatory limits. I routinely study organization-
15 wide demographics and work with formulas that
16 measure levels of coverage and relative benefits.

17 In my work, I help employers form
18 employee-level communities of interests while
19 satisfying the requirements of ERISA, the Employee
20 Retirement Income Security Act. I think this work
21 is analogous to the Commission's work of drawing
22 districts that meets the needs of California's
23 communities of interests while at the same time
24 satisfying the requirement of California's
25 Constitution and the Voting Rights Act.

1 My employee benefits practice also
2 involves advising planned fiduciaries. And because
3 fiduciaries have control over employees' benefits
4 and other people's money, they're subject to the
5 highest legal standard of care, the Prudent Expert
6 Rule. In order to keep these people out of
7 trouble, I regularly explain the need for what's
8 called procedural prudence. This requires them to
9 document the bases for all of their significant
10 decisions so those decisions can be defended at a
11 later time.

12 My experience with procedural prudence
13 will help the Commission to better plan and
14 document its actions while preparing for future
15 litigation.

16 Although I'm not a litigator, I'm a
17 counselor, my legal training and experience will
18 help me to research, analyze, and explain statutes
19 and cases. And quite frankly, I've already looked
20 at some of the applicable cases and laws.

21 I've also worked closely with litigation
22 counsel to analyze and develop legal strategies for
23 handling a wide variety of complex employee
24 benefits disputes and cases. So in other words,
25 while I'm not a trial or an appellate attorney,

1 I've worked closely with both trial and appellate
2 attorneys on complex litigation and basically
3 working on strategies, theories of law, how to move
4 forward. So I think I could probably work closely
5 with litigation counsel if called upon to do so.

6 I have many years of issuing and
7 responding to RFPs and negotiating service
8 contracts, including contracts for legal services.
9 On several occasions I've been called on to
10 spearhead the evaluation, vendor selection, and
11 implementation of new companywide software.

12 Again, I'm not an IT person. I think
13 there are probably other candidates that are much -
14 - much, much stronger in that regard, but I've gone
15 through the process of figuring out what an
16 organization needs in the way of software. And I
17 think more importantly, working with all the
18 stakeholders and vendors to make that happen. In
19 other words, implementing, which is -- involves a
20 lot of communication and developing of consensus as
21 to the way forward.

22 As a small business owner, I was
23 responsible for hiring, evaluating, mentoring, and
24 firing employees. I mean, I know what's involved,
25 I've done all of those things. I know how tough it

1 is having to let people go.

2 Finally, I've been posting a blog on
3 public employee benefits issues for close to ten
4 years which I think it demonstrates my ability to
5 explain complex matters in just a page or two, but
6 I think it also reflects a certain discipline and
7 willingness to do something on a regular basis, for
8 about ten years.

9 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

10 Question 2. Work on the Commission
11 requires members of different political backgrounds
12 to work together. Since the 2010 Commission was
13 selected and formed, the American political
14 conversation has become increasingly polarized,
15 whether in the press, on social media, and even in
16 our own families.

17 What characteristics do you possess and
18 what characteristics should your fellow
19 Commissioners possess that will protect against
20 hyper partisanship?

21 What will you do to ensure that the work
22 of the Commission is not seen as polarized or hyper
23 partisan, and avoid perceptions of political bias
24 and conflict?

25 MR. CHANG: I think the most important

1 characteristic that I possess, and one that all of
2 the commissioners should possess, is a sincere and
3 honest belief in the purpose and structure of the
4 Commission. That is to draw districts based on
5 strict nonpartisan rules designed to ensure fair
6 representation. And to do it in a manner that will
7 reinforce public confidence in the integrity of the
8 process.

9 If we all adopt this as our mantra, we're
10 going to go a long way to avoid hyper partisanship.
11 In other words, keep focus on both the work of the
12 Commission and focus less on what we bring or our
13 individual biases or concerns.

14 What can I do to ensure that the
15 Commission is not seen as polarized, and to avoid
16 perceptions of political bias and conflict? Three
17 things. First, I will continually remind myself
18 and my fellow commissioners, as appropriate, about
19 our purpose, our mantra.

20 Second, I will insist that our processes
21 and decisions are properly documented and explained
22 so that the work of the Commission is transparent
23 and is open to public scrutiny. Many partisan
24 disputes can be diffused simply by asking ourselves
25 why are we doing this? Why are we arguing? What's

1 going on here?

2 Third, I will work hard to make sure that
3 the public understands how and why we have made our
4 decisions. And I think that goes to the issue of
5 making a special effort to -- to do outreach and to
6 let the public know what we're doing.

7 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

8 Question 3. What is the greatest problem
9 the Commission could encounter, and what actions
10 would you take to avoid or respond to this problem?

11 MR. CHANG: Well right now, unfortunately
12 the greatest challenge for the Commission is
13 dealing with the consequences of the Coronavirus
14 pandemic. This video conferenced interview is a
15 response to the kinds of challenges that we will be
16 facing in the coming months and years.

17 Unfortunately, the Commission faces hard
18 deadlines to get its work done and we need to
19 quickly analyze the challenges and obstacles that
20 will confront the Commission and how to deal with
21 them. We may not have the luxury of getting
22 together in larger groups and meeting with staff.
23 We may be forced to get much of our initial
24 background education and training by video
25 conference or on a self-study basis. Commissioners

1 must be prepared for the extra work and extra
2 reading that they will need to do in an environment
3 that is less hands on, if you will. Less person to
4 person.

5 The situation will force the new
6 Commission to come together and to learn to lean on
7 and trust one another much more quickly under
8 difficult conditions. With fewer opportunities for
9 face-to-face meetings, we will have to figure out
10 one another, and the strengths and weaknesses of
11 the totality in ways that we might not have in the
12 past.

13 Finally, how -- how will we execute our
14 public outreach without the ability to hold public
15 meetings? How will we gather information on
16 communities of interest if everything must be done
17 online or over the phone? How will we obtain the
18 public's interest and attention when everyone,
19 frankly, has more pressing matters on their minds?

20 I mean, these are the challenges that
21 we're facing, and that the Commission is going to
22 need to get its arms around and deal with.

23 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

24 Question 4. If you are selected, you will
25 be one of 14 members of the Commission, which is

1 charged with working together to create maps of the
2 new districts. Please describe a situation where
3 you had to work collaboratively with others on a
4 project to achieve a common goal. Tell us the goal
5 of the project what your role in the group was, and
6 how the group worked through any conflicts that
7 arose.

8 What lessons would you take from this
9 group experience to the Commission if selected?

10 MR. CHANG: As to the first part, in 1996,
11 our community opened a new high school and I was
12 asked to help form and organize a nonprofit
13 organization to serve as the high school's booster
14 club. I sat on a three-parent site council tasked
15 with figuring out how the extracurricular
16 activities at the high school would be funded, and
17 how the fundraising activities of the school's
18 clubs and athletic teams would be managed.

19 We had to balance the financial needs of
20 small groups like the Debate Club, and the Robotics
21 Team, with the potential fundraising capabilities
22 of the football team, which eventually built a
23 snack shack and was able to sell food at the
24 football games. After several stakeholder
25 meetings, we developed guidelines, which balanced

1 the financial needs of the various groups while
2 recognizing that not all groups had equal
3 fundraising potential.

4 This structure, frankly, worked
5 fairly well for a while, until some of the small
6 clubs needed more money than they could raise, and
7 while other clubs, like the football boosters began
8 raising substantial disproportionate amounts of
9 money. Over a multiyear period, I saw the
10 functioning of the Booster's Association change.
11 Eventually the larger, more financially capable
12 clubs threatened to pull out of the arrangement
13 unless they were given more control over their
14 accounts. And this was done.

15 So what did I learn from all of this?
16 Well, I'm not sure I agree with the ultimate result
17 or structure, but I could see how the original
18 booster guidelines that I worked so hard on and
19 with others on could eventually fail unless they
20 evolved.

21 I also learned that notions of fairness
22 and reasonableness often do not carry the day when
23 money or children are involved. Your children.
24 When you're dealing with issues that are
25 potentially divisive, it is critical to get all of

1 the players to buy in to the organizing principles
2 of the task, whatever they may be.

3 And it's also important to be transparent
4 and to bring along all of the dissenting views, and
5 listen to them so the conflicts can be raised and
6 addressed quickly as possible, and not to be left
7 to later in the process where they can threaten to
8 derail or bring down the larger effort.

9 In this case, I think the problem was
10 enhanced by the rapid turnover of parent leaders
11 within the various clubs. We failed, I guess I
12 failed in part, we failed to bring them along and
13 get them to understand what we had all tried to do
14 in the beginning.

15 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

16 Question 5. A considerable amount of the
17 Commission's work will involve meeting with people
18 from all over California who come from very
19 different backgrounds and a wide variety of
20 perspectives.

21 If you are selected as a Commissioner,
22 what skills and attributes will make you effective
23 at interacting with people from different
24 backgrounds and who have a variety of perspectives?

25 What experiences have you had that will

1 help you be effective at understanding and
2 appreciating people in communities of different
3 backgrounds and who have a variety of perspectives?

4 MR. CHANG: All righty. I am a first
5 generation Asian-American. I was born and raised
6 on the East Coast, and then spent my high school
7 years in Davis, California. My college years at
8 U.C. Berkeley. My law school, and post-law school
9 years in Fresno and in San Bernardino. And the
10 last 30 years in the Greater Sacramento Area, and
11 in the more rural areas of Placer County.

12 I've been blessed to have worked already
13 with many people from different backgrounds, and I
14 think I have an appreciation of what it's like to
15 be different because I am a minority, the type
16 everyone can see. Because I am the son, and son-
17 in-law of immigrants, I am sensitive to the
18 immigrant experience and what it means to come to
19 the United States in search of the American dream.

20 I don't think I'm apt to prejudge people based
21 on where they come from, what they look like, or
22 what they have because I would not want that for
23 myself, or my family, or anyone else for that
24 matter.

25 Turning to the second part about my

1 experiences that would help me being effective to
2 understand and appreciate people of different
3 backgrounds.

4 While I was an undergraduate at U.C.
5 Berkeley, I shared an apartment with an African-
6 American student from Oakland, and several
7 Japanese-American students from the Yuba City,
8 Marysville area. And although we were all
9 minorities, I quickly learned how different we were
10 in terms of our social and financial background and
11 how things like racial discrimination can affect
12 individuals and communities in dramatically
13 different ways.

14 Even though I did not take the same
15 classes, we'd generally only see each other in the
16 evenings, we would spend many late nights
17 discussing our differing backgrounds. And,
18 frankly, they schooled me on things like the
19 Chinese Exclusion Act, the internment of Japanese-
20 Americans, and what it was like to be black in the
21 '70s. It was a real eye-opener. I learned a lot.

22 I spent a summer interning in the U.S.
23 Capitol on the staff of Congressman Paul Tsongas.
24 A significant part of my duties was to answer phone
25 calls and letters from constituents. This showed

1 me what constituents ask of or from their members
2 of Congress.

3 During law school, I interned with the
4 state -- California State Department of
5 Rehabilitation and I learned about the struggle for
6 the rights of individuals with disabilities. I
7 worked closely with a supervisor who was
8 paraplegic. He, and the work we did together, gave
9 me a new perspective on the rights and struggles of
10 this particular minority.

11 Finally, I've had the opportunity to
12 compare and contrast my own upbringing within
13 a well-educated and financially advantaged setting
14 to the challenges which my wife's parents and
15 family had to overcome as they immigrated from the
16 fields of Canton, China to the U.S. for a better
17 life.

18 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

19 We will now go to panel questions. Each
20 panel member will have 20 minutes to ask his or her
21 questions.

22 And we will start with the Chair, Mr. Coe.

23 CHAIR COE: Thank you, Mr. Dawson.

24 Good morning again, Mr. Chang. Thank you
25 for taking the time to speak with us today.

1 In your application, a little bit when you
2 were -- you were talking before, you talked about
3 how you volunteered for Granite Bay High School's
4 nonprofit Booster Club and also served on the
5 school's first site council. You also state that
6 you have served multiple times on your
7 neighborhood's Homeowner's Association.

8 And I'm wondering what motivates you to
9 pursue these types of opportunities?

10 MR. CHANG: We love where we live. We
11 love the community and we love the opportunities
12 that it has provided us and our children
13 educationally. My wife and I are very active, at
14 least at a certain level, in the neighborhood. We
15 spend lots of time walking around seeing our
16 neighbors. And we feel that a lot of organizations
17 like high school public schools of public
18 education, Homeowner's Association, they're only
19 going to be as good, the communities are only going
20 to be as good as the activities of these
21 organizations.

22 The high school is going to be very
23 reflective of how good its parent involvement is.
24 And a big part of organizing the parents is its
25 site council and the organizational work I did.

1 The thing that makes our neighborhood so
2 special is our Homeowner's Association and the
3 willingness and ability of our neighbors, frankly,
4 to reach out to one another and work together and
5 to really care for one another and our
6 neighborhood.

7 And so, you know, whether or not it's
8 something that you have the time for or not, it's
9 important. And I think that people need to make
10 time for these kinds of volunteer activities,
11 especially if they expect something from their high
12 school, their communities, their neighborhoods. If
13 you expect something, then I think you have to be
14 willing to contribute to that effort as well to
15 make it better.

16 CHAIR COE: Thank you.

17 I kind of go out of order with my
18 questions because you mentioned something that --
19 that I think leads into, really well into something
20 I was going to ask later.

21 But regarding your experience, working
22 with your community, with your neighborhoods and
23 kind of understanding what's going on, how people
24 feel. That seems to be directly related to one of
25 the big tasks of the Commission which is to

1 identify communities of interest throughout the
2 state as alluded to in Standard Question 5 in terms
3 of meeting with people all over the state to hear
4 their perspectives and concerns. And some of those
5 communities are easier to find than others.

6 But do you think that your -- your
7 experience working in these volunteer capacities in
8 your experience, kindof engrained in your
9 community, would help you as a commissioner to
10 identify communities of interest in other parts of
11 the state?

12 MR. CHANG: I think in terms of, quite
13 frankly, identifying communities of interest, I'm
14 not sure, frankly, that it's going to be done by
15 the individual commissioners saying here's a
16 community of interest, what about here, let's look
17 here. I think a big part of the Commission's work,
18 and staff's work is going to be able to get out the
19 word in every different way we can. Through
20 different social media, through the Internet,
21 through all kinds of outreach to make sure that
22 people understand that we want to hear from them,
23 we want to know what their concerns are. We want
24 to know what, you know, what might, if you will,
25 join them together as a community of interest.

1 What might differentiate them from people next door
2 to them or people near them.

3 In terms of my ability to seek out
4 communities of interest, I can tell you I'm
5 sincerely interested in doing that. With that
6 said, I think we're going to have to figure out how
7 to do that under -- with the background of the
8 pandemic, and the fact that I think a lot of
9 people, let's say we were to start this next month
10 or this summer, I'm not sure a lot of people are
11 going to be focused on this at that point. And so
12 I think the real challenge is how do you reach out
13 to the public? How do you get people to focus on
14 the census? How do you get people to focus on the
15 work of the Commission when we have so many other
16 things like our jobs, our families, our health to
17 worry about?

18 And so I guess what I would bring to this
19 is a real, if you will, focus and I think some,
20 some, if you will, self-searching as to how the
21 Commission is going to tackle this -- this
22 challenge.

23 CHAIR COE: Great, thank you.

24 Yeah, I really understand the challenges
25 facing the Commission in regards to the pandemic.

1 For the sake of this next question, let's assume
2 that we have -- we have come up with a way to
3 effectively reach out to communities and to
4 identify them under the current conditions. Some
5 of those communities that are identified are going
6 to be -- some of them are uncomfortable engaging in
7 government and bringing forward their positions and
8 their perspectives and their concerns. And that
9 might be for a variety of reasons, but they -- they
10 generally don't engage and they're uncomfortable
11 for one reason or another.

12 How could the Commission make them feel
13 comfortable bringing forward their perspectives to
14 help better inform the Commission in its work?

15 MR. CHANG: I thought about that a little
16 bit. I think the best way to do that is not for
17 individual commissioners or even staff to try to go
18 into these communities or to contact these
19 communities and say we're from the Commission, we
20 want to hear from you.

21 I really think the trick is going to be to
22 identify what I would call as leaders in the
23 communities of interest themselves, or
24 alternatively, intermediaries. In other words,
25 people with similar backgrounds, people who have

1 more credential or creds with those communities of
2 interest, people whom they already trust based on
3 many years of contact and some kind of
4 representation. I don't presume that some of these
5 communities that you're alluding to are going to
6 trust us or anybody outside right away.

7 And so I think what we're going to need to
8 do is to figure out the key, if you will, to unlock
9 access to these groups. And I think it's going to
10 be so-called intermediate individuals or a
11 spokespersons or people who are familiar with them.
12 I suspect that's going to help us a lot.

13 CHAIR COE: Thank you.

14 Switching topics a little bit. Your essay
15 on impartiality, and in that essay you state that
16 you have -- you admittedly have strong views on how
17 I would like to see things done, but that you have
18 succeeded in working with strong and opinionated
19 personalities to talk through and resolve difficult
20 issues. Can you give us an example of one of these
21 times?

22 MR. CHANG: Well, you know, to be honest
23 with you, as a -- as a lawyer, I've been practicing
24 for 40 years, and working on various legal trade
25 groups, Bar Association Committees, et cetera, you

1 know, I'm dealing with strong personalities,
2 including my own partners and co-owners all the
3 time. And we don't always see eye to eye. We have
4 to resolve issues.

5 For example, as business owners, we have
6 to resolve issues about, you know, where we're
7 going to have our offices, whether we're going to
8 sign a new lease, you know, whether we're going to
9 expand the -- our expenses. You know, the rent, or
10 keep it smaller, whether we're going to grow the
11 organization quickly.

12 I've served on both large law firm
13 executive committees. I was a member of the
14 executive committee of Sacramento's largest local
15 law firm for four years where I served on the
16 executive committee. At one point, head of the
17 business department, head of recruiting. And
18 during that time, we would have lots of discussions
19 and, if you will, negotiations over different
20 directions that the organizations would take. We
21 would talk about things like changing the name of
22 the organization, which people have very strong
23 feelings about.

24 And I think what you -- what you really
25 want to do, and I think this goes back to my

1 earlier answer, is in resolving these, if you will,
2 potential disputes or these differences of opinion,
3 I think what everyone needs to do is from time to
4 time, they need to step back from their own heads
5 or where they are and the arguments and the
6 positions that they have, if you will, taken to get
7 everybody in a rather intransigent, if you will,
8 position. They need to step back and they need to
9 say, what are we trying to do? What's the larger
10 goal? And they also need to keep in mind what the
11 time frame is for making a certain decision.

12 So, for example, in my former law firm,
13 there was a huge dispute about whether to change
14 the name of the law firm. And you think, you know,
15 maybe that's not that big a deal, but we had big
16 fights over that issue. And ultimately, we agreed
17 not to change the name of the law firm. And I
18 think the reason -- and by the way, I basically
19 backed down on my position on this because I think
20 I was able to understand that the need to do that,
21 and the time frame for doing something like that
22 ultimately was not as important as other concerns.

23 Okay, like -- like really building the
24 teamwork within the law firm and bonding with
25 the -- with the partners and developing certain

1 long term strategies. And so I backed down from
2 that because I realized that that is something that
3 could be done over a longer time frame, and that
4 frankly, in the big picture, which
5 I -- which I look at a lot of times, it wasn't
6 quite as important to some of the other things.

7 So I think that's a really important
8 ability, which is to step back from the argument.
9 The heat of the moment and look at, what is the
10 Commission trying to do? And I think equally
11 importantly, how much time do we have to do it?
12 And is what we're arguing over today really that
13 important or is it something that we can set aside
14 our differences, move on in the interest of the
15 Commission's work as a whole?

16 CHAIR COE: Thank you.

17 One of the difficulties with impartiality,
18 and one of the difficulties that maybe would occur
19 in successfully accomplishing that step back that
20 you talk about is the recognition -- that
21 recognition of one's internal inherent biases.

22 How does one go about identifying those,
23 being aware of those and ensuring that it doesn't
24 creep into his or her decision making?

25 MR. CHANG: Well it's a very personal

1 thing because I think each of us is wired a little
2 bit differently. Each of us comes to this process,
3 this project with different biases. I think,
4 again, I think what I would hearken back to are
5 some of the tools that -- that I've been using
6 personally, which is that, you know, we all have
7 strong feelings.

8 I mean, the people that you're recruiting
9 are very accomplished, and they're accomplished
10 because they were able to get things done. And
11 oftentimes they were the leaders of various teams,
12 projects, initiatives. And so they were able to
13 bring other people along to their point of view.
14 And so I think, you know, it's just starting out.
15 I think people are going to have a lot of these, if
16 you will, built-in biases and thoughts about how to
17 do things and get things done their way.

18 I think the real trick of the Commission,
19 and I think the real challenge of the panel is
20 figuring out how to bring together the kinds of
21 personalities that can actually work together, and
22 the kinds of personalities who will not be butting
23 heads against one another all the time.

24 In my background, I've spent a lot of time
25 recruiting. And so one of the things that I

1 learned about and studied was the notion of doing
2 personality profiles. And one of the things that I
3 studied, and I'm sure many of you are aware
4 anecdotally is that you can have, you know, two
5 people with the same resume, or equal resumes in
6 front of you, but one of those people can be a lot
7 more dominant. In other words, somebody that has
8 to win every argument than the other person.

9 One -- one person can be a lot more, if
10 you will, stubborn or bullheaded than the other
11 person. And I think the thing is, it's not that we
12 don't need a little bit of everything on the
13 Commission, but I think the challenge is to A, make
14 sure that you don't have 14 people who all have to,
15 as I said earlier, be quarterback, be the leader.
16 And then secondly, as to the rest of us, I think
17 what you need is you need to figure out quickly and
18 we need to figure out how we fit together and what
19 our roles are.

20 And I think it's going to be a challenge,
21 but we need to accept that we're going to have
22 different roles on the team and they're not all
23 going to be leaders, and they're not all going to
24 be, you know, this is my idea and we have to get
25 this done this way.

1 I think a focus on the team aspect of it,
2 a focus on the mantra that I described earlier is
3 going to help a lot in, if you will, controlling
4 some of these personal biases and interests.

5 CHAIR COE: Thank you.

6 MS. PELLMAN: We have 6 minutes, 6 seconds
7 remaining.

8 CHAIR COE: Thank you.

9 In your essays and in some of your
10 testimony today, you've talked about your
11 experiences either working with, or your contact
12 with diverse groups of people of various
13 backgrounds, and also your experiences in having
14 lived in many different areas of around the country
15 and in California.

16 And so my question is, from those
17 experiences in those different regions and with
18 those different people of different backgrounds,
19 what have you learned about the different people
20 you've met about their perspectives and concerns,
21 and desires that would make you an effective
22 representative for the diverse population of
23 California on this Commission?

24 MR. CHANG: Well, to be honest with you, I
25 think the -- I think the most important thing that

1 I've learned is that everyone, you know, everyone
2 is -- as an individual is part of the community, is
3 part of a larger whole. And they all have a story
4 and something of value that we all want to learn
5 about, we all want to get to know better about.

6 I'll tell you a little story that might be
7 a little bit illustrative. When I was much
8 younger, like many people, I attended a summer camp
9 up in the woods of Maine, if you will. This was
10 when I lived on the East Coast. And back in that
11 day I was, frankly, a chubby little Asian boy,
12 okay. And I went to this camp. I didn't know
13 anybody there. And it was kind of interesting. I
14 think because I looked a little bit different that
15 I wasn't perhaps as athletic or as good a swimmer
16 as many of the other kids, I -- I was, if you will,
17 shunned a little bit.

18 And it came to me that I noticed there was
19 another young boy who kind of wasn't making friends
20 either. And he was a -- he was an African-American
21 boy from the, if you will, downtown Boston. He'd
22 never been to a lake. He didn't know how to swim.

23 And so the interesting thing was that over
24 the course of about a week, we became really
25 steadfast friends, really good friends. And I

1 think part of it was just learning and appreciating
2 that everybody, no matter what they look like,
3 where they're from, they all have something of
4 value that we want to get to know better, we want
5 to learn about better. That we can, if you will,
6 share with.

7 Along those same lines, when I was in high
8 school, I spent time riding my bicycle from Davis,
9 about 15 miles, or 10 to 15 miles out to Dixon to
10 tutor Hispanic immigrant farmworkers' children on
11 English. And I think again, that's something where
12 I would spend time in these, you know, relatively
13 poor, if you will, family settings, et cetera,
14 helping them and working with them. But doing
15 that, you really appreciate how rich their
16 backgrounds are, and things that you, everybody can
17 learn from being exposed to them.

18 As I mentioned earlier in my -- in my
19 other answers, after I met my wife, and we've been
20 together for 45, 50 years now, I learned that her
21 family's background was much different than my
22 family's background. Her father grew up in the
23 rice patties of Canton, China and came to the
24 United States all by himself as a little boy when
25 he was ten years old. He was put on a steamer by

1 himself as a ten-year-old child, and sent to the
2 United States to join his father. You know, this
3 is your prototypical, or, if you will, journey, if
4 you will, of the immigrant. And he came to the
5 United States and he worked in a laundry. You
6 know, when he was a young boy, he had two or three
7 jobs.

8 And it was, again, really important for me
9 to learn how different people are and what they can
10 make of themselves and how much potential we all
11 have. And so I don't -- I don't look at people in
12 terms of where they came from or what they, you
13 know, what they -- what kind of house they lived
14 in. I look at all of them in terms of their
15 potential and the effort that they put into life, I
16 think, in what they're striving for.

17 CHAIR COE: Okay. Thank you.

18 Time check, please.

19 MS. PELLMAN: One minute, 35 seconds.

20 CHAIR COE: Okay. I'm going to go ahead
21 and say no further questions and turn the time over
22 to Ms. Dickison.

23 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Good morning,
24 Mr. Chang, how are you today?

25 MR. CHANG: I'm doing well. How are you

1 doing?

2 VICE CHAIR DICKSON: I'm doing well.

3 So I see that you're an employee benefits
4 attorney, but that you also worked in a firm that
5 had an emphasis in municipal and special district
6 law?

7 MR. CHANG: Yes.

8 VICE CHAIR DICKSON: How much work did
9 you do in special district law?

10 MR. CHANG: Okay. First of all, my
11 specialty and the specialty that I've been working
12 very hard at for about 40 years is employee
13 benefits law. Some people in the private sector
14 refer to that as ERISA law.

15 VICE CHAIR DICKSON: Mhm-hm.

16 MR. CHANG: However, about 20 years ago, I
17 decided that working with 401(k) plans and private
18 sector employers was not as interesting or
19 challenging, for me, as it could be. I'm looking
20 for challenging things to do, and I like to do
21 cutting edge things.

22 So about 20 years ago I veered off and did
23 something kind of unusual. I started focusing my
24 employee benefits practice on the public sector.
25 That is working with non-ERISA employers, such as

1 local governments, cities, special districts,
2 public hospital districts, joint powers
3 authorities, things of that sort, on their employee
4 benefits issues.

5 That is much more challenging than doing
6 ERISA work because the non-ERISA clients, the
7 cities, the public agencies, are not subject to
8 many of the provisions of ERISA and yet they're
9 subject to other provisions of the tax code. The
10 local agencies are also subject, as some of you may
11 know, to the California Constitution and other
12 state and government code provisions. Which again,
13 make the mixture of state and federal regulation
14 somewhat mixed, somewhat confused, and more
15 challenging.

16 In terms of advising municipalities and
17 special districts, I've actually been working in a
18 large statewide what we call, you know, public
19 agency municipal law firm, Best Best & Krieger, for
20 the last almost three years. And I'm there because
21 I really enjoy working with all of the cities and
22 the special districts and the public hospital
23 districts, even the mosquito districts that they
24 work with and for.

25 My emphasis is on dealing with their

1 employee benefit issues and their health plan
2 issues, but, in order to do a good job of that, I
3 have to venture into, and work with my colleagues
4 on more general, if you will, public agency law.

5 So, for example, I have become familiar
6 with and have a pretty good working understanding
7 of the Brown Act, the open meetings law that
8 regulates local agencies. And for that reason, I
9 think I have kind of an analogous understanding of
10 the Bagley-Keene Act. I've actually taken a quick
11 look at that to see how different that might be. I
12 understand the notions of public records. I have
13 understandings and notions of the need to document
14 and the formality of public meetings. The timing
15 involved in having agendaized public meetings, those
16 deadlines. The, if you will, the relative
17 inflexibility of some of those meetings, which I
18 think the Commission is going to have to address
19 and deal with.

20 I also am very interested, having studied
21 this a bit, in the ability to -- for the Commission
22 to delegate authority and to also have, if you
23 will, advisory groups of two commissioners or less
24 to get some of its work done without the
25 application of the Bagley-Keene Act. And so I'm

1 really interested in having the Commission, if I'm
2 fortunate enough to be selected, to work a little
3 bit more efficiently. And hopefully, we can learn
4 to allocate and delegate work so that the work can
5 be spread out better.

6 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Okay. I'll, come
7 back to that.

8 So in the work that you've done then
9 working with public agencies, and maybe kind of the
10 special district, a lot of those are sometimes
11 built around communities, the special districts.

12 What did you learn, or have you learned
13 anything about the different needs of maybe
14 different special districts in various areas?

15 MR. CHANG: The kind of work that I do
16 with special districts, I mean I work with small
17 public utility districts, water districts, JPAs,
18 which are communities with very special needs, for
19 example, self-insuring certain liabilities and
20 risks, is more about the communities of the
21 organizations themselves and their employees. And
22 so, actually, most of my work as an employee
23 benefits attorney is studying the, if you will,
24 employee-level communities of interest.

25 So, for example, I've worked with a lot of

1 cities where the city might have as many as six or
2 eight Memorandums of Understanding, Collective
3 Bargaining Agreements. And each of those
4 Collective Bargaining Agreements is
5 a -- represents a community of interest. The
6 firefighters, the policemen, the police managers,
7 the unrepresented employees, the -- the service
8 workers, et cetera. And what I do in my practice
9 is I work with employers to understand the various
10 communities of interest that they are trying to, if
11 you will, differentiate in the design and operation
12 of their retirement plans.

13 So, for example, they may want to provide
14 different benefits for their safety officers than
15 they want to for their HR or their finance staff.
16 I help them analyze the laws and the restrictions
17 on those things and I advise them as to what they
18 can do or not. So I'm very sensitive to the
19 communities within these organizations, but because
20 of my work, I don't have an opportunity to deal
21 with their constituents. In other words, say the
22 city's voters, et cetera.

23 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Okay, thank you.

24 Let's circle back around to what you were
25 talking about, about the Commission's ability to

1 delegate work and maybe work more efficiently.

2 Could you expand on that?

3 MR. CHANG: Sure. I had an opportunity,
4 as many others have, to read the summary report of
5 the last Commission. And kind of reading between
6 the lines, and I don't want to read too much into
7 this, but reading between the lines, I got the
8 impression, and maybe because it was the first
9 Commission, that there was a decision pretty early
10 on for the last Commission to do much of its work
11 as a Committee of the whole.

12 If that's true, and I may be wrong about
13 this, if that's true, that meant basically getting
14 14 people to travel around the state and do all the
15 public hearings as a group, to do a lot of the
16 outreach, and all of the -- a lot of
17 the -- all of the business meetings that way.

18 And although there might have been some
19 advisory committees on things like litigation, et
20 cetera, for specialists, perhaps attorney types, I
21 got the impression that a lot of the work of the
22 last Commission was done, again, as a committee at
23 large. And my concern or observation is given the
24 special times and special challenges that we're
25 facing, you know, particularly, you know, with this

1 Coronavirus issue, the fact that it's going to be
2 really hard, if not impossible, to get in the same
3 room with the other 14 members, okay, or.

4 I think we have to look at different ways
5 of getting our job done. And as I mentioned in my
6 earlier comment, I think it's going to mean
7 thinking a little bit out of the box, about
8 allocating and delegating responsibilities amongst
9 ourselves. And the only way that can be done is if
10 we understand one another's strengths and
11 weaknesses, and people are willing to step up and
12 take on these tasks and report back to the
13 Commission as a whole.

14 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Okay. Thank you.

15 So, in your analytics essay, you talk
16 about having sufficient math skills to apply the
17 plan, retirement plan cuts and whatnot. You also
18 talk about working with experts for doing this.
19 Did you work with any actuaries or statisticians or
20 anything like that?

21 MR. CHANG: We routinely, in our practice,
22 work with actuaries. In my specialty because it's
23 quite broad, I work with a lot of defined benefit
24 pension plans, like CalPERS, as well as the defined
25 benefit pension plans of various local agencies,

1 like transportation authorities, like hospital
2 districts. A
3 few -- a few local districts still have defined
4 benefit pension plans.

5 All of those plans require the use and
6 involvement of actuaries to do very complicated
7 mathematical analyses of benefits, and of value of
8 benefits. We spend a lot of time analyzing present
9 values and future values. We look at, we work
10 together on funding issues.

11 I also work very closely with their
12 financial advisors in helping clients understand
13 and analyze projections regarding budgets and
14 funding of plans. You know, what the effect of or
15 impact of, of say the market volatility is on their
16 plans.

17 And -- and not that I'm a financial
18 advisor, but rather my job is to help explain how
19 these different drivers or factors are going to
20 affect the agency's operation and funding of the
21 plan, their own budgetary needs in the future.

22 So in answer to your question, yes, I work
23 a lot with actuaries. The other thing that I do is
24 with regard to general employee benefits matters on
25 the private sector side, 401(k) plans, for example,

1 are subject to numerous mathematical tests
2 involving coverage, coverage ratios. For example,
3 a general test is that, you know, you don't meet
4 general coverage rules in a 401(k) plan unless you
5 cover a certain percentage of what we refer to as
6 the, you know, eligible population, and then that's
7 a statutory definition.

8 And so I spend a lot of time with third-
9 party administrators and pension consultants
10 basically gathering demographic information about a
11 company's structure and organization, including the
12 fact that it may have multiple subsidiaries and
13 subdivisions, and things of that sort, gathering
14 that information and then helping and to analyze
15 whether or not these coverage rules have been met.

16 There are also very complicated ways to
17 basically satisfy the so-called nondiscrimination
18 rules of the code that involve combinations, mixing
19 and matching coverage and levels of benefits. And
20 those get fairly complicated mathematically. But
21 I'm able to at least wade my way through the
22 regulations and work with other advisors,
23 consultants, actuaries, and perhaps people who are
24 more talented at math than I am to figure these
25 things out.

1 I -- I'm very interested in some of the
2 mathematical and numerical challenges that the
3 Commission is going to face. I've already gotten a
4 little bit of a jump and started reading a little
5 bit and trying to get my head around notions of
6 what an efficiency gap is and -- and definitions
7 and things of that sort are just to familiarize
8 myself with some of those concepts.

9 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: So you have
10 experienced working with different types of experts
11 in various areas, and then coupling that with what
12 you were talking about a minute ago about
13 delegating some of the work.

14 How do you think those abilities and those
15 ideas will benefit the Commission?

16 MR. CHANG: I think maybe one of my
17 stronger sets of skills is the ability to kind of
18 move in and out of -- from the big picture to
19 detailed work, and then go back to the big picture.
20 And I think because I can serve and work at both
21 the detailed in the trenches level, as well as more
22 of a planner, a strategist, either of those things
23 or both of those things as the Commission might
24 require.

25 I think what it allows me to do is to

1 fairly quickly identify some of the more, if you
2 will, progress-related challenges and analytical
3 challenges that we're going to have to deal with.
4 Either in terms of getting outside experts,
5 statisticians, people that are expert in GIS
6 Systems, people that draw maps, political
7 scientists, things of that sort.

8 But I think one of my strong suits is kind
9 of looking at the big picture, figuring out the
10 roles of the various players that are going to be
11 needed. And then, frankly, I don't have the kind
12 of ego or the need to try to do what they do.
13 They're the experts. I think the best role of the
14 Commission is to learn to find the best experts,
15 the best staff, and to really lean on people that
16 are good to get their job done and to hold them
17 accountable.

18 I think it's a big mistake for the
19 Commission to try to replicate or supervise in a
20 detailed fashion every single little thing that's
21 done. Yes, we have to, you know it's our decision
22 ultimately, and we have to own everything that we
23 decide, everything that we vote on, but a lot of
24 the so-called legwork, a lot of the analytical
25 work, a lot of the research, we have to rely on

1 experts, academics, and other people to help us.
2 Otherwise we're not going to get our job done
3 timely.

4 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you.

5 Can I get a time check?

6 MS. PELLMAN: Yes. We have 4 minutes, 20
7 seconds remaining.

8 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Okay. Thank you.

9 So the Commission, the way the Commission
10 is selected, the first eight commissioners are
11 selected randomly, and then they are tasked with
12 selecting the next six commissioners to round out
13 the Commission.

14 If you were one of the first eight, what
15 would you look for in those other six?

16 MR. CHANG: If I was fortunate enough to
17 be one of the first eight, I think that -- the
18 couple of things that I would hope that we look for
19 are number one, I think we need to first look at
20 ourselves and see what we bring to the table, the
21 first eight, and see if we can kind of get a sense
22 of, you know, what positions, if you will, on the
23 team we might have represented or at least what
24 kinds of relative strengths and weaknesses we might
25 have.

1 So, for example, do we have somebody
2 really strong in software and IT issues, in some of
3 the processing issues that we're going to have with
4 regard to dealing with the pandemic situation. The
5 video conferencing, the outreach, those issues.

6 You know, do we have people, you know,
7 that have certain strengths and weaknesses. I
8 think we need to become familiar with those people
9 because then it's going to show us, hopefully,
10 whether there are clearly areas we're missing.
11 These areas may not be just skill sets. They may
12 be issues of being more representative and more
13 familiar with certain geographic communities, or
14 communities of interest as we've identified. They
15 maybe just a need for people that have a different
16 perspective.

17 But I think that the main message there is
18 I think we would want to look at building out this
19 team of different people with different skill sets.
20 And, again, not trying to replicate and have --
21 have everybody be the same. I think that's -- I
22 think that's really important.

23 I think the other thing that I would hope
24 to -- to do if I were charged with that is try to
25 see if we could figure out whether everybody that

1 we're talking to could or would get along with one
2 another. That's really hard. I mean, you know,
3 even in a, you know, in this kind of setting, you
4 know, we're asking one another questions, but it's
5 not always easy to know whether someone is going to
6 quote, play nice with everybody else.

7 But I think you have to really focus on
8 issues of personality, strengths of will, issues of
9 self-confidence, and demonstrated ability to, if
10 you will, control and mitigate some of those
11 things, again, in the interest of the greater good,
12 the work of the Commission.

13 So I think that would be a big part of
14 what I would be looking for, the ability to work
15 together as a team.

16 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you so much.

17 I have no further questions at this time.
18 So I yield the remainder of my time.

19 CHAIR COE: Okay. Thank you,
20 Ms. Dickison.

21 Mr. Belnap, the floor is yours.

22 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Alright, good
23 morning, Mr. Chang.

24 I want to return to the idea that you
25 talked about in terms of allocating and delegating

1 the Commission's work to smaller subgroups of
2 commissioners as well as staff.

3 For what subject areas would you want to
4 establish -- or what functions, there's another way
5 of looking at it, do you want to establish these
6 smaller groups?

7 MR. CHANG: I'm not sure I have an
8 extensive list yet. But, again, what I did was I
9 looked at the last Commission's Summary Report and
10 their recommendations and I at least highlighted
11 and noted that there were a number of areas where
12 the last Commission, or at least some of the
13 commissioners, felt that they could have done a
14 better job.

15 And I made a couple notes, and I'll just
16 give you some examples of the kinds of things.
17 Again, I don't think that the big decisions, you
18 know, the large decisions of drawing finals maps
19 and approving, you know, important boundary lines
20 is going to be something that we delegate to small
21 -- to small groups. That's not it at all.

22 But I think that the work of the
23 Commission getting organized and organizing its
24 consultants and advisors, and staff, and get us up
25 and running are clearly things that can be

1 delegated. And -- and so things like putting
2 together initial RFPs, or criteria for selection of
3 certain vendors or providers, like legal counsel,
4 that's something that maybe you could delegate to
5 someone with that experience and they can at least
6 come up with a draft, you know, on an advisory
7 basis for everybody. But not do that as a
8 Committee of a whole.

9 Maybe screening some of these candidates
10 and narrowing down the pool down to a smaller group
11 is something that you could delegate. Certainly
12 supervising staff and working on certain general
13 recommendations for timelines and project --
14 project, if you will, project management timelines.
15 I think that's really important. I think there are
16 a lot of things that I saw in the report that
17 Commissioners wish they could have done.

18 I think issues as to training and making
19 sure that all 14 Commissioners are on the same page
20 in terms of training and an ability to get to know
21 and meet one another, I think that's something that
22 you could charge one or more of the commissioners
23 with to make sure that that's their job to make
24 sure this happens. Or they can oversee that, or
25 work with staff to do that.

1 I think there are a lot of opportunities
2 of doing more detailed, if you will, operational
3 setup things. You know, working with staff to
4 review contracts. Working with staff to select,
5 eventually to select litigation counsel. I know
6 that you would delegate, or the last Commission
7 delegated the actual litigation supervision to a
8 smaller group, and it wasn't done by the Commission
9 as a whole. That makes sense, but just the roles
10 of selecting, interviewing, you know, narrowing
11 down the pools. I think that's so important.

12 I personally think, you know I read that
13 the last Commission spent huge amounts of time
14 going out into the community and conducting dozens,
15 if not hundreds, of outreach meetings. And I
16 commend that. And I think the first Commission,
17 frankly, that was a good thing to do, and I think
18 they needed to do that because they were
19 establishing, if you will, the standard, if you
20 will, for future Commissions, and trust, if you
21 will, and awareness in the Commission process.

22 I think, unfortunately, the reality of
23 what we're facing is, I'm not sure if this
24 Commission will have, if you will, the ability, or
25 even the luxury to conduct as many public meetings

1 because of the Coronavirus pandemic. I think we
2 may be restricted in our ability to do that.

3 I think another aspect of that -- and so,
4 you know, if we have a limited ability to do
5 things. If we have a limited amounts of time,
6 perhaps some of those outreach efforts can be done
7 by smaller groups, you know, in a delegation type
8 manner so that you don't have as many people
9 traveling all over the place, but you're still
10 gathering valuable information for the larger group
11 to absorb and analyze.

12 So I guess the main areas that I would
13 really want to break down and study would be a lot
14 of the organizational things that -- that the
15 Commission needs to do to get set up, to get its
16 staff set up, things of that sort. Because without
17 a structure, you know, without some of these
18 fundamentals in place, we're going to kind of
19 wallow around in our bigger meetings and not get
20 anything done.

21 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: I understand from
22 your earlier answer that you see yourself as
23 somebody who can be flexible that you could fit in
24 a variety of spots in the Commission.

25 But setting that aside for a moment and

1 just looking at your own personal preference, if
2 you were, if the Commission set up these subgroups,
3 which subgroup would you want to work in?

4 MR. CHANG: Oh, in terms of -- that's a
5 good question. I think based on my professional
6 and personal experiences, I have a lot of
7 experience presenting to conferences. I do -- I
8 present and do a lot of lectures to like financial
9 officers and human resource officers on an annual
10 basis. I do it three or four times a year. You
11 know, presenting at CALPELRA, or the Financial
12 Officer's Association meetings. I've been doing
13 that for 20, 30 years.

14 I think that because I enjoy and I like to
15 do public presentations, I like getting out in
16 front of people, it doesn't bother me too much. I
17 think I would like to spend some of my time, if
18 possible, and if circumstances allow, going out and
19 meeting with, you know, the public, meeting with
20 their representatives, as you -- as you've said,
21 trying to identify and understand communities of
22 interest. I think the person-to-person public
23 outreach is something that I would like to do.

24 I also, because of my analytical or legal
25 background, I'm very interested in some of the

1 more, I don't know, nerdy, or quantitative aspects
2 and challenges facing the Commission, you know,
3 including what I think is a real fundamental issue
4 is to what extent do we rely on or can we use or
5 will we use hard more objective quantitative data
6 in our line drawing versus subjective anecdotal
7 information like what we get from the outreach
8 meetings. Because I think they're entirely
9 different kinds of information and data. And to be
10 perfectly honest with you I think a big challenge
11 of the Commission is to understand its overall
12 goals and mission and understand the this
13 Commission frankly is going to be different from
14 the first one and that this Commission is being
15 empowered and authorized at a time when academic
16 data, the progress and litigation at the Supreme
17 Court level and just the whole discussion of
18 redistricting in the whole United States has
19 evolved a bit.

20 And I think there's going to be clearly in
21 my mind more emphasis on the use of -- I guess to
22 put it nicely, the use of, if you will, more
23 partisan information without using it in a partisan
24 way, if that makes any sense to you.

25 And I've seen this raised, this issue of ,

1 if you're following me, I've seen this issue raised
2 time and time again by academic commentators. That
3 there's information now available about so-called
4 communities of interest, as well as the factors
5 that group people to make for fair representation.
6 And I think it's critical for this Commission to
7 understand and figure out what its boundaries are,
8 what it's comfortable doing, and what it's
9 comfortable using along these lines to basically do
10 its job.

11 I'm not saying I know what it's going to
12 do or not do, but it's quite possible that the
13 first Commission did not necessarily utilize all of
14 the tools available to it purposely, in drawing its
15 lines.

16 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay. Thank you.

17 So I want to ask you. I'll tell you what
18 my question is upfront, then I'll give you
19 background about it.

20 What I want to know is your thoughts on
21 how many attorneys would you want to see on the
22 Commission?

23 And now the background is, as I think
24 through these functional areas that you've
25 described, I think more than one of them could

1 benefit from the insights of an attorney, not
2 necessarily just the -- the litigation.

3 So in that respect, as you think of the 14
4 members of the Commission, and you can give me a
5 range, although I want it to be a pretty tight
6 range, of how many attorneys do you think would be
7 on the Commission?

8 MR. CHANG: Are you experiencing any
9 feedback at all?

10 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: No, I can hear you.

11 MR. CHANG: No? Okay. I'm just turning
12 down my speakers.

13 Boy, I personally haven't thought about
14 that. I'm -- I'm less -- I think you need a
15 certain minimum number of attorneys for the
16 following reason: I think you need the right
17 attorneys to work with litigation counsel in this
18 so-called post line drawing, and the line drawing
19 aspects because there are a lot of legal issues,
20 both in the analytical aspects, the pre- line
21 drawing aspects, compliance with Constitution,
22 Voting Rights Act, you know, things of that sort,
23 okay.

24 And I think it helps to have an attorney
25 or two who can help, if you will, other

1 commissioners, and help the body as a whole, digest
2 and understand, if you will, and interpret for us
3 sometimes the outside counselors. Because I think
4 outside attorneys, specialists like myself, we
5 sometimes tend to speak in more complicated ways
6 and we need someone to interpret for us. You know,
7 make it -- make it more understandable.

8 And I think having attorneys that are not
9 Voting Rights specialists, or not, you know,
10 Constitutional experts might be useful for the rest
11 of the group. Also, I think once the lines are
12 drawn, clearly a big role of the Commission on an
13 ongoing basis, is to prepare ourselves and to be
14 able to defend potential litigation, and to
15 participate in needed, in various litigation
16 involving what we do.

17 I think in that regard, I think you're
18 going to need, you know, a small group of
19 attorneys, one or two, at least, who are familiar
20 with working with litigators, appellate attorneys,
21 things of that sort, who can understand the legal
22 arguments and the procedural aspects of what's
23 going on.

24 And I think more importantly than just
25 understand those things, who can act, more

1 importantly, as liaisons to the rest of the
2 Commission and be able to explain what's going on
3 and take the time to make sure that the rest of the
4 Commission understands what they're doing, what
5 their, if you will, litigation counsel is doing and
6 why. I think that -- that bridging aspect of it is
7 really important.

8 So I don't have in my mind a set number of
9 attorneys, but I do think there are a couple areas
10 because this is a legally mandated, a legally
11 driven, a statutory, you know, kind of construct
12 and involves litigation. Clearly, I think at least
13 one or two attorneys is useful. How many you
14 really need is going to be a function of how hard
15 they want to work, whether they work together, and
16 what their self-specialties are.

17 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: The next subject but
18 it has a similar flavor.

19 What types of experts would you want the
20 Commission to hire?

21 MR. CHANG: You're talking about outside
22 experts?

23 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Outside experts,
24 yes.

25 MR. CHANG: And I'm sure the prior

1 Commission did this, but the kinds of experts that
2 I would be interested in, and is I would be very
3 interested in getting started early on retaining,
4 or at least talking about the retention of hiring,
5 if you will, academic experts who can explain and
6 give the Commission, initially, a really good
7 background and history and education on basically,
8 you know, voting rights issues. How our Commission
9 came to be? Why? As well as the, if you will,
10 perceived or understood mandate that was created by
11 the initiatives. What the impacts of the
12 litigation or the influences of litigation may have
13 been.

14 And I think more importantly, once we
15 understand some of those basics which is part of
16 the initial training in my mind, I think that we
17 need experts to help us understand how the work
18 that we do, or will be doing, how the district
19 lines that we will be drawing are viewed both, if
20 you will, from a political lens of perspective, but
21 also from a, kind of an academic, if you will,
22 social studies political science view.

23 Because I think a lot of what the
24 political scientists do, as I understand it, is
25 they try to understand and analyze what the last

1 Commission and other commissions have done and have
2 been trying to, if you will, explain them in more
3 objective terms and to try to measure these things
4 in terms of results. And analyze whether the
5 results are indeed partisan or, arguably partisan
6 or not. And I think, I think having an
7 understanding of that perspective, what they're
8 saying and how, what the Commission ultimately
9 comes up with, may or may not be viewed one way or
10 another. I think that's a really important
11 perspective. And it's something in my own mind
12 that I'd want to understand. So I'd want experts
13 for that.

14 I think the other experts that we're
15 desperately going to need are the kinds of
16 technology, communications experts, and maybe even
17 communications coaches that are going to help
18 facilitate our intra-Commission communications, as
19 well as our outreach communications.

20 I noted from the Summary Report that some
21 of the commissioners thought that our outreach --
22 that the outreach efforts early on and some of the
23 reporting to the community on an ongoing basis was
24 not as timely or as comprehensive as it could have
25 been. And I think that if we have, you know,

1 experts coaching us on the need, you know, to -- to
2 keep ourselves in constant contact, not only with
3 one another, but with our audience, our
4 constituency, you know, the people that we want to
5 reach out to, I think we will do a lot better job.

6 So I personally am very much in favor of,
7 you know, budget willing and allowing, hiring the
8 people to help us because I can't imagine that the
9 14 initial commissioners are going to be able to
10 understand everything they need to do and would
11 want to do. And that hearkens back to, you know,
12 reading what the last Commission did, and hopefully
13 meeting with staff, prior staff, and prior
14 commissioners to really understand what we're going
15 to be missing as we go forward.

16 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay. Thank you.

17 Madam Secretary, can I get a time check?

18 MS. PELLMAN: Two minutes, 52 seconds
19 remaining.

20 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: I'm sorry, I didn't
21 catch what you said.

22 MS. PELLMAN: Two minutes, 45 seconds.

23 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right. Thank
24 you.

25 Mr. Chang, can you talk about what it was

1 like coming from the East Coast to California as a
2 teenager and what you learned from it?

3 MR. CHANG: Sure. I mentioned earlier
4 that I grew up in a somewhat -- somewhat privileged
5 financially, well-educated household. This kind of
6 explains the movement.

7 My father was, before he passed away, was
8 a medical doctor. And he was a postgraduate
9 researcher at Harvard University, and he became an
10 associate professor in microbiology and virology
11 there. My mother was educated in an Ivy League
12 school and was also a researcher, that's where she
13 met my dad. They got married and had me and I was
14 born and raised in Boston and outside of Boston.
15 So definitely East Coast.

16 And I grew up in a small suburban
17 community outside of Boston. I was the only -- I
18 was the only Chinese in most of my public school
19 classes. So I was a definite minority, and I was
20 in a very, if you will, white community filled with
21 Italian Catholics, and Irish Catholics, but there
22 weren't any other Chinese.

23 So I knew what it was like to be a
24 minority there for sure. I knew what it was like
25 to stand out. I knew what it was like to be, if

1 you will, teased a little bit, and to be singled
2 out because of the way I looked or the shape of my
3 eyes, those kinds of things. But, you know, I also
4 figured out how to get along and how to have a good
5 time. I had a really rich, wonderful childhood.
6 Very typical. Okay. But it was a very, you know,
7 in terms of meeting and mingling with other Asian-
8 Americans, not very many opportunities.

9 My father was offered a position in the
10 late '60s on the faculty at the U.C. Davis Medical
11 School. He moved our family out to U.C. Davis when
12 I was in junior high school. So I spent junior
13 high school and high school at U.C. Davis. And --

14 MS. PELLMAN: Thirty seconds remaining.

15 MR. CHANG: And immediately I recognized
16 that California is so much different than, than at
17 least the parts of Boston and Massachusetts I was
18 in. Even Davis, although Davis, frankly, didn't
19 have as many Chinese-Americans in the schools at
20 that time, it was a much more eclectic, diverse
21 group of students and families coming from all
22 around the world. And so immediately I had that
23 experience of being raised in a college town. And
24 so it was an eye opener for me.

25 MS. PELLMAN: Time. Time is up.

1 CHAIR COE: Thank you.

2 Okay. Mr. Dawson.

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

4 I think I'd like to let Mr. Chang sort of
5 follow up on Mr. Belnap's.

6 But I have a specific question. How does
7 a professor's kid get a job at a walnut orchard in
8 Zamora?

9 MR. CHANG: Good question. When we were
10 growing up, and so you understand this, I was the
11 oldest of four children. My father, although we
12 were financially comfortable, my parents, I think,
13 were really good parents in the sense that they did
14 not hand anything to us on a silver platter. They
15 made us work for our spending money if we wanted
16 anything.

17 And so the work in the Zamora walnut
18 orchard was my second job in high school. My first
19 job was scooping ice cream at a Baskin-Robbins
20 downtown. So I scooped ice cream for about a year
21 or so, and I still wanted spending money because I
22 would go out and hang out with friends, I'd go to
23 movies, and things of that sort, just like any
24 other kid.

25 And so in order to raise a little bit of

1 pocket money and, you know, frankly, my parents
2 didn't really want me hanging around, they said go
3 out, get a job, do something with yourself. And so
4 I was able to through a friend, actually in high
5 school, I was able to secure a job working for the
6 father who's a walnut farmer up north of Woodlands.

7 And so what we would do is we would jump
8 in a truck, we would drive 30, 40 minutes at 6:00
9 in the morning, every morning during the summer, up
10 to north of Woodland, up to the -- the walnut
11 orchards up there and we would spend the first half
12 of the day dragging irrigation pipes. These are
13 the large three-inch irrigation pipes that you run,
14 you know, for 24 hours, drag them through the mud
15 between the walnut trees. It was a very messy job.
16 It was very manual. It was hard labor.

17 And then after we did that for three or
18 four hours, we would spend the rest of our day when
19 the weather was getting hotter, driving tractors
20 either cutting down weeds or spraying the orchards
21 or basically doing a lot of menial labor. It was
22 hard work.

23 But to be honest with you it was good, it
24 was really good for me. Because during that period
25 of time, and I did that for three summers, by the

1 way, I realized that while it was good for me and I
2 enjoyed the money and I enjoyed the work and the
3 friendship, I also realized that that's not what I
4 wanted to do for the rest of my life. And I think
5 it motivated me to apply myself in college, and
6 later on in life, law school so that I could do
7 something else, obviously.

8 MR. DAWSON: What did you learn from this
9 experience in a agricultural setting that maybe
10 gives you some insight as to rural agricultural
11 interests that could be useful to the Commission?

12 MR. CHANG: When we worked in the -- when
13 we worked in the fields and in the orchards, I
14 worked with a number of older gentlemen and workers
15 who, you know, frankly, they spent their whole
16 lives laboring in the fields and in the orchards.
17 I, just as a sideline, I also spent a couple months
18 working in apricot sheds, cutting apricots in
19 half. I tried a little bit of that, and you know,
20 picking fruit and things of that sort. So I do
21 have a bit of background working in those kinds of
22 factory, if you will, agricultural settings.

23 And again, I think -- I think those
24 experiences, what they do for people is you just
25 appreciate how everybody is different, you know.

1 How they -- how their lives are different than your
2 own. I think you truly appreciate, maybe how
3 fortunate you are, if you happen to be more
4 fortunate than they are. And I don't take any of
5 that lightly and I really emphasize that for my
6 children.

7 I mentioned earlier, along those same
8 lines that my father-in-law came from the fields of
9 Canton. And so he came from an agricultural
10 setting, too, you know, where they had the water
11 buffalo in front of their -- in front of their dirt
12 house. We were really lucky in that regard to be
13 able to take our kids, his grandkids back to
14 Canton, China and show them the dirt house he lived
15 in. The water buffalo, or the pool where they grew
16 fish to eat, and the fact that they just had a wood
17 burning stove.

18 So I guess, in answer to your question,
19 being exposed to other people, to other languages,
20 to people of different socioeconomic backgrounds, I
21 think makes each of us so much more better in terms
22 of who we are, and the way we think, and our own
23 sensitivities. I'm very sensitive to -- to the
24 interests and the rights of these other people
25 because I've spent time with them and they're good

1 people. They're just like me, except their
2 different in certain ways.

3 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

4 I want to switch gears a little bit and
5 follow up on a response that you made to one of the
6 standard questions where you indicated that you
7 thought that the COVID-19 situation could have an
8 impact on the Commissions work.

9 I wanted to ask you sort of a slightly
10 different question. Do you have any concerns about
11 the affect that this COVID-19 situation will have
12 on the census, being that that's one of the major
13 data inputs that the Commission will be using?

14 MR. CHANG: I do.

15 MS. PELLMAN: Mr. Dawson, quick time
16 check. Sorry. We only have 2 minutes and 30
17 seconds remaining.

18 MR. DAWSON: I'm sorry.

19 MR. CHANG: Thank you. I do have
20 concerns about the impact of the pandemic on the
21 census, which I know is going on as we speak
22 because we basically submitted our questionnaire
23 recently. So I know it's out there right now and
24 people are supposed to be responding.

25 I'm very much concerned about that and

1 whether or not the census is going to be concluded,
2 if you will, in the manner it was intended to be.
3 I know, you know, from the fact that we're all
4 working remotely, and we're dealing with things
5 like keeping our businesses open and we're keeping
6 our -- trying to keep our employees employed.
7 We're trying to get food and supplies and things of
8 that sort.

9 Frankly, everybody has other things on
10 their mind right now. So yes, I'm very, very
11 concerned about the success and comprehensiveness
12 of the census.

13 With that said, I'm not sure there's
14 anything personally I can do about it. I mean, I
15 think the Census Bureau and, you know, the people
16 conducting the census are going to have to adapt
17 and figure out how to deal with that situation. I
18 don't know legally. I haven't figured out
19 what -- whether there are any extensions of
20 deadlines or things that they can do to mitigate
21 this impact, but I'm very much concerned about
22 what, you know, what you're commenting on.

23 MR. DAWSON: Okay. Thank you.

24 What's the time left, Madam Secretary?

25 MS. PELLMAN: One minute, 5 seconds.

1 MR. DAWSON: Are there any follow ups from
2 the panel?

3 CHAIR COE: Ms. Dickison?
4 Mr. Belnap?

5 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: None here.

6 CHAIR COE: Ms. Dickison, can you hear us?

7 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Yes. No follow
8 up.

9 CHAIR COE: Okay. I have none either.

10 MR. DAWSON: Well with the few seconds
11 remaining, Mr. Chang, if you'd like to make a
12 closing statement.

13 MR. CHANG: Sure, I have about half a
14 minute.

15 In summary, the Commission must work and
16 function as an integrated team. I have lots of
17 experience serving on committees and fulfilling the
18 needs of a team at various positions. I have
19 empathy for my teammates, and I want what is best
20 for the group.

21 Because of my employee benefits
22 background, I do work that is legally analogous to
23 the work of the Commission. I have a strong
24 appreciation for the importance of procedural
25 prudence when it comes to justifying the work of

1 the Commission and defending it against legal
2 challenges.

3 I'm a good problem solver and I like to
4 think outside of the box. And as a result, I've
5 been successful in taking on large projects and
6 managing those projects to firm deadlines, which of
7 course the Commission has.

8 I don't --

9 MS. PELLMAN: We are at the end of our
10 time.

11 MR. CHANG: Thank you.

12 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

13 CHAIR COE: Thank you, Mr. Chang, for
14 taking the time to interview with us today.

15 Our next interview is scheduled for 1:15
16 so we will be in recess till 1:14.

17 (Thereupon the Panel recessed at 12:16 p.m.)

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1:14 P.M.

CHAIR COE: Okay. The time being 1:14, I'd like to call this meeting back to order.

At this time, I'd like to welcome Dr. Jagaree Roy for her interview this afternoon.

Dr. Roy, can you hear us?

DR. ROY: Yes, I can.

CHAIR COE: Great. Thank you for being here this afternoon and thank you for being flexible on rescheduling this -- this interview. We certainly appreciate that.

At this time, I'd like to turn the time over to Mr. Dawson for the five standard questions, please.

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

2 Dr. Roy, I'm going to read you five standard
3 questions that the panel has requested that each applicant
4 respond to.

5 Are you ready, ma'am?

6 DR. ROY: Yes, I am.

7 MR. DAWSON: 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 success
14 of the Commission?

15 DR. ROY: So I think the Commission all
16 collectively should be able to set very clear objective
17 goals and then to work in a impartial and unbiased manner
18 towards those goals. In order to achieve that,
19 Commissioners should be able to listen carefully to each
20 other, to be able to interact with the public in -- with
21 patience and with empathy.

22 They also need to be able to analyze data, perhaps
23 large sets of data to sift through technical information,
24 and to be able to clearly integrate public input and data
25 in order to determine what or particular community of

1 interests might be.

2 Further, I think all of this work has to be done in
3 a very transparent manner. So commissioners need to be
4 able to operate under scrutiny and in a transparent way.

5 And finally, the Commission needs to be finally --
6 finely tuned to the diversity of California so that they
7 are able to appreciate diverse viewpoints.

8 Now, amongst the strong attributes do I possess.
9 So I have been a scientist by training and profession for
10 the last 30 years. So objective reasoning, critical
11 thinking, unbiased data analysis, these have been the tools
12 of my trade. So these are the skill sets that I would
13 select to bring to the Commission.

14 Further, I have experience in analyzing data, and
15 not only in analyzing data, but also in evaluating methods
16 that are used to analyze data in determining what might be
17 appropriate and what might not be appropriate.

18 As a scientist, my work has always been open to
19 scrutiny and review. So I do have experience in operating
20 under conditions of full transparency, which I think will
21 be very critical for this Commission. And then further,
22 not just in my professional life, but also in my personal
23 life, I have had a very diverse life, a lot of interactions
24 with diverse sets of people. And that I think will really
25 add to -- will really become valuable to the Commission.

1 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

2 Question 2. Work on the Commission requires
3 members of different political backgrounds to work
4 together. Since the 2010 Commission was selected and
5 formed, the American political conversation has become
6 increasingly polarized, whether in the press, on social
7 media, and even in our own families.

8 What characteristics do you possess and what
9 characteristics should your fellow commissioners possess
10 that will protect against hyperpartisanship?

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

14 DR. ROY: So yes, you are right, our political
15 climate, you know, has been very hyperpartisan, though one
16 hopes that these extenuating circumstances will help in
17 bringing people together.

18 I think some of the reasons of hyperpartisanship
19 are competing interests. In this particular case, it is
20 clear that the Commission has a very clear objective goal
21 which is to come up with a set of district maps in a fair
22 and impartial manner. So the commissioners have to be
23 reminded of that goal. There has to be some acknowledgment
24 that every commissioner serves with integrity. And I think
25 there will be differing viewpoints because each person

1 comes with their own experiences, so there must be an
2 acknowledgement that every person's experience is genuine
3 and authentic.

4 Where conflicts arise, I believe, are when there is
5 a notion that one party or the other must in some way
6 concede or compromise, and neither party is willing to do
7 that. But I believe in most cases that conflict can be
8 resolved by -- that there -- there is in most cases a
9 solution where neither party actually needs to compromise
10 and that both sides or multiple sides can be happy with the
11 solution.

12 In order to achieve that, people really need to
13 first of all -- commissioners will need to first of all be
14 able to clearly articulate their thought. And also not
15 their own point of view but be able to listen carefully and
16 articulate the opposing point of view. And also be willing
17 and able to examine the preconceived notions and underlying
18 assumptions that might be forming their own opinions. And
19 if we are willing to do that, then I think almost all
20 conflicts can have a amicable resolution.

21 In terms of appearing -- the appearance at not only
22 actual but perceived appearance of hyperpartisanship, or
23 lack of hyperpartisanship, I think that again, the
24 Commission has to try to operate under as many objective
25 criteria as possible. That's easier said than done because

1 there's always subjectivity in any task. But to the extent
2 possible, the goals and the tasks of the Commission should
3 be as objective as possible and there must be full
4 transparency.

5 If the public can see that these are the criteria
6 by which the Commission is making their decisions and it's
7 a fully transparent process, then I believe that there will
8 be a perceived -- a perception that the Commission is going
9 to work under bipartisan and nonpartisanship.

10 MR. DAWSON: Thank-you. Question 3. What is the
11 greatest problem the Commission could encounter, and what
12 actions would you take to avoid or respond to this problem?

13 DR. ROY: I believe that probably the greatest
14 problem is going to be for the Commission to insulate
15 itself from undue outside influence. And that is tricky
16 because it
17 will -- it's not going to be so easy, especially for public
18 hearings, to be able to figure out what is authentic and
19 what might be politically motivated input.

20 The Commission again, has to be -- of course be
21 aware of this, and then be really able to engage people in
22 conversation to try to get a feeling for how authentic
23 their input might be. Also be ready to do due diligence in
24 terms of for any groups that might be bringing information
25 to try to get a idea of where, you know, what those groups

1 really are.

2 Again, finally, I will say to insulate against
3 political bias to the extent possible, the Commission
4 should work towards very objective criteria and objective
5 goals. I think again, transparency is going to be a key
6 way to, you know, insulate the Commission against --
7 against these problems.

8 The second issue that I think may come up are
9 perhaps logistical issues. Just reading the -- the
10 handbook and the -- and the review put out by the previous
11 Commission, there apparently appears to be in some cases
12 constraints on perhaps time, specifically, and in some
13 cases resource. So in order to overcome those challenges,
14 I believe this Commission can now be much better prepared
15 gaining from the experience of the previous Commission in
16 terms of planning, in terms of thinking about contingency
17 plans. But knowing ahead of time some of the problems that
18 might crop up, for example, much large volume of public
19 input that came in for the previous Commission. This
20 Commission would now be aware of that and would be prepared
21 to handle that and analyze that ahead of time.

22 And so I think those issues can be overcome by
23 some -- by learning from the previous Commission and by
24 some prior planning and contingency planning.

25 MR. DAWSON: Thank-you. Question 4. If you are

1 selected, you will be one of 14 members of the Commission
2 which is charged with working together to create maps of
3 the new districts. Please describe a situation where you
4 had to work collaboratively with others on a project to
5 achieve a common goal. Tell us the goal of the project,
6 what your role in the group was, and how the group worked
7 through any conflicts that arose.

8 What lessons would you take from this group
9 experience to the Commission, if selected?

10 DR. ROY: So, yeah, let me tell you about a
11 collaborative project, in fact, that was just completed in
12 my work group. This was a scientific project that involved
13 -- in the publication of a manuscript and it involved 21
14 authors from six different groups and five different
15 countries. And it was a combination of almost five years
16 of continuous work. So I'm very proud that this project
17 has -- is now almost completed.

18 My particular role in this, so I was one of the two
19 primary authors on the resulting publication which means
20 that I performed the -- a very large portion of the
21 experimental work that went into this project. Also, I was
22 involved in coordinating the data from all of the different
23 collaborators and putting things together, keeping people
24 on track of their schedules. And in the final writing of
25 the manuscript, I was one of the three people that did the

1 majority of the manuscript writing and the processing of
2 all the data and putting everything in final form. So that
3 was my role in the project.

4 So let me tell you about a conflict that arose.
5 When this project first started back in 2015, there were
6 actually three people that were going to be involved almost
7 full time in this project. There was myself as senior
8 scientist and two postdoctorate fellows. We'll call one
9 Postdoc E and one Postdoc who was doing experimental work,
10 and a computational Postdoc, Postdoc C. And a promise was
11 made by our boss, who is the overall coordinator of this
12 project, that in the resulting publication, all three of us
13 would be primary authors.

14 Now what happened is about two years into the
15 project, Postdoc C left the lab and went to a different
16 place in Germany. And over time as the project, you know,
17 evolved and we got input from a lot of other scientists,
18 and the project was revised, it -- the work that he had
19 initially done almost was revised to a certain extent and a
20 lot of it was actually removed from the final manuscript.

21 So now we had a conflict because on the one hand, a
22 promise had been made that he would be one of the primary
23 authors on the final publication. However, when we looked
24 at the manuscript of the publication in its final form,
25 very little of what he had initially done was actually

1 going to be included in this -- in this work. And it
2 became very unfair now to the other postdoc, Postdoc E,
3 because primary authorship is in fact a very big deal of
4 when postdocs go on to get jobs, their contribution towards
5 the work is measured by this -- by these designations.

6 So in order to resolve this conflict, really again,
7 myself and my boss, we were instrumental in kind of
8 bringing everyone together. Emotions were running very
9 high about, you know, how to fairly give credit for the
10 work. And we really decided that look, you have to sit
11 down and put aside all the emotions and really look at the
12 objective criteria. And really, you know, credit has to be
13 given in terms of the final work that has actually been
14 done. And we had to come to the conclusion that this
15 person could no longer be a primary author and was going to
16 be given a secondary authorship.

17 So again, I think the resolution of the conflict
18 was really to use objective criteria and to bring everybody
19 to the table together and come up with like a consensus
20 about what is the right way to resolve this conflict.

21 So what have I -- what are the things that I
22 learned from this project, working together? I would say
23 the three major things that I learned in terms of this
24 collaboration were firstly, to have clear set goals, not
25 only long-term goals, but also short-term goals. And have

1 everybody in the group kind of focus, keep everyone on
2 track, and have everybody focus, both on short-term and on
3 long-term goals. That was one of the things that I
4 learned.

5 The second thing I learned was that, you know,
6 problems are always going to crop up. And there's a
7 tendency when a problem crops up to assign blame or
8 responsibility right away. And I think that is -- should
9 be avoided. And really, whenever a problem crops up, the
10 group has to focus on okay, what is the best way to solve
11 this problem, rather than to try to immediately figure out
12 who is responsible for the problem. And that can always
13 come later. The first sort of goal should be how is the
14 problem best going to be solved?

15 And then the third thing that I sort of learned is
16 that, you know, different people are going to contribute in
17 different ways. And at the end of the day, everybody's
18 contribution will be very critical and very important. But
19 so there must not be any preconceived notions and
20 assumptions about how people are contributing, or
21 expectations on how a particular person might contribute.
22 The assumption should be that everybody will have a
23 valuable contribution at the end of the project.

24 I would say these are the lessons that I sort of
25 learned from this collaboration.

1 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

2 Question 5. A considerable amount of the
3 Commissions work will involve meeting with people from all
4 over California who come from very different backgrounds
5 and a wide variety of perspectives.

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

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

14 DR. ROY: So in some senses, I feel that my story,
15 I am a woman of color who grew up in a different country,
16 and has now resided in California for more than 25 years.
17 I feel I am the epitome of the diversity that California
18 possesses.

19 In my professional life, I have had the opportunity
20 to interact with students, with colleagues of a wide
21 variety of -- from a wide variety of socioeconomic, and
22 racial and cultural backgrounds, lot of international
23 students who have come from different countries. And
24 really, I've had the opportunity to make some choice
25 connections with them. Many of them are now my very good

1 friends. And I would say I have learned something or the
2 other from every single one of them.

3 So I think that -- that understanding that every
4 person comes from a different background, from a different
5 -- and not only just theoretically, culturally different
6 things, there's also every unique person comes with
7 something that they can teach, and some new thing that they
8 will bring to the table. So that, I think, has really
9 enriched my understanding of people in general.

10 Further, outside of my professional life, I have
11 been involved in very sort of diverse -- have been in touch
12 with a diverse set of people. The community where I live
13 is largely Asian-American immigrants. But the housing
14 community that I'm in, actually, is both a lot of Russian
15 immigrants and a lot of Asian immigrants. So we've, you
16 know, we've learned about each other's culture, about each
17 other's -- what are important to us.

18 In some sense I feel the more I know different
19 people, I realize that there are a lot in -- a lot of
20 things that are in common. And then there are a lot of
21 things that are superficially different, and then some
22 things that are even fundamentally different. So these
23 experiences I think will really sort of really enrich the
24 diversity that is in my life.

25 I've also had -- I have been involved in the last

1 few years in some voluntary work in my community, and also
2 some work in a community that's where we live occasionally.
3 And through that I have been exposed to people of different
4 income backgrounds, and I have some understanding of what
5 are the difficulties that they may face, and what are the
6 situations that -- the kind of life stories that bring them
7 to particular situations. So I have some understanding of
8 that.

9 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. We'll now go to panel
10 questions. Each panel member will have 20 minutes to ask
11 his or her questions.

12 And we'll start with the Chair, Mr. Coe.

13 CHAIR COE: Thank you, Mr. Dawson.

14 Good afternoon, again, Dr. Roy. Thank you for
15 taking the time to speak with us today.

16 You mentioned your volunteer activities right at
17 the end of your last answer and I'd like to ask you about
18 some of those.

19 Some of them that you listed in your application
20 involved helping support domestic violence victims, the
21 homeless, and also encouraging young women to pursue
22 science.

23 What drives you towards these particular volunteer
24 activities?

25 DR. ROY: Well the activities that I had with the

1 two organizations that drive, that are involved in domestic
2 violence, really, as a woman who has sometimes struggled
3 with, you know, being taken seriously sometimes in the
4 scientific world. As a immigrant who has also sometimes
5 struggled with that identity, I -- felt I was very
6 sensitive towards difficulties that especially immigrant
7 women may have when they are in a situation of harm or
8 trouble in a -- in a, you know, new different land. So
9 that is what motivated me to get involved with these
10 organizations, even though they are not, you know, solely
11 for women. Domestic violence is not really gender
12 specific.

13 However, there was that -- that feeling that I had
14 that a person who is facing domestic violence really has no
15 recourse, especially in the immigrant community. And also,
16 don't -- in most cases, they don't even have access to the
17 proper information about where they can -- what they can
18 do, where they can go. And that to me was very, very, sort
19 of a frustrating situation to be in. So that is what
20 motivated me to volunteer with those two organizations, and
21 also to support them financially, which I -- which I tried
22 to do.

23 The work that I started doing at -- at the homeless
24 shelters really started out by the observation that in this
25 community that I lived, that I have lived for a long time

1 now, and this is in the heart of Silicon Valley, by any
2 standards an extremely, I would say wealthy community, and
3 yet we were seeing that there were all these small homeless
4 camps that would crop up in different places. And the
5 reaction that people would typically have to those would be
6 one of, you know, how can we just get rid of these homeless
7 camps and, you know, that they shouldn't exist. What can
8 we do to, you know, not have these in our own community?

9 And then the question that cropped up is that, why
10 is this happening? What are the stories of these people?
11 What situations are they in so that they have become now
12 homeless and have no access to shelter, and sometimes even
13 food? And when I started thinking about that, I realized
14 that okay, there has to be something that can be done. And
15 that is what motivated me to start volunteering at these
16 homeless shelters where basically the shelters are set up,
17 but they need people to come in and help in providing food,
18 and cooking food, and serving food.

19 And in some cases, the people that -- the people
20 that were being served were, you know, people that just due
21 to some circumstances or the other in their lives, just
22 kind of fell off the -- fell off the sort of social
23 framework and became homeless. And once that happens, it's
24 very difficult to kind of come back into the -- into the
25 normal social frame. So that -- those are the thoughts

1 that motivated me to go down that path.

2 The work that I had done about trying to motivate
3 young girls, middle school and high school women students
4 to pursue science, that is actually just totally motivated
5 from the really difficult times that I had in my own
6 personal life as a woman in science. Trying to compete in
7 what is a very aggressive man's world, so to speak, and
8 this was, you know, the situation that I describe is what
9 it was about 30 years ago. Times are changing and, you
10 know, it has become so much better and easier for women to
11 be very successful now, you see. Not just in science, but
12 in the corporate sector, and politics, everywhere.

13 And -- but when I -- when I was struggling myself,
14 I realized that okay, the only way to mitigate this is to
15 get more young women to, you know, go and become
16 scientists. And also, it would briefly anger me when I
17 would hear things like, you know, that girls are struggling
18 in school with math and science. And almost with the kind
19 of attitude that this might be something inherent to young
20 girls, which I refused to accept, and I knew -- and I know
21 is untrue.

22 So, you know, it's just a matter of motivation and
23 good role models and getting young girls to be excited
24 about this. And then once I started doing that, I realized
25 that any -- any young girl can become a great mathematician

1 or a scientist, they just need to be shown the way and to
2 be excited and motivated about it.

3 CHAIR COE: Thank you for that.

4 On the subject of science, you are a research
5 associate in the Department of Biology at Stanford
6 University. Your application states that for the past 15
7 years you've undertaken active research in the -- I'm going
8 to totally screw up the pronunciation of this, phosphatase
9 enzyme calcineurin?

10 DR. ROY: Yes.

11 CHAIR COE: That's close?

12 DR. ROY: Yes.

13 CHAIR COE: So what is that? And I recognize this
14 might be a topic that is way more complicated to explain
15 what it is in the few minutes that we have. But to the
16 extent you can, what is that and what were the goals of the
17 research?

18 DR. ROY: Yes, and I will be very happy to give you
19 the elevated pitch on that. So this is very exciting
20 because this is what we tell a notes, a person like you who
21 would have no prior knowledge of this area.

22 So for example, if you had an organ transplant, you
23 could go on what is commonly known as an immunosuppressant
24 drug. So you may have heard of immunosuppressant drugs.
25 Large numbers of people in our country who have solid organ

1 transplants have to take immunosuppressant drugs. And what
2 these drugs do is that they suppress our immune system, and
3 this is what helps your body not reject the new organ.

4 Now the two most commonly used immunosuppressant
5 drugs, both are compounds that inhibit or suppress this one
6 particular enzyme, and that is the enzyme that we study.
7 And that enzyme is calcineurin. The name is irrelevant.

8 So why do we study this enzyme?

9 Now what is happening is that this enzyme, which is
10 in every tissue of your body, not only is it important for
11 your immune system, but it is also very critical for a
12 large variety of your body's function, like brain function,
13 kidney function, heart function. So you might imagine that
14 a immunosuppressant drug that is, you know, inhibiting this
15 enzyme would have a lot of side effects. And in fact,
16 these drugs do have a lot of side effects.

17 So the reason that we are studying this enzyme is
18 we want to find out what are all the targets of this enzyme
19 so that we may understand what these side effects are. And
20 only when they understand what the side -- why the side
21 effects are being caused, drug companies can then go in and
22 try to mitigate those side effects through designing better
23 inhibitors and better drugs.

24 So that is in just the work we do and why we do it.

25 Was that clear?

1 CHAIR COE: Yeah, that was clear. A good elevator
2 pitch as you -- as you phrased it. Thank you.

3 How do you think that your background in scientific
4 research could benefit the work of this Commission?

5 DR. ROY: I think it could be immensely useful
6 because I come with a lot of objectivity. I am very used
7 to critical thinking. One of the goals of the way we do
8 research is to take any problem to try to come up with
9 hypothesis and methods of asking what are the best types of
10 solutions to this problem in a very objective way. Or
11 carry out, you know, experiments, or just a set of methods,
12 look at the results, and then be very objective about okay,
13 what does the result tell us? Did it solve the problem?
14 Did it not solve the problem?

15 If the result indicates that the hypothesis was
16 wrong, then we have to go back and change the hypothesis.
17 And so we analyze data. Also, sometimes we do experiments,
18 and we want the experiment to be -- turn out a certain way
19 and it does not. And so we have to be very critical, very
20 analytical, and very impartial about what the result is.
21 So we take the result and we say well, this is the way it
22 is. It did not work out. The hypothesis must be wrong.
23 We have to go back, and we have to reevaluate our
24 assumptions about what the problem is.

25 So this thinking I think will be extremely valuable

1 to the Commission in terms, not of just analyzing data, but
2 in terms of trying to figure out, you know, what are the
3 key factors one has to use to determine a community of
4 interest, for example. I think this -- my impartiality and
5 my ability to be analytical and critical of data and of
6 input will become very valuable.

7 CHAIR COE: Okay. How do you think you would
8 balance your responsibilities at Stanford University with
9 the work of the Commission? How would those -- those two
10 things fit together in your schedule?

11 DR. ROY: Yes. So I am -- actually, if selected on
12 the Commission, I intend to serve with passion and
13 integrity, and I would then -- I am thinking of then
14 retiring from my position at Stanford, which is what I
15 would like to do so that I would have all the time and
16 effort that I need to devote to -- to this cause. Because
17 I think this is not -- I don't believe this is something
18 that can be done with, you know, with minimal time at all.
19 So I would be looking to retire from my position at
20 Stanford.

21 CHAIR COE: Okay. Thank you.

22 Switching topics just a little bit. In your
23 essays, a term that you used a few times was dogmatic
24 beliefs and how these types of beliefs could carry the risk
25 of self-justification and bias.

1 Can you expand on this a little bit?

2 DR. ROY: Yes. So I think what I was alluding to,
3 in many cases is, I mean, first of all, as a scientist we
4 tend just to -- we tend to believe that everything has to
5 have or be based on approvable conjectures, for example.
6 And any -- any kind of idea that is based on, for example,
7 on faith, we might call dogmatic. But in fact, that whole
8 idea itself is dogmatic because, for example, there are
9 many things that -- that are obviously true but cannot be
10 proven, or cannot be quantified, or cannot be -- cannot be
11 accounted for.

12 For example, I know as I get up in the morning, I
13 am having a good day, or I feel bad, and yet, and that is
14 true. Nobody can deny that the truth in that. And yet as
15 a scientist, I cannot say is that okay, this is the -- this
16 is the quantifiable reason why I'm having a bad day, or why
17 I feel happy, or why I feel sad. So I feel dogmatic belief
18 is when we are not really, when we are not open to the idea
19 that a viewpoint that is -- that might be opposing may be
20 true, and we are not really ready to challenge our
21 assumptions about why we might think that a viewpoint may
22 be incorrect or may be inappropriate.

23 So that, I believe, is what I mean by dogmatic
24 thinking. And I'm in no way would I say that as a
25 scientist I'm, you know, I'm immune from dogmatic thinking.

1 In fact, we see it all the time even in this -- in our
2 profession.

3 CHAIR COE: So if you saw that type of thinking
4 entering into the work of the Commission, either, excuse
5 me, by a fellow commissioner or a member of the public that
6 may a meetings, how would you approach those individuals?

7 DR. ROY: I think I would like to just engage them
8 in some conversation and try to listen carefully and
9 understand what -- where that belief was coming from. And
10 then I would like to try to, I think I would try to engage
11 them in conversation, try to explain my viewpoint, but also
12 listen carefully about their viewpoint. And I would like
13 to propose to them, a commissioner or even a member of the
14 public, I would like to propose that they and I both be
15 ready to challenge assumptions upon which our beliefs may
16 be based, or our ideas may be based.

17 And I think just the process of having that
18 conversation which -- in which both parties are listening
19 carefully to each -- to each other and articulating more
20 clearly their own viewpoints, I think that would be --
21 would be able to resolve, even if there's a dogmatic
22 viewpoint.

23 I think -- I think every single person is in fact
24 open -- is open to understanding where -- where another
25 person's point of view comes from. It is our assumptions

1 and our preconceived notions that block us from -- from
2 taking that step and understanding that.

3 So I believe that if I faced what I thought was
4 some kind of a dogmatic viewpoint, I would like to engage
5 in conversation and really try to find out where the
6 viewpoint, what was the basis of that. And try to -- try
7 to mitigate that. And it may turn out that it is I who
8 has been dogmatic. And then I would like to come -- like
9 to come to that understanding and learn that.

10 MS. PELLMAN: You have 3 minutes, 38 seconds
11 remaining.

12 CHAIR COE: Thank you, Madam Secretary.

13 Dr. Roy, if you were to be appointed to the
14 Commission, which aspects of that role do you think that
15 you would -- you would enjoy the most? And conversely,
16 which aspects of that role do you think you might struggle
17 with a little bit?

18 DR. ROY: I think the two would be the same. I
19 think what I would enjoy the most is, and one of reason
20 that I really applied on the Commission, is the opportunity
21 to travel and to go to different parts of our state, and to
22 really interact with the people and find out more about
23 them. Because, you know, the data analysis and the work
24 that happens behind that I think would be easier for me. I
25 would, I feel, be much more comfortable with that and that.

1 But on the other hand what I would really enjoy, I think,
2 is the -- is the public engagement. And also that is the
3 area in which I frankly have the least experience.

4 So again, that is, again, I think what I would
5 perhaps struggle with because I do not have extensive
6 experience, you know, in public hearings and in engaging
7 with the public, and in understanding over a short time
8 frame what the public is trying to say. So I believe,
9 again, that will possible be the area that I might struggle
10 with.

11 I -- if selected on the Commission, I would look to
12 learn from the other commissioners about how best to, you
13 know, to be effective in those situations.

14 CHAIR COE: Okay. Thank you.

15 No further questions at this time. Ms. Dickison,
16 the time is now yours.

17 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you.

18 Good afternoon, Dr. Roy.

19 DR. ROY: Good afternoon.

20 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: So you talked about the --

21 DR. ROY: I think I lost the audio from this.

22 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Oh no, I'm here. Can you
23 hear me okay?

24 DR. ROY: I can. Thank you.

25 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Okay. So you talked about

1 the main purpose of government is to enable citizens to set
2 up rules that will lead to fair and just society and how
3 it's essential that citizens get an equal voice. You
4 talked about that in your first essay.

5 DR. ROY: Yes.

6 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: What did some of -- you know,
7 thinking about that, what are some of the differing needs
8 of the various regions of the state that you are aware of
9 and how might those needs influence preferences that
10 individuals have full representation?

11 DR. ROY: I think the needs are so varied, you
12 know. For example, in the very urban setting I spent some
13 years living in San Francisco City, for example. And the
14 needs of the people there are, you know, high cost of
15 living is a big issue, homelessness was a issue, crime is a
16 issue, public transport is a issue. These are the things,
17 some of the things that, you know, people living in very
18 urban area would want the government to, you know, step in
19 and solve some of those issues or, and the citizens want to
20 then have a voice as to how those issues would be dealt
21 with.

22 Or in San Jose where I live, for example, it's so -
23 - more suburban neighborhood, a lot of families with
24 children, and schooling is one of the, you know, biggest
25 issues over here, including also the high cost of living,

1 and jobs. And so those, again, are issues in a more
2 suburban area.

3 If you go to rural California, I think the issues
4 are so completely different. There are agricultural areas
5 where, you know, jobs related to agriculture are important.
6 There's water resource, land resource, how recreational
7 land is used. And again, the citizens of those areas want
8 to have a fair say in how decisions are made that affect
9 their jobs, affect the way, you know, the rural resources
10 are allocated. So I believe the -- that it is, therefore,
11 so important that in each area, the citizens do have a fair
12 chance to have their concerns voiced through their
13 representatives. So that becomes so important.

14 Now it is -- I think there will be differences in
15 how easy it is for fair representation to occur. You know,
16 I think a lot of those differences will depend on the
17 economic background. You know, and there are places in our
18 state where people might be struggling or there might be
19 language barriers, and then it becomes much more difficult
20 for them to engage in -- in the democratic process and to
21 ensure that they have proper representation.

22 So, on the other hand, you know, there are
23 wealthier regions of our state where it is much easier for
24 the citizens to ensure that they are -- that their voices
25 are heard.

1 So I think economic barriers, language barriers,
2 these are all going to play a part in whether citizens get
3 their voices heard. So I do believe there will be large
4 differences.

5 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: What can -- what steps can
6 the Commission take to maybe remove some of those barriers
7 to ensure that they are hearing the individuals in those
8 areas or that are affected by those barriers?

9 DR. ROY: So I think first of all the Commission
10 has to be composed of people who represent different parts
11 of the state. I think that geographical levels indeed
12 becomes very important. I think in public engagement, the
13 Commission needs to be able to have, first of all, ensure
14 that the people of the areas where public meetings are
15 going to be held, have -- there is enough outreach so that
16 they have the ability to engage either in person or through
17 either e-mail.

18 If there are language barriers, then the Commission
19 needs to be very attuned to that and make sure that there
20 are either interpreters or that there are people who are
21 non-English speakers, for example, have other means of
22 entering their input in their -- in the languages of their
23 preference.

24 The Commission should also be able to -- really it
25 has to be a combination of outreach, and it has to be a

1 combination of having enough interaction with the public to
2 be able to really hear their voice and to ensure that their
3 concerns are taken up by the Commission.

4 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you.

5 In your application, you talked about a little bit
6 today, you have the ability to assess and analyze data, and
7 elevate -- evaluate it.

8 How could your skills in that area assist the
9 Commission in ensuring that the data that it's looking at
10 is not set up in a way that could create a bias?

11 DR. ROY: Right. So I think, you know, what has
12 happened in the last ten years since the last Commission is
13 that we have now have an explosion of data. And with data,
14 we also have an explosion of data analytical methods. So
15 one of the things that I can really bring to the Commission
16 is my ability to analyze methods and to ensure that the
17 right methods are being used.

18 And also, every method that you use to analyze data
19 comes with its own assumptions. And it's important to know
20 what those methods can do with the data and it's also
21 important to know what the methods can't do. And so it's
22 important when you, you know, take data and you come up
23 with some matrix and analyze it, it's important to
24 understand what results are valid and what is the
25 information that you lost out on.

1 So that kind of perspective is what I can bring to
2 the Commission and be able to really say that okay, this is
3 the data that we have, if we use this method, then we can
4 get this information, but we lose out on this other
5 information. And so perhaps there needs to be a
6 combination of methods that needs to be used to fully
7 extract the information that there is in the data.

8 And I believe the skills that I have, and the
9 experience that I have with the data analysis, even though
10 the data that I've dealt with is completely different from
11 the data that the Commission will have, but I still believe
12 that those skills I can bring to really objectively
13 understand the methods that are being used and determine if
14 they are the right ones or not.

15 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you.

16 Have you ever worked with data in a way that you're
17 taking the hard data such as the census data and combining
18 that with the data that maybe would be coming from public
19 input and how to evaluate that?

20 DR. ROY: I have not worked with particularly these
21 kind of data, but I do have experience in working with
22 different types of data. So this is an example of two
23 completely different types of data. One is, you know, very
24 mathematical data which is coming -- or quantifiable data,
25 which is coming from the census.

1 Now the public input data is going to be much more
2 subjective and not mathematical in its nature. So it will
3 need a completely different sort of outlook in order to
4 evaluate that. So I do not have experience in particularly
5 these kind of datas, but I do have experience in dealing
6 with different types of data. Both data that is much more
7 objective, and also subjective data. And I think I will be
8 able to try to get out the relative information from the
9 subjective data and combine it with a more mathematical
10 type of data like the census data.

11 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you.

12 Okay. You talked about and -- in your responses
13 and also in your application about your mentoring of young
14 girls, I think you said middle school, but also of graduate
15 and undergraduate young women.

16 Can you talk about what you've learned from the
17 individuals you've mentored that will assist with the work
18 of the Commission?

19 DR. ROY: I have learned how to be patient. I have
20 learned how to listen carefully. I have learned how to not
21 have expectations that are unreasonable and, in fact, not
22 even valid for a particular age group or a particular type
23 of person.

24 I have learned that when you work with someone
25 individually, it has to be a two-way process. Often, I am

1 kind of the teacher, but I have to be open to learning from
2 my students. And I've actually learned a lot from the
3 undergraduates and graduate students, and even middle
4 school kids that I have mentored.

5 I've learned how to, from the middle school kids,
6 I've -- girls, I've learned how to just be positive and how
7 to, you know, be happy about things that you're doing. And
8 how to -- sometimes I've learned on how to focus and how to
9 take like small nuggets of things, information and kind of,
10 you know, takes even if -- for example, we did a large
11 project once with a whole bunch of middle school girls in
12 the lab at Stanford and the project actually failed. And I
13 was so disappointed. I thought, you know, this is a
14 disaster. And yet the girls were all so excited because
15 they were not so much interested in whether the experiment
16 worked or failed, but just the opportunity of doing all
17 these new things and learning how to do simple laboratory
18 work. That was just super exciting to them.

19 So I learned that okay, you can't have goals that
20 everything will go perfect. You have to understand that
21 even the experience is actually important, as important
22 perhaps as the result.

23 So those are, for example, some of the things I've
24 learned from the young students.

25 From the older students, I have also learned a lot,

1 especially about, you know, what are good methods of doing
2 things.

3 One example that I can give you is that I had this
4 one student recently who I was mentoring. And every time
5 we set up to do something, she would always come and ask
6 me, almost every single day, she would ask me, okay, this
7 is what I'm going to do, is this is the right thing? Am I
8 doing it the right way? And eventually I told her look,
9 just go ahead and do it because, you know, you learn from
10 your own mistakes. And she turned around and told me, well
11 why would I learn from mistakes that have already been
12 made? I want to rely on your experience. Why would I want
13 to make the mistakes that have already been made?

14 And so then I realized that yes, that is actually a
15 very valid viewpoint. And we tend to, you know, want
16 people to be individualistic and go ahead and do things and
17 learn on their own, but it's also important to learn from
18 the experience of others. So that was a lesson that I
19 learned in that case.

20 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you.

21 MS. PELLMAN: You have 5 minutes, 37 seconds
22 remaining.

23 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you.

24 The Commission is selected by the first eight
25 commissioners are selected randomly, and then they are

1 tasked with selecting the next six.

2 If you were one of the first eight, what would you
3 be looking for in the other six commissioners?

4 DR. ROY: So first of all, I think the candidate
5 pool at this point is, you know, extremely, of extremely
6 high quality. So I would first of all focus on the work
7 that -- that this panel, that you all have already done and
8 focus on the candidates that have received a positive
9 review from all three of the panel members.

10 Beyond that, I think I would like to see, if
11 selected on the Commission, I would like to see as diverse
12 a skill set as possible. So for example, I will bring
13 certain skill sets and certain experiences. I would like
14 there would be a lot of diversity so that we can all learn
15 from each other and help each other in the different tasks
16 that need to be done. So that's what I would look for.

17 And the second thing I think that is also very
18 important is geographic diversity. I think since public
19 engagement is going to be a key part of this Commission,
20 and the Commission has to go around the state to all
21 different counties. And of course it's not possible to,
22 there's only a 14-member Commission, so not all the
23 counties can be represented. But when you go and engage in
24 a local community, then I think the engagement with the
25 public will be much more effective if there is a feeling

1 that there is a local or even semi-local person on the
2 Commission who can really understand their unique
3 geographical issues. So I would be looking for
4 geographical diversity.

5 And then finally, I think I would be, you know,
6 looking at the applications and interviews, and just trying
7 to get a sense of people that I really connect with and
8 that I feel would have passion to, you know, serve on this
9 Commission. So that would be, I guess, the final thing
10 that I would try to look for. And I would encourage the
11 other commissioners also to kind of follow those
12 guidelines.

13 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you.

14 I have no further questions at this time. I yield
15 my time.

16 CHAIR COE: Thank you, Ms. Dickison.

17 Mr. Belnap, the time is yours.

18 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right.

19 Thank you, Dr. Roy, for being here, for your
20 continued interest in serving on the Commission.

21 In your application you indicate that you grew up
22 in India, but you are raising two kids in California. From
23 your experience, what are the key difference between
24 growing up in India and growing up in California?

25 DR. ROY: Very, very different. So I think a key

1 difference is that -- is cultural difference. For example,
2 I think Indian culture is really based on personal
3 relationships. And it places a lot of value on
4 relationships that people have with each other.

5 Whereas, growing up in California and also in this
6 country, the culture is to place a lot of emphasis on
7 individual achievement and individual creativity. And both
8 of these have their merits. Great merits.

9 I think in this culture because we put so much
10 emphasis on individual achievement, we have so much
11 productivity, so much creativity. People -- there is no
12 ceiling, people know that my young kids were new growing up
13 in California that they could do whatever it is that they
14 wanted. And they could be whatever it is that they wanted.
15 There were no -- no bars on what they could do and achieve.
16 So there's a very free environment in that way.

17 The pitfall, I would say, is that when you go down
18 that path, sometimes you may become maybe perceived as
19 becoming -- perceived and may also in reality become
20 somewhat self-centered and self-serving. Whereas in the
21 Indian culture, which is very relationship-based, the
22 relationships that you would have with and the duties that
23 you would perform with your family members, with your
24 community members, would actually supersede your own
25 personal achievement.

1 So I think, you know, so my children growing up
2 here had a very individualistic viewpoint and, you know, we
3 encourage that. We wanted them to go and be exactly
4 whatever they could be. But we also struggled in to remind
5 them constantly that they needed to be connected to the
6 family, not just to the family, but to their community, to
7 the friends. And that -- so that was what we were -- I was
8 trying to bring from my upbringing in growing up in India
9 to give to them.

10 So I would say those are those, for example, the
11 kind -- the differences of growing up in two different
12 places.

13 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Thank you.

14 And you had brought this point up in your essay on
15 impartiality. So help me understand how you as a parent
16 and your husband, navigating this -- these differences in
17 culture. How did it impact or increase your ability to be
18 impartial?

19 DR. ROY: I think -- we -- it did definitely
20 impacted our ability to be impartial because, for example,
21 growing up in India is a very hierarchical culture. You
22 always did what your parents told you to do, for example.
23 And, you know, when I was growing up, if my parents told me
24 10 p.m. is bedtime, then 10 p.m. was bedtime and there was
25 no two ways about it.

1 My kids, on the other hand, would challenge our,
2 you know, our rules, always challenge our rules. And in a
3 sense what that did was it allowed us to have a
4 conversation with them. And it allowed us to okay, ask --
5 tell them, okay, we had to always explain to them, this is
6 the reason why we wanted to go to bed at 10 p.m. And then
7 they would come back and say but on the other hand, this is
8 what we -- you know, this is what we need, if we do that,
9 then we miss out on this.

10 So we really had to be able to articulate ourselves
11 very well and also be open to getting input from them.
12 This is something that never happened when I was growing up
13 in India. Nobody asked me for my opinion as a child. But
14 we really have to do that. And I think that was the right
15 way to proceed. So that helped me to come really impartial
16 because I was attuned to, you know, getting feedback all
17 the time.

18 I had to explain anytime I would set up a rule, I
19 really had to explain why it was and what was the benefit
20 of it and then be able to concede if -- if I was, you know,
21 if the -- if I was -- if the argument was good enough to
22 tell me why it shouldn't be that way.

23 So -- so, yeah, I think impartiality really rules
24 because I had to set aside my own notions and, you know,
25 this is the way it happens because this is the way I grew

1 up was a absolutely worthless argument. And so I think
2 that what taught me to become more impartial and try to put
3 aside my own judgments.

4 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right. Thank you.

5 You came to California in your late 20s, what was
6 the transition like and -- transitioning to come to be in
7 California and why did you end up staying in California?

8 DR. ROY: So it's a very interesting story. I was
9 actually born in California, right here in Stanford where I
10 work now, so that was very interesting. But I left
11 California when I was just a year old. My parents were
12 students here and then they left California with me and
13 then, you know, I grew up in India.

14 I first came back to the United States as a
15 graduate student and I was in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania for
16 graduate school for a number of years. And when I moved to
17 California as a postdoctorate fellow, I moved to San
18 Francisco, it was -- I cannot tell you how wonderful it
19 was. Because in Pittsburgh I always felt -- even though
20 I'm a U.S. citizen, I was born in the U.S., I always felt
21 that I was treated as a foreigner even though I was treated
22 very well, everybody treated me very well, but I was truly
23 felt that I was an outsider, that I was a foreigner or
24 different person.

25 But when I came to San Francisco and I lived in San

1 Francisco, I -- that did not happen at all. I felt that I
2 was just like any other Californian. There were so many
3 people that had come from different backgrounds just like
4 me. And I frankly I felt at home, I felt totally at home.
5 And then even when I continued, you know, a few years
6 later, then I moved to San Jose where I've lived ever
7 since. And I totally feel that I am as Californian as, you
8 know, even a person that has lived here for three or four
9 generations.

10 So I think the reason that I've stayed in
11 California and I hope I will never, ever leave is because
12 of this feeling that I have of truly belonging to the
13 state.

14 Of course the state is just beautiful. I mean, I
15 cannot -- I have always been in love with California. It's
16 so physically beautiful, just spectacular state. But I
17 think it's the people who have really made me feel that I
18 belong here that has made me make this my home.

19 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right. Thank you.

20 Turning to another part of your application, you
21 state that as a scientist, you have had to set aside your
22 work, years of work because your experimental observations
23 proved a hypothesis to not be true.

24 Can you provide us an example of that happening?

25 DR. ROY: Yes. Not -- not -- not a very -- not a

1 very -- not a story that I want to remember or recount in a
2 lot. So for example, as I explained to Mr. Coe earlier, we
3 work with the enzyme calcineurin. And so many years ago we
4 had this idea that this one particular -- we will -- the --
5 one of the work that the laboratory does is finding
6 targets, new targets for this enzyme.

7 And so some years ago, we had this idea that oh,
8 this one particular target was going to be the, you know,
9 the key target for this enzyme, and I spent two years
10 working very, very hard at trying to prove this. And every
11 experiment that I did basically would tell me that this is
12 not the case. And my boss and I, we would sit and we would
13 say, okay, maybe this is just not the right experiment,
14 let's do another experiment. Or maybe we're not thinking
15 about -- maybe we're not doing the key thing.

16 And then after two years of work, we finally had to
17 come to the conclusion, this is not -- this is not the
18 right thing. This target that we're focusing on is not the
19 right one. We have to know -- we have to evaluate what the
20 results are telling us that the hypothesis was incorrect.
21 Now of course it was a very good reason for us to have that
22 hypothesis, right? So there was a whole lot of literature
23 and published results that pointed us in that direction
24 which is why we pursued it for so long. But ultimately we
25 had to come to the conclusion that no, this is incorrect,

1 we have to reevaluate our hypothesis and we kind of stepped
2 back. We let go of that work for two years and we then
3 focused on a whole different avenue which in fact became
4 totally fruitful.

5 So, you know, it's difficult to know how long to
6 pursue something and then when to let go. But again, this
7 is a case in which at some point we have to decide -- we
8 have to listen to what the results are telling us which is
9 that this hypothesis is incorrect.

10 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right. Thank you.

11 And a part of your application regarding
12 impartiality, you say one way to avoid bias in any process
13 is to diligently follow a set of rules or protocols without
14 any preexisting notions of the results.

15 So what is a rule or protocol that the Commission
16 should put in place in its work to avoid bias?

17 DR. ROY: So this is a little tricky, but for
18 example, I would say that in terms of dealing with large
19 volumes of public input, perhaps a protocol might be is to
20 be able to categorize the public input, put it into
21 different bins, input that is coming from individual
22 people versus input that is coming from groups versus, you
23 know, written input, versus oral input. And really then
24 distribute -- so one sort of very unbiased way of analyzing
25 this would be to then -- then look at each bin carefully

1 and try to come up with conclusions about what each
2 particular type of public input is -- is trying to give
3 information about.

4 And then without knowing how that input will
5 actually influence the map itself would be just analyzing
6 all of that input and then coming up with conclusions,
7 particular conclusions based on all that -- all the input
8 without trying to know how each input might influence the
9 final map.

10 So coming -- setting a protocol where you analyze
11 the input in a very impartial manner, come to certain
12 conclusions, have a list of those conclusions, and then try
13 to go back to the map and see, okay, are these -- are these
14 conclusions in correspondence with the map or not?

15 So I would say that might be an example.

16 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay. Thank you.

17 Mr. Chair, I have no further questions.

18 CHAIR COE: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Belnap.

19 Mr. Dawson?

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

21 Dr. Roy, as a scientist, obviously your -- your
22 work is highly dependent upon relying upon the data that
23 you collect and the analysis of it. Are you concerned
24 about the quality of the census data, particularly in light
25 of the effect that COVID-19 might have on the collection of

1 that?

2 DR. ROY: Yes, I am concerned about the quality of
3 the census data just because this has been such an
4 extenuating time. And I'm concerned that this pandemic
5 has -- is going to affect people not just in terms of their
6 health, but there is clearly going to be a huge economic
7 cost to this. And I am concerned about how motivated
8 people are going to be to participate in the census data
9 and that is definitely a concern to me.

10 I am not sure what other sources of -- other
11 sources of data that will be available to the Commission,
12 I'm unsure on that point. But I think if the Commission is
13 -- is open to other sources of data, I -- I would really
14 like to see the Commission use every possible source of
15 data that they can to supplement the census data. As I
16 said, I'm not sure what the rules are and what the
17 availability of data is to the Commission but I am
18 definitely quite concerned about the validity of the census
19 data under these circumstances.

20 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

21 I'm sure that this is pretty speculative, but how
22 do you think the Commission should go about dealing with
23 it?

24 I think I remember you said earlier how in the last
25 ten years there's been large advances in statistical

1 analysis, data analysis that might be brought to bear.

2 DR. ROY: Yes. So I think we have to be open to
3 all the analysis tools that are out there, the Commission
4 should be open. However, there also needs to be a little
5 bit of caution in using -- or in solely relying on any kind
6 of statistical tool.

7 For example, I know that there are computational
8 matrices, competitive matrices that are used. Some states
9 even exclusively mandate their use. That I think is not a
10 good idea because every analysis tool comes with its own
11 assumptions and own biases. And it's very important to
12 know what those tools can do and more importantly what they
13 cannot do.

14 But I think under these circumstances, the
15 Commission should be open to not using them in obligatory
16 manner, but using them in a subsidiary role to check or to
17 get them some information about whether the census data and
18 whether the maps that they are drawing are in fact correct
19 or not. So I think the Commission should be open to using
20 the tools that are out there.

21 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

22 I wanted to follow up on one of your responses to I
23 believe it was Ms. Dickison's question where you were
24 talking about filling in the, you know, the remaining
25 commissioners. And you talked about the importance of

1 geographic diversity.

2 And I understood you to say that it is --
3 geographic diversity is sort of a virtue in and of itself,
4 that it lends credibility to the Commission when it goes
5 out and meets the public.

6 Did I understand that correctly?

7 DR. ROY: I didn't mean to suggest that it's a
8 virtue in and of itself. But I think what it would do if
9 the Commission itself had appropriate geographic diversity
10 is give confidence to the public during their public
11 engagement.

12 I mean, for example, if the Commission was solely
13 consists of residents of L.A. County and the Bay Area, for
14 example. And if that Commission now went into the northern
15 parts of our state to engage the public, I do see a problem
16 with that. I see that there would not be as much trust
17 from the public in the Commission as there ought to be.

18 I didn't mean -- and also I want to say that this
19 doesn't mean that the other forms of diversity should be
20 ignored by any means in the Commission. I don't mean to
21 suggest that at all. I think geographic diversity is
22 important, though, specifically since public engagement is
23 such an important part of this Commission.

24 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

25 Those were my only follow ups, Mr. Chair. If any

1 of the other -- if any of the panel members have additional
2 follow ups.

3 CHAIR COE: Ms. Dickison, do you have any follow-up
4 questions?

5 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: I do not.

6 CHAIR COE: Mr. Belnap?

7 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: I do not.

8 CHAIR COE: I do not have any follow-up questions,
9 Counsel.

10 MR. DAWSON: All right. Thank you.

11 Dr. Roy --

12 Excuse me, Madam Secretary, how much time do we
13 have left?

14 MS. PELLMAN: Yes, we have 14 minutes, 35 seconds
15 remaining.

16 MR. DAWSON: All right. Thank you.

17 Well, with the time remaining, Dr. Roy, I'd like to
18 offer you the opportunity to give a closing statement to
19 the panel, if you wish.

20 DR. ROY: Thank you. So first of all, I would like
21 to thank the panel for giving me this opportunity and the
22 time to do this.

23 I want to say that if selected, it would be an
24 honor for me to be on this Commission and I intend to serve
25 with passion and with integrity.

1 I'm looking at the applicant pool right now and I
2 feel that it is a highly qualified pool and there are
3 people from all over the state. You have lawyers, you have
4 people who have extensive experience in public policy and
5 community engagement. You have teachers. It's a great
6 applicant pool. But I don't believe that you have too many
7 other scientists. I don't know the pool completely, I
8 might be the only one or one of very few scientists.

9 So I think as a scientist, I will bring objective
10 reasoning, critical thinking, some very impartial
11 analytical skills. And I think that would be very
12 invaluable to the Commission.

13 And I also think I have the experience of working
14 under conditions of scrutiny and transparency and that,
15 too, will be quite invaluable to the Commission.

16 And finally I think just my diverse story and the
17 diversity that I have had in my life I think is -- I feel
18 it is very enriching to me and so I do believe that it will
19 enrich the Commission as well.

20 So with that, I would like to thank you for giving
21 me this time.

22 CHAIR COE: Thank you, Dr. Roy. Thank you for
23 speaking with us this afternoon.

24 Our next interview is scheduled for 3:00 so we will
25 be in recess until 2:59.

1 DR. ROY: Thank you very much. Nice to meet you
2 all.

3 (Thereupon the Panel recessed at 2:32 p.m.)
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2:59 p.m.

CHAIR COE: Okay. Being 2:59 p.m., I'd like to bring this meeting back to order.

I'd like to welcome at this time Ms. Angela Vasquez.

Can you hear us okay?

MS. VASQUEZ: Yes, I can hear you.

CHAIR COE: Fantastic. Thank you for being here this afternoon. We appreciate your flexibility in rescheduling the interview during these times here.

Go ahead and turn the time over to Mr. Dawson for the five standard questions, please.

MR. DAWSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Ms. Vasquez, I'm going to ask you five standard questions that the panel has requested each applicant respond to.

Are you ready?

MS. VASQUEZ: Yes.

MR. DAWSON: First question. What skills and attributes should all commissioners possess?

What skills or competencies should the Commission possess collectively?

Of the skills, attributes, and competencies that

1 each commissioner should possess, which do you possess?

2 In summary, how will you contribute to the success
3 of the Commission?

4 MS. VASQUEZ: Great. Thank you. I certainly
5 believe there are some core skills and attributes that the
6 commissioners, you know, each commissioner should possess,
7 I think. First and foremost, a strong desire to see an
8 equitable and fair redistricting process. I think that's
9 sort of one of the fundamental attributes for all
10 candidates and for the final commissioners who are chosen.

11 I also believe, you know, a fundamental skill of
12 critical thinking and I think that could look a variety of
13 ways depending on education and experience but certainly I
14 think a demonstration of critical thinking, an ability to
15 analyze complex problems.

16 And I think thirdly, another core attribute and
17 skill is an engagement style that is -- that is open. And
18 I think there are ways to communicate fairly. So certainly
19 communication with the public, you know, should be open and
20 fair and I think similarly, commissioners in their work
21 together and with staff should be -- should be fair and
22 open to -- open to dialog.

23 I certainly think collectively there are some
24 skills that the Commission should -- should have. You
25 know, such as ideally there would -- we would have folks

1 with different types of expertise, whether it's legal
2 expertise, data analysis expertise. I certainly would hope
3 that we have folks who have done community development,
4 community engagement, community organizing such as myself.

5 And I also think that, you know, folks who have
6 either some government, previous governments or leadership
7 or even project management skills or background would be
8 really mission critical for such a -- for such a large and
9 time-sensitive public initiative such as redistricting.

10 For myself, I certainly believe that I have the
11 critical thinking and analysis skills part of -- actually,
12 the major part of my roles in public policy and community
13 advocacy has been sort of, you know, the ability to
14 identify data sets that are relevant to policy, whether
15 it's, you know, educational data, childcare data, et
16 cetera. Distilling that information and then developing
17 policy recommendations based on areas of need, et cetera.
18 So I certainly believe that I have the data analysis skills
19 necessary.

20 I personally am not a lawyer, but I have worked --
21 most of my roles involved extensive work with folks who
22 are. And so while I don't have that expertise, I
23 definitely feel like I bring to the table the ability to
24 code switch. I think with a sort of legislatively-driven
25 process, there are going to be -- there is definitely a

1 need for someone with a legal expertise. However, I feel
2 like one of my core skills and one of the best ways I can
3 contribute to the Commission and contribute to the
4 community processes in forming the Commission is being able
5 to take really complex information, distill that, refine
6 it, and then communicate it across the Commission when
7 we're sort of doing behind the scenes work. And then
8 conversely, being able to communicate the complicated
9 decisions and all the factors that are going in to drawing
10 these maps and communicating those back out to the
11 community.

12 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

13 Question 2. Work on the Commission requires
14 members of different political backgrounds to work
15 together. Since the 2010 Commission was selected and
16 formed, the American political conversation has become
17 increasingly polarized whether in the press, on social
18 media, and even in our own families.

19 What characteristics do you possess and what
20 characteristics should your fellow commissioners possess
21 that will protect against hyperpartisanship?

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

25 MS. VASQUEZ: So I think there are sort of three

1 core things that I think I possess and I would -- I would
2 hope that if selected, my fellow commissioners would
3 possess.

4 The first I think would be a focus and a commitment
5 to the issues. I think certainly in hyperpartisan -- in a
6 hyperpartisan climate, you know, folks -- folks have
7 developed very strong opinions about, you know, a variety
8 of different things. However I think a focus on the issues
9 and impact of those issues on communities, whether it be,
10 you know, the local -- local economies, employment, public
11 education, et cetera, I think focusing on the issues and
12 the issue at hand being redistricting and making sure that
13 those political boundaries are fair I think grounds people
14 in their values. And I think grounding people in their
15 values many of which we all share at some fundamental
16 level, fairness, you know, self-determination, et cetera, I
17 think sort of helps to diffuse a lot of partisan and highly
18 emotional conversations so that you can again talk about
19 things like data. You can talk about things like the
20 impact of, you know, current events on communities and
21 individuals and families, et cetera.

22 I think another important characteristic is really
23 an openness to complexity, right, that people hold varying
24 degrees of views, sometimes even conflicted views. So
25 people themselves I think are not monoliths, certainly you

1 get ten Democrats in a room and they're going to give you
2 ten different opinions on a particular -- on a particular
3 issue, right? So the end I think as commissioners knowing
4 that, right, but we will be engaging with different
5 communities who we may think may hold very similar views
6 but once actually engaging on -- engaging with those
7 communities will very likely see a broad range of opinions,
8 et cetera.

9 So I think definitely an openness to complexity, an
10 openness to conflicting viewpoints even within individuals
11 or groups of individuals who we would otherwise think are
12 very similar is -- is going to be something I think that's
13 really important for diffusing, again, conversations that
14 could get very, very high conflict.

15 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

16 Question 3. What is the greatest problem the
17 Commission could encounter, and what actions would you take
18 to avoid or respond to this problem?

19 MS. VASQUEZ: I think the first and probably one
20 that is most top of mind I would hope for everybody is
21 really the census and the great I think opportunity there
22 is right now for -- for undercounting everybody in the
23 state of California.

24 I think already our state was at great risk of
25 undercounting our most vulnerable residents. You know,

1 immigrants, children, certainly folks who are homeless,
2 folks who are highly mobile, low-income folks. I think
3 those populations who are already really vulnerable and
4 already are, you know, have been historically marginalized
5 in the political process and in the policymaking process.

6 I think especially now with, you know, shelter-in-
7 place orders sort of indefinitely into the future, I think
8 we're at even greater risk of undercounting those -- those
9 folks. And I think in terms of a strategy to at least
10 mitigate the impact, I certainly don't think the Commission
11 itself is going to have much on the front end of preventing
12 an undercounting of the census but I certainly would hope
13 that the Commission could think creatively about how they
14 might engage on sort of the back end after the fact.
15 Whether it's community groups, what are data sets that the
16 Commission could use or have access to to fill in those
17 gaps?

18 I think being, again, having commissioners who are
19 mindful that, you know, that there is great risk of the
20 census not being the end all, be all data set for which we
21 are drawing maps that, you know, to the, again, the extent
22 legally possible that we could be creative in -- in pulling
23 other pieces of information to fill in the gaps that the
24 census -- that the census will leave.

25 I think related -- relatedly another challenge to

1 the Commission is sort of the increasing racial and ethnic
2 segregation across California. That, you know, as our
3 state has gotten more diverse, we have geographically
4 segregated ourselves quite a bit for a variety of reasons,
5 mainly economics and historical segregation. And so,
6 again, I think as a Commission, to the extent possible
7 being creative about how -- how -- what kinds of
8 information we are able to use both quantitative data about
9 communities but also our ability to be flexible with real
10 time communication community, like community -- community
11 engagement efforts that aren't just in person but either
12 driven by, you know, online initiatives, digital
13 initiatives, I think are going to be really important to,
14 again, getting additional pieces of information that
15 otherwise we would not have access to.

16 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Question 4. If you are
17 selected, you will be one of 14 members of the Commission
18 which is charged with working together to create maps of
19 the new districts. Please describe a situation where you
20 had to work collaboratively with others on a project to
21 achieve a common goal. Tell us the goal of the project,
22 what your role in the group was, and how the group worked
23 through any conflicts that arose.

24 What lessons would you take from this group
25 experience to the Commission, if selected?

1 MS. VASQUEZ: So as a policy analyst at Advancement
2 Project, I was the lead organizer and really founder of a
3 broad-based coalition of advocates who historically had not
4 really worked together on anything.

5 So a little bit of background. You know, in 2013,
6 the state really radically changed its -- the way it funds
7 public education. And our organization thought as an
8 opportunity to ensure that vulnerable populations of
9 students were not left out of that reworking of -- of
10 public education finance. Because I was the resident
11 social worker at Advancement Project and I had a great boss
12 who allowed me to sort of identify a project and run with
13 it, I saw an opportunity to ensure that LAUSD's 8,000,
14 9,000-plus foster youths benefitted again from this huge
15 statewide policy shift.

16 So I -- I had a passion and interest but not a lot
17 of contacts or information about how -- how this policy
18 might impact foster youth. I just knew that I -- I had,
19 again, a drive to -- to make sure that those kids
20 benefitted from it. So I was able to sort of go out into
21 my professional networks and identify, you know, legal
22 service organizations, community advocates, youth
23 advocates, foster youth themselves and I established the
24 Coalition for Educational Equity for Foster Youth. And
25 over about six months, we -- I convened them and we

1 developed really a policy platform that we then took to
2 LAUSD, the second largest school district in the nation.

3 And that policy platform included a request of
4 \$10 million in new spending for -- for foster youth. So
5 that would have taken LAUSD's budget for their 9,000 kids
6 from three staff members to about 100. And it was -- it
7 was several meetings with Board of Education members that I
8 facilitated as well as many, many conversations with
9 existing administrators within the District, again, trying
10 to get as much input to create an actual roadmap for the
11 District of how they would implement our policy platform
12 and fund it. Right?

13 So the results of that was over about a year of
14 advocacy and engagement, I was able to help our coalition
15 secure that \$10 million. And so it was this huge new model
16 program for foster youth. And it was really informed by my
17 leadership and as well as my ability to bring together both
18 those advocates who had a variety -- like a huge variety of
19 opinions about what the District should be doing and how
20 they should be doing it and really built consensus for our
21 group so that we could go with one voice to those
22 policymakers.

23 And I feel like with all of that work on the
24 coalition is very similar to the kinds of, you know,
25 community stakeholder engagement that I would -- I would do

1 as a commissioner in the redistricting process. And I
2 think the way that I engage those elected officials and
3 policymakers gives me a really important perspective in how
4 community members would be approaching the Commission.

5 I certainly was a passionate advocate in, you know,
6 board meetings, giving public comments to LAUSD and, you
7 know, certainly, I had the backing again of a coalition of
8 folks. And I really appreciated the complexities that the
9 board members had in terms of weighing different budget
10 priorities. We were certainly not the only interest group
11 going to the board with our request and our ask and I'm
12 grateful that we won. But I certainly was cognizant that
13 we were one of many, many, many voices and organizations
14 and coalitions who were asking for really the same thing.
15 And so certainly that experience is going to be top of mind
16 for me as a commissioner knowing that, you know, there are
17 going to be lots of groups represented arguing passionately
18 and being able to weigh those voices among the many -- the
19 many others that will be present for sure.

20 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

21 Question 5. A considerable amount of the
22 Commission's work will involve meeting with people from all
23 over California who come from very different backgrounds
24 and a wide variety of 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 of
6 communities of different backgrounds and who have a variety
7 of perspectives?

8 MS. VAZQUEZ: I -- I certainly feel like I -- I
9 have extensive experience for navigating productive
10 disagreements and facilitating group decision making
11 certainly with my work on the coalition. Again, working
12 with folks who are very passionate, have their own
13 viewpoints and experiences in -- in child welfare and in
14 the foster care system and the public education system. So
15 certainly a big part of that coalition work was navigating
16 disagreements in a productive way and building consensus.
17 Acknowledging -- acknowledging when disagreements were
18 happening and then facilitating the group to move past that
19 toward a decision point or even a decision to table a
20 conversation for a later date.

21 I think sometimes it's important to know when to
22 let a conversation breathe and when -- when to -- give
23 folks space and when to push people. And -- so that was --
24 I definitely think that's a skill that I have developed and
25 would certainly bring to the Commission experience for

1 sure.

2 In terms of -- in terms of sort of more broad --
3 more broad experience, I mean, as -- at State School Board
4 Association where I currently am now, I am responsible for
5 being a liaison for 31 school districts in the northeastern
6 part of L.A. County. L.A. County is huge and we're -- we
7 are incredibly diverse. And each of those 31 school
8 districts represent a very different community from really
9 their neighbor.

10 We have -- you know, I work with folks who are in
11 very well-off suburban foothill communities in the San
12 Gabriel Mountain. And then I have working class immigrant
13 communities that I work with, school districts that I work
14 with the San Gabriel Valley. And my work there is really
15 both identifying their individual interests and hoping and,
16 you know, working to get -- ensure that they -- that
17 district has what they need to educate their students well.
18 And also identifying areas of commonality, whether it's
19 common interest or common need and communicating that
20 backup to my headquarters so that we can develop and refine
21 our own policy and legislative agenda based on what we've
22 identified as areas of common interest.

23 I certainly also feel like, you know, I'm a woman
24 of color. I grew up in the Inland Empire. My parents are
25 both second generation. So I grew up among immigrants but

1 I don't -- I do not have an immigrant experience myself,
2 but I'm sensitized to it. And I certainly feel like I
3 think that's an important attribute for hopefully all --
4 all commissioners to have is this sensitization to a
5 variety of communities.

6 I don't -- I don't know that it's possible for
7 every commissioner, including myself, to know everything
8 about every subcommunity or have, you know, deep expertise
9 on rural communities in Northern California. But I think
10 what I have and what I would hope other commissioners have
11 is a mindfulness of what you don't -- you don't know what
12 you don't know but you can certainly be sensitized and
13 mindful of what you don't know and an openness to learning
14 more.

15 And I think because I'm a woman of color, I sort
16 of expect to go in as -- as someone with a different
17 experience than the folks around me, especially in the
18 professional workspace. So I think my own professional and
19 personal experiences have sensitized me to -- to being
20 among people who are different and developing working
21 collaborative relationships with those folks.

22 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. We will now go to panel
23 questions. Each of the panel members will have 20 minutes
24 to ask his or her questions.

25 And we will start with the Chair, Mr. Coe.

1 CHAIR COE: Thank you, Counsel.

2 Good afternoon again to you, Ms. Vasquez. Thank
3 you again for being here and speaking with us today.

4 In your application, you used the words leader or
5 leadership in your essays quite a bit. And I got a strong
6 sense from the application and from hearing you talk today
7 that you are a doer, someone that likes to --

8 MS. VASQUEZ: Yeah.

9 CHAIR COE: -- get involved, to jump in and lead
10 the effort to get things done.

11 In fact, you mentioned that you were -- you were
12 recruited to the Pacific Oaks College Board of Trustees by
13 a colleague because he was impressed by your ability to
14 lead mission-based work.

15 MS. VASQUEZ: Yeah.

16 CHAIR COE: If you were appointed to the
17 Commission, you'd be one of 14 people who may also be
18 themselves strong leaders as well.

19 MS. VASQUEZ: Yes.

20 CHAIR COE: How would you work with other
21 commissioners who also viewed themselves in this same
22 capacity?

23 MS. VASQUEZ: That is a great question. And I
24 think I'd go back to the coalition which is where my
25 colleague Ryan who recruited me to the Pacific Oaks Board,

1 why he recruited me to the board. I led the Coalition for
2 Educational Equity for the past three years and in that
3 experience, I was certainly working with folks who -- who
4 had their own egos, who had their own agendas, who had
5 their own missions, who were experts absolutely in their
6 own right in many ways more so than myself. And part of --
7 part of my work I saw as an organizer and a facilitator was
8 often -- sometimes, especially in those conversations was
9 to step back and let -- let folks have conversations and
10 disagreements, a bit of what I was referring to earlier,
11 let folks sort of have conversations amongst themselves.
12 And I myself take a more an observer role.

13 I don't always have to add to or, you know, direct
14 a conversation. I think -- I balance my sort of doer side
15 with my learner side. I'm a huge nerd and I think I'm
16 always sort of very dynamically taking a sort of jump in
17 and participate and then step back and see sort of what --
18 what happens. I like to think that's actually one of my --
19 one of my strengths is the ability to take the microphone
20 but then also be able to step back and encourage others to
21 be more proactive in their leadership as well.

22 Because I think -- I certainly again do -- probably
23 rarely ever have if ever the monopoly on truth or a truth
24 or what is right. So I certainly feel like especially on a
25 commission of, you know, 14 other folks that I -- if there

1 is space to lead, that I would be confident enough to take
2 that space to lead, and certainly in spaces where it makes
3 more sense for me to observe and listen. And even be
4 challenged, be challenged by other -- my other
5 commissioners. I certainly hope that I have the strength
6 of character to be listen -- or to listen and be open to my
7 other commissioners' experience and leadership for sure.

8 CHAIR COE: What would you envision as your role on
9 the Commission if you were to be appointed?

10 MS. VASQUEZ: I view it as in many ways a thought
11 partner. As a -- I view myself as in relation to the state
12 of California certainly a leader and a public servant.
13 Right? That this is -- this is not my Commission, these
14 are not my maps, these are the communities' maps, this is
15 our state's maps, these are our state's political
16 boundaries. This is that community. That community,
17 hopefully, ideally will decide who -- who is a part of
18 their community and what those boundaries, again, to the
19 extent legally possible what those boundaries are.

20 I think in relationship to my other commissioners,
21 I think we are joint stewards of a process. And joint
22 stewards and thought partners to each other and leaders of
23 staff, directors of staff who will be giving us information
24 for us to make those really important decisions.

25 So, yeah, that's how I view broadly my role. I

1 think it sort of depends on what relationship you're
2 talking about.

3 CHAIR COE: Thank you.

4 MS. VASQUEZ: Yeah.

5 CHAIR COE: It wasn't clear from your application
6 how many groups or organizations that you are currently
7 involved in. Outside of your regular job, you're on the
8 Board of Trustees at Pacific Oaks College; is that correct?

9 MS. VASQUEZ: Yes. And currently that is my
10 volunteer civic engagement.

11 CHAIR COE: So are there any other organizations
12 that you're currently part of?

13 MS. VASQUEZ: Not right now, no.

14 CHAIR COE: How would you balance your role -- your
15 regular role in your regular job and your role on the Board
16 of Trustees at the college with your service on the
17 Redistricting Commission?

18 MS. VASQUEZ: I certainly would devote -- I view
19 the role of -- the work of the Commission to be intense and
20 for me would be my top priority. I would like to think
21 that my job would allow me to go part time should I need to
22 devote more time to the Commission work if, you know, if
23 that was required.

24 I will say that I -- I took -- I applied for the
25 Commission knowing that luckily I have the financial

1 flexibility to not work a full-time salaried job. And I
2 know that that is not the case for many folks my age.
3 Certainly many folks, you know, within my communities,
4 whether it's in L.A. County. Certainly none of my own
5 family members could afford to even go part time in their
6 current role and I view that as a huge privilege for myself
7 that I can even consider taking on something like this as
8 someone who is not retired, as someone who does not, you
9 know, make certainly enough income to take a year of
10 absence, two years of absence without an income.

11 You know, I'm lucky enough -- I'm lucky enough that
12 I -- I feel like my, you know, my life currently allows me
13 to devote as much time as possible to do such an important
14 public service, I feel like. So I definitely plan to
15 commit wholeheartedly to the Commission's work.

16 CHAIR COE: Thank you.

17 So you currently live in L.A. County and you
18 mentioned you were born in the Inland Empire.

19 MS. VASQUEZ: Yes.

20 CHAIR COE: Outside of those regions, tell us about
21 some experiences you've had in other parts of the state and
22 what you may have learned from the people in those regions
23 outside your home areas, about their concerns and their
24 perspectives and their needs and their desires that would -
25 - that would make you an effective representative for them

1 on this Commission.

2 MS. VASQUEZ: Certainly. I -- in my work as a
3 children's advocate at several organizations, a lot of my
4 work has required me to be both a local capacity builder
5 and then also a member of various sort of statewide
6 collaboratives or commissions or what have you. And
7 through that work, I have been able to meet a lot of
8 children's advocates, public administrators not just in
9 Sacramento but oftentimes because these are statewide
10 bodies.

11 You know, I've worked with folks from Sonoma
12 County, you know, in the wake of the fires and how -- and
13 learning how they were struggling to serve student --
14 homeless students in those -- in those counties. I was on
15 a statewide collaborative for -- for public schools and how
16 we were changing our accountability system. And I actually
17 remember a particular instance in meeting with that group
18 that folks from way up north in California had taken two
19 days to travel down to Sacramento for this meeting because
20 there weren't direct flights to Sacramento.

21 And to me it was sort of like, oh, yes, there are
22 places in California where, you know, there's not air
23 access, they didn't get, you know, they didn't walk into
24 LAX, jump on a plane, get to Sacramento in an hour and
25 half. That these folks have driven two whole days, stayed

1 in a hotel to come to this meeting in Sacramento. And I
2 think, you know, there're certainly -- I have learned
3 through my work that there are geographic barriers, income
4 barriers for folks who are more remote or more rural in
5 California.

6 And I would, again, I'm certainly not an expert in
7 those communities or geographies but I am sensitive to the
8 fact that they exist. And as a commissioner, we would need
9 to think through -- think through really well how we're
10 going to meaningfully engage those kind of communities.

11 You know, likewise, there are desert communities
12 even within L.A. County that most -- I would say most of
13 the advocates in L.A. County do not even bother engaging
14 with sort of the north -- the northern rural desert part of
15 our county. But because that's where most of our county
16 places their kids in foster care. For two years, I was
17 driving three and a half hours out to the desert to go --
18 to go work with school district administrators out in the
19 Antelope Valley because I felt so strongly that because
20 that was where the need was, that was where my work and our
21 organization's work should be.

22 So, again, certainly I don't -- I don't have an
23 expertise on all of the geographies of California, but I
24 think by virtue of my work, I'm sensitive to the fact that
25 there are going to be a lot of access and community

1 engagement barriers for folks across California. And I
2 would hope as a Commission, we would work to overcome those
3 barriers.

4 CHAIR COE: Thank you.

5 Staying on the subject of communities, one of the
6 biggest tasks from the Commission is to identify
7 communities of interest all across the state.

8 One thing I noticed in your application is that you
9 have some experience developing a community outreach
10 program. And specifically you talk about your -- your --
11 is it the Painted Brain?

12 MS. VASQUEZ: Yes.

13 CHAIR COE: Where you did an internship?

14 MS. VASQUEZ: Yes.

15 CHAIR COE: That experience that you had in
16 developing community outreach programs, I'm wondering how
17 you think that could assist your role on the Commission in
18 identifying communities of interest throughout the state
19 keeping in mind that some communities are -- are fairly
20 easy to find and some are more difficult to locate and are
21 less engaged.

22 And how do you think your experience developing
23 community outreach efforts assists in identifying
24 communities of interest throughout the state particularly
25 those that may be more difficult to locate?

1 MS. VASQUEZ: For sure. So the Painted Brain was
2 an interesting internship, social work internship. So it
3 was -- it was a collaborative of young adults with mental
4 illness of varying severity but really in many cases the
5 folks that we ended up working most with were folks who
6 were traditionally disengaged from other sort of peer led
7 groups. They're -- even in the mental health community,
8 they're sort of a hierarchy of diagnoses and those folks
9 with more severe diagnoses often were left out of, you
10 know, youth support groups, peer support groups, et cetera.

11 And so our work at the Painted Brain was to go out
12 and find those folks who would benefit from knowing each
13 other but who weren't necessarily there right at the table.
14 Right? And I think that sort of -- that's indicative of
15 community work generally. Right?

16 I'm forever -- I was joking with a colleague that
17 the nature of community work is, you know, hosting a public
18 meeting and having the three same -- the same three people
19 come every time. And what really you want the other 97
20 people, you know, or a group of 100, you want to know what
21 those other 97 other people are saying.

22 And so I think in that sense as a Commission, we
23 would have to be really proactive. I certainly think
24 opening a space and seeing who comes is one -- is one
25 important constituency to hear from and there will

1 certainly be community groups who would be proactive at
2 coming to us as a Commission. But I think then again being
3 mindful that there will be many other voices immigrant
4 communities, rural communities, very low income, unhoused
5 communities whose input we will either need to create a
6 plan to get directly or to develop really good
7 relationships with close representatives who will hopefully
8 be able to facilitate a dialog with those kinds of
9 communities or who will be able to help inform us about
10 those communities which are traditionally really hard to
11 engage again. You know, those ones that come to mind are
12 immigrants and unhoused folks. But certainly there are
13 others.

14 CHAIR COE: Thank you.

15 Madam Secretary, could I get a time check, please.

16 MS. PELLMAN: Yes. We have 5 minutes, 5 seconds
17 remaining.

18 CHAIR COE: Thank you.

19 Ms. Vasquez, could you give us an example of a time
20 where you had to make a difficult impartial decision that
21 involves setting aside your preference, your self-interest.

22 MS. VASQUEZ: Yes. With that, I really would go
23 back to the Coalition for Educational Equity for Foster
24 Youth here in L.A.

25 I facilitated and led that coalition knowing that I

1 was not the expert and that I convened a table of folks who
2 knew so much more about the child welfare system and the
3 foster care system than I ever could. Certainly as of that
4 point a pretty young professional. With that said, by
5 virtue of my role at Advancement Project, I did feel myself
6 at least compared to the rest of Coalition, I was certainly
7 more aware of and sensitive to both the budget constraint
8 of L.A. Unified, the political dynamics at play. That was
9 my expertise that I was bringing to that coalition.

10 And certainly in those conversation -- in those
11 coalition conversations as we were trying to develop our
12 policy platform, I was often the lone voice reminding the
13 coalition that we were like -- unlikely to get -- unlikely
14 to get any new programs. Right? That the District had
15 made very clear that they weren't going to invest any new
16 money, that they were just going to do business as usual.
17 And that was really their way of managing advocates like us
18 and our expectations.

19 And I think I -- it didn't take me a long time but
20 it certainly -- I think I had to -- I realized that that
21 was not building consensus with my group, that sort of -- I
22 was sort of the stickler and the Negative Nancy in that
23 group. And rather than continue to push that hey, you
24 guys, we're not going to get anything, but we should really
25 be at the table anyway, I had to set aside this what I

1 thought was managing expectations and again work toward
2 finding an advocacy platform that excited our coalition.

3 In the end, I'm really glad I did that and that I -
4 - I let better angels prevail because we actually did get
5 up getting \$10 million in new spending from -- from LAUSD
6 for these students. And I don't know that we would have
7 gotten that had I not just shut up and listened to the
8 passion and the moral suasion of the rest of the group.

9 And so I think that was a really big lesson for me
10 that again, you know, I'm not always, I'm not going to be
11 the expert. And many -- and a lot of cases it may be
12 better for me to sit and reflect on the truth that the
13 group is trying to communicate to me.

14 CHAIR COE: Thank you.

15 Time check, please.

16 MS. PELLMAN: One minute, 34 seconds.

17 CHAIR COE: Okay. No further questions. At this
18 time I'll go ahead and turn the time over to Ms. Dickison.

19 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you.

20 Good afternoon, Ms. Vasquez. Did I say that right?

21 MS. VASQUEZ: Vasquez. Yeah.

22 VICE CHAIR: Vasquez. Okay. Thank you.

23 So Mr. Coe asked a number of my questions. But so
24 the majority of your career it appears has been in
25 advocacy, correct?

1 MS. VASQUEZ: Yes.

2 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Okay. Given that, what do
3 you see as the Commission's role or what do you see as
4 advocacy or what role do you think advocacy should have in
5 the Commission's work?

6 MS. VASQUEZ: Certainly I see the Commission's work
7 as being the recipients of advocacy. In this case, you
8 know, I would be on the other end of the work that I
9 usually do. You know, my work, my professional work and
10 even my personal work has often been, you know, advocating
11 on behalf of communities to decision makers, to
12 policymakers, even to public administrators in many cases.
13 And so the role of the Commission I would see are -- are
14 recipient of advocacy as it relates to communities of
15 interest and where those -- where communities believe their
16 boundaries should be drawn. As it should be, right, that
17 we're a representative body and the reason why California
18 has moved to a citizen's Redistricting Commission is
19 because we feel like citizens and not politicians will be
20 more responsive to community interests as they shift, as
21 they change.

22 Now with that said, I do think because it's a group
23 of 14 people, there are going to be -- there's going to be
24 internal advocacy happening that's -- that's going to be
25 present in the group dynamic, right, that there're going to

1 be folks who have strongly held values. And I certainly
2 think that's going to be part of the dialog among the
3 Commission is, you know, we have this group saying the line
4 should be here and we have this other group saying the line
5 should be here. And I imagine that even -- even to the
6 extent that commissioners are impartial, they're going to
7 be making decisions based on their values and their
8 experiences.

9 And so I think even, you know, I'd imagine that
10 those conversations will look like advocacy in sort of
11 weighing, you know, each other's comments and perspectives
12 as commissioners. That to me is also advocacy. Yeah, but
13 I see it sort of -- the dynamic happening both externally
14 and internally.

15 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Okay. So thinking about what
16 you were just talking about, about two different groups
17 having, you know, kind of not agreeing on where the lines
18 should be, how do you -- how do you see that type of thing
19 being weighed and, I mean, what, if there's one thing that
20 should be weighed more than another?

21 MS. VASQUEZ: You know, I -- in the abstract it
22 would be hard -- it would certainly be hard to say. I
23 mean, again, there are going to be legal requirements that
24 the Commission is going to have to be weighing. There are
25 going to have to be practical considerations to be weighed.

1 And so I certainly would like to think that it would be
2 situation specific. Each of these boundaries are going to
3 be unique, each of these communities are going to be
4 unique. And there are going to -- there's going to be
5 diversity within -- within these communities.

6 And so, again, that's sort of where this ability to
7 be impartial I think becomes really -- really relevant. To
8 be able to at least that first pass weigh -- weigh
9 competing interest -- potentially competing interest,
10 different interests similarly and then through the lens of,
11 you know, legal requirements, practical requirements, et
12 cetera, be able to tease out those potential tradeoffs.

13 And I think that's where the work of the 14
14 commissioners is going to be most important is being able
15 as a team, as a group collectively decide with, you know,
16 holding that importance of saying we -- we were thoughtful
17 about the decision we were making in this particular
18 instance and be able to justify it to the public.

19 I hope that answers your question.

20 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: It does. Thank you. Give me
21 just a minute.

22 MS. VASQUEZ: Yeah.

23 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Okay. When you were thinking
24 of communities of interest and what might bind those
25 communities together, what do you think may influence their

1 preference for representation?

2 MS. VASQUEZ: I'm so sorry. Could you repeat that
3 last part of the question? I think --

4 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: What may -- I'm sorry, what
5 may influence community preference for representation? And
6 how could that differ between the regions?

7 MS. VASQUEZ: Got it. Great. Thank you.

8 I certainly think for me what comes top of mind in
9 terms of what influence -- influences preference for
10 representation is, you know, many of the demographic
11 differences among people that I think are, you know, are
12 pretty salient, whether it's racial and ethnic differences,
13 immigration status, income, profession, education, ability,
14 you know, gender, et cetera, I think all of those things
15 and more really are going into different communities of
16 interest. Right? But that's -- I think that's also,
17 especially when we're talking about drawing political
18 lines, I certainly think that the very salient demographics
19 are going to be important like race and ethnicity, like
20 income, like immigration status are going to be very
21 important.

22 And I would also hope that the Commission,
23 especially as the lines get more granular, try to look for
24 diversity within -- within communities where it may not be
25 readily apparent. Whether it's, you know, like I said,

1 profession or geography, rural, urban, suburban, what have
2 you, those are important factors that aren't typically
3 thought of but I think again as a Commission would hope
4 that we would have staff and the data to be able to make
5 nuanced decisions about how communities prefer to have
6 their representatives and their lines be drawn.

7 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you.

8 Let's see. If -- so the way the Commission is
9 selected, the first eight are selected randomly and then
10 they select the final six.

11 If you were selected as one of the six -- or one of
12 the eight, what would you be looking for in those final
13 six?

14 MS. VASQUEZ: Certainly would look, you know,
15 definitely depends on the composition of the eight. I'm
16 thinking political partisan diversity, gender diversity,
17 racial ethnic diversity. I would really hope, again, just
18 considering the own demographics of our state that we would
19 have someone who has an immigrant experience. If not an
20 immigrant themselves, that at least again coming from a
21 community where that is really salient for them and top of
22 mind for them in their experience.

23 You know, I'm third generation so I'm sensitized to
24 it but it's certainly not something that I -- it's not a
25 community that I would ever feel comfortable speaking on

1 behalf of. So, you know, I would look hopefully for
2 someone to have an immigrant experience.

3 I would like to see some education diversity. I
4 think it's very possible for the Commission to be stacked
5 with experts and nerds and, you know, very, very highly
6 accomplished folks traditionally speaking. And personally
7 I think folks who have a high school degree have a lot to
8 offer in terms of drawing political boundaries. So I would
9 sort of look for some education or professional experience
10 diversity on the Commission.

11 Those are the two that are top of mind. I think
12 there's demographics, certainly. But I also think that
13 there are certain experiences that just by virtue of the
14 Commission, we would need to be intentional about making
15 sure that the Commission is as representative of our
16 state's diversity and a variety of characteristics.

17 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you.

18 So I want to go back to a little bit talking about
19 when I asked about what role you thought advocacy could
20 play and you responded that, you know, the Commission being
21 recipient of that. So you've done that work, that type of
22 work.

23 Looking at the last Commission noted is that they -
24 - note that there were times that certain speakers at
25 public events may not have been a member of the community

1 that they were saying they were representing but they were
2 actually, you know, advocating for a political position
3 instead.

4 Do you think with your background, that would --
5 you would have something additional that could help the
6 Commission work through that type of thing?

7 MS. VASQUEZ: I certainly think so. I mean, I
8 think -- I certainly think that advocates -- I certainly
9 think as an advocate myself, I sort of have an intuition
10 about -- I don't even know, I wouldn't even call them
11 nefarious factors, but folks who like you were saying maybe
12 aren't representing the interest of the community that they
13 are claimed to be a part of or speaking on behalf of.

14 And I think that's sort of where my cognizance of,
15 you know, these are representatives that may or may not
16 have been chosen by community members to speak on their
17 behalf. And weighing -- being able to take what they're
18 saying as their -- as their individual truth and
19 understanding that that may not be everyone's truth in that
20 community again.

21 So I'm Mexican-American but I don't speak on behalf
22 of all Mexican-Americans, right? And to that extent, I
23 think there's -- there're -- I know you're going to always
24 have to weigh the validity and street cred, for lack of a
25 better term. Hopefully you're able to do some if, you

1 know, you're able to do some background research on folks
2 who are speaking and presenting to the Commission in a
3 formal capacity. You know, certainly written public
4 comment, you can search and see if that person really is,
5 you know, is vetted by the community that they're planning
6 to speak on behalf of. I think that's another strategy is
7 hopefully on the back end being able to vet folks who are -
8 - who are speaking, claim to speak on behalf of folks.

9 MS. PELLMAN: You have 5 minutes, 14 seconds
10 remaining.

11 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you.

12 So you mentioned that you have more than --
13 response to Question 1, you made the comment that out have
14 the ability to identify data sets that are relevant to
15 policy.

16 How do you think that ability would be helpful to
17 the work of the Commission?

18 MS. VASQUEZ: Yes. Especially, you know, as a
19 children's advocate, many times I -- I did not have -- the
20 data that I wanted to have did not exist. And so whether
21 at the state level, usually at the state level. And so I
22 had -- I had to get creative about the proxy data sets or
23 in some -- in a lot of cases, qualitative information I had
24 to go out and gather to answer the questions that I had.

25 So, you know, as an example, I had a project

1 related to childcare services for kids in foster care. The
2 state does not track that information. The state doesn't
3 know how many kids in foster care are also receiving
4 subsidized childcare. And so through both, you know,
5 qualitative engagement with experts, childcare
6 administrators, you know, foster parents, I got a general
7 sense of where that data might exist at the local level and
8 then I had to go on the back end, really do some -- some
9 direct surveys of foster parents in L.A. County to get at
10 least a somewhat representative sample about how many young
11 kids in foster care might be in preschool or childcare.

12 So in some ways that might be a product of being
13 nonprofit staff is that many times there aren't -- many
14 times there will be huge data sets that you can download
15 and like play with and do statistical analysis on, but a
16 lot of times the questions you want answered aren't going
17 to have cut and dry data answers to them. And so as a
18 commissioner, I would like to think that I would help steer
19 the group into thinking creatively about proxy data sets or
20 proxy information sets qualitative information that we
21 could use to answer questions we had about where
22 communities of interests are.

23 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you.

24 So at this moment I don't have any additional
25 questions so I yield my time.

1 CHAIR COE: Thank you, Ms. Dickison.

2 Mr. Belnap, the time is yours.

3 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right. Good afternoon.

4 MS. VASQUEZ: Good afternoon.

5 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: So you graduated with a
6 bachelor's from Claremont and went on to USC to get a
7 master's degree in social work.

8 When did you know that you wanted to study social
9 work and why?

10 MS. VASQUEZ: Oh, that's a fun question.

11 So I went to Claremont McKenna. I actually
12 transferred my freshman year to Claremont McKenna after one
13 year at the University of La Verne. My parents are both
14 public school teachers, they're first-generation college
15 graduates. All they knew in terms of advising me about my
16 career was you're smart so you should either be a doctor or
17 a lawyer. I had no interest in being a doctor or a lawyer.

18 I knew I wanted to do public service. I knew that
19 I didn't want to teach. And so I spent most of my college
20 years sort of floating and wandering. Part of why I ended
21 up at Claremont McKenna was that I knew that was where you
22 wanted to go if you wanted to do work in government. And I
23 said, okay. And I went there, realized that, you know, the
24 ethos there was much more conservative than what resonated
25 with me. And so I hid out in the psychology department and

1 got a lot of really great data skills but not really sure
2 what I wanted to do with those data skills.

3 And so going to social work school was really my
4 way of sort of splitting the difference. Do I want to do
5 clinical work and work directly one on one with children or
6 families or individuals and serve that way? Or do I want
7 to do community work organizing, policy, advocacy, and
8 social work as a discipline? I want -- I love it so much
9 is really grounded in both individual clinical direct
10 practice work and that community organizing public policy
11 work that also drew me very passionately.

12 And so going to social work school really
13 solidified for me that my career was going to be both
14 informed by really other's direct clinical practice, but
15 that I saw my role as a system social worker being in
16 advocacy in community organizing and development, but
17 always being informed by direct individual experiences.

18 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right. Thank you.

19 MS. VASQUEZ: Yeah.

20 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: So I'm curious about the
21 \$10 million that in funding that you secured from in the
22 LAUSD budget.

23 What specifically does the funding do for foster
24 youth?

25 MS. VASQUEZ: So it was dedicated to hiring 100

1 school-based social workers for those foster youth
2 students. So I think I mentioned historically, LAUSD had
3 three dedicated central administrators to serve 9,000-plus
4 kids across all of their school sites. And so we as a
5 coalition identified a broad need of capacity.

6 We just need boots on the ground, we need people,
7 we need -- we, foster youth, foster youth students need
8 people they can go to, interact with directly to be able to
9 get their individual education needs met. They needed an
10 advocate on the ground, they needed an ally, they needed
11 sort of a case manager, someone to help navigate --
12 navigate especially high school students.

13 I always thought, I think there was a lot of
14 disagreement in that coalition as to whether school-based
15 social workers were the best use of that \$10 million. And
16 there was a lot -- there was a lot of debate within our
17 coalition about what that \$10 million should be used for.
18 I personally as an advocate and a public policy person saw
19 that as the district scaffolding. That that was a
20 commitment, that was a stake in the ground that the board
21 said we care about our foster youth so much that we are
22 going to make a line item in the budget for these kids.
23 And that our job as advocates was to help shape what that
24 looked like.

25 So, you know, certainly I think this -- it was a

1 new program, it actually ended up being absorbed by a
2 bigger program just last year. But I think -- I think that
3 -- that \$10 million was certainly a huge win no matter what
4 it looked like because it signaled from the second largest
5 school district in the nation that they -- that they really
6 cared about one of our most vulnerable student populations.
7 And I was really proud to help shape what that looked like.

8 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: So where do you feel your
9 passion for foster youth comes from?

10 MS. VASQUEZ: You know, I -- my first -- my first
11 year in social work school, I was -- I was placed as a case
12 manager at a group home in south L.A. It was a group home
13 for young women ages 12 to 17. It was a group home, was
14 basically the last stop before these young women either
15 went to juvenile halls or went into locked mental health
16 facilities. So these were young women with really, really
17 challenging individual needs. And I loved working with
18 those young women and I hated the context in which I was
19 working.

20 Not necessarily even the group home, but just the
21 administration of the foster care system and how much I had
22 to fight with a system I couldn't even wrap my arms around
23 as a young professional, right, as a graduate student. And
24 that really for me put a fire in my belly for systems work.
25 And for -- and systems work broadly defined.

1 I think a lot of the great work that I did in many
2 roles was not just the \$10 million for foster youth from
3 LAUSD, but a lot of the administrative changes. I actually
4 helped make a school site level whether it was out in the
5 Antelope Valley, you know, putting in -- helping to put in
6 a process of an education evaluation for every single
7 elementary student at Palmdale School District so that
8 those foster youth had an administrator look at their whole
9 record and assess their needs.

10 So, again, I think that experience at the group
11 home helped me see that there -- that systems changed with
12 an equity lens can look a lot of different ways but that
13 someone needed to do it. And someone with a passion needed
14 to do it and find others who wanted to do that with them.
15 So that's where that comes from.

16 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay. Thank you.

17 In response to a question that you answered from
18 Ms. Dickison, you talked about external advocacy and
19 internal advocacy. Then you thought that on the
20 Commission, there will be strongly held values and
21 preferences. So there'll be some level of internal
22 advocacy on the Commission.

23 MS. VASQUEZ: Uh-huh.

24 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: What or for whom do you think
25 you'll be advocating for in terms of internal advocacy if

1 you were selected to be a commissioner?

2 MS. VASQUEZ: I would think fairness and equity. I
3 think that can look, that's going to look different ways to
4 different people on the Commission. And I ultimately for
5 me I would say probably the most relevant value that would
6 inform those conversations with my commissioners are that
7 people are the experts in their own experiences. And that
8 we should, we are being asked to weigh other folks,
9 individuals and communities, deeply held truths.

10 We're going -- we're -- like, we're going to have
11 to make really tough decisions because these are bright --
12 ultimately in the end, we're going to be drawing bright
13 lines, this person lives here and so they are part of this
14 community as it relates to political representation. This
15 person across the street belongs in this community of
16 interest. So we are going to have to be drawing bright
17 lines.

18 And so to that end we, I think the advocacy in the
19 Commission is going to be informed hopefully not by our
20 own -- necessarily by our own individual experiences but
21 the truth and the experiences that we have done a good
22 faith effort in getting from those communities and from
23 those individuals.

24 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay. Thank you.

25 MS. VASQUEZ: Yeah.

1 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: So you indicated in your
2 application that as a field organizer for the California
3 School Boards Association, you had worked with school board
4 members whose politics and personal beliefs are different
5 from your own.

6 Can you provide us an example of an experience
7 where you had a board member whose politics and personal
8 beliefs were different and you had to set those aside?

9 MS. VASQUEZ: Yes. So I very much -- a big part of
10 my role at the School Boards Association is customer
11 service. And I especially in the foothills of the San
12 Gabriel Valley, I work with predominately, you know, upper-
13 middle class, white suburban communities. Republicans,
14 many of them, if not most of them. They're elected
15 officials too. They certainly have more power and
16 influence over their communities and even within my
17 organization than I do. And it's in many, if not all,
18 cases in my professional role, it's not my -- it's not my
19 role to be an advocate for my own personal political
20 beliefs.

21 I certainly, I don't, you know, I'm not a
22 Republican but I certainly have many a lunch meeting with
23 folks who are, who have very, very different political
24 views. And I think for me, a skill set that I have is to
25 professionally engage in my role as a public affairs rep

1 with those -- with those folks even though I personally may
2 disagree with their politics. And even if they bring those
3 politics into that conversation, I -- I use -- I use my
4 skills to really either try to find some areas of common
5 interest, usually its kids and schools, and what kids in
6 those -- those schools, in their schools need from CSVA,
7 from the state, maybe even from community partners.

8 And I also like to think there are many times where
9 I have been -- I have been unexpectedly challenged and then
10 sort of had my -- because of the relationship and because I
11 still I think have mutual respect for the people I work
12 with, there have been times where I feel like I've had very
13 wonderful political conversations dialog with folks. Those
14 folks even in my role at CSVA that have led to, you know,
15 partnerships whether hosting a community forum, et cetera.

16 So like I certainly don't -- I certainly I would
17 think on a daily basis put aside my own politics so that I
18 can hear, listen more deeply for a need or for a concern
19 which is often where a lot of that comes from.

20 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right. Thank you.

21 Brief question. Do you speak Spanish? And if so,
22 how fluent?

23 MS. VASQUEZ: I do not. Yeah.

24 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right. Thank you.

25 Well I've got one last question. This will be

1 long.

2 Madame Secretary, can I get a time check?

3 MS. PELLMAN: Yes. We have 6 minutes, 44 seconds.

4 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay. Thank you.

5 So you indicate in your application that have
6 demonstrated in your career the ability to analyze complex
7 data, both quantitative and qualitative.

8 I'd like you to walk us through an example of an
9 analysis that you formed or have been heavily involved in.

10 MS. VASQUEZ: Yes. So I'll go back -- I'll go back
11 to the childcare example.

12 So we had a -- we had a hypothesis as an
13 organization. I had -- I helped -- hypothesis as an
14 analyst that kids in foster care, young kids in foster kids
15 were not accessing childcare and development services the
16 way they were entitled to, at a high enough rate.

17 The state does not -- the state does not track that
18 specific data point, how many kids in foster care are
19 accessing. They do have who -- who is accessing childcare
20 and development services. So that was a huge data set that
21 I was able to download. The who, the general location, you
22 know, ZIP code. And they were able to identify basically a
23 proxy flag that was a proxy for child is receiving
24 community services, I will say. So, again, it wasn't
25 whether or not they're in foster care, but it was a close

1 enough proxy.

2 We mapped that out particularly zoomed, we were
3 particularly interested in L.A. County so we zoomed in on
4 L.A. County and then we mapped out where those very, who we
5 termed at that point, very vulnerable kids were across the
6 county. And we noticed some hot spots. And we noticed
7 that was, we noticed that those hot spots were pretty well
8 directly aligned with a lack of childcare services map that
9 we had already created as an organization. So basically we
10 were able to overlay these two sets of data, right. But we
11 have very low-income folks layered, second layer, we have a
12 lack of access to childcare generally. And then we layered
13 over this sort of proxy data set of kids who were receiving
14 social services. And we found that there were specific
15 geography within L.A. County that were likely to have high
16 numbers of very young kids in foster care without access to
17 childcare and development in preschool programs.

18 So, again, not perfect data sets, but by drawing
19 from different pieces of information, we were able to
20 create a map that said, okay, this sort of answers our
21 question or at least points us in the right direction. And
22 from there, you know, I went and tried to put more meat on
23 those bones by engaging healthcare administrators, foster
24 care administrators, et cetera, to create a better picture
25 of what the community -- what the community, the community

1 being young kids in foster care, potentially needed in our
2 county.

3 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay. Thank you.

4 If I smiled, it was because we had the first
5 appearance of a pet come in behind you. I know you
6 couldn't see it--

7 MS. VASQUEZ: Oh, gosh.

8 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: -- your cat walked through.
9 That's okay. That's where that smile came from - it
10 wasn't your data analysis.

11 MS. VASQUEZ: That's funny. Okay.

12 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Anyways, I had no further
13 questions.

14 MS. VASQUEZ: Okay.

15 CHAIR COE: Thank you, Mr. Belnap.

16 First appearance of a feline photobomb in the
17 Applicant Review Panel history.

18 MS. VASQUEZ: Yeah.

19 CHAIR COE: Mr. Dawson.

20 PANEL MEMBER DAWSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

21 I'll just note, that that was not the first, but it
22 was about 20 minutes ago the cat first made an appearance.

23 MS. VASQUEZ: Oh, goodness.

24 PANEL MEMBER DAWSON: I wanted to follow up on
25 something that you had said in your response to Standard

1 Question 1.

2 You used an interesting term where you said that
3 you had the ability to code switch between -- let me make
4 sure I get it right, the language of policy and advocacy
5 and that of the community?

6 Did I understand that correctly?

7 MS. VASQUEZ: Yes. And I think it's a -- code
8 switching I think is a term used more when we're talking
9 about language or, you know, but I sort of, I see it as a
10 skill in terms of being able to interpret legalese. Again,
11 you know, I'm not a lawyer, but I work with a lot of
12 lawyers. So oftentimes I'm having to, you know, remind
13 folks people don't know what this legal term means. So,
14 you know, we need to translate it, not just for us as sort
15 of thought partners, colleagues in the field but then if
16 we're going to go out and do community engagement around
17 this issue, you know, we're going to have to make sure that
18 we're using plain language and not lawyer-speak. And then
19 vice versa, right.

20 But having, you know, communities are going to be,
21 individuals are going to be communicating in different ways
22 and being able to hear community input, I think that it may
23 be potentially -- potentially really emotional and not
24 super specific but be able to, my ability to be able to
25 hear what the underlying concern is. Maybe that's also a

1 bit of like my social work, clinical experience, right.
2 But hear -- hear the emotion and then be able to listen for
3 the subtext underneath and communicate that amongst the
4 commissioners.

5 So, yeah, that's sort of how I view code switching.

6 PANEL MEMBER DAWSON: All right. Thank you.

7 I wanted to ask you about, in your, the blurb that
8 you put for your work at the National Center on Youth Law.

9 MS. VASQUEZ: Yeah.

10 PANEL MEMBER DAWSON: You said that you directed
11 and led the review and analysis of existing and proposed
12 federal, state, local regulations laws or policies
13 affecting the education and foster youth in L.A. County and
14 statewide.

15 My question is, who was the audience? Who was the
16 clientele for this review and analysis?

17 MS. VASQUEZ: The review were school district
18 administrators and school board policymakers. So, you
19 know, especially the foster care system is a legally, very
20 legally-driven system. So is the education system in
21 California. And so when you're working with and on behalf
22 of a student group very heavily impacted by those two big
23 public systems, we're working with policies, you know,
24 you've seen the ed code, right? It's really vague.

25 So oftentimes my organization and me specifically

1 were called in to present really complex legal issues in a
2 way that made sense to the actors in those different
3 systems. So again, that's a bit where code switching came
4 in, but I was often explaining ed code to foster care
5 administrators. And vice versa explaining, you know, child
6 welfare processes and WIC codes to education
7 administrators.

8 PANEL MEMBER DAWSON: Okay. Thank you.

9 And then well then that sort of leads to my
10 question about your work at the School Boards Association
11 where you say that you identified and developed various
12 projects, initiatives, and local campaigns to strengthen
13 support of public education by stakeholders including
14 elected officials, parents, school staff, and students.

15 My question is, these stakeholders that you
16 identify as elected officials, did that include members of
17 the California legislature?

18 MS. VASQUEZ: It does, though at CSVA, very
19 indirectly. I would say at my -- more so at Advancement
20 Project as an analyst and at the National Center for Youth
21 Law, I was much more in conversation with legislative staff
22 and legislators themselves. Although, at CSVA, I did
23 convene and facilitate a student mental health policy
24 roundtable with Assembly member Chris Holden. So I
25 certainly have, you know, experience working with elected

1 officials and their staff, for sure.

2 PANEL MEMBER DAWSON: Were you ever called to
3 testify on a bill in Sacramento?

4 MS. VASQUEZ: I was not, though I will say a very
5 close -- a very close proxy is giving public comment at a
6 L.A. Unified School Board meeting which are often more
7 attended than the legislative hearings.

8 PANEL MEMBER DAWSON: I believe it.

9 MS. VASQUEZ: Yeah.

10 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: I think those are all my
11 questions.

12 Mr. Chair, I have no more follow ups.

13 CHAIR COE: Ms. Dickison, do you have any follow-up
14 questions?

15 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: I do not have any further
16 questions.

17 CHAIR COE: Mr. Belnap?

18 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: I do not.

19 CHAIR COE: I might have one.

20 Madame Secretary, how much time do we have?

21 MS. PELLMAN: We have 7 minutes, 24 seconds.

22 CHAIR COE: Okay. So really quick, Ms. Vasquez.

23 If you were to be appointed to the Commission, which
24 aspects of that role do you think you might enjoy the most
25 and which aspects of that role do you think you might

1 struggle with a little bit?

2 MS. VASQUEZ: You know, I think I hinted at this
3 earlier that I really do enjoy group analysis. I like -- I
4 like being able to take what in this case would be, you
5 know, staff recommendation, data sets that have been
6 distilled and reports that are being presented, maps that
7 are being presented. I really like having things to react
8 to, and I love having thought partners who are bringing
9 different perspectives, seeing things that I may not see,
10 bringing lenses that I might not have. I really do enjoy
11 those discussions. So I'm really excited about sort of
12 digging in with commissioner colleagues. And I think that
13 comes from my coalition work, right, in doing many of my --
14 much of my work in partnership with other organizations.

15 The part that I would probably struggle most with
16 is, again, you know, I am not a lawyer and so I'm an
17 advocate and I think -- I think I would struggle most with
18 -- not even struggle, but just sort of like, the
19 guardrails, the legislative guardrails I think would sort
20 of, I would be the one to say, well what can we do? It
21 says we can't do this, what can we do? Right? That I will
22 be the one pushing and I'm sure that will irritate the
23 resident lawyer or lawyers on the Commission.

24 Sorry, Counsel.

25 CHAIR COE: Thank you for that.

1 No further questions, Counsel.

2 MR. DAWSON: Madame Secretary, how much time do we
3 have left?

4 MS. PELLMAN: Five minutes, 8 seconds.

5 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

6 Ms. Vasquez, with the time remaining, we'd like to
7 offer you the opportunity to make a closing statement to
8 the panel, if you wish.

9 MS. VASQUEZ: Sure. So first of all, thank you all
10 for your time and for your commitment to creating a
11 commission that is going to be doing some of the most
12 important policy and political work for this state,
13 especially as we've talked about in this interview in times
14 that are hyperpartisan and now with the global crisis. Not
15 just the global health crisis, but the global economic
16 crisis. I think our -- we have yet to see just how intense
17 our political conversation can be and I think the work of
18 redrawing our voting districts is going to be evermore
19 important.

20 You know, as I said before, I truly believe that
21 people are the experts in their own experiences. And by
22 extension, I really am so proud of the state of California
23 for giving citizens the ability through representatives to
24 draw their own boundaries. But this is a public input
25 process and I would be incredibly honored to serve all

1 folks in the state of California as a commissioner if I am
2 chosen.

3 So with that, thank you.

4 CHAIR COE: Thank you, Ms. Vasquez, for taking the
5 time to interview with us this afternoon.

6 Our next interview isn't scheduled until 9 a.m. on
7 Monday, April 6th. So we will be in recess until 8:59 a.m.
8 on Monday, April 6th.

9 (Thereupon the Panel recessed at 4:26 p.m.)

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REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

I do hereby certify that the testimony in the foregoing hearing was taken at the time and place therein stated; that the testimony of said witnesses were reported by me, a certified electronic court reporter and a disinterested person, and was under my supervision thereafter transcribed into typewriting.

And I further certify that I am not of counsel or attorney for either or any of the parties to said hearing nor in any way interested in the outcome of the cause named in said caption.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 1st day of May, 2020.



Jacqueline Denlinger
AAERT CERT # 747

CERTIFICATE OF TRANSCRIBER

I do hereby certify that the testimony in the foregoing hearing was taken at the time and place therein stated; that the testimony of said witnesses were transcribed by me, a certified transcriber and a disinterested person, and was under my supervision thereafter transcribed into typewriting.

And I further certify that I am not of counsel or attorney for either or any of the parties to said hearing nor in any way interested in the outcome of the cause named in said caption.

I certify that the foregoing is a correct transcript, to the best of my ability, from the electronic sound recording of the proceedings in the above-entitled matter.



MARTHA L. NELSON, CERT**367

May 1, 2020