

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 8, 2020

8:59 A.M.

Reported by:
Peter Petty

APPEARANCESMembers Present:

Ryan Coe, Chair (Present via Zoom)

Angela Dickison, Vice Chair (Present via Zoom)

Ben Belnap, Panel Member

Staff Present

Christopher Dawson, Panel Counsel

Shauna Pellman, Auditor Specialist II
(Present via Zoom)

Applicants (Present via Zoom)

CC Barron

Trena Turner

Michal Offutt

Jennifer Pae

INDEX

PAGE

CC Barron	4
Trena Turner	54
Michal Offutt	115
Jennifer Pae	149
Recess	209

1 PROCEEDINGS

2 8:59 a.m.

3 CHAIR COE: Good morning. The time being 8:59,
4 I'd like to call this meeting of the Applicant Review Panel
5 back to order. A couple of reminders for everybody,
6 whether in the room or remote, please silence all cell
7 phones while the meeting is in session and other devices as
8 well.

9 For those in the room, in case of emergency
10 please follow the State Auditor staff instructions in case
11 of emergency.

12 At this time I'd like to welcome CC Barron for an
13 interview this morning. Mr. Barron, can you hear us okay?

14 MR. BARRON: I hear you fine, thank you.

15 PANEL MEMBER COE: Fantastic. I'd like to turn
16 the time over to Mr. Chris Dawson for the five standard
17 questions, please.

18 MR. DAWSON: Good morning once again. Mr.
19 Barron, I'm going to ask you five standard questions that
20 the Panel has requested that each applicant respond to.
21 Are you ready?

22 MR. BARRON: I'm ready.

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

25 What skills or competencies should the Commission

1 possess collectively?

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

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

6 MR. BARRON: First of all, all of the
7 Commissioners should be comfortable with public scrutiny,
8 work collaboratively with their fellow Commissioners at
9 their highest level of professionalism, and possess a sense
10 of integrity in all decisions made as a result of a
11 collective effort in order to respect and to defend the
12 process.

13 Insofar as this Commission's primary task is to
14 redraw and set new state and congressional lines for voting
15 and fair political representation, each member should have
16 a knowledge and facility with data, its analysis and
17 interpretation, the ability to present and discuss
18 deliberations in layman's terms, and be able to handle the
19 arduous task of hours and days of deliberations with one
20 another as a Commission.

21 The skills, and attributes, and competencies that
22 Commissioners should possess, and that I possess, in my 35-
23 year career as -- with the Los Angeles Unified School
24 District I served as the director of two district wide
25 commissions, coordinating and facilitating the work of a

1 large commission membership.

2 I was appointed to the Los Angeles County Arts
3 Commission for 18 years and served as its president on two
4 occasions. I have a thorough knowledge of the Robert's
5 Rules of Order, and have served on a sundry of
6 subcommittees to bring the commission work to fruition.

7 In my capacity as the Director of the Mexican
8 American Education Commission, I disaggregated federal,
9 state, and district data for the implementation of the
10 Department of Education's Elementary and Secondary
11 Education Act.

12 And finally, served as a district wide Bilingual,
13 Bicultural Education Committee to evaluate the
14 effectiveness of bilingual programs statewide upon the
15 sunset of the California Bilingual Bicultural Education Act
16 of 1976.

17 All these and still more public appointments have
18 prepared me well to take on the challenges of this
19 Commission.

20 In summary, I bring the experience as serving as
21 a director to large commissions, and being a member of a
22 commission I was tasked specifically to serve diverse and
23 sometimes marginalized students, parents, and general
24 population. I believe I would be a valuable resource to my
25 fellow Commissioners in this regard, as well as my boots-

1 on-the-ground pro bono services to my immediate community
2 that I'm presently involved. That is all.

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

9 What characteristics do you possess, and what
10 characteristics should your fellow Commissioners possess,
11 that will protect against hyperpartisanship?

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

15 MR. BARRON: Well, in my view and practice, I
16 believe we're all Americans and we all have the right to
17 vote for the person or persons who will look after our
18 individual and collective interests. How this is
19 accomplished is as diverse as all of the parties and
20 independent voters who have this right.

21 Democracy can be messy, but it is paramount that
22 we all vote to preserve the principles of our democracy and
23 the great oligarchical and anarchistic tendencies.

24 All Commissioners should focus on the task
25 without a self-fulfilling expectation. We need to leave

1 our preferences at the door and construct a voting district
2 where all the stakeholders are forced to lobby one another
3 for an outcome that concerned them most collectively.

4 What I would do to make sure that the work of the
5 Commission is not seen as polarized is that we would have
6 to create a product, a final product that speaks for
7 itself. Although the public may not see this, in this case
8 all Commissioners must have a common refrain and protect
9 one another from being swayed from our collective
10 decisions. A divided Commission is a recipe for failure in
11 everyone's eyes.

12 I will speak from a unanimous place and voice
13 regardless of outside forces and intimidating rhetoric. We
14 must speak with one voice and associate the Commission with
15 the diverse benefits of the final product for all parties.

16 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Question three. What is
17 the greatest problem the Commission could encounter, and
18 what actions would you take to avoid or respond to this
19 problem?

20 MR. BARRON: There are two problems that I
21 suspect are entangled in some way. One is the authenticity
22 and accuracy of the data. The Census data is already in
23 question due to the pandemic we are experiencing. It could
24 cast great suspicion on an already suspicious election.

25 Second, inherent in its presentation to the

1 public it must be in a manner that demonstrates a
2 nonpartisan activity to complete our tasks collectively,
3 with due diligence, with all the resources that were at our
4 avail.

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

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

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

16 MR. BARRON: In my second term on the L.A. County
17 Performing Arts Commission, myself and a minority voice of
18 the commission wanted to extend funding to arts programs
19 not commissioned with funding, primarily ethnic minority
20 art forms.

21 The goal of the project was to garner additional
22 votes to reach a simple majority on these -- with regard to
23 this. At that time I served as the president of the
24 commission and so I facilitated an extensive debate on the
25 proposed changes, so that all 15 commissioners could have a

1 clearer understanding of the benefits to the residents of
2 the county if these changes were instituted.

3 One issue that was raised by the opposition was
4 that these art forms didn't exist. And if so, were less
5 than prestigious than the art forms traditionally funded.
6 Also, that there was no querying calls from the public for
7 any change.

8 With the help of my executive director, we made a
9 call for applicants from arts organizations who had
10 traditionally been refused assistance from our commission,
11 and held a public meeting of the commission. Over 100 new
12 and well-established arts organizations showed up and
13 expressed how the help of our commission could help secure
14 their place in the performing arts arena.

15 At our next regularly scheduled meeting of the
16 commission I entertained a motion to increase funding to
17 two new genres in the performing arts in ethnocentric dance
18 forms. It succeeded with a two-thirds majority vote.

19 What lesson? Well, never recommend change alone.
20 Solicit the sentiments of those affected by your proposed
21 change and garner the support of a critical mass directly
22 affected to argue on your behalf. Never let methodologies
23 control the debate and be prepared to test their validity.

24 MR. DAWSON: Question five. A considerable
25 amount of the Commission's work will involve meeting people

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

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

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

11 MR. BARRON: Well, attributes is a loaded word.
12 I'd say this refers to a personal association. So, again,
13 with my indigenous upbringing, in the culture that I was
14 raised different was considered good or, as my mother would
15 put it, sacred. That an evil did not exist, but rather a
16 person's spirit was either well or ill. And if the latter,
17 should be assisted or if necessary avoided, but never
18 ostracized.

19 Even among my siblings, some are step-brothers
20 and sisters, and some with no blood relation, though we
21 were all raised together as one of the same family. Hence,
22 I was never surprised by physical differences or aberrant
23 behaviors as far as perspectives which are grounded in a
24 person's primary source anecdotal experiences, and nearly
25 always different in one degree or another. Hence, it is my

1 norm of expectation.

2 Professionally, I worked with African American,
3 Mexican American, American Indians, and Hawaiian and Samoan
4 students and teachers developing a culturally-responsive
5 education program for the Los Angeles Unified School
6 District's language.

7 We explored the cultural and linguistic evolution
8 of these four groups from the time of their enslavement,
9 conquest, genocide and/or invasion. This was a six-year
10 effort with four, an African American language, Chicano
11 English, Red English, and Hawaiian/Samoan Pidgin English,
12 as well as multi-cultural education.

13 We traveled as far south as Mexico and as far
14 east as West Africa, and as far west as the Hawaiian
15 Islands to study the language and cultural similarities
16 with the four populations residing in the United States.

17 I learned much. I learned more than I ever knew
18 before in the arena of linguistics and cultural survival.
19 We developed a text for teachers to use to help Mexican
20 American students transition from their home language, a
21 non-standard form of English, (indiscernible) -- the
22 ancestral linguistic features to mainstream American
23 English and academic English without loss of own language
24 and cultural heritage.

25 During my final years at the district I worked in

1 the human relations department of the district. In this
2 department, along with all other ethnic minorities, I was
3 charged to know, assist, and protect the LGBTQ student
4 population in our 49 high schools from harassment and
5 assault.

6 This at the time was a population that had no
7 prior association group. So, I researched in earnest, was
8 mentored by a colleague who was lesbian, in my department,
9 and went and then readily joined a 501(c)(3) entitled
10 GLIDE, Gay and Lesbians Initiating Dialogue for Equality.

11 I did these dialogues with students and adults
12 throughout the district in the greater Los Angeles area,
13 and the 501(c)(3).

14 Personally, I have a granddaughter who's a
15 lesbian. I have a grand-niece who's bisexual, a grand-
16 niece or grand-nephew, now, who's a trans man. And an
17 uncle who was homosexual and was persecuted and killed for
18 that back in the 1940s. So, I'm not unfamiliar with sexual
19 -- other sexual ways of expressing our human desire to be
20 with one another. I don't see it, nor was I raised to see
21 it as an abhorrent behavior, simply a behavior with human
22 beings.

23 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. We will now go to Panel
24 questions. Each Panel Member will have 20 minutes to ask
25 his or her questions. And we'll start with the Chair, Mr.

1 Coe.

2 CHAIR COE: Thank you, Mr. Dawson. Good morning,
3 again, Mr. Barron. Thank you for taking the time to speak
4 with us today.

5 MR. BARRON: Thank you.

6 CHAIR COE: So, your application doesn't have any
7 work history in there in the employment section, but you
8 gave us an amendment to that that explained that you have
9 been retired for more than ten years, and that's why it was
10 empty. And from your essays, I gathered that you worked as
11 a teacher for L.A. Unified, among other roles, and also for
12 the CSU system as a college instructor.

13 MR. BARRON: Correct.

14 CHAIR COE: I'm wondering if you can give us a
15 little bit more background on your career path and what
16 roles you had during your career.

17 MR. BARRON: Wow. Okay, so I figured I made a
18 mistake when I read my application, when I heard everybody
19 else give their vitae's over the internet. I do have a
20 vitae, it's quite long.

21 I started as a classroom teacher. Let me go
22 back. I didn't learn to read until I was 13. No one in my
23 family had. They spoke multiple languages, but they
24 couldn't read and write in most of those languages.

25 I grew up in an immigrant community primarily

1 made up of Russian Jews, Mexicans, and Armenians. Right
2 around 1910 to 1920. My parents immigrated from Mexico
3 1912.

4 And I went to -- I didn't go to school. I worked
5 from the time I was 5 until an aunt forced me to go to
6 school. My mother was a seamstress and did piecework in
7 the home, so I stayed home and did piecework with her. And
8 later, I worked in the -- a dairy delivery. And then, at
9 12 I acquired a job in a warehouse in downtown Los Angeles,
10 and worked all through my high school years.

11 So, when I learned to read at 13, I learned at an
12 immigrant school that I was enrolled in. And I learned
13 English. And thankfully, the teacher used a phonetic
14 approach to my instruction which allowed me to get back
15 onto grade level reading within one year.

16 I then had a regular high school education,
17 struggling of course in comprehension and the facility of
18 the English language. And then, immediately joined the
19 military service upon graduation.

20 When I returned from the service, where my
21 English skills improved tremendously, as well as my study
22 skills, I immediately discharged from the service on a
23 Friday and started university on a Monday, with the help of
24 Senator Cranston at the time.

25 I went to -- I became a teacher, first a high

1 school teacher and then an elementary school teacher when
2 bilingual/bicultural was initiated in Congress, here in
3 California. Because I thought my language skills would be
4 of better use at the elementary school level. I taught at
5 five different elementary schools as bilingual teacher.

6 I then went into administration where I worked in
7 the recruitment of teachers from Mexico and Spain. During
8 that time there was a great need for bilingual instructors.

9 I then became the Director of the Mexican
10 American Education Commission with 28 members who were
11 charged with implementing or finding a form of
12 implementation for all of the Elementary and Secondary
13 Education Acts Title Programs, Title 1, Title 2, Title 7.
14 And the idea, as well as Indian Education Programs. I
15 worked with that and then later left that after five years
16 and became a trainer of teachers.

17 We had a district teacher program where we
18 credentialed teachers to -- through a rigorous form of
19 fifth year education in the CLAD and BCLAD, which is a
20 language acquisition approach to teaching children whose
21 primary language wasn't English.

22 I then moved on. I actually left the district
23 for five years to work with teachers with students that had
24 left school or were forced to leave school, or the dropout
25 phenomena. And I later helped establish a charter school

1 and for students who had left school and had somehow become
2 part of the gang culture in Los Angeles.

3 After that I went on to the universities. All
4 this while I was working at the university as an adjunct
5 professor. I began in 1986 at CSUN, California State
6 University Northridge.

7 Well, I then went full time at Cal Poly Pomona as
8 an associate professor. Again, writing the BCLAD and CLAD
9 requirements into their credential program. And then,
10 moved on to Whittier College where I did a year doing
11 approximately the same thing, rewriting their credential
12 program so that it would reflect language acquisition
13 capabilities and bilingual capabilities on the part of
14 would be teachers.

15 I left that in 1998 and went back to the district
16 and started as an administrator, an assistant principal.
17 And then, later I entered the language acquisition
18 department's to write curriculum for what was then termed
19 the unidentified immigrants, or the forgotten immigrants.
20 Of course, the standard English learners, these are
21 students who spoke English, but they had a relaxed form
22 of it so that it didn't sound correct. Certainly, it
23 couldn't. And they had no skills at decoding the English
24 language appropriately. But they did have a language. So,
25 we discovered those linguistic features, trained teachers

1 on how to utilize those to create a kind of transitional
2 program so that they could then use their same home
3 language skills in mainstream American English and, more
4 importantly academically. And we were quite successful
5 with the four groups I mentioned.

6 During all this time I was on the Arts Commission
7 and I was appointed to the Board of Education for the
8 County of Los Angeles, where I served in a capacity as
9 board member, and had some very interesting experiences as
10 a policymaker.

11 In 2007, I became very ill and I felt my capacity
12 to basically contribute to all the things I was doing was
13 lacking. And that's why I decided to retire at 60. But I
14 did carry on with an appointment to the -- it was in Los
15 Angeles County, the Natural History Museum, where I served
16 on the content committee, on the board of trustees, and was
17 governor to the institution from the L.A. County Board of
18 Supervisors.

19 During that period, which is about seven years,
20 we were able to institute a permanent exhibit on the 500-
21 year history of Los Angeles, from its indigenous to its
22 present formation. I worked with Dr. William Estrada, then
23 Curator of History to accomplish that, and left it, and
24 dedicated myself to the activities of -- the residents in
25 my local neighborhood, Alhambra, California, which had

1 significantly changed since I moved in, and who had a whole
2 litany of things to do regarding its governance. And they
3 recruited me to help in those efforts. And that's, in a
4 nutshell, my life of work, and raising four children, and
5 trying be a productive member of my society.

6 CHAIR COE: Thank you. Thank you for that. I
7 wanted to touch on a couple of things that you mentioned
8 during your story, and I wanted to ask you about a couple
9 of your experiences and how the perspectives that those
10 experiences bring, whether or not you think that they could
11 be beneficial perspectives to have on the Commission, and
12 there's two things I want to ask about.

13 The first is you mentioned not being able to read
14 or write until you were 13 years old. And how do you think
15 that having that experience or that perspective do you
16 think that could be beneficial to have that perspective on
17 the Commission?

18 MR. BARRON: Well, first of all, I wanted to note
19 that a lot of people say, well, you know, we've mitigated
20 the issue of people not speaking English and, therefore, we
21 write everything in their language, whether it be
22 Vietnamese, or Spanish, or whatever.

23 But what you don't realize is that most of the
24 people who speak these languages don't read and write in
25 those languages. My mother never did and yet she spoke

1 several. And my father spoke French, and Spanish, and
2 English, and he never, ever read, not that I knew of, read
3 a word of it.

4 So, if you send home a document and ask a parent
5 to read it, and sign it, and return it, it might as well be
6 in Chinese for a Mexican American, you know, a Mexican, or
7 any other issue, you know. We don't all have literacy.
8 I'm not that old. I'm only in my 70s.

9 A lot of Americans, even English speaking
10 Americans didn't have more than maybe fourth grade literacy
11 skills when they were becoming adults -- they just had
12 opportunities and they exploited those opportunities, and
13 they succeeded.

14 So, to assume that because a person can speak and
15 you can understand them does not mean they have the
16 literacy to understand important information that could
17 change their lives.

18 So, when I became a reader of English, what I
19 discovered was that there was a world far greater than I
20 had ever experienced in my little world of East of the Los
21 Angeles River. It also opened up a world of people that I
22 had misinterpreted. The people that I considered Euro-
23 American were actually Jewish. They just weren't dark.
24 And people who I thought were Chinese were really Japanese
25 because I didn't know the culture. But through literacy, I

1 realized there was a variety of humanity that my mother and
2 father just could never explain to me because they, too,
3 were struggling to keep a family intact.

4 So, I think that if I were on the Commission I
5 could give that kind of perspective to my fellow
6 Commissioners. When some of these -- and, you know, I've
7 had a lot of experience with the public. Many people
8 misinterpret us and our job to bring fairness to the public
9 arena. And not take it personal because they really don't
10 understand. Even if we said it in their language, even if
11 we were all bilingual in all the languages they need to
12 hear it in, it's American culture. I've lived in Mexico,
13 I've studied in Mexico. I've studied in other countries
14 and even though I know that country, I don't know that
15 country. And even if I could speak that language, I don't
16 know that culture. I'm a visitor. I know this culture.
17 And our country is unique. And the principles under which
18 we reside are very simple, but not to other people in the
19 world because there's are very complex in compared to us.
20 Because we're allowed to be critical thinkers. We're
21 allowed to make decisions for ourselves. We're allowed to
22 determine our own destiny.

23 CHAIR COE: Thank you. The second thing that I
24 wanted -- that you mentioned that I wanted to ask about how
25 you think your experience could be beneficial to the

1 Commission is you mentioned your military service. And in
2 our essays you talk about your service in Vietnam. Do you
3 think that your experiences or perspectives as a veteran of
4 military service could be a beneficial perspective on this
5 Commission?

6 MR. BARRON: Absolutely because I'll get the job
7 done. You'll sink or swim. You either did the job and you
8 did it the way they wanted it, or you weren't going to get
9 back.

10 So, I'm extremely prompt, usually early. I brief
11 and I debrief everything I do. That's part of my PTSD. My
12 poor spouse has to witness and live under. I think it
13 would -- I accept the challenges and I don't give up. And
14 I think I've applied that principle to everything I've ever
15 done since that experience. Not only in Vietnam, but also
16 in my military experience I had many opportunities to learn
17 extensive forms of technology. I worked on UNIVAC
18 computers. It was like three-story high computers that had
19 light bulbs for circuitry.

20 I acquired a very high technical education in
21 early forms of GPS, and satellites, and triangulation, a
22 form of mathematics that's earlier forms of quantum
23 dynamics.

24 So, I was very lucky to be exposed to this. And
25 even though my comprehension skills were just really only

1 about four years old in the English language, but the
2 military finds a way to inundate you with on-the-job
3 training and I think they were very successful.

4 MS. PELLMAN: Time check, we have four minutes,
5 12 seconds remaining.

6 CHAIR COE: Thank you, Madam Secretary.

7 Mr. Barron, before I run out of time, I'd like to
8 switch topics a little bit to impartiality and that you
9 wrote an essay on that. I'm wondering if you could provide
10 an additional experience or example of a time that you had
11 to make a difficult impartial decision that maybe involved
12 setting aside your preference or self-interest.

13 MR. BARRON: I was thinking about that. And I
14 think a real obvious one was when I was the Director of the
15 Mexican American Education Commission. I had to be totally
16 impartial. We had 28 Commissioners. They're from all over
17 the Hispanic community, the Mexican community. There were
18 professors, there were PhDs, and there were moms and dads
19 from neighborhoods who had -- well, in the middle of,
20 really a social upheaval.

21 I had Saul Castro, who led the walkouts in 1968.
22 Members of the Moratorium Committee Against the War in
23 Vietnam (indiscernible) -- a Mexican loyalist was murdered.

24 And they were all on my Commission. And they
25 were charged with making decisions about bilingual

1 education in Title 1 and Title 7. And none of them were
2 educators. None of them knew any idea of what those
3 students were. And I was a five-school veteran of
4 bilingual education. I was one of the first bilingual
5 schools in the L.A. Unified School District, a teacher at
6 least.

7 And so, I had all of this wealth of knowledge and
8 experience but I couldn't contribute it because they
9 already had formed their own ideas. And it was diverse.
10 There were Mexican Americans who didn't want anything to do
11 with bilingual education, only wanted English taught. And
12 there were those who wanted to preserve the culture and
13 language of their ancestors.

14 And I had to find a way of common ground, so they
15 could have a civil conversation about it. And the way I
16 did it was to bring in everybody but myself. People who
17 were doing excellent ESL programs and people who were doing
18 excellent bilingual programs within the district at the
19 time. Professors from the university levels to explain
20 what the theoretical framework of a bilingual program is
21 and the history of English as a second language.

22 And allowed them to debate among themselves. I
23 took copious notes for them, reminded them of what they had
24 said, and on occasion would take meetings that would last
25 four to six hours long, and keep my mouth shut. Allowing

1 them to come to the decision of which and how they were
2 going to support these programs as representatives of that
3 community. So, I had --

4 MS. PELLMAN: One minute remaining.

5 MR. BARRON: -- I had to be very impartial and I
6 had to just let things go. What we ended up with was
7 potpourri of programming, which is not real good for
8 implementation, but it is what the community wanted.

9 CHAIR COE: Thank you, Mr. Barron. It sounds
10 like I'm about out of time, so I'll go ahead and turn the
11 time over to Ms. Dickison for her questions.

12 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Good morning, Mr. Barron.

13 MR. BARRON: Good morning.

14 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: So, you talked already
15 about your work history and I see that in your essays you
16 talked about advocating for academic and logistic needs of
17 African Americans, Mexican Americans, American Indians, and
18 Hawaiian, Samoans.

19 In that work did you develop some skills in doing
20 that that would assist the Commission in addressing those
21 communities or other communities throughout California?

22 MR. BARRON: Yes. I learned something in the
23 area of sociology. We all come with social capital as
24 Americans, as a people of a culture. We also come with
25 cultural competencies, cultural capital, especially in a

1 diverse society.

2 So, I had to learn what was this capital that
3 they had, that each group African American, Mexican
4 American, American Indian, and you can go on the list, but
5 those four only because they were identified as involuntary
6 immigrants. Or that they were American born, but they were
7 treated as if they were immigrants.

8 And I learned that if we're cognizant and if the
9 Commission were cognizant that what they're saying has a
10 value to them. It is their credibility. It is what makes
11 them a member of a society, even if it seems abhorrent to
12 somebody else. Let's just put it this way, it's a culture
13 in progress.

14 And America is a culture in progress and it has
15 multiple premises with multiple conclusions, an inducted
16 model if you will.

17 If I can bring to the Commission that kind of an
18 understanding, then they will not be too surprised by the
19 variety of opinion that we get, and sentiment, and
20 credibility that we get from the general population. We're
21 all a work in progress and certainly this country is. It's
22 only -- this state is only 171 years old. And before it,
23 it was Spain and Mexico longer than it was the United
24 States. And it was indigenous even longer than that, and I
25 won't go there. But I think it's valuable information.

1 You know, when I became aware of that, I really
2 saw why everybody brings something of value to the social
3 capital that we possess as Americans.

4 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you. So, one of the
5 things that the Commission is going to be tasked with is
6 identifying communities of interest throughout the state.
7 What methods or, you know, ways do you think the Commission
8 can employ to try to identify those communities of
9 interest?

10 MR. BARRON: There's a lot of methodologies and
11 I've used many in my history because I've had to do exactly
12 the same thing. They're not going to come running to you
13 all the time.

14 Their loudest, and what do you call them, the
15 formados (phonetic Spanish), their perfume (phonetic), the
16 ones that were the spokespeople. They'll come and knock on
17 your doors. But the others, they're going to stay in their
18 homes, and they're going to stay at their jobs, and they're
19 going to stay with their children, and maybe bellyache a
20 bit, but they're not going to come out unless you go to
21 them.

22 So, I practice a thing called administration by
23 wandering. I would go into the communities, just walk and
24 knock on doors. I had their addresses. I knew their
25 names. I showed up at their front door. And they asked me

1 in, I sat there and had a cup of coffee, and we discussed
2 the (indiscernible) -- but they got to know me as a person
3 who was interested in their interests.

4 And I don't know how feasible that is for us
5 because I mean the pandemic that we're in. But, you know,
6 the next best thing is phone calling. I did a lot of that
7 working on political campaigns. And they don't like to be
8 called. But if you have the right telephone protocols you
9 might get them, especially if you speak in every day
10 English. You can reach people.

11 Also, there are networks. I have a tremendous
12 network statewide in the American Indian population, as
13 well as the Hispanic population, as well as the African.
14 I've been in -- I've done seminars in Oakland, East Palo
15 Alto, East Los Angeles, South San Diego, because we're
16 everywhere. We're everywhere. And the only way you're
17 going to be effective is if you put boots on the ground and
18 walk their path, and allow them to ask all of those
19 embarrassing questions and don't take offense. You build
20 relationships.

21 I want to talk about one thing I'm very proud of.
22 During the quincentennial in 1992 American Indians, I
23 should say indigenous peoples of the Americas got together
24 and they created the Peace and Dignity Journey. That is a
25 run from Chickaloon, Alaska to Panama, and from Tierra del

1 Fuego, Argentina to Panama, to commemorate that Native
2 people are still here. And it was through all of the
3 indigenous lands of both South America and North America.

4 And when it came into the urban areas I
5 coordinated what we call (indiscernible), runners coming
6 through, and hosted them for their time through Los
7 Angeles, and all the way down to San Diego. And I did it
8 for 20 years. We've had four runs in 20 years. And at the
9 end of each run representatives of all of these indigenous
10 populations went to the United Nation and asked for a seat
11 on the United Nations to represent indigenous peoples.

12 Well, after 20 years of effort, it was just a
13 ceremonial run, it wasn't a racing run, we acquired an
14 indigenous committee. And an indigenous committee is alive
15 and well at the United Nations. One of my former students,
16 a doctorate and has a juris doctorate, as well as a PhD,
17 facilitates their work. She was one of my former students.
18 And they discuss how indigenous peoples of the world, not
19 of the Americas alone, are being affected by the dominating
20 cultures that are in control of their destiny.

21 So, I'm very proud of that. It was a long
22 effort. And it was word of mouth. We took no corporate
23 donations. We spent the four years in between each run
24 raising money. We hosted all of the runners. I met
25 indigenous people from all over the two continents, or

1 actually the continent. And it was insightful and
2 enlightening that so many, so many indigenous people knew
3 exactly where they were in the world today, and that wanted
4 to be part of this greater world, if given the opportunity.

5 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Excuse me. So, do you
6 think that perspective, having the perspective of an
7 indigenous person yourself would benefit the Commission to
8 have somebody on the Commission with that perspective?

9 MR. BARRON: I guess. I mean I don't know. Why
10 not? I'm not real keen on -- I don't always vote for the
11 Latino or the American Indian. No one's perfect. I look
12 at what they can do, what they have done, what they say
13 they're going to do and hold them accountable. And I don't
14 care what color, or shade, or background they have. I
15 gamble like everybody else and hope they'll be truthful and
16 deliver.

17 But I don't know. I just bring -- I only bring
18 what my experiences have been. And if that's beneficial to
19 you all wonderful. If not, then I'll go back to my
20 gardening and my dogs.

21 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: So, I see you're in the
22 Southern Coastal area. How much experience or knowledge do
23 you have of the northern area of the state?

24 MR. BARRON: I love Northern California. I'm
25 there all the time. I go to the Wine Country a lot. Not

1 as far south as Oregon, in the Applegate Valley there. And
2 my granddaughter goes to Southern Oregon University. So, I
3 go up there. I have friends, a very good friend I've known
4 since I was five years old, who lives in Novato,
5 California. And I go see him at least three or four times
6 a year. And I've done work, like I said, in Oakland, with
7 the African American community. And I was in East Palo
8 Alto.

9 When I was an undergrad I was a geology and
10 philosophy major. And in geology I did a lot of field work
11 in Death Valley. And here in Southern California, San Luis
12 Obispo to the border on the fault lines of California. So,
13 I know Highway 395 like the back of my hand all the way up
14 to Tahoe and Reno. I know the geology and topographic
15 geology of California very well.

16 As far as urban centers, even in San Francisco,
17 my son now is here in L.A., but for many years lived in San
18 Francisco. He's an RN recovery of paramedic for the
19 (indiscernible) life. And he lived in San Francisco, as
20 well as in Tahoe. So, we were out there a lot with them
21 and got to know his friends, and those neighbors,
22 neighborhoods. And so, over the years, you know, I've
23 transversed the state many, many, many times. Now, I can't
24 because it's too far to drive, I have to fly, but only if
25 my doctor allows me to.

1 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Could I get a time check,
2 please?

3 MS. PELLMAN: Yes, seven minutes, 45 seconds
4 remaining.

5 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you. What do you
6 believe could influence a person or a group's preference
7 when they're looking for representation from the
8 government?

9 MR. BARRON: Well, somebody who understands their
10 everyday concerns. Poor people want to go to work. Right?
11 They want a job. They want to feel like a part of the
12 society, besides putting food on the table, shelter, and
13 clothing.

14 Some others want to be part of the decision
15 making and they want to have their voice heard. And they
16 don't want to be shunned or minimalized at community
17 meetings that they go to after their full time employment.

18 So, you have to know your clientele. You have to
19 know your constituency and whether they're -- their hopes
20 and aspirations, but also what are their headaches. And if
21 we can do that, if we can demonstrate that, you know, okay,
22 yeah, you're not going to go vote because you're trying to
23 stay alive during this pandemic but, you know, let's try
24 another methodology. Absentee voting. An absentee ballot.
25 Make recommendations -- or, if I don't have the answer

1 what's your answer? What do you suggest? Put the ball in
2 their hands and I guarantee you they're going to give it
3 back because they're coming to you for an answer, they just
4 want to be heard.

5 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you. So, the first
6 eight Commissioners are selected randomly and then they are
7 tasked with selecting the next six. If you were one of the
8 first eight Commissioners selected, what would you look for
9 in those other six individuals?

10 MR. BARRON: I would look for everything that's
11 lacking in me because we need to be a Commission that's
12 self-sufficient at least in theory. I don't think
13 everybody has to be a statistician, but I think we have to
14 know how to read statistics and I think we need to know
15 what the effect of our decisions will make based upon the
16 data. And if there were any way to ameliorate any of the
17 fault lines in that, we need to have some educated guesses
18 that could do that.

19 So, whatever I might be lacking and there's a
20 lot, I'm not -- I disaggregated data until I turned blue in
21 my face, but that was a long time ago. I haven't used the
22 modern technologies that you have today to work with data,
23 so that's a weakness of mine. And you need to know that.

24 But I have other strengths and you need to know
25 that as well. And I would have to measure that with the

1 Commission as we would choose to complement the full
2 breadth and length of the Commission.

3 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you. What would you
4 ultimately like to see the Commission accomplish?

5 MR. BARRON: Oh, certainly, I want them to
6 accomplish the task at hand. But I also would like to have
7 them become a model for the rest of the country. I really
8 am a kind of a centric Californian. I think we have a lot
9 to offer the country. And I know that might sound a little
10 elitist, but I think we're doing some of the best work in
11 this country and have for at least the 40 years that I've
12 been around in public service.

13 Yeah, we haven't accomplished everything and we
14 haven't done everything right, but we've moved on and we've
15 incorporated the assets that we have in this state. And I
16 think we could be a model for the rest of the country. And
17 I'd like to see that thrown out there. I'd like to give it
18 to the arena and do some comparisons so that we can
19 highlight some of our successes.

20 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you. I don't have
21 any further questions at this time, Mr. Chair, so I yield
22 my time.

23 CHAIR COE: Okay, Mr. Belnap, the time is now
24 yours.

25 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay, thank you. Good

1 morning, Mr. Barron.

2 MR. BARRON: Good morning, Mr. Belnap.

3 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: I'd like to ask, why did
4 you decide to become a teacher?

5 MR. BARRON: Ah. I decided to become a teacher
6 because I wanted to know how did I ever learn. I know I --
7 I don't even know how I passed tests. I was a good test
8 taker. I used to take Iowa Test, that was before the SATs,
9 and all the other standardized norm reference tests as we
10 designed. I was a good test taker. In the military I was
11 a good test taker. But I was insecure because I didn't
12 know what the heck it really means to be a good test taker.

13 So, I was fascinated with, so how did I get to
14 this point? How did I do this? How did I learn to read so
15 quickly? Did I have a home language that had a linguistic
16 foundation that I didn't know anything about and I just
17 simply translated it into mainstream American English.

18 So, I was curious. I started in high school, but
19 I found it very difficult because I was too short, I was
20 too young, and I got very little respect from my students.
21 So, I decided to work with people shorter than I,
22 elementary school children.

23 I also had, at the time, my first child. And I
24 had taken a number of child development classes and studied
25 Piaget, and Erikson in the child development work. And I

1 was fascinated how the human being developed, and its
2 especially its intellectual and cognitive abilities. So, I
3 wanted to have the answers to those questions. So, why not
4 become a teacher? I was going to have to study some of
5 that, at least the pedagogical side of how to teach.

6 But I also was going to have to investigate how I
7 learn or how my students learn. What I discovered was I
8 have -- we have multiple learning styles as human beings.
9 And what is the mismatch, if there is a mismatch, is that
10 our teaching styles do not match the learning styles of our
11 students. That's why only one out of three Americans
12 graduate with a high school diploma because the other two-
13 thirds are taught like the one-third that succeeds.

14 We have the same illiteracy rate we had in 1952.
15 We have sixth grade competency skills in literacy. It's
16 just been raised to eighth grade in 1980. But a 12th
17 grader is not expected to have eighth grade competency -- I
18 mean 12th grade competency skills. Some do, many do, but
19 many more don't because the expectation isn't there.

20 Because the change in the teaching methodologies,
21 the teaching methodologies to match the learning styles of
22 the student is still not at the ivory tower. Only in
23 theory, but not in practice.

24 Some of the work I did in the learning deposition
25 department was to match those teaching styles with those

1 learning styles so that they could have greater success in
2 school.

3 MR. BARRON: Thank you. In your career as a
4 teacher what kind of students were you drawn to help?

5 MR. BARRON: Anybody who had a question mark on
6 their forehead.

7 Oh, I lost you. You're no longer there. Hello.

8 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Can you hear me?

9 MR. BARRON: I can hear you.

10 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay.

11 MR. BARRON: But I just can't see ya.

12 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Ah. Well, I --

13 MR. BARRON: So, children who look puzzled -- if
14 I may continue?

15 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Uh-hum.

16 MR. BARRON: Children who look puzzled. And a
17 lot of the children, I mean I taught second grade to high
18 school, but primary in the elementary schools, second grade
19 to sixth grade. And by fifth or sixth grade, if they still
20 had a question mark on their forehead, like what I am I
21 doing here and why am I here, then something didn't
22 compute. Something was not -- they were losing -- I was
23 losing them to the institution of education. So, I needed
24 to make them enthusiastic about learning and enthusiastic
25 about being here.

1 And so, I was drawn to those really hard students
2 to teach and I got them. People would say they're dumping
3 on you, Mr. Barron, again, they're giving you all the hard-
4 to-learn students. And I found them challenging because
5 what I discovered, and this is my research in child
6 development, was that they were already thinking
7 abstractly. They had advanced in terms of their emotional
8 growth and were no longer accepting the world as black and
9 white. They were actually saying is there a gray here?
10 They were abstracting. What if I cross the light when it's
11 red, am I going to die? What if I beat the car and I do
12 that, and I did, so why should I obey traffic laws? Why
13 should I do anything I've been told to do up until this
14 point?

15 So, a puberty that usually happens to all of us.
16 And that's why junior high school is such a challenging
17 grade level to teach.

18 But what you should so is harness that critical
19 thinking skill and put it into a format that's enjoyable
20 for them to learn things. I taught topographic maps to
21 children, and I taught algebra using carpentry. And
22 hypotheses was based upon algebra theorems while we were
23 building things in front of our classroom.

24 So, I incorporated the theoretical with the
25 practical and the enthusiasm of critical thinking in

1 exploring new ways of building the same mouse trap.

2 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Thank you. Does a teacher,
3 like yourself, have to exercise impartiality and, if so,
4 how?

5 MR. BARRON: Oh, yes. Every parent thinks they
6 know their child. And it's -- when you have parent
7 conferences you have to bite your tongue as they give you
8 the litany of reasons why their child is angelic. And I
9 tell them, well, maybe they suffer from a multiple
10 personality disorder because they're not that way in my
11 classroom. They may be that way at your house, but they're
12 not that way in my classroom. They behave differently.
13 And I don't know why. I'm not going to even try to go down
14 that road, but I'm -- but it has to cease and a new form of
15 behavior has to be introduced for the classroom experience.

16 And so, I had to, you know, listen to every
17 argument in the world why their child was the perfect child
18 and I had to explain one way or the other that although
19 that may be true, this is a different place, and I am a
20 different person, and we have a different task. And so,
21 perhaps we have to make some behavioral changes so that
22 they can survive their 310 minutes with me.

23 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay, thank you. So, you
24 received your master's degree from Pepperdine in 1985.

25 MR. BARRON: Right.

1 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: What opportunities did this
2 degree open up for you?

3 MR. BARRON: Well, you know, it was -- it opened
4 up administration. I also received an administrative
5 credential, and so I was able to then take on an
6 administrative role which I did immediately. That's when I
7 -- that was my first administrative role when I was on --
8 when I was the Director of the Mexican American Education
9 Commission.

10 I left teaching in the classroom, but I did
11 resume teaching at the university. That's when I would
12 teach at night a class that I designed, and it's still at
13 California State University at Northridge. It's still
14 being taught there.

15 But I started teaching at the university level
16 just keep, just to hone my teaching skills, but now with
17 young adults.

18 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: What class did you teach?

19 MR. BARRON: I created a class called the Chicano
20 Child. It was a combination of posture theory, or brain
21 theory at the time, Leslie Hart and Howard Gardner. And
22 child development theory, like I said previously, now work
23 of Piaget and Erikson.

24 And in Chicano culture -- now, for Chicano
25 culture I didn't teach the culture. My students were

1 Chicanos, so they were the culture. And what they had to
2 do was compare their experience to these things called
3 child development and brain theory. And what they
4 discovered was that they were on/off, or left or right of
5 the generalizations that we assume that all children have
6 in their development, as well as in their youths, and their
7 intelligences. As Howard Gardner would say, their multiple
8 intelligences in cycling and cognating information.

9 It was very successful. I taught there for at
10 least six years, that class, and then I left because my
11 work became more difficult to do two things at once.

12 But I know it's still being taught there. In
13 fact, I know the teacher now who just picked it up and
14 taught it. It satisfied both the requirement for a
15 credential in the Ed Department, and a requirement for a
16 major in Mexican American studies.

17 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay, thank you. You were
18 Director of the Mexican American Education Committee for
19 five years.

20 MR. BARRON: It was a Commission.

21 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Oh, Commission. Yeah,
22 thank you. Was that a statewide Commission or was that for
23 a local --

24 MR. BARRON: It was only for Los Angeles Unified
25 School District. And as you know, it's the second largest

1 district. And at that time it still was the second largest
2 school district. And at that time the majority population
3 in the district was Mexican American. So, of the ethnic
4 population.

5 Now, there were four other special interest and
6 ethnic commissions as well. In fact, my predecessor, the
7 first commission was in 1970 and that was with Dr. Raul
8 Arreola (phonetic). And after the Mexican American
9 Education Commission was established for the Board of
10 Education, then four other ethnic and special interest
11 commissions were established.

12 When I came on, all six were in operation. I
13 only administered the work of the Mexican American
14 Commission. But I worked with the other commissions and
15 with the other directors to ameliorate the issues that many
16 of the students shared as a complete minority group within
17 standard education.

18 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right, thank you.

19 Madam Secretary, time check?

20 MS. PELLMAN: There are seven minutes, two
21 seconds.

22 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right, thank you.

23 So, Mr. Barron, you indicated that you've worked
24 with Census data. When did you work with that data and for
25 what purpose?

1 MR. BARRON: Well, it was Census data, it was
2 1982, I think it was. Because we were looking at the
3 school district data, which was the ethnic and racial
4 surveys. And we were looking at the state data on the drop
5 off phenomenon and who exactly is in school. And if they
6 left, why they left and where did they go, which is a whole
7 other set of issues.

8 And so, I had to compare and contrast that
9 information, that data to identify groups within the group.
10 So, the use of Hispanic in the Census data began in 1980
11 and so they use a Spanish surname. Well, Hispanic didn't
12 cover everyone that was in that mosaic of Spanish surnames.
13 There were many, many Spanish surnamed people who no longer
14 had a Spanish surname because they got married and now they
15 were using this non-Spanish surname identifier. And so, we
16 had to look more directly at the file of each individual
17 student to find out if there was any association with a
18 previous language or culture that was more dominant than
19 the surname indicated.

20 Also, we had to compare those who voluntarily
21 identified their linguistic background, and as well as
22 their ethnic background. Because at least in the American
23 Indian population you could self-identify. So, people who
24 want to be an Indian became an Indian. Most Indians who
25 were Indian didn't want to be identified as an Indian

1 because it wasn't a good thing. At least in my generation.

2 So, the data was very skewed in relationship to
3 deciding, you know, what American Indian program we were
4 going to implement or what literacy program we were going
5 to implement, or special needs program we were going to
6 implement.

7 So, that's when they disaggregated a lot of data
8 from those years, almost on a yearly basis.

9 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay, thank you. In your
10 application you indicate that you started a doctoral
11 program at Pepperdine and were there for a year. Just to
12 confirm, you didn't finish that program and if that's
13 correct, why was that?

14 MR. BARRON: I knew that was going to come up.
15 Well, I left the program in protest. My committee chair,
16 Dr. Lindsey, was relieved of her professorship because she
17 wasn't Christian enough. As you know, Pepperdine is a
18 Christian school. I received a free ride for my master's
19 from Pepperdine. It was completely funded by them. So, I
20 never thought that there was a bias. But there obviously
21 was.

22 Dr. Lindsey was a great supporter of my thesis.
23 So, when she was summarily let go, I got angry. Well, a
24 reaction to my PTSD but -- and I left in protest. In fact,
25 we were a small cohort and about half of us left in protest

1 and did not complete our studies.

2 To some degree I regret it. But the principle
3 was more important, the principle of the thing. And I'm
4 still in contact with Dr. Lindsey and her husband, and
5 they're both professors at other universities now. But
6 they were extremely helpful in my academic development on
7 that level. And I felt it was very unfair on the part of
8 the institution to summarily let her go simply because she
9 wasn't the right kind of Christian.

10 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right, thank you. So,
11 if you were not randomly selected as part of the first
12 eight Commissioners, why should those eight select you to
13 be part of the final six?

14 MR. BARRON: Well, they should only select me --

15 MS. PELLMAN: You have two minutes remaining.

16 MR. BARRON: They should only select me if they
17 think I have something to put -- to add to the mix. They
18 shouldn't have to. I mean I'm not going to force anybody
19 to accept me. I accept me fine, thank you.

20 I have to have some utility to the process. If I
21 can't bring anything else or if somebody can bring
22 something better and satisfy the need of the other eight,
23 then they should. They shouldn't just appoint me because I
24 wear glasses.

25 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right, thank you. I

1 have no further questions at this time, Mr. Chair.

2 CHAIR COE: Okay, Mr. Dawson, the time is yours.

3 MR. DAWSON: Than you, Mr. Coe.

4 Mr. Barron, I wanted to follow up on a couple of
5 things that you'd said earlier. In your response to
6 standard question three you talked about a potential threat
7 to the work of the committee was the reliability of Census
8 data. We know that historically, even without regard to
9 the COVID-19 issue, there are certain groups who tend to be
10 under-counted, the homeless, the incarcerated, recent
11 immigrants, particularly undocumented immigrants.

12 Do you see this -- the issue of COVID-19
13 worsening that problem and if so, what could the Commission
14 do to deal with that?

15 MR. BARRON: Well, certainly the pandemic is
16 making it more and more difficult. And it's giving an
17 excuse for us never to go back and knock on people's doors,
18 and just simply accept the computerized data that we're
19 getting. That's all fine and good. I mean therein lies an
20 inherent weakness because not everybody has access to a
21 computer. And not everybody who gets that form even in the
22 language that they speak understands the question. I've
23 gotten countless phone calls to assist Spanish speakers who
24 are filling out the Census, without feeling like they're
25 giving up their integrity in answering the question.

1 So, there is some inherent problems with the
2 computerized method of garnering any Census data from
3 everyone. Especially, the ones who are going to be served
4 the best by a good Census count.

5 So, how would we overcome it? I don't know. I
6 can't -- I mean, I can speculate. I'd have to talk to your
7 legal team because what is legal and what will not create
8 the most suspicion by voters who think that we're giving a
9 leg up to disenfranchise a marginalized group of our
10 society. We'd have to step softly on how we find a
11 solution to people who don't -- who really are not in the
12 mainstream visibly, but are in the mainstream. Basically,
13 it's backbone because they're working three and four jobs,
14 the working poor. Not all of them are undocumented, but
15 many are.

16 But also, they are not -- they're not -- they're
17 not believers in a political institution that they have
18 very little positive contact with.

19 MR. DAWSON: Do you think that that is
20 exacerbated in this current political climate?

21 MR. BARRON: Oh, yes. Oh, yes. And not just
22 now, but since at least 1986 there have been a series of
23 propositions that targeted immigrant groups. Proposition
24 227, 186. I mean there have been -- there's been an effort
25 to marginalize the marginalized even more.

1 As you know, Los Angeles Unified School District,
2 and many school districts, but I'm going to use theirs
3 because they have the highest population. They're losing
4 teachers because they're losing students. It's all based
5 on average daily attendance. You have less students, you
6 need less teachers. And that's because people are running
7 from the urban cities and becoming migrant workers. Not
8 only in the farms, everywhere in the country, and running
9 to Washington State because they're afraid of being turned
10 in to the authorities.

11 Now, there's a lot of that going on
12 (indiscernible) -- in our California society. But it's
13 affecting everything, and even the middle class because
14 those teachers are -- belong to the middle class that are
15 losing their jobs. Not that they make a fantastic wage or
16 salary, but over time they can have a quality of life.

17 But I think the climate has been steadily rising
18 to identify who is a -- you know, on a hierarchical level
19 who are the better Americans, or who are the better
20 Californians, or who are the better residents. Even though
21 we acknowledge our diversity, we have a hierarchical plane.
22 I think that's problematic.

23 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. I wanted to follow up on
24 a response that you gave to a question that Mr. Belnap
25 asked. You were talking about looking out for folks in the

1 Hispanic community and there's the issue of Hispanics with
2 non-Hispanic names, and that's an issue I have some
3 familiarity with. As immigrant populations become more --
4 as the generations go on, as those groups become more
5 acculturated, more assimilated, this presents a challenge
6 to folks like yourself, who are interested in identifying
7 those groups. And if you were a member of the Commission,
8 wouldn't it also present a challenge to identifying
9 communities of interest based on ethnic or linguistic
10 characteristics?

11 MR. BARRON: Yeah. We just have to look closer
12 that's all. We have to be sure of what we're looking at.
13 We have to ask questions. And we have to get honest
14 answers from the participants.

15 Now, sending a survey out like a Census is so
16 bizarre in terms of counting people. I know it's the most
17 efficient way of doing it, but it just is -- people don't
18 ask themselves when they get up in the morning what I am I?
19 And then, every ten years we ask them who are you? You
20 know, in some of our subcultures in America, if you say
21 that you would be shot in the head.

22 The assumption is that we're all Americans. Now,
23 I know the purpose of the Census and it's important, but I
24 don't know if we've articulated it well to the general
25 population. Maybe we should do a marketing campaign of why

1 the Census is so important. And not every ten years, but
2 all through the ten years that we are about to make a new
3 count. I don't think people understand the positive effect
4 of a Census count, except those who are already
5 enfranchised by it.

6 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Madam Secretary, could I
7 have a time check, please?

8 MS. PELLMAN: Yes, 13 minutes, 34 seconds.

9 MR. DAWSON: All right, thank you.

10 I just had one additional question. As you know,
11 the Commission is made up not to be nonpartisan, but a
12 balance of partisan interests. There will be five
13 Democrats, five Republicans, and four persons not
14 affiliated. You are registered as a Democrat and I see
15 that one of your letters of recommendation is from the
16 President of the Alhambra Democratic Club.

17 My question is what have your activities been in
18 Democratic Party organizations?

19 MR. BARRON: Well, I support them. I go to their
20 meetings and I listen to the candidates that they're -- I
21 use it to find out who's running for what in the San
22 Gabriel Valley, in particular Alhambra. And I listen to
23 everybody's rationale of why they support a candidate, and
24 I make my decision based on a group -- I don't always
25 agree, but a group consideration of who they're endorsing.

1 Sometimes I endorse them, sometimes I do not. As a voting
2 member, I get to make that choice.

3 And then, I use it to inform my neighbors who
4 don't have the time or don't have the effort -- don't want
5 to make the effort to go to meetings at night. And my
6 family, when it's time to vote.

7 Now, I have been more active when it has to do
8 with the Alhambra City Government. And that's why I worked
9 with Grassroots Alhambra, a 501(c)(3) that we established.
10 And I'm not on its board. But we established it to oversee
11 the work of the city council because they were very much
12 opposed to many of the sentiments of the community. So, we
13 got the community together and we made a litany of things
14 that we think should be prioritized by the city for its
15 residents, and we've been arduously advocating those. We
16 don't have to really try because the city's always doing
17 something we don't like.

18 And in one case we had to sue the city and we
19 have a suit in litigation at this time. And another time
20 we stopped the construction. Right now, we're fighting
21 1,006 project of housing, unaffordable by the way. Not
22 affordable housing. Unaffordable housing in an already
23 congested area of our city.

24 So, you know, we're basically -- I'm active in
25 whatever concerns my fellow neighbor concerns me, and I

1 need to know whether I want to support or oppose, or just
2 stay neutral on the issues that people find important. I
3 think that's called participatory democracy. And the more
4 participatory you are, I think the better citizen you are.

5 MR. DAWSON: So, you would describe your
6 participation as primarily driven by local city, county
7 interests then?

8 MR. BARRON: Right now. But since I retired it
9 has been because my wife and I both have been -- had some
10 serious illnesses we had to address and I wasn't able to do
11 a lot of the things I did before. I even had to leave the
12 museum position because I had to get my health in check.

13 So, I focus just on my city government and my
14 neighbors' concern about our city.

15 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. I have no further follow
16 ups. Mr. Chair, if the Panel has any additional follow
17 ups?

18 CHAIR COE: Ms. Dickison, any follow-up
19 questions?:

20 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: I do not have any follow-up
21 questions.

22 CHAIR COE: Mr. Belnap?

23 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: I do not.

24 CHAIR COE: I have no follow-up questions at this
25 time, Counsel.

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

2 Mr. Barron, with the time remaining -- and Madam
3 Secretary, could I have a time check, please?

4 MS. PELLMAN: Yes, nine minutes remaining.

5 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

6 With the nine minutes remaining, Mr. Barron, I'd
7 like to offer you the opportunity to make a closing
8 statement to the Panel, if you wish.

9 MR. BARRON: Sure. I'd just like to say that
10 this is possibly the most revealing professional and
11 personal interview I've ever given in the public arena.
12 When I was 18 and on my way to a four-year commitment in
13 the military my older sister (indiscernible) -- gave me a
14 book to read. It was entitled Pedagogy of the Oppressed,
15 you've probably heard of it -- at the time I didn't
16 understand a stitch of what I read. It was only about 186
17 pages long. But the following three years I read, and
18 reread, and reread.

19 And the thesis of this book was that you cannot
20 liberate the oppressed if you do not liberate the
21 oppressor. And that the shared enemy, if you will, is
22 ignorance. So, I've kind of dedicated my life to
23 liberating myself of all my ignorance, all that I don't
24 know to the best of my ability. And to live a life like
25 that.

1 I want to thank you all for this excellent
2 opportunity. I know you'll make the wise decision. And I
3 know that I'm in good hands as a California citizen and
4 voter with the work of this Commission. Thank you.

5 CHAIR COE: Thank you, Mr. Barron, for taking the
6 time to speak with us today.

7 Our next interview is scheduled for 10:45, so we
8 will be in recess until 10:44.)

9 (Off the record at 10:22 a.m.)

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

11 CHAIR COE: Okay, the time being 10:44, I'd like
12 to call the meeting of the Applicant Review Panel back to
13 order.

14 At this time I'd like to welcome Pastor Trena
15 Turner for her interview. Pastor Turner, can you hear us
16 okay?

17 MS. TURNER: I hear you just fine. Thank you.
18 Good morning.

19 CHAIR COE: Thank you. Good morning to you. I'd
20 like to turn the time over to Mr. Dawson for the standard
21 five questions, please.

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

23 Mam, I'm going to read you five standard
24 questions that each of the applicants have been requested
25 to address. Are you ready?

1 MS. TURNER: I am.

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

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

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

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

10 MS. TURNER: Thank you. I think the most
11 important skill will be one of listening. A simple skill,
12 but kind of complex in that we need to ensure that we are
13 paying full attention not just to what we know, but what
14 others know. So that we are leaning in, not based on
15 previous perspectives, but we are open to new ideas. So, I
16 think the individual skill, as well as the collective skill
17 is a desire, an appetite and a passion to know more than
18 what you currently know. So, I'll say listening is a huge
19 skill.

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

1 What characteristics do you possess, and what
2 characteristics should your fellow Commissioners possess,
3 that will protect against hyperpartisanship?

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

7 MS. TURNER: Yeah, this ties in for me the
8 importance and the intentionality behind standing with just
9 the one skill of listening. Of course there are lots of
10 skills that can be in place. But the polarization of our
11 nation right now is such to the point where if we don't do
12 something drastically different I'm almost afraid of where
13 we'll end up.

14 People have dug into camps as opposed to
15 remembering that people are people. And if, indeed, you
16 have a love for those around you, then certainly there is a
17 capacity to love those that are further away from you.

18 Polarization. This particular role, people
19 coming from different backgrounds I think is great because
20 you for sure will have an understanding of why you believe
21 what you believe. And always there are people behind
22 understandings, people that come to mind that you believe
23 you're representing, your family, your loved ones. People
24 that you've been in close proximity to.

25 However, on this Commission having people that

1 come from certain camps that's great, again with the
2 ability to lean in and learn new things.

3 So, for example, the work that I do -- and we'll
4 talk about that later. But the work that I do requires
5 that I step out of what I already know and be able to
6 listen from a different perspective. That may sound
7 foreign and even offensive at its onset. However, at the
8 core people just do want to protect those that they hold
9 dear, and the key is in helping them see that there are
10 others that are just as dear as well.

11 So, the polarization, to me only happens when we
12 don't recognize that we really do have a greater capacity
13 to embrace more than those that we have become familiar
14 with and comfortable to. And that extends across every
15 situation.

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

19 MS. TURNER: One of the greatest -- change is not
20 easy for people. In human nature it's not easy at all.
21 The greatest problem would be for someone that digs in and
22 refuses to receive new information, new insights. That
23 just will -- and so, the difficulty is to even have
24 patience with those individuals because there usually is an
25 approach that because of an exterior, because of an initial

1 word spoken that can make you want to shut down, and what
2 you have to do is to kind of listen through the pain.
3 Listen through offense. Listen through to first of all get
4 to the place of did I understand what your perspective is?
5 Did I understand what you said? And it's like, hmmm, I did
6 understand you. Okay, let me stay in this long enough to
7 see if I cannot then move you from where you are based on
8 new information. Or, perhaps it's me that needs to hear
9 new information and shift the thought.

10 So, the danger would be for those that shut down,
11 have an unwillingness to move, unwillingness to receive new
12 information, fact, testimony, et cetera, and not move
13 beyond that.

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

20 Tell us the goal of the project, what your role
21 in the group was, and how the group worked through any
22 conflicts that arose.

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

25 MS. TURNER: The example that comes to mind has

1 to do with when I was instrumental in merging the five
2 organizations that I currently am now Executive Director
3 over. So, that's kind of skipping ahead to the end. But
4 it didn't start out that and that certainly was not my
5 intent.

6 Back in 2015, 2016 I started doing work with a
7 grass roots organizing. Not at all my frame coming from
8 corporate world, and so was not very familiar with it, but
9 was intrigued by the concept as I was introduced to it and
10 drawn in. And quickly learned that of the five counties in
11 the Central Valley there were five separate entities doing
12 work. And the culture and the way each of them operated
13 was very different.

14 And in trying to have -- so, then I learned that
15 the issues that they were fighting were very similar, but
16 they were going about it in a very much of a different way.
17 And there were those that felt they were stronger, more
18 powerful, more affluent, influential and affluent. Those
19 that they believed were kind of almost beneath them.

20 So, yet, in building together certainly we would
21 create and have more power. So, in that my role was at the
22 time just one of the board members of a local -- one of the
23 five organizations. But I was brand-new coming in and
24 didn't have all of the history and baggage concerned.

25 And so, beyond the personality issues, beyond

1 people digging in and holding onto their own kind of belief
2 processes, I really was looking at the bigger picture as I
3 was just learning it. The importance of winning for more
4 people, for a broader group of people and being able to
5 move policy, et cetera.

6 So, I started asking questions about why would we
7 not merge? They told me it was something they had talked
8 about for -- depending on who you asked, either three to
9 seven years. And I was like, well, let's not waste time
10 talking about anything for those many years, let's vet it
11 and see if we can merge, and if it's beneficial or not.

12 And me coming in as a brand-new person, too, the
13 discussion and to the issues was -- actually wasn't as hard
14 as you would imagine. But I came in asking questions,
15 leaning in, trying to determine is this legal? Can we
16 merge five 501(c)(3)'s or not? And then, what would be the
17 benefit and what will it cost us to not do it. Let's look
18 at the wins we're currently having.

19 So, I just started out by asking questions to
20 determine why were people somewhat hesitant and why were
21 there all of these -- all statements about why we couldn't
22 merge. So, let's just kind of work through them one by one
23 and see what's real.

24 And after doing that for about four or five
25 months, meeting with the individual board members from the

1 different counties, we decided to bring in legal
2 representation to ensure that it can be done. And once we
3 learned that we can do it, then we had to work with what
4 all along was the real issue, the personal thought
5 processes, and the relinquishing of power and who would be
6 in charge. That, of course, is always the issue.

7 And so, we worked through that. We determined
8 that we were a body of people, no matter where we can from,
9 that really was only serving to ensure that we're meeting
10 the needs for the whole of the community, all of the
11 communities in the Central Valley.

12 And so, brought the boards together with the
13 legal representation. They agreed to merge after we
14 addressed the situations. We had a founding convention and
15 2,000 people were there. We did merge. And after the
16 merger I was approached about leading the organization as
17 the Executive Director, which wasn't where I initially
18 thought we were going. But through some prayer and just
19 kind of reflection, I did accept that position.

20 But that's my example of having people from
21 different backgrounds, and although they were all
22 organizing, they were very different in their approach and
23 as far as who they felt were worthy of being represented.

24 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Question five. A
25 considerable amount of the Commission's work will involve

1 meeting with people from all over California who come from
2 very different backgrounds and a wide variety of
3 perspectives.

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

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

12 MS. TURNER: Yeah, I feel like this one is kind
13 of almost the whole of my life. Working for the telephone
14 company, all the iterations of it, Pacific Bell, Pacific
15 Telephone, ATT, SBC, all of those, I spent a great amount
16 of that time in management traveling, getting an
17 opportunity to deal with people from different backgrounds.
18 I did a lot of travel in that particular role.

19 My role, primarily, most of that time was
20 teaching managers how to manage across -- before we merged,
21 it was actually across in a couple of different states.
22 And then, eventually, based on the way the company shifted
23 it was California.

24 But even, I guess I more want to focus on the
25 current work that I'm doing, both from a pastoral

1 perspective, our congregation is pretty much about 70
2 percent African American, but there are others as well that
3 are there from different backgrounds. And it's one of the,
4 I think, few ministry congregations that have up front
5 conversations about race. Churches, you know, for the most
6 part are very segregated and without intentionality, and
7 leaning into those that are different, other, they could be
8 othered, people come, and they go, and they just don't
9 stick.

10 So, we're starting to see a growth and spread
11 there. And that's kind of narrow in the approach as far as
12 different thought processes. Because still, after all,
13 they're coming from a faith perspective that's similar.
14 But in the work of faith in the valley, working with the
15 elected officials, working with people in the community,
16 because we are nonpartisan everyone that I interact with
17 don't believe the way I do. They don't -- they're not
18 pulling for the same sort of outcome.

19 And so, I still get to respect and honor that.
20 And it would be a mistake to think that through every
21 conversation you're going to get to the end and everyone's
22 like, oh, I see, yes, let's just work for the same thing.
23 That's not what happens sometimes. Sometimes people will
24 have all of the facts on the table, they'll hear all of
25 what should happen, and we are really good on bringing in

1 testimony from different backgrounds, and there still then
2 is a determination.

3 Usually, there just is something that we have not
4 gotten at, yet, to be able to determine why -- why are you
5 lifting one group or individual over another. And
6 sometimes you can get to that. Sometimes people won't have
7 enough trust for you to let you know what that core issue
8 is, again.

9 So, for me, it's the work that I do, I did. I
10 did through the company, the church, Faith in the Valley.
11 I've ran into people -- there are people that, because I
12 wear a title of Pastor, that I think I put them off.
13 Coming in it's kind of like I know you're not going to
14 appreciate me and where I come from. And so, I then do my
15 best to over compensate for that, to assure then that even
16 though I have my own personal beliefs, I also believe that
17 people get to live life the way that they -- not to be so
18 mysterious and vague. Barcelona last year, Borealis.
19 Borealis, an Australia foundation, they will work heavily
20 for trans, gay, lesbian individuals, and they invited me
21 into this space. And when I got there, I think all of the
22 participants were surprised that me, black, cisgendered
23 female was in this space. And everyone was prepared for
24 me, I guess, to judge them or not received them based on
25 experiences and what have you.

1 However, it was a very fruitful and rich,
2 rewarding experience beyond the content of what we were
3 there to do, which was work on the over criminalization of
4 people of color. Beyond that, I think there were some life
5 changes and adjustments that made from the perspective of
6 who's seen as valued. And I think I was able to represent
7 a group of individuals that had received rejection before,
8 out of what they categorized me as the church, and they'd
9 been rejected from such. And they were like, huh, maybe
10 this -- maybe I have over-generalized the church because
11 you seem to be receptive.

12 Now, most of what I was there for had nothing to
13 do with that. It just is an example of me not holding any
14 set belief about any person. I think every person has
15 value and should be well-represented. And it's an example
16 of me leaning in to see what someone different than me
17 would desire, and need, and be able to represent them fully
18 in their humanity.

19 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

20 We will now go to Panel questions. Each Panel
21 Member will have 20 minutes to ask his or her questions.
22 We'll start with the Chair, Mr. Coe.

23 CHAIR COE: Thank you, Mr. Dawson. Good morning
24 again to you, Pastor Turner. Thank you for taking the time
25 to speak with us today.

1 MS. TURNER: Good morning.

2 CHAIR COE: So, your application lists quite a
3 few community efforts, including a VIP community
4 development center that serves the community of all ages,
5 working with Californians for Safety and Justice,
6 facilitating leadership trainings for the Boys and Girls
7 Club, First 5, and others. Recruiting people to
8 participate in the annual Stop and Read Program. You know,
9 there's a lot more here.

10 What -- my question is what motivates you to be
11 so involved in your community in these ways?

12 MS. TURNER: Uh-hum. Well, I love -- sorry,
13 cliché answer. I love people. Because of now I have more
14 time to actually direct the things that I love to do. Not
15 time that I'm not busy, there's a lot going on always, but
16 now I get to be kind of the -- I get to direct which
17 programs I want to work in.

18 And for us, my husband and I, that the CEC is
19 part of our ministry, it's a segment of it. And so, for
20 the Stockton area, I haven't been here that long, but the
21 people here -- I don't know, I think I've had experience
22 and exposure to things that sometimes seem different than
23 what the people that I'm around have had. And so, I'm
24 doing, now, a reading program in our shut-in space. Both
25 for adults, two hour reading to adults, and then also for

1 children's bedtime stories in a community reads program. I
2 didn't start it, I just volunteered to participate in it.

3 I think people are hungry for someone that will
4 see them, spend time, and recognize the gift that they are.
5 You know, and so anything that I can bring to that, I think
6 I walk away richer because of it. So, it fills me with
7 just joy to be able to work with people and, also, those
8 that are considered challenges by others. I like to see
9 new people change when they have a new experience, and they
10 walk away a little different.

11 CHAIR COE: Thank you. You also mentioned in
12 your application that you've received community honors from
13 the NAACP, and the Amelia Ann Adams Whole Life Center
14 Bridge Award. Were you awarded these honors for something
15 specific or for overall involvement in the community?

16 MS. TURNER: Uh-hum. Let's see, NAACP was, I
17 think overall work in the community for sure. Just for
18 some of the same things that you read, et cetera.

19 For the Amelia Ann Adams program, she is actually
20 -- she's deceased and so that award is done in her honor.
21 And she's actually the one that brought me into social
22 justice work. I, of course, I went to school and read like
23 all of us have, but it never stuck, social justice never
24 stuck for me, I think with all my years of corporate work.
25 And so, coming into Stockton, moving here, starting to do

1 ministry work, I think that we represented something
2 different.

3 So, when Pastor Amelia initially approached us it
4 was because of work that we were already doing in the
5 community. And she had not quite seen anything like it in
6 the Central Valley. The way that we do work multi-
7 culturally, the CEC that's open, the reading programs, all
8 of that is a little bit of a different frame for some of
9 the churches in this in this particular area of the Central
10 Valley. And so, that award had more to do with innovation,
11 bringing a freshness, newness, programs to the Stockton
12 area specifically.

13 CHAIR COE: Great, thank you. I'd like to move
14 on to your essay on impartiality for a moment. And in that
15 essay you say that: Impartiality is one of those things
16 better spoken about by a third party. It is something best
17 said about you, rather than something you say about
18 yourself.

19 MS. TURNER: Uh-hum.

20 CHAIR COE: And in your letters of recommendation
21 and in many public comments to your application, other
22 people do indeed speak very favorably to your ability to be
23 impartial. Why do you think that other people view you as
24 impartial? What is it you think you've done in your life
25 to make you -- to make other people view you this way?

1 MS. TURNER: Uh-hum, yeah. I feel very strongly
2 about that. I think that you can easily be deceived. And
3 the thing about this deception is that you don't really
4 know it, right. And you can easily be deceived about
5 yourself when you make absolutes about I always, and I
6 never, et cetera. And I'm always cautious about that. And
7 I love it and I was really blessed by reading some of the
8 comments that came. It really made me feel -- it really
9 made me feel good that my desire was being seen as such. I
10 think it's because I try to come into any conversation -- I
11 always bring what I know, but I always try to come into a
12 conversation, Mr. Coe, listening for what others know.

13 And now, I can't come with a set knowledge and
14 receive new knowledge and walk away the same, right.
15 Nothing works like that. It shouldn't. And so, I love
16 listening to people, hearing their perspective, and then
17 kind of testing or checking, seeing what do I need to
18 adjust based on this encounter, based on what I've learned,
19 et cetera. And then, how do I carry the gift that I've
20 been given, how do I carry that with me when I walk away
21 and not pretend like it never occurred?

22 And so, I think conversations are gifts. I think
23 experiences are gifts. This experience is something that
24 prior to last year, I hate to tell you, I didn't know
25 anything about a redistricting committee, which made me

1 determined to want to lean into it more, and to study, and
2 to make this attempt. Because I believe that when you
3 learn information, when you've been exposed to something
4 that you should carry it and treat it, and I've shared it
5 with so many different people. Regardless of where we go
6 with this, I've shared it with so many different people
7 just because so people are aware of it.

8 So, I think people, when I give them the best
9 that I have, I think they respond in kind and give me their
10 best.

11 CHAIR COE: Thank you. In your very first essay
12 you say: We embrace diversity when we have a desire and a
13 capacity, with demonstrated actions to learn from others
14 gaining a clearer picture of what our collective needs may
15 be in a way that brings value to all.

16 And you've kind of said some similar things this
17 morning. Can you give us some examples of the demonstrated
18 actions that you're referring to here?

19 MS. TURNER: Uh-hum. Mr. Coe, say it again
20 because I don't have it in front of me. I heard you say
21 demonstrated actions, but I want to make sure I'm
22 demonstrating exactly the point you're talking about.

23 CHAIR COE: Yeah, the excerpt from your essay
24 that I quoted was: We embrace diversity when we have a
25 desire and a capacity, with demonstrated actions to learn

1 from others, gaining a clearer picture of what our
2 collective needs may be in a way that brings value to all.

3 And so, my question was can you give us some
4 examples of the demonstrated actions that you're referring
5 to here?

6 MS. TURNER: Yeah. We went -- this is simple,
7 but we went -- my husband and I went -- there was an open
8 house after one of the bombings of the Islamic Centers and
9 stuff. And here, locally, there is a center that I'd never
10 visited or been, and even though we represent people from
11 the Muslim and the Sikh communities, et cetera, I'd never
12 been to this particular place.

13 But they made an open invitation to everyone.
14 You know, kind of to remove that fear that people typically
15 would have. And I told my husband we've got to go, you
16 know, let's -- because I did not want them to do an open
17 invitation and no one show up. And so, that's another, I
18 guess, way of thinking I have about myself. I always want
19 to be the one to try and represent. Well, let's not just
20 think someone else should do it, you go. So, we went.

21 And, of course, if you've ever been to a temple,
22 you know, they separate -- in the center they separate the
23 males and females, and what have you.

24 Well, when I went, I am aware that there is a
25 head covering that they wear. And so, when I went I had

1 one in my purse. And I didn't even think to talk to my
2 husband about it one way or the other. We just, we went to
3 the event. We went in, we went our separate ways, and we
4 did our tour and what have you. And at the space where
5 they pray, I noticed the other women were putting on their
6 scarves. And I had to follow their lead because I don't --
7 didn't have a lot of knowledge in it one way or the other,
8 other than to say that the hair covering is important. And
9 so, when they pulled theirs out, I pulled mine out, and I
10 watched very carefully and tied it the way that the others
11 were. Some had it on the whole time.

12 Anyway, and so we went in and we did the prayer
13 and, you know, took the shoes off, the whole bit. And when
14 we came out I didn't remove it because those that wear them
15 all the time of course kept them on, and the others had
16 them on. So, when I came out my husband kind of -- he did
17 a little double take, like what? You know, so he was
18 surprised because he didn't know.

19 But by the same token, in the kind of reception
20 period, I'm not certain if that's what they call it, but
21 the reception period when they have the different foods and
22 what have you, and I'm really picky, Mr. Coe, about trying
23 different things. But I would rather try something that I
24 never would eat at home than offend someone. So, I was
25 eating the different things that I don't know what it was.

1 And one of the ladies she says, oh, your Muslim, right?
2 And so, and I was like, oh, no. You know, and she kind of
3 looked like you sure? You know, because you had the hair
4 dress.

5 For me that's the point, that's the demonstrated.
6 It's not the big announced, oh, and I'm going to do this,
7 that and the other for the people. Do what you know to do
8 and then when you learn more do more, but try to fit in.
9 My goal was not to mock, not to pretend, but to honor what
10 they respected and to try and show them that you've opened
11 your home to me, I want to be a great guest in your home,
12 and I want to learn in the process.

13 CHAIR COE: Thank you. I wanted to ask you about
14 something you mentioned a couple of times before and that's
15 leaning in and really understanding what other people are
16 saying. And I'm trying to actively not lean in so my head
17 isn't too big in this screen here right now.

18 But how do you actively demonstrate to another
19 person that you are open and interested to the things that
20 they find important?

21 MS. TURNER: Uh-hum. People, every -- you don't
22 have to be an excellent communicator to have great value
23 and excellent points. And many people aren't great
24 communicators. So, the first thing they say may not even
25 be what they mean or intend.

1 And I think what happens frequently is things are
2 stated and said, either out of frustration or, you know,
3 just, you know, feeling of not being heard. And it's said
4 the first time and then people are offended by it, or
5 they're put off by it, or it wasn't, you know, something
6 that they found value in, and end of conversation.

7 And what I like to do, particularly if something
8 strikes me odd or different is to just kind of -- and I
9 mean lean in. My head may look big, too, but really do
10 kind of lean in and say, you know, tell me more. Tell me
11 more about that, which is kind of my go to for I really
12 want to say what? Right. It's like, well, tell me more
13 about that, you know, which gets them then to maybe say a
14 little bit more.

15 And sometimes you might be surprised that people,
16 when you say tell me more, they kind of like step back
17 like, you know, you really want to know? Because we move
18 so fast in our society, we really don't get to the depths
19 of conversation frequently that we need to. So, tell me
20 more just basically says, no, I do value what you're saying
21 and I want to understand. And I don't want to just react
22 to your first thing.

23 I mentioned a couple of times about words and
24 conversations being gifts. People will give you, based on
25 how valued they feel, right. So, if I don't feel like

1 you're really listening anyway, I'm going to give you short
2 answers, responses. How are you doing? I'm great. Are
3 you? Good. Tell me more? What -- you know, and then it's
4 like, oh, well, maybe I'm not so great, right. Maybe there
5 was more I wanted to have in this conversation.

6 And so, the leaning in to me is not thinking so
7 much about what do I need to do in another 20 minutes, or
8 30 minutes, this moment won't repeat. Let me get all of it
9 out of this moment that I'm in.

10 CHAIR COE: So, part of the reason that I asked
11 about that was that one of the tasks in front of the
12 Commission is going to be identifying communities of
13 interest all across the state. And a lot of that
14 identification, there's going to be some data aspects, but
15 a lot of it is going to be listening to the perspectives of
16 the people in those communities and what they find
17 important.

18 So, my question is kind of twofold. It's one,
19 some of those communities are easier to find, some of them
20 are a little harder to find people that aren't engaged for
21 one reason or another. So, how would, as a Commissioner,
22 you go about identifying communities of interest,
23 particularly trying to pay attention to inadvertently maybe
24 overlooking some of those harder to identify communities?

25 MS. TURNER: Uh-hum. Hmm, a couple of things.

1 You have to be willing to be -- it's kind of almost like
2 that -- I don't know if it's called Samoa, I don't know
3 what I was eating at that place. But it's almost akin to
4 that. You have to be willing to go places you typically
5 would not go, physically and, you know, in the moment, in
6 the conversation kind of exploring, et cetera.

7 You have to be willing to be with people and
8 around people that you typically wouldn't. I don't know
9 how much time I have, but there's an amazing story that
10 later I maybe can tell you.

11 But there was a gentleman, his name was Frank.
12 Frankie, Frankie, Frankie. He was a Latino gentleman, big,
13 big, big booming guy, right. He was -- had mental
14 challenges. But he loved me and my husband. And to make a
15 long -- he was very brash, he was -- you know, had some
16 issues. He looked at the young girls kind of the wrong way
17 and he had a lot of kind of issues around them. But we
18 also knew that he had some mental challenges or what have
19 you.

20 Long story later, but for right now let your mind
21 wander all of those things. And he was around the church a
22 lot because he loved being there. But he had no
23 background, no social graces.

24 And Frankie had a birthday party and he invited
25 all the church to, and we knew all the church wasn't going

1 to go, right. And but for sure I could not imagine him,
2 even Frankie having his big 40th, I think it was back then,
3 party and no one show up. We did. We went, my husband and
4 I, but there was about five or six people that were there.
5 The five or six people were all people that were probably
6 from Frankie's community, if you would. And they were all
7 shocked as all get out that he really had someone that
8 showed up to his party.

9 We went there and, Mr. Coe, the barbecued on a
10 dirty grill, with their hands dirty, the meat wasn't clean.
11 They opened chicken out of a package that was thawed out in
12 the sun. And all the while it was like -- and so, but they
13 were like, oh, Mrs. Turner, Pastor Turner, they were like
14 over the moon excited, right. And I'm sitting there going,
15 oh, my God, I'm praying. And to make it worse, I had my
16 two-year-old grandson with me. And I'm like, Jesus, this
17 is more than I can do. But I was determined I wanted to
18 hear him. I wanted to be there for his people.

19 You see I'm alive, and well, and didn't die from
20 it or any of those other things. But that was huge for him
21 and for those five or six individuals. That was just for
22 five or six people that no one else pays attention to,
23 people that people, you know, push aside.

24 I think that you have to be willing to -- because
25 people aren't going to just come to you. Frankie came by

1 some miracle, but his friends wouldn't.

2 And so, I think the Commission, it's important
3 for us to recognize that any time -- I try to make myself
4 as regular, normal as possible. But there are people that
5 I'm amazed that they'll be like I was so scared to talk to
6 you, Pastor Trena, I didn't want to talk. And I'm like I'm
7 blown away by that. I'm like, why? I'm just me. I really
8 do want to hear from you.

9 I think people in the community, when we're
10 trying to listen to testimony to try to make the decisions
11 and determinations, we need to make them as comfortable as
12 possible. Number one so that they can share their truth
13 and know that we're willing to go where we need to, to be
14 able to hear the stories. So that we're doing the right
15 job and a good job at representation.

16 CHAIR COE: So, you touched on a point I wanted
17 to make regarding those communities that maybe have a lack
18 of comfort for one reason or another in engaging
19 particularly in government or authority. But since
20 perspective of as many communities and as many people as
21 possible is important for the Commission to do its best
22 work, how do you make them feel comfortable enough to come
23 forward? Because in some of the examples you've given,
24 you've talked about how you've gone to them.

25 But in the work of the Commission, at least the

1 way they did it ten years ago, you're having to get the
2 people to you, to some type of meeting. How do you get
3 them to feel comfortable enough to come, and speak, and
4 share their perspectives with the Commission?

5 MS. TURNER: Yeah.

6 MS. PELLMAN: We have three minutes remaining.

7 CHAIR COE: Thank you.

8 MS. TURNER: Normalizing as much as possible. I
9 love the approach that you are all going through to ensure
10 that you have diversity represented. I think everyone
11 can't sit with suits and ties, and look so polished, and
12 posh, and what have you. I think people will see that as
13 another body of government that they won't approach.

14 I think it's the regular language, it's the
15 shifting in language of being able to use terminology that
16 is normal, natural, accepted by all. It could be videos.
17 It could be public service announcements. Social media for
18 sure, making sure that people -- because it's some of the
19 things that we use now. Just trying to ensure that through
20 the six degrees of separation that we are reaching people
21 and they're saying, no, this Commission you do want to
22 approach and you do want to speak with.

23 CHAIR COE: Thank you.

24 Madam Secretary, one more time check, please?

25 MS. PELLMAN: Two minutes remaining.

1 CHAIR COE: Two minutes, thank you.

2 Pastor Turner, I'd like to ask you, if you were
3 to be appointed to the Commission which aspects of the role
4 do you think that you would enjoy the most and, conversely,
5 which aspects of that role do you think you might perhaps
6 struggle with a little bit?

7 MS. TURNER: I would love the meeting the people.
8 Hands down, that would be great. And I would enjoy the
9 challenge of hearing different perspectives and trying to
10 ensure that I'm still holding them of in value and in
11 respect.

12 The ones that I would find challenging?
13 Challenging I don't know, it's not my forte, numbers,
14 figures, those kinds of things. You saw my records and
15 stuff. I have ability to understand all of it, but it's
16 not where I like to hang out. And so that, for me, would
17 be like eat your peas, right. Peas being synonymous for
18 something I hate. Can do it. Not my favorite.

19 CHAIR COE: Okay, thank you very much. I have no
20 further questions at this time, so I'm going to go ahead
21 and turn the time over to Ms. Dickison.

22 MS. TURNER: Thank you.

23 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Good morning, Pastor --

24 MS. TURNER: Good morning.

25 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: -- Trena, right?

1 MS. TURNER: Yes. Good morning.

2 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Okay. So, I wanted to kind
3 of go a little further on one of Mr. Coe's questions.

4 MS. TURNER: Uh-hum.

5 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: And he was talking about
6 communities of interest. And something that stood out to
7 me in your essay on diversity, you were talking about
8 ensuring inclusivity at meetings and planning?

9 MS. TURNER: Uh-hum.

10 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: And you always ask who's
11 not at the decision making table.

12 MS. TURNER: Uh-hum.

13 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: How would you determine
14 who's not at the table or who's not be represented when
15 you're looking at communities of interest in each of the
16 areas of the state?

17 MS. TURNER: Uh-hum. I would go about it --
18 thank you for the question. I would go about it similar.
19 A couple of days ago, even on my team we're looking at
20 perhaps a restructuring and what have you, and we're doing
21 some visioning meetings because of the time that we're in.
22 How do we not go back to a normal? How do we move beyond?

23 And so, we were talking about who needs to be a
24 part of this meeting, right. And they were like let's
25 bring in this person, that person. Well, you know the more

1 people you get in the more opinions, you may not move as
2 quickly as you'd want to, and not that that's always the
3 best thing.

4 But we started with a question that says who's
5 here? And I don't mean that, you know, I look around the
6 screen and say, oh, Mrs. Dickison is here and then, you
7 know, the legal rep, and Chris is on and all. Not that
8 who's here. Who do you represent? Who are you? Right.
9 And so, it gives an opportunity to say, well, I'm an older,
10 black, this female gendered, I'm a pastor, I'm here.
11 Because those are the things, my natural things that I'll
12 hold. And then, when you do that around the table you'll
13 learn that someone else is there because they are an
14 immigrant. Someone is there because of all the different
15 things. At the very -- because the easy answer is they'll
16 get all the people that have them represented, right. But
17 that's not always the luxury that we have.

18 And so, you start with who are you that's there.
19 What -- honestly, what groups can you hold in -- what
20 groups can you hold? What groups can you represent? And
21 once you name that, then you begin to see where are the
22 gaps of who's not at the table.

23 Now, do I have an opportunity to bring that group
24 into the table with me? Can I go get them? Or, now, do I
25 need to do the research, or the interviews, or the reaching

1 out to ensure that I'm holding them at the table, and their
2 perspective, even if they're absent.

3 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Okay, thank you.

4 MS. TURNER: Uh-hum.

5 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: You spoke about individuals
6 that might represent various groups. Something that the
7 last Commission noted was that in some of their
8 interactions they suspected that there were individuals
9 that were representing themselves as members of communities
10 when in reality they probably were not. They were probably
11 looking to further their own agenda.

12 MS. TURNER: Uh-hum.

13 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: What do you think the
14 Commission can do to guard against that type of thing this
15 time around?

16 MS. TURNER: And the guard against would be the
17 perception or guard against that happening?

18 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Guard against being --
19 guard against communities being represented by somebody
20 that doesn't have their best interest at heart.

21 MS. TURNER: Uh-hum.

22 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Or is using the community
23 to further their own agenda.

24 MS. TURNER: Yeah, yeah. I think it's the deep
25 questioning and challenging of who's there and why. And

1 not the assumption. The thing that I have to say, Ms.
2 Dickison, that keeps coming to my mind, so I'll say it so I
3 can quit tripping up over it in here. When I first started
4 doing work in community involvement, of course I'm Black,
5 all day long I've been Black. So, in being in one of the
6 groups, they were having a discussion, I remember
7 distinctly, about interactions with police. And they were
8 going back and forth and I couldn't quite understand it,
9 right. And so, finally, because of the way the discussion
10 was going there was finally an agreement where the police
11 union, or whoever it was, agreed to meet with the people at
12 a Starbucks, and they were just going ballistics. And I'm
13 thinking what in the world is wrong with these people?
14 They just cannot be satisfied, right.

15 And then, finally, someone turned to me and they
16 said because we don't go to no f'ing Starbucks, right. And
17 I was like, whoa. Okay, so now here is my point. If I
18 were chosen to represent Black people, I would have been in
19 a meeting saying this is beautiful, yes, let's meet at
20 Starbucks. Let's go do it, right. Not recognizing that I
21 was not representing them well because I didn't represent
22 that segment of community, where they came from, and what
23 their realities were one way or the other.

24 So, your question makes me think of that in the
25 manner that says it has to be deep. Not just who you're

1 presenting as, but what are your experiences? Who are you
2 surrounded with and what have you been exposed to, to be
3 able to answer that question? Other than that, we'll just
4 categorize people, oh, you know, I see a white male, looks
5 conservative in a suit, he's going to represent this group,
6 this people. And it's not as simple as that. I think it
7 requires interrogation to know not just who's presenting,
8 but who are you really carrying with you when you show up.

9 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you. Appreciate
10 that. Another thing that you talked about in your
11 impartiality essay, you talked about that you do your best
12 to be impartial and you listen to feedback from others.
13 And as you learn better you make adjustments, you know,
14 when and where those adjustments are needed.

15 Could you give us an example of a time where as a
16 result of feedback you made an adjustment that improved
17 your impartiality going forward?

18 MS. TURNER: Yeah, I can. Early on in the work
19 we were talking a lot about sanctuary, and this had to do
20 with immigrants. And we were looking at, first of all,
21 faith spaces, temples, mosques, churches, people, places
22 that would serve as a sanctuary for immigrants. And
23 because we have a church, as well I was thinking, oh, maybe
24 Victory and Praise, I wonder could we be a sanctuary.

25 Well, in the conversations, and then it started,

1 it kind of moved into we also have immigrants, right, that
2 could be same sex, what have you, partners. And then I was
3 like, oh, I don't know if that will fly in my community.
4 Because personally, that's not necessarily what we teach or
5 whatever. And I'm like, you know, that might be a -- I
6 wonder what that's going to -- well, maybe I won't say
7 Victory and Praise.

8 Well, in one of the events one of the individuals
9 that worked with -- well, for me, actually, now, and we
10 were having a conversation. And I'm thinking, well, we
11 probably could -- and I didn't name our congregation.
12 Thank the Lord I was spared from that. But I said there
13 are probably spaces that would be sanctuary, but they would
14 probably need to make sure they were married or they were
15 not this.

16 And she went off about those sanctuaries that
17 would think that, that would weigh in people's lives over
18 their sexual preference or what have you. And as she was
19 talking, first of all I was like kind of taken aback. And
20 I wanted initially to argue it by saying, wait a minute,
21 these are their places, they can think the way they want to
22 think. And I was like Trena, do what you always talk
23 about, listen, right.

24 And so, she went deeply about what this would
25 cost people if they were being deported, and if they'd been

1 in this area for a long time. And you know, after I
2 finished listening I'm thinking, wow, how do I adjust for
3 that? What do I think? You know, because this isn't about
4 me trying to proselyte someone. It's not about me trying
5 -- no, this is about saving lives, you know.

6 So, the shift in me, number one I could have
7 never asked the question and said we're not ever going to
8 be a sanctuary. And then, even when she gave her
9 perspective I could have dug in to a personal. But the
10 work that I do, I'm not there for my personal beliefs. I
11 get to hold whatever they are, but I also get to fully
12 represent all of the other people.

13 And so, I was appreciative of her, glad for the
14 wisdom because being the boss I didn't never want to come
15 across like that. But I was glad for the wisdom in just
16 naming some, because I recognized there were others like
17 it.

18 But I walked away from it having learned that
19 without the challenge I never would have tried to wrestle
20 with what was more important, people's lives or a personal
21 belief as far as -- because it really had nothing to do
22 with the ability to give the building, right.

23 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you. So, you
24 mentioned doing a lot of traveling in your role with AT&T,
25 I believe it was.

1 MS. TURNER: Uh-hum.

2 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: How much knowledge do you
3 have of the far northern part of the state or the far
4 southern part of the state?

5 MS. TURNER: How much knowledge? Can you help me
6 quantify that, what do you mean when you say how much
7 knowledge?

8 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: What do you know about any
9 communities in those areas or how being located in those
10 areas might affect their needs or what they're looking for,
11 for representation?

12 MS. TURNER: That's interesting. Well, I do know
13 one of the -- Terry Supahan, on my team, he's another one
14 that -- not on my team personally, but he's one of the
15 other executive directors in the network. He works in True
16 North and they have spaces where he was looking forward to
17 having some of the Census group come out because he was
18 explaining how they literally had to get on a boat, you
19 know, and cross a river and go up, you know, whatever. It
20 was a very difficult space to get to. So, I know there
21 presents a lot of challenges where he is in the True North.

22 But other than that, the geographic challenges
23 are spread out in some of the areas. I know that for us,
24 in the Central Valley, with a lot of the migrant
25 communities there's issues. I know Southern California

1 somewhat. Never really thought about it in my travels.
2 And my travels with AT&T was always, you know, jump on the
3 plane, grab a cab, get to the buildings right. So, that
4 would be a little bit different. So, I don't really know
5 how to answer from a challenge of geography as far as me
6 getting to them.

7 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you.

8 MS. TURNER: Uh-hum.

9 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Can I get a time check,
10 please?

11 MS. PELLMAN: Yes, there are nine minutes, 14
12 seconds remaining.

13 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Okay, thank you. Just
14 looking at my notes to make sure all of my questions have
15 already been answered.

16 So, one of the ways that the Commission -- the
17 way the Commission is selected, the first eight
18 Commissioners are selected randomly, and then they are
19 tasked with selecting the next six.

20 If you are selected as one of the first eight,
21 what would you be looking for in those other six
22 Commissioners?

23 MS. TURNER: I would be looking for someone for
24 sure that's different than me. Different than me, but also
25 flexible and open to -- back to the listening again, and

1 showing a willingness to receive new information and make
2 adjustments.

3 I'd be looking for someone that is farthest --
4 yeah, farthest away from what I represent. I feel pretty
5 strongly about my beliefs and strongly about what I've
6 presented for you today, but I know that that's not --
7 everyone doesn't come from that same perspective. And so,
8 it would be easier, I wouldn't have to stretch me later to
9 represent a group of people if we could find that on the
10 Commission. And then, that helps us be able to relate to
11 people that we meet across the state.

12 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you. What would you
13 ultimately like to see the Commission accomplish?

14 MS. TURNER: Ultimately, I would love for the
15 Commission to come in their full selves, first of all, so
16 that we know who we're dealing with, know what to expect.
17 And what I mean by that is I sit on a board that have some
18 diverse opinions, but I've sat with them long enough to
19 where even when they're not present I'm able to say, well,
20 you know, if Justin was here, this is what he'd be saying,
21 even if it's different than what I want to happen. Because
22 of the -- just the valuing of a difference of opinion we
23 can learn to represent each other to ensure that we come
24 out -- because the bottom line what you want is not to come
25 out with my thought process, you want to come out with

1 what's best for the end game, right. So, in this case for
2 the State of California.

3 So, I would hope that we'd end up with a
4 Commission that has the same kind of -- first of all coming
5 with their true self, no hidden agendas. This is what I
6 know, this is what I don't know. This is what I'm strong
7 in. So, because of the areas I'm strong in, you have that.
8 This is an area that is not my first strong suit, well, let
9 me kind of step back and you lead in that area. Because I
10 don't think anybody has to be great at everything, but
11 let's be real clear on what we can do and not set us up for
12 failure by pretending. So, pretenses doesn't get us
13 anywhere. So, I would love a Commission that would trust
14 each other enough to be open, vulnerable, and let us know
15 who we're dealing with and I think we can build anything
16 from there.

17 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you.

18 Mr. Coe, I don't have any further questions at
19 this time, so I yield the rest of my time.

20 CHAIR COE: Okay, thank you Ms. Dickison.

21 Mr. Belnap, the time is now yours.

22 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay, thank you. Good
23 morning, Pastor Trena.

24 MS. TURNER: Good morning.

25 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: So, you worked at AT&T for

1 25 years.

2 MS. TURNER: Yes.

3 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: What were your various
4 roles at AT&T?

5 MS. TURNER: Okay. Oh, I moved a lot. So, I
6 started out, believe it or not, as a TSPS operator. It was
7 the first year away from the old cord boards. And so, I
8 did that until I almost got fired for falling asleep doing
9 the job. But my boss saw me doing the job while I was
10 asleep, so that actually got me a promotion out of there.

11 So, from there I spent a short amount of time as
12 a service representative in residence. I was promoted from
13 there into San Francisco, working with some of the data
14 lines, tracing lines, tranches, those kinds of things.

15 And then, I went into management leading special
16 projects. I ended up working a while in methods and
17 procedures. I had moved into second level management into
18 the training department, teaching managers how to manage.
19 So, not so much on the product side of it, but on the
20 personnel side. From there I ran call centers for a great
21 amount of time.

22 And as the Associate Director, my second level
23 managers, basically just taught them how to run call
24 centers.

25 So, that's kind of the journey, the quick pace.

1 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: So, in what role at AT&T
2 were you most satisfied and having the most joy in your
3 job?

4 MS. TURNER: Oh, you know, I skipped one. I sung
5 for the telephone company for a while. They made up a
6 position for me to just run the management programs and
7 come out and sing. Unheard of. You won't find that I
8 applied for.

9 The thing I think that gave me what I loved the
10 post, I tend to like places I am. I think the thing I
11 loved the most was probably as an associate director
12 helping second level managers know how to run their call
13 centers. It was a challenge. I was there for -- I don't
14 think we were ATT at the time. I was there when we did all
15 the cease and desists, and all of that whole sales scandal
16 stuff that was going on. That was probably the darkest
17 time. But the challenge in that was getting people to be
18 able to sell, teach their individuals how to sell in
19 integrity, even though that was very real there was lots of
20 pressure to sell in ways that were basically deceptive.

21 But the good part about -- it did get to be a
22 challenge to say you know what, this is really a good
23 product. It really is a good product. You've got to be
24 darn good at what you do to keep up with those that are
25 putting things on that's not real. Because internally that

1 got to be the competition was not, you know, how you would
2 excel in your job. The competition got to be how do you
3 sell and do a great job, and people actually know what
4 they're receiving, while you're being compared against
5 those that's not.

6 And so, my role, I got an opportunity to counsel,
7 coach, train a group of individuals that was determined to
8 do it the right way. And we really did have a good time
9 with that, in spite of all of the trauma.

10 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right, thank you. What
11 skills did you develop at AT&T that you would bring to your
12 work as a Commissioner?

13 MS. TURNER: Hmm, at AT&T, that was some years
14 ago, too. Probably communication was one. AT&T was
15 masterful in their trainings, in their customer service
16 trainings, in their presentation, facilitation skills. All
17 of that really came from AT&T training.

18 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay, thank you. So, one
19 of the things you emphasized in your response to question
20 one was that the skill the Commissioners need to have is
21 the ability to listen.

22 MS. TURNER: Uh-hum.

23 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: That was the focus of your
24 answer. And I could acknowledge that that is probably one
25 of the most important skills, but there's probably others.

1 So, what other skills should the Commissioners either have
2 individually or collectively?

3 MS. TURNER: Uh-hum. Uh-hum. Yeah, there would
4 need to be the ability to analyze data, communication.
5 Written skills are important. They would need skills of --
6 let's see, so that's what comes to my mind for -- written
7 skills, analytical skills. I'm drawing a blank. That's
8 all I'm thinking about right now.

9 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay. So, I think your
10 experiences that you've written about in your application
11 and that you described today demonstrate your ability to
12 listen to communities. Of the other skills, analyzing
13 data, written skills, what else do you bring to the
14 collective pool of skill sets for the Commission?

15 MS. TURNER: Uh-hum. Uh-hum. One of the -- with
16 the analysis and data that's presented, I think that it can
17 get so wonky that people turn off from it, turn away from
18 it. I have ability and it's amazing, I don't -- I wouldn't
19 be able to necessarily spell it out for you, but to look at
20 data, look at something that is written, and reword it.

21 Coming into this current job that I have, there's
22 one gentleman whose name is Joseph McKellar. He is
23 masterful in how he writes. But I tell you, everything he
24 writes I have to read it like two or three times. I'm
25 thinking are you kidding me? No one, Joseph, is going to

1 love you enough to read this two and three times.

2 And I'm like who are you writing this to? You
3 know, and so he -- Joseph does a lot of work with the
4 Catholic Diocese and what have you. And he and I had an
5 opportunity to actually meet Pope Francis and be in a
6 closed session with him in the World Meeting of Popular
7 Movements, a couple years back. And that's how he writes.
8 He writes like he's writing to, you know, the Pope and, you
9 know, a whole bunch of -- I'm like, Joseph, you know what
10 that was amazing, we did that. We followed up. He went
11 back a different year through the World Meeting of Popular
12 Movements, but that's not our audience.

13 And so, and he says, well, you know, Pastor
14 Trena, you know, they need to know this, this, and this.
15 And I'm like okay, I got that. Number one, I had to read
16 it a couple of times to see what you're really saying, but
17 that three-page document try this on, right. And I'll give
18 him something that may be a page long. This is the plain
19 English, you know. For the most part people read at about
20 an eighth grade level, right, and he's writing easily like
21 college level or whatever. There's a place for that.

22 But if we're reading -- I mean, if we're using
23 the data to actually want people to understand it and read
24 it, we have to be able to speak plainly and clearly. And I
25 like to reword things.

1 I'll tell you something else, one of the other
2 jobs, unnamed jobs that I had at AT&T, and when I say
3 unnamed, they would hire me just because they wanted me to
4 be there and there wasn't necessarily -- they'd make up a
5 position or what have you. One of them was trying to get
6 -- there was a problem between the computer programmers.
7 There was a problem between the computer programmers and
8 marketing, and they could not get along at all. Everything
9 was an issue. It was causing delays in productivity and
10 everything else. And I would go in and listen to
11 programmers say what they need and listen to marketing say
12 why it couldn't happen. And after I listened -- and I'm
13 not a -- my husband's a computer programmer by trade. I'm
14 not and we certainly don't talk about computer programming.

15 But I would listen to them for a while and be
16 able to say, wait a minute, if you need load live, and I
17 don't even know the words I'm saying, right, but I heard
18 the patterns of speech of what they're talking about. If
19 this is what has to happen, then are you asking for this?
20 And I'd say a couple of different things and they'd be
21 like, oh, my God, yes, this is what we need, right.

22 It's a different kind of analysis. It's a
23 different kind of being able to take information and have
24 it translate across to someone else. And I actually did
25 that for a while and I still do that in different scenarios

1 where people are at odds. And what they're really doing is
2 talking on different levels. And I don't mean
3 intelligence. I mean just different. They're talking in a
4 different almost coding.

5 And if you again, back to that, and I hate for it
6 to be overused, but for me at least I feel like it's almost
7 an interpretation of languages, or translation, and being
8 able to sit and saying, wait a minute, you guys are dug in,
9 but this is what you're asking for. And this is not what
10 you have an aversion to. And so, being able to relay it
11 again, then it's like, yeah, that's what I want, right.
12 And then, we can put it down and move forward with it.

13 So, that's a unique, I think, ability that I have
14 and a skill set that won't fall into a normal category that
15 I provide.

16 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right, thank you. So,
17 Faith in the Valley, it was a merger of five different
18 nonprofits or five different groups.

19 MS. TURNER: Yeah.

20 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Can you -- I don't -- you
21 might have said it in the application but I don't remember,
22 what were the five groups that came together into one?

23 MS. TURNER: Uh-hum. They were all similar
24 groups with different levels of ability and strength, and
25 money. But one was in Bakersfield. Our Kern County

1 chapter. There was Bakersfield, which was Faith -- they
2 were called Faith In Action. There was the Fresno, which
3 was Faith In Community, Fresno County. Merced was called
4 -- oh, what was Merced called? I'll come back to them. I
5 forget what Merced was called before. Stanislaus County,
6 and then San Joaquin County. San Joaquin County was PACCT,
7 People Acting in Community Together. I'm not going to
8 think of the Stanislaus's previous name was, and Merced for
9 whatever reason is not coming to me. But those were the
10 five counties.

11 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: And they were all faith
12 based organizations?

13 MS. TURNER: Yes.

14 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All Christian or other
15 faiths?

16 MS. TURNER: Oh, no. Oh, no, we're multi-faith.
17 So, there is -- there's a mix in all of them.

18 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay. You spoke about it
19 somewhat in your essay on impartiality, but I'd like you to
20 speak about it again.

21 MS. TURNER: Uh-hum.

22 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: As you were helping the
23 group come together and merge, how did that -- how did you
24 have to exercise impartiality in bringing that group
25 together and also as Executive Director over the group?

1 MS. TURNER: Uh-hum. Uh-hum. So, it was
2 twofold. The impartiality came in because each of those
3 groups represented some sort of faith leader and, you know,
4 that's a huge feat in itself to get faith leaders from
5 different backgrounds -- it's a huge feat to get faith
6 leaders in the same background to agree and yield power.
7 Now, it's further complicated when you have someone that is
8 a Rabbi, that's very learned, et cetera, and then someone
9 that might be representative of an indigenous tribe, or
10 someone that is -- because we like to say in our faith
11 frames, no matter what it is that, that you know, we all --
12 you know, we believe in the sanctity of people and the
13 dignity of all, as long as I get to lead it, right.

14 And so, but trying to bring them together and not
15 have some of the prejudices and privileges that sometimes
16 we don't know we operate in, where I feel like I need to
17 yield -- I need to have the floor and you need to yield to
18 me, and although you've spoke I'm going to restate what you
19 already said, and I'm actually putting a little bit of a
20 slant on it to my favor.

21 So, I had to kind of listen through and see what
22 was going on, and to ensure that everyone had their voice
23 heard, and was not talked over or made to feel smaller, or
24 minimized. And I couldn't alienate those that were used to
25 leading and running everything in the same process, at the

1 same time.

2 And so, specifically, for my organizations, I'm
3 still my Board Chair, and we've come along in three -- this
4 is bad. I hope this isn't televised. But any -- is this
5 televised? I shouldn't say this, then.

6 But anyway, yeah. So, there are very, very
7 intelligent, a lot of skill, a lot of ability, which
8 sometimes can also mean lack of patience with someone
9 that's still trying to find their way.

10 And so, trying to just ensure that everyone has
11 time on the floor and are able to fully articulate what
12 they need for who they're representing.

13 So, in the merger process everyone of course
14 wanted to know, we know who we are now. Who will we be
15 once we merge? And will I lose, that was the biggest
16 battle I think, what power will I lose? Because ultimately
17 five boards that were running the organizations had to
18 agree to become five steering committees, without the legal
19 voice that they had before. And each of them got to send
20 only three board members to the new merged board. So, we
21 have one board, now, over the whole organization. And
22 everyone else is just kind of like a steering committee.
23 Not even the power of an advisory committee. It's just
24 they are the steering committee.

25 And so, we allow and we use them to direct what

1 we work on, but the power of the organization comes through
2 the faith leaders and the board of directors.

3 And you mentioned as Executive Director. I just
4 want to remind you, so all of this was not with me having
5 any title. I was a board member in PACCT, the one in San
6 Joaquin County. It just was I understand mergers,
7 acquisitions, all that stuff. I understood that a lot
8 stronger than I did social justice, initially. And based
9 on what they had taught me to date, it was like if we need
10 to wield more power, our best opportunity for doing so
11 would be to bring these organizations together.

12 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right, thank you. So,
13 to answer your question, this is live streaming on the
14 internet. But just my opinion, it didn't sound like you
15 said anything offensive. Just sharing your experience.

16 MS. TURNER: Which is good.

17 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: So, tell me more about the
18 Latino Community Foundation that you talked about in your
19 application.

20 MS. TURNER: Yes.

21 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: And why you were asked to
22 be a part of that particular program?

23 MS. PELLMAN: Time check, we have 40 minutes --
24 four minutes, 40 seconds.

25 MS. TURNER: Oh, my goodness because I could talk

1 about them all day, and I won't. They are -- they have a
2 deep, deep special place in my heart. When I was
3 approached, like I said, by the Latino Community
4 Foundation, Masha is the one that approached me, it was I
5 kept receiving emails. And the program that they were
6 naming seemed amazing. It talked about the power of the
7 Latino and how much support that they needed. And by them
8 being historically, you know, coming from the perspective
9 that they were, that there were things that they were not
10 receiving the same amount of training and support for. And
11 if you're going to be engaged with, you know,
12 mainstreaming, you need to make sure that you're coming and
13 you're at the top of your game and, you know, all these
14 things that you're missing. And I kept thinking, oh,
15 that's an amazing program. I wish I -- I wouldn't slow
16 down, but I kept thinking I wish they did something like
17 that for Black folk, that is just, oh, I love that, right.

18 And so, I kept doing my job and after so many
19 more weeks I'd get another invitation and, you know, about
20 being a part of this. I'm like these people obviously
21 don't know I'm Black, right. I'm not the Latino community.

22 And then, finally, because they kept -- I kept
23 thinking is this spam mail or are they really sending me
24 something, because sometimes you can't tell. And so, I had
25 my admin, I said call them, because at least I don't want

1 them to keep reaching out to me and I certainly don't want
2 to feel like I'm not responding to my email.

3 So, I had my admin give them a call and they were
4 like, oh, no, we know exactly who you are. This isn't spam
5 mail, we're sending it to you. And they were sending it
6 just because of that work that I do with the immigrant
7 population community.

8 And just ensuring that we are providing, you
9 know, the help for all services, we have a valley watch
10 network where people are able to call in when they are
11 concerned about their rights as it was relating to all of
12 the ICE raids that was going on, and what have you. And
13 all of those things are near and dear to me, and things
14 that my group was working actively on.

15 And so, basically, they were like, no, and I was
16 the -- they were like, no, we want you as part of this
17 because we want -- it's in our best interest that you're
18 providing your best service, and that we have worked to
19 hone your skills as well.

20 And so, I went through an 18-month program with
21 the Latino Community Foundation, the only Black person
22 there. And they didn't try -- what I love about them is
23 they didn't try to adjust or shift and say, you know, we're
24 here for our heritage, oh, and for the Black. No, they
25 were unapologetically in support of their community. And

1 I got to benefit by them bringing all of their experts that
2 they did, all of the coaching though Google and through
3 some amazing sponsors and coaches that they had. I learned
4 things that I never would have.

5 And last thing I want to say about them, what I
6 loved about them is what they do is provide true feedback.
7 If you presented something and it sucked, it just did, it
8 was like they'd say it with love, but it was like, yeah,
9 no, Pastor, I've seen you do better. They'd do that. And
10 I'm like, ah, I love this, you know, true feedback. Yes,
11 let me fix it, okay.

12 So, anyway, that's the Latino Community
13 Foundation. They're an amazing organization and I got a
14 chance to be a part of their program.

15 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay, thank you.

16 I have no further questions, Mr. Chair.

17 CHAIR COE: Okay, Mr. Dawson, the time is now
18 yours.

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

20 Good -- well, good morning, still, Pastor Trena.

21 MS. TURNER: Good morning.

22 MR. DAWSON: I wanted to follow up on one of the
23 questions, I can't remember which Panelist, but you were
24 talking about your time at AT&T. You were a manager and
25 not only that, you were a trainer of managers, correct?

1 MS. TURNER: That's right.

2 MR. DAWSON: And so, knowing what you know about
3 the job of the Commission, could I ask you to put your
4 management training hat back on and what would you be
5 telling your fellow Commissioners that would be important
6 to know as they manage the work of the Commission?

7 MS. TURNER: Yeah. I'd be telling them to share
8 their learnings, articulate, share, speak out their
9 experiences. I would imagine that whatever we are
10 experiencing together would hit each of us differently,
11 from a different perspective. And I think that we can kind
12 of multiply that learning when it's shared across.

13 We used to do, with my managers I used to have
14 morning, every morning, you know, just a quick 10, 15
15 minutes, what's our game plan for today. What did we
16 learn? What needs to shift? You know, that kind of thing.
17 That's from a call center perspective when we did that. I
18 would pull them all together on a conference call or what
19 have you to say how do we need to adjust in the moment.

20 Now, from that a lot of things happen. Of
21 course, you will learn new things, et cetera. But beyond
22 that, you get an opportunity to adjust a thinking,
23 attitudes, how you want to approach the day so that you're
24 not waylaid or checking in with someone, figuring out that
25 someone had a break through moment months ago that could

1 have benefitted the entire team, that just didn't think it
2 was important enough to talk about.

3 So, that was big because when you're managing
4 people that are already very self-sufficient, et cetera,
5 there aren't a whole lot of hand-holding things you need to
6 do. But what we do forget to do is to check in and share
7 the incremental gains as we're moving.

8 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Can you tell me a bit
9 more about your transition from being a corporate executive
10 to being a Pastor, and also a community organizer?

11 MS. TURNER: Yeah. Traumatic, almost. I was a
12 lover of the corporate world, absolutely was -- it was --
13 if you allow me to say from my faith frame, it really was a
14 God thing only that allowed me to walk away in 25 years.
15 I'm not old enough to have retired. I did not get a buyout
16 package or what have you. I was at the top of my game,
17 walked away with lots of amazing commendations, and awards,
18 and what have you.

19 But I knew that while I was going around and
20 helping others be better at what they were doing, my
21 husband meanwhile was pastoring back at home. And I was
22 also trying to help build that work. We started our
23 organization, our church I'll say, with just my family back
24 in '95. We currently have 12 churches.

25 And at that time, when I was still working for

1 ATT, I was helping them build and I felt like I was giving
2 the leftover to the ministry that he was trying to build.
3 And very much love my husband. We've been married 43
4 years, and he's a great guy and all that.

5 But for the -- so, it got to be kind of like,
6 man, where should I be spending my time? And I decided to
7 just really -- well, not I so much decided, I really felt
8 led and called to walk away from the job that I had to be
9 able to build this ministry that he was doing. And I
10 really expected to kind of like suffer for Jesus, be really
11 sad about it. And one of the miracle things that occurred
12 is that when I did walk away, my VP and everyone, they were
13 sure that another headhunter, because that was something
14 that would happen frequently is a headhunter would come to
15 try to get me to work for someone else. And they're like,
16 you sure you're not going? I'm like, no, I'm going to work
17 for my husband at the church, I really am going to do that.
18 So, it blew everybody away, including me. I just felt it
19 was the right thing to do.

20 I walked away from it. That heaviness that I
21 expected never really did occur because I moved right into
22 teaching, now, people that were coming in from -- you know,
23 people that weren't part of churches before that were
24 coming in, now needing to be in leadership, but really not
25 knowing how to lead. They had a heart for wanting to do

1 this different work within the church and was making some
2 of the typical mistakes a brand-new manager or leader would
3 make. So, there, I went right back into training again,
4 teaching people how to interact, how to work with others,
5 how to be flexible. How to get the best of them, not what
6 you want, what are they -- people are already crafted and
7 shaped to do some things. How do you help them be their
8 best.

9 And so, that's what we were doing and the
10 ministry began to grow from us, you know, into -- the
11 largest we were, were 600, and then we moved a building,
12 and so now we're about almost 400. You know, so we lost a
13 couple of people in a different process. I'll talk about
14 that later. I mean, I won't. But anyway, that's a
15 different thing that happened.

16 But in that, as we were growing from just us to
17 all of these other people, and then birthing out all of
18 these other churches and what have you, that's what I
19 think, back to the woman I told you, Amelia Adams, part of
20 what got her attention and she started talking to me about
21 this organizing group. They're now -- Faith In Action is a
22 nationwide group.

23 And so, she started talking about you need to be
24 a part of this, right. And I did not understand her frame,
25 her approach. So, she came to me a couple of different

1 times and finally I agreed to go to a meeting. And when I
2 went to the meeting about who do you love and, you know,
3 that's how we typically start out to see, you know, who do
4 you have passion to fight for and all of those things, I
5 didn't get it. I felt like they were moving too slow. I
6 went to one meeting, whew, I did that. This Amelia person,
7 I loved her, I did it, I'm done.

8 And she's like now I need you to come back to
9 another meeting. And I'm like, oh, Lord, no one has time
10 for this -- anyway, to answer your question, I went back to
11 a couple of more meetings. I didn't get it until I ended
12 up in a national meeting. And I'm like oh, my God, this is
13 amazing, all faith institutions should be doing this.

14 So, that's how I got involved. I came back and I
15 kind of move and stuff, created a plan on the plane, back
16 home, for just in my mind at the time of a social justice
17 ministry within our church. And then from there is when I
18 learned about the organizations thinking if they should
19 merge, and all of that. And then, I ended up being a part
20 of it, which is why I wasn't expecting to be the Executive
21 Director. I was still just working at the church. And
22 they were like, no, the way you put that together, we need
23 you to be a part of this process to apply for Executive
24 Director.

25 So, there was -- I said it that way because I had

1 to still go through a process with a few other people that
2 were in running. But ultimately, I ended up being the
3 Executive Director. So, that was the transition. It's
4 kind of a -- not a direct line.

5 MR. DAWSON: So, it was your work in ministry,
6 your pastoral role which then brought you into contact with
7 these other community groups?

8 MS. TURNER: Yes.

9 MR. DAWSON: Are you originally from Stockton,
10 have you always lived in the Valley?

11 MS. TURNER: No, sir. I'm from the Bay Area. I
12 grew up in Richmond, California. I've been in Stockton
13 since '95.

14 MR. DAWSON: I see. And these groups that -- I'm
15 taking it from Faith In The Valley these are all Central
16 Valley organizations?

17 MS. TURNER: These groups?

18 MR. DAWSON: I'm sorry, the five groups that
19 became Faith In The Valley, they're all based in the
20 Central Valley?

21 MS. TURNER: Yes, from Bakersfield to Stockton,
22 yes.

23 MR. DAWSON: So, my question is about the
24 perspective of the Central Valley and the importance or
25 whether you -- I'm going to assume that you think it's

1 important that the Central Valley be represented on the
2 Commission. Could the interests of the Central Valley be
3 recognized, be understood by folks, say, south of the
4 Tehachapis or on the Northern Coast? Does it take a
5 Central Valley person to understand the issues of the
6 Central Valley?

7 MS. TURNER: I strongly believe it does. The
8 Central Valley is very different. We have this same
9 conversation in the work that I'm doing currently. Coming
10 out of the Bay Area, the Bay Area is very much more
11 involved politically there. It's an easy thing to say,
12 you know -- in my work frequently they say, okay, well,
13 what is everyone talking about in the Central Valley, you
14 know, what issues are important for them? And I would be
15 like no issue. I mean, the priorities are so many, so
16 great in the Central Valley that there is no one issue that
17 you can come -- Bay Area, hands down housing. You know, it
18 would be housing first of all. And everyone knows how to
19 participate. It's easy to say we're getting ready to
20 organize around an issue, and a few, a couple of phone
21 calls, you know, somebody has heard of it or participated
22 before.

23 The Central Valley has such a low participation
24 of civic engagement that it makes it its own issue, number
25 one. Beyond that, the priorities, the issues between the

1 environmental concerns, and water, and the air because of
2 being in the Valley, the immigrant population because of
3 being in the Valley. You know, the conservative kind of --
4 we speak of the Central Valley -- oh, that's disrespectful
5 to us. I was going to say we talk about the Central Valley
6 almost like Alabama, right. And so, it's very different
7 than the -- very different than the Bay Area. Very
8 different than Southern California, again civically
9 engaged. Southern California has different types of
10 issues. But the Central Valley stands out.

11 And even in some of our coalition spaces they
12 frequently will speak in -- funders, let's go there, the
13 funders will speak, typically speak about representing the
14 Southern California and even/or the Northern California.
15 Central California seems to be an afterthought, an add on,
16 and like, oh, yeah, well, yeah, that includes them, too.
17 And frequently the conversations it does not include
18 Central Valley, not from a Central Valley frame, other than
19 just to understanding what they're -- what holds North and
20 South together.

21 MR. DAWSON: I understand. Thank you. That was
22 -- that answered my question.

23 I believe those were all my follow ups. Mr.
24 Chair, I have no further follow ups, if any of the Panel
25 Members have any further follow ups?

1 CHAIR COE: Ms. Dickison, any follow-up
2 questions?

3 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: I do not have any follow-up
4 questions.

5 CHAIR COE: Mr. Belnap, any follow-up questions?

6 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: None here.

7 CHAIR COE: I have no follow-up questions, Mr.
8 Dawson.

9 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Madam Secretary, what is
10 our time remaining in the 90?

11 MS. PELLMAN: Eleven minutes, 15 seconds.

12 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Pastor Trena, with the
13 time remaining I'd like to offer you the opportunity to
14 make a closing statement to the Panel, if you wish.

15 MS. TURNER: Yes, I would first of all like to
16 thank you all for just the innovation, and being able to
17 continue in the process. I want to close by saying that I
18 am looking forward to an opportunity of serving on the
19 Commission, and I'm also looking forward to whoever serves
20 on it.

21 I believe the process is set up to get the very
22 best people that are here that will be able to serve
23 California. I've done more research about redistricting
24 and understanding the maps that has to be drawn, et cetera.

25 And so, I'm confident in the process that you all

1 have gone through to narrow it down. That if it's me, I'm
2 going to be excited about it. If it's someone else, I'm
3 like, yeah, they did that. I trusted the questions that
4 you asked will yield the right results.

5 So, I'll just close by saying it's been an
6 amazing experience. I thank you for it. I hope I get the
7 opportunity to go on the ride, the journey. And I just
8 trust the process regardless of what happens. So, I just
9 want to say thank you.

10 CHAIR COE: And thank you, Pastor Trena for
11 taking the time to speak with us today.

12 Our next interview is scheduled for 1:15 p.m., so
13 we will be in recess until 1:14 p.m.

14 (Off the record at 12:05 p.m.)

15 (on the record at 1:14 p.m.)

16 CHAIR COE: Okay, the time being 1:14 p.m., I'd
17 like to call the meeting of the Applicant Review Panel back
18 to order.

19 At this time I'd like to welcome Ms. Michelle
20 [sic] Offutt. Did I say that right?

21 MS. OFFUTT: Michal.

22 CHAIR COE: Michal, okay.

23 MS. OFFUTT: Yes.

24 CHAIR COE: Welcome, thank you for being here.

25 MS. OFFUTT: Certainly.

1 CHAIR COE: And I'd like to turn the time over to
2 Mr. Dawson for the five standard questions, please.

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

4 Ms. Offutt, I'm going to read you five standard
5 questions that the Panel has requested that each applicant
6 respond to. Are you ready?

7 MS. OFFUTT: Yes.

8 MR. DAWSON: First question. What skills and
9 attributes should all Commissioners possess?

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

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

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

16 MS. OFFUTT: I believe that first the people need
17 to listen, to understand what we are presented with. To be
18 respectful of each other. To understand what data may be
19 forthcoming and be able to analyze that to determine if
20 there's additional information needed, and ask questions.
21 And each person needs to, I guess I'd say be congenial and
22 get along. Communications is very important. I think,
23 like I said, listening and being respectful of each other
24 in the Commission, and being able to analyze the
25 information that we're presented with. Understanding what

1 our goal is.

2 And it's something that not a lot of people get
3 an opportunity to participate in. It has to be taken very
4 seriously. So, a lot of thought and effort must go into
5 all the deliberations and ultimately reaching the
6 conclusion that hopefully is agreed to by everyone, a
7 consensus.

8 And it's a product that's going to affect
9 everybody in the state for the next ten years, so that's
10 petty sobering.

11 I think, personally, I -- people think I'm quiet.
12 I like to listen. I like to consider everything. And as I
13 was sitting here just before you came in I thought some
14 folks would describe me, if you're old enough to remember,
15 as the EF Hutton of group participants. Meaning that when
16 I speak they tend to listen. And I don't just rattle on,
17 although I feel like I'm doing that now.

18 I'm not sure I covered everything. I hope so.

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

25 What characteristics do you possess, and what

1 characteristics should your fellow Commissioners possess,
2 that will protect against hyperpartisanship?

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

6 MS. OFFUTT: Well, in filling out the application
7 I noticed that it seemed to expect applicants to come from
8 probably state and local governments, and maybe
9 organizations where they're active in dealing with the
10 government, or probably maybe large organizations. Such
11 that they might feel that they're lobbying on behalf of a
12 particular issue or point of view.

13 But that's not the job that this is. So, I would
14 hope that anybody that comes with a particular point of
15 view would be able to set it aside because that's not what
16 this job is about. This is to represent everyone here in
17 the State of California. The product is going to affect
18 everyone. It doesn't have anything to do with a political
19 belief or any kind of religious belief. It doesn't have
20 anything to do with any personal issues that we are
21 experiencing on a day-to-day basis. As I said, this is
22 something that's going to affect all of us for the next ten
23 years.

24 I think that on the panel, if I was confronted
25 with someone I felt had an agenda other than what we're

1 trying to do, I'd have to speak up. I would hope that any
2 person who thought they might be getting close to that line
3 would accept feedback, but also may ask whether or not
4 others thought that they were going too far, off-schedule,
5 basically being too biased.

6 I would expect the group to provide feedback to
7 individuals as we're discussing things, and try to minimize
8 anything that would take us off of track of whatever our
9 goal is at the moment.

10 I know we come from positions, but everyone even
11 within the broader positions that we have is different.
12 So, they're really -- you know, other than someone wanting
13 to paint the broad brush, everybody has a little difference
14 and we just need to set those aside. And that's what I
15 would be thinking that as Commissioners we'd want to do,
16 and work together on.

17 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Question three. What is
18 the greatest problem the Commission could encounter, and
19 what actions would you take to avoid or respond to this
20 problem?

21 MS. OFFUTT: Well, following through on what was
22 asked before, I think would be something that would create
23 distractions and just take us off of our focus. We have to
24 be able to be honest in discussions, but still start with
25 why we happen to be on the Commission, and what our job is.

1 I think that's -- I don't think there would be anything
2 coming from the outside. I suspect anything that came up
3 would come from within the group and possibly conflict over
4 maybe data interpretation.

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

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

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

16 MS. OFFUTT: My last position before I retired, I
17 was the Deputy Assistant Regional Commissioner at Social
18 Security for process operations. I worked in Richmond. We
19 had about 1,200 employees at the time I left. Suddenly, my
20 boss, on January 1st, I think it was 1995, had a heart
21 attack and died. He was a very popular boss and everyone
22 was really hit by his loss.

23 During the grieving process someone raised the
24 issue of how to remember him and decided they wanted to
25 name the building that we worked in for him. So, that

1 became our objective.

2 The union took a step to get this started. I had
3 become like the senior management official. A lot of
4 managers agreed. So, we started like a petition and worked
5 to get the information together, presented it to the
6 Regional Commissioner, who had some contacts in Washington.
7 And we worked, all of us, to provide the information
8 necessary to get this into legislation.

9 We got -- I mean, we just worked, everybody, to
10 get what information was required and get it to the
11 congressional office that ultimately introduced the bill
12 that got the building renamed. And when that happened, we
13 had an appropriate ceremony that culminated the project to
14 have the building renamed on the basis of the entire staff.
15 I think it's one of the few federal buildings, that's not a
16 post office, who's named for a former employee.

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

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

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

5 MS. OFFUTT: My first experience with a different
6 culture came when I was in high school. My father was in
7 the Air Force and we were assigned to an air base in
8 Tripoli, Libya. We left a base in Kansas and moved to
9 North Africa. And I spent the first three years of high
10 school in a culture as different as anyone could imagine.
11 Religion, language, everything was different. And as a
12 female that was extremely informational, at least
13 educational.

14 As far as I think what people currently know of
15 Islam, at that time Libya was probably one of the most
16 conservative Muslim states in the world. So, that was my
17 first experience, real in a different culture.

18 Coming back, subsequently I'm -- you know, we had
19 different assignments when my father was in the service.
20 After I became an adult and went through all my different
21 positions, finally working at Social Security, both in the
22 field and in process operations. But primarily in
23 different field offices. We encountered the diversity of
24 California, frankly.

25 Offices had expanded after the federal government

1 took over the adult welfare program, so that became SSI.
2 Many offices were open in locations to serve people.
3 Offices tried to have staff reflect the people who in the
4 communities they represented. We had employees, we tried
5 to hire, who could also speak languages if we encountered
6 it.

7 So, in that setting I can't go through all the
8 different peoples that we served. I can just -- I mean, I
9 worked -- when I first got my first assignment, I was sent
10 from my training to Walnut Creek because at the time the
11 boss said they need some color out there. I have
12 coworkers, Hispanic, some Filipino, Asian, Native American,
13 everybody, and we were all there serving California's
14 population of those people.

15 In addition to that, prior to being in the field
16 offices, I had had an assignment with the Office of
17 Education during the Vietnamese refugee resettlement in
18 1975, and I spent a summer monitoring our efforts at
19 providing survival English to the Vietnamese who were
20 coming in through Camp Pendleton.

21 It was a great experience just to be going
22 through that and learning about people. I was fortunate
23 enough even to bring my then 10-year-old son down to live
24 with a family for a few days.

25 For me, California's diversity is the most

1 fascinating thing I think about being here. I just have
2 learned so much and I'm actually happy when I meet new
3 people from new places.

4 One of the most recent experiences I've had was
5 with an immigrant from Nepal, who just recently became a
6 citizen. And he was so grateful, you know, to come and I
7 was so happy to welcome him and his family. I don't know
8 what to say other than I appreciate it. I would try to --
9 whatever I have to do to be respectful of what exists and
10 hope to incorporate the idea into whatever decisions have
11 to be made as the lines on the maps are being drawn.
12 That's what I would work for.

13 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. We will now go to Panel
14 questions. Each of the Panel Members will have 20 minutes
15 to ask his or her questions. We will start with the Chair,
16 Mr. Coe.

17 CHAIR COE: Thank you, Mr. Dawson.

18 Good afternoon, Ms. Offutt, thank you for taking
19 the time to speak with us today.

20 MS. OFFUTT: Yes.

21 CHAIR COE: In your essay on impartiality that
22 you sent to us, you discuss how you were designated the
23 third level hearing officer for employee grievances for
24 both staff and managers?

25 MS. OFFUTT: Correct.

1 CHAIR COE: How were you designated for this
2 role? Did you seek the position or did someone else seek
3 you out for this position?

4 MS. OFFUTT: Initially it's because of the
5 position I held, as the Deputy. So, that's the structure
6 of process internally. So that I would get the third
7 level. There were quite a few. And like I said there, I
8 was called on to go outside of the operations where I
9 worked in Richmond to also do hearings in other parts of
10 the agency, out in the field, and in the then regional
11 office. So, I would go to places and conduct the hearing.
12 And that was you do what you do, listen to both sides and
13 see if you need to ask questions, and then render your
14 decision.

15 CHAIR COE: Thank you. And in that role or any
16 other experience can you give us a specific example of time
17 where you had to make a difficult impartial decision that
18 involved setting aside your preference or your self-
19 interests?

20 MS. OFFUTT: Oh. I don't think there was any
21 occasion that I had any particular interest, personal
22 interest in. The hardest case I had was one in Hawaii,
23 which involved a supervisor. Because grievances with
24 managers were rare. That was a difficult decision because
25 she was being disciplined and removed from supervision.

1 I'm not sure what else I could say about it. It's hard for
2 someone who's worked to become a supervisor in our
3 management to then face leaving or being removed.

4 CHAIR COE: And in that situation, were you the
5 hearing officer in that situation?

6 MS. OFFUTT: Yes.

7 CHAIR COE: Okay. And so, were you the one who
8 ultimately had to make the decision on -- or was it a
9 committee of votes, or how did that work?

10 MS. OFFUTT: No. No, no, it was me as an
11 individual.

12 CHAIR COE: I see. So, you had to be tasked with
13 making the individual decision on your own?

14 MS. OFFUTT: Yes.

15 CHAIR COE: And is there a -- can you give us a
16 little bit of flavor of the process that you went through
17 in order to make that decision?

18 MS. OFFUTT: I had to meet with the managers who
19 had initially decided that this person should be removed.
20 I also talked to some of the employees who were being
21 supervised, so that I could hopefully have a picture of
22 both sides. Then, after I got the information I considered
23 it and made a decision. I didn't have to check with
24 anyone, I had that authority.

25 CHAIR COE: I see, thank you. A different

1 question. In your first essay you say of this Commission
2 that it will be necessary to have a group that will work
3 collaboratively to produce an acceptable outcome.

4 What is an acceptable outcome of the Commission
5 -- for the work of this Commission in your mind?

6 MS. OFFUTT: Well, not really good at statistics,
7 but I understand that most of the districts need to be
8 equal, as equal as they can be given the population. I
9 believe there's a range to allow for places where it might
10 need to have differences.

11 So, I would hope that the information can be
12 sorted to make it possible to be as close to meeting what
13 the range should be so that everybody in a particular
14 district is fairly represented. Like I said, I'm not
15 really good at statistics, but that's what I believe the
16 outcome is to be that these district maps should be fairly
17 even. That's --

18 CHAIR COE: Thank you. And in your essays and in
19 your responses to standard question number five, you
20 discussed having met or worked with diverse groups of
21 people from many backgrounds. And from your interactions
22 with those people that you've met, and the interactions
23 you've had what have you learned about their perspectives,
24 their needs and concerns that would make you an effective
25 representative for the diverse population of California, on

1 this Commission?

2 MS. OFFUTT: To the extent possible to put myself
3 in the place they're coming from. Starting with
4 understanding myself, some people -- I'm not sure how to
5 describe something some people might see, somewhat
6 privileged, some middle class, a little bit too educated
7 dealing with some people that, you know, don't have the
8 same education.

9 But you need to go from where you are, me as a
10 person, into where that person is, whether they've been
11 disabled, or they come from a different country, and what
12 they know about this country comes from what somebody told
13 them, or maybe something they saw on television. You kind
14 of have to get out of your own space and into sort of where
15 they are to the extent that you can do that.

16 And then, bring that along to the group, which I
17 would presume had similar experiences, to try to show that
18 you understand.

19 One of the questions about hyperpartisanship, it
20 goes beyond the politics. I mean, we have all kinds of
21 actions going on and I was just reminded of that when I'm
22 thinking about the sexual harassment cases that are going
23 through all of the Black Lives Matter things. But most
24 recently, just terrible things.

25 When in Chinatown, at the Chinese New Year, and

1 we're dealing with the virus that apparently started there.
2 People get -- they focus on just that little bit and stop -
3 - don't stop to think about, you know, all of us. We're
4 all involved in this and that's what we have to kind of
5 understand to represent different communities there.

6 To go back to what we're looking for is to come
7 out with something, hopefully, that fairly represents all
8 these people.

9 CHAIR COE: Thank you. A similar question, but
10 along the lines of geography. I know you mentioned that
11 you worked in Richmond. I see you're currently in Contra
12 Costa County. And I'd like for you to talk a little bit
13 about your experiences in different parts of the state,
14 different regions of the state, the encounters you've had
15 there with the different people in those regions, and what
16 you've learned from them about how their concerns and their
17 perspectives can vary by region. And what you've learned
18 from them that would make you an effective representative
19 for them on this Commission.

20 MS. OFFUTT: I had a friend, who had a brother,
21 that had a ranch up in Humboldt County. I took my son up.
22 We went to visit. My son got pecked by a chicken. We had
23 to get him to a doctor and I needed to go to the bank to
24 get some money. And I'm unknown in this place, you know,
25 up in the Redwoods, and everybody was just very helpful. I

1 was surprised because I don't know at the time how many
2 Black folks were up in Humboldt County.

3 Going to one of the things I've done more
4 recently, partly nostalgic, I was driving Highway 99
5 because when I was here, when I was young that was the
6 main highway north and south. And it was interesting to
7 drive along, to really see all the farmlands, and all the
8 everything, the whole agricultural process. And I thought,
9 you know, most Californians don't go and do this. Plus,
10 you're driving 99 and avoiding all those big trucks
11 carrying produce and things.

12 Once again, stopped, maybe getting something,
13 maybe you just get to meet people. You find maybe a little
14 more people that are immigrants there. So, that's just --
15 I've been there.

16 I was trying to remember going to Los Angeles the
17 first time, my reaction was that a lot of Buffalo, New York
18 hadn't been moved to Los Angeles. I thought it was just
19 very strange, the section I was in. But I noticed that
20 like when I first started working for Social Security and
21 go to L.A., there were different areas designated where
22 people were. You know, groups of people identified by
23 Hispanic, or Black, or just whatever.

24 If you go to L.A., now, it's not the same. I
25 forget where Monterey Park is, but I know it's not the

1 same. And I remember part of it changing as some of the
2 managers I knew that worked there reported on service area
3 changes. But that's part of how things change.

4 One of the other things was -- and I'm not sure
5 about San Diego. I think it's probably still a Navy town.
6 But the whole approach is our attitudes, people in the Navy
7 change.

8 The other place that was fascinating is the
9 Imperial Valley, which I don't -- I'm not sure that it gets
10 enough recognition down there, out in the desert, and what
11 it produces.

12 MS. PELLMAN: You have four minutes remaining.

13 CHAIR COE: Thank you, Madam Secretary.

14 Ms. Offutt, one of the biggest challenges in
15 front of the Commission is going to be identifying
16 communities of interest throughout the state. Some of
17 those communities are easier to identify than others. Some
18 are less obvious for a number of reasons, less engaged for
19 various reasons.

20 As a Commissioner how would you go about trying
21 to identify communities of interest throughout the state,
22 paying particular attention to not inadvertently
23 overlooking some of those harder to identify communities?

24 MS. OFFUTT: Those -- does the Commission have
25 staff available to help identify any of those communities?

1 I would be looking to see -- let me go back to one of the
2 things. This will be the second Commission. And this
3 Commission will need to build on what was done initially.

4 I would hope we have means to identify anybody
5 who might be overlooked to bring that -- to bring some
6 information about that community to see where it would fit
7 in the broader scheme of things because whatever decision
8 is made, whoever wants to represent that community will
9 have to go and do it, and know that they're there. So,
10 there might be a place where one fits and one doesn't.

11 I would, if need be, have to go to the locale to
12 find out where we needed to look.

13 CHAIR COE: Okay, thank you.

14 One more time check, please?

15 MS. PELLMAN: One minute, 40 seconds.

16 CHAIR COE: Okay, I think I've about out of time,
17 Ms. Offutt, so I'll go ahead and yield my time, and turn
18 the time over to Ms. Dickison.

19 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Good afternoon, Ms. Offutt.
20 I want to continue a little bit on thinking about
21 communities. One of the things you mentioned in your
22 application was that working -- in working for the Social
23 Security Administration you tried to ensure that field
24 office staff reflected the service area community.

25 In your position, what was your role in that

1 process?

2 MS. OFFUTT: Well, when I managed a field office
3 part of it was, you know, hiring. You know, when I had
4 vacancies and could hire, then I would, you know, following
5 whatever rules there were look to see if I could fill from
6 the people who were available, some of the needs we might
7 need in the areas.

8 And I was in three different locations within the
9 Bay Area and doing that. We -- and things changed over
10 time, so have to adapt. You didn't always get to hire as
11 many people as you'd want to, but that was the primary
12 goal.

13 The other thing, if needed be, we were -- you
14 know, had to be in touch with different advocacy groups and
15 things, if we needed assistance such as, you know, we might
16 have a person, some immigrant, maybe, from Laos or
17 something, where we didn't have a speaker. If we could be
18 in touch with the agency that could provide us an
19 interpreter, you'd do something like that. That was
20 particularly important not just with employees, but people
21 who would come in and file for disability benefits, they'd
22 frequently have to, if they were not -- if we did not have
23 the ability to speak, then we'd have to get assistance.
24 And that could be difficult, but you needed to have those
25 kind of contacts in the community to get that kind of help.

1 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: How did -- how did the
2 office or you determine the type of staff or the different
3 groups of people you needed to be reflective of the
4 community? Did you use certain data or what process did
5 you use to determine what would be reflective of the
6 community?

7 MS. OFFUTT: Well, the jurisdiction of the
8 office, as far as its service area, was predetermined.
9 What we had to be sensitive to was changing populations.
10 Plus the fact that you are always going to have the ability
11 to hire. You might have to seek a detail, if you needed
12 assistance, from some other place. I'd have to say kind of
13 your control over the people that you had depended on the
14 budgets from higher than where you were.

15 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: So, you mentioned that you
16 just had -- you had the service area is predetermined, you
17 mentioned that, but that you had to be sensitive to
18 population changes. Did you use anything, like Census
19 data, to maybe know what those population changes or other
20 information to determine what that was?

21 MS. OFFUTT: No, not Census data. It was -- you
22 have to be in your community in terms of the media, the
23 local governments, and organizations that you would be
24 dealing with. One of the things that you, you know, in
25 your service area you'd need to keep on track of.

1 Nowadays, they don't have newspapers. We weren't in a
2 situation where the radio and TV was available, but you did
3 have your, you know, like I said local organizations and
4 your local political entities, the city if need be, the
5 county. That's where you got your information and became
6 aware of -- you keep track of how things change on a local
7 level.

8 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: So, do you think that
9 having that experience could translate to work on the
10 Commission?

11 MS. OFFUTT: Well, I would hope that we'd be able
12 to get that kind of information. I know we'll -- we're
13 looking at what's coming from the Census. And with the
14 situation we're in right now, we're not sure what we're
15 going to get as far as the responses of people, but it's
16 definitely going to I think be significant changes
17 affecting us here. And I would hope that at a local level
18 there would be contacts that we would have to be able to
19 get a sense of where and how things have moved.

20 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Okay. Thinking of the
21 Census and everything that's going on right now, do you
22 have concerns about the data that may come from the Census
23 itself?

24 MS. OFFUTT: I'm concerned. I actually, in 2000,
25 worked for the Census as a field supervisor, which we did

1 follow ups when there weren't responses. And I understand,
2 now, the challenge that's going to be faced for
3 nonresponders this year. There are going to be places that
4 I fear just won't get counted. That -- that's concerning.
5 But 20 years ago, when I did this, I had a group of folks
6 who I would give them follow ups to do, and we'd try to
7 schedule so that you do weekday, evenings, and weekends.
8 And if you couldn't -- if they had a problem, then I'd go
9 out, either go with them, or go instead of them. Try about
10 five different ways to get in touch with people.

11 I -- I don't know what's likely to come out this
12 year with what we're in right now. And I'm very concerned
13 that the Census is -- there will be some questions.

14 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you. So, Mr. Coe
15 talked about the different regions of the state and I think
16 you talked about, you know, your knowledge of being in
17 certain places. Based on that, do you -- what do you think
18 or how do you think where someone lives may -- may
19 influence their preference for representation in the
20 various areas of the state?

21 MS. OFFUTT: Okay, that's kind of hard. Part of
22 it depends on how long they've been there. If they've been
23 in a place for a long time and see it changing, it depends
24 on whether or not that person likes the change or not. And
25 that would affect who they wanted as a representative. And

1 other people who -- I mean they will move and maybe have
2 moved, and don't think so much about who they're
3 representative is.

4 I've been where I am for 40 years and I have to
5 admit I was surprised after 2010 I had a whole new
6 representative and was trying to figure out how he got to
7 have my area, you know. But that's what happens every ten
8 years.

9 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Yeah. Okay.

10 Could I get a time check, please?

11 MS. PELLMAN: Yes. Eight minutes, five seconds.

12 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you.

13 You talked earlier, let me get back to that,
14 about living in North Africa, I think it was.

15 MS. OFFUTT: Yes.

16 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Okay. And that was during
17 your high school years. What did you learn about -- about
18 people and communities while you were in that area that
19 could translate to searching out communities of interest
20 for the Commission?

21 MS. OFFUTT: Well, I was a military dependent.
22 My father was in the Air Force. Tripoli, like I said, was
23 -- this is before Col. Gaddafi took over. Tripoli was
24 ruled by a king. It was a very, very conservative Muslim
25 country. The only -- the western folks there, besides the

1 Americans, were the British and Italians, primarily. We
2 lived in the community. We interacted at the marketplace.
3 And in the religious community there was a -- oh, I'm not
4 sure what. Anyway, a Catholic school, I think. And we
5 were in high school. We had a few sports. I know that we
6 were able to have a volleyball game with the Catholic
7 school. There's not a lot of interaction with the Arab
8 community, especially females because it was so
9 conservative. We really had to keep to ourselves.

10 But one of the things that my mother, who wanted
11 to reach out and understand, we had a -- she had a lady
12 come in to assist for cleaning things because one of the
13 things that would happen periodically, the winds would be
14 so great that even if you closed your shutters the sand got
15 in the house. But my mother reached out to her and we met
16 her family, and went out.

17 Also, the vendor that came around with his cart
18 selling fresh vegetables.

19 So, those are things that she did for us to help
20 us, my brother and myself, understand where we were living
21 and the people that we were living with.

22 It is just an approach that I guess I've kind of
23 grown up with. That's the way we deal with people is
24 people to people, so you go out and deal with people.

25 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you.

1 MS. PELLMAN: You have three minutes and 18
2 seconds remaining.

3 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you. I have one more
4 question. If you were selected as one of the first eight
5 Commissioners, which are selected randomly, you would be
6 tasked with selecting the next six to round out the
7 Commission. In that situation what would you be looking
8 for in those other six Commissioners?

9 MS. OFFUTT: If I were selected, I would -- since
10 I'm assuming they're -- they've got the same information as
11 we've gone -- or we're going through here, that they would
12 fit the bill. Have analytical skills, communication
13 skills, interpersonal skills. That's I would expect and,
14 hopefully, if I was selected I don't want them to be like
15 me, but to be a complement to what I can bring. That's
16 what I would look for.

17 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you. No further
18 questions, Mr. Coe.

19 CHAIR COE: Okay, thank you Ms. Dickison.

20 Mr. Belnap, the time is yours.

21 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Good afternoon, Ms. Offutt.
22 I want to ask a few questions about your employment
23 history. I see from your application that between 1983 and
24 1998 you worked for the Social Security Administration.
25 What was before? Before you worked for the Social Security

1 Administration did you have a career?

2 MS. OFFUTT: Oh, in 1983 I was working -- I
3 worked for Social Security Administration from 1971.

4 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Ah.

5 MS. OFFUTT: I started in the field offices and I
6 had an interlude, I took a management internship in
7 Washington for two years, and then I was back in the field
8 offices until 1983, when I transferred from the field
9 operation to the process operation. Which Social Security
10 characterized the field as the front end, the process as
11 the back end. So, I just moved within the organization.

12 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: So, how many total years
13 was that with the Social Security Administration before you
14 retired?

15 MS. OFFUTT: Twenty-seven.

16 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Twenty-seven years, okay.
17 And after, you already mentioned working as a field
18 supervisor for the Census, and I do have a few questions
19 about that. But I also noticed that you went back to law
20 school. Why did you go to law school?

21 MS. OFFUTT: Initially, when I started law school
22 in 1969 I was going full time in Golden Gate. That was
23 their first -- they had been providing evening classes and
24 that was the first time they put day classes. So, I went
25 for two years to day classes. And then, I needed to get a

1 job, I needed to work. I had a son. Yeah, I was divorced,
2 right then. And I needed to work. I took a leave of
3 absence and I tried to do it in the evenings while working.
4 That had to end. I couldn't juggle that.

5 So, you know, Social Security I was working.

6 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Uh-hum.

7 MS. OFFUTT: In 19 -- my mother died in 1995,
8 right after -- or later in the year, after my boss that I
9 mentioned we got the building named after him. And when
10 she did, it was kind of to fulfill something that she
11 asked, so I said, okay, let's go back. But it had been a
12 long time. I needed to be updated, start school again.
13 But I was kind of fulfilling her dream and my dream to
14 finish that, which is what I did. I was -- I think I had
15 one year going into retirement, where I was working and
16 going in the evening, but then I was retired so I could
17 study more. And that's what is really bringing me up to
18 date from 20 some years before. A lot of things have
19 changed.

20 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: And after receiving your JD
21 from Golden Gate, have you had the opportunity to use that
22 training in either volunteer work or other experiences?

23 MS. OFFUTT: Well, I think that learning how to
24 structure your analysis goes into, i.e., you know, I think
25 that was something that I consider pretty fundamental to

1 approach. But doing the hearings, third level grievances,
2 and helping to get started out here, but the federal
3 lesbian and gay organization started, helping them get kind
4 of structured to be recognized by the government.

5 I did some work for Contra Costa -- no, no.
6 Well, yeah, it was like an assignment of going through old
7 cases in the DA's Office to retire files. To study and see
8 that basically if there was nothing else needed, or
9 anything was going to happen to set the files so they could
10 be retired and, you know, not be sitting around.

11 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right, thank you. So,
12 now, I want to talk about your experience as a field
13 supervisor. What I want to know is -- I'm assuming people
14 refused to participate at times in the Census. At those
15 times were you able to get, or at least from some of those
16 individuals what their reasons were for not participating
17 in the Census?

18 MS. OFFUTT: When we could contact a person, we
19 got a response. It was running into situations where we
20 could not get a hold of a person, that's why we'd try so
21 many times. But it wasn't because they didn't want to, it
22 hadn't come to that, yet. That's what's probably happening
23 this year.

24 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: So, who were some of the
25 more difficult groups to reach and get a response from?

1 MS. OFFUTT: We weren't working with groups, we
2 had areas that covered. So, I mean we just got cases in
3 this area, these people have not responded, so I would take
4 three, or four, or five, depending on the staff and what
5 they could do. Because the people that were doing the
6 Census work also had other jobs. I think I only had one
7 person that that was his full time job. Which meant that
8 sometimes he got more work because he was available.

9 But, you know, try to encourage to get them go
10 out in the different hours when we might think we'd get a
11 hold of somebody. And that was the way we did it. And
12 after we did, then we'd turn the files over, back to the
13 manager, the field manager. But we'd go and, like I said,
14 if somebody -- if we were in an area that maybe a woman
15 didn't feel safe or something, then I'd go, too, or I'd go
16 alone just to make sure we did as many possible contacts as
17 we could.

18 But these are all individuals and I had people in
19 El Cerrito, and Richmond, basically, to try to catch.

20 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right, thank you. Did
21 you notice any trends in the types of people who were
22 difficult to contact and difficult to therefore count?

23 MS. OFFUTT: I would not -- I wouldn't say a
24 trend. I was remembering. Not really. In the area there
25 are just, you know, different people and you might go to --

1 I don't know how many apartment buildings. But if you
2 could catch somebody in an apartment building and talk to a
3 neighbor, then you could find out maybe something about who
4 lived in the apartment that you were trying to get to. But
5 we had just such a variety of different addresses to go to,
6 I would not put it into a trend.

7 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay.

8 MS. OFFUTT: I don't think I could do that.

9 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right, thank you.

10 Mr. Chair, I have no further questions.

11 CHAIR COE: Thank you, Mr. Belnap.

12 Mr. Dawson, the time is yours.

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

14 Thank you for being here, Ms. Offutt. I wanted
15 to -- I think I wanted to fill in a couple holes in my
16 understanding. I heard you say that you went to high
17 school in Libya because your dad was in the Air Force?

18 MS. OFFUTT: Yes.

19 MR. DAWSON: And then, you went to undergrad at
20 Vassar?

21 MS. OFFUTT: Yes.

22 MR. DAWSON: And then, you came to California
23 when?

24 MS. OFFUTT: Okay, after I graduated from
25 college, 1964. I thought I was going to stay in New York

1 City, but that was not going to -- I couldn't afford to do
2 that, then. And my father had retired at that point into
3 Cleveland, Ohio, which was his home. So, I went back and
4 thought about going to graduate school. I was about to go
5 to graduate school and threw up my hands and says, I'm
6 tired of school.

7 So, one day, and I was helping a friend out, a
8 family friend who had owned a beauty school. I just got up
9 and left, and went to the recruiting office and joined the
10 Air Force. So, I went to officer training school from
11 November 1964 to February of 1965. So, at that point I
12 guess I followed in my father's footsteps.

13 And after I finished and was asked where I wanted
14 to be assigned, I said anywhere east of the Mississippi.
15 So, I was assigned to Hamilton Air Force Base in Novato,
16 California. And basically, as I indicated, I got out here
17 and just fell in love. So, the state got me, even though I
18 didn't want to come west of the Mississippi.

19 MR. DAWSON: I see.

20 MS. OFFUTT: I'm happy to be here.

21 MR. DAWSON: I imagine it was quite a change
22 from, you know, seven sisters, and then you said it was in
23 Ohio that you were living when your dad retired?

24 MS. OFFUTT: Well, that's where he lived. I
25 never lived with them after he retired. The whole -- my

1 whole life through college was going to every place he was
2 assigned. We lived on -- we left Libya, we came back and
3 lived on Cape Cod. Came out -- I was out here, you know,
4 elementary school. We lived in Kansas. So, you know, I
5 feel like I've lived everywhere around the country.

6 MR. DAWSON: What was your assignment while you
7 were at Hamilton Air Force Base?

8 MS. OFFUTT: Information Office.

9 MR. DAWSON: I see.

10 MS. OFFUTT: We were -- it was an air defense
11 command, so we served -- our region, I guess we had fighter
12 squadrons, plus oversight onto some of the radar stations
13 around California and Nevada, set up for air defense.

14 MR. DAWSON: I see. Your time, then, in
15 California I seem to understand has been primarily in the
16 Bay Area, then?

17 MS. OFFUTT: Yeah, like I said, I got out to the
18 base and the first place I saw was Point Reyes. I went out
19 there and I told my son that's where my ashes are going to
20 be scattered.

21 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Can you tell me about
22 your time when you served as President of the SSA Black
23 Caucus, what was that -- that organization, what was that
24 about?

25 MS. OFFUTT: There are some people that worked in

1 the agency that there was a moment in the 70s when there
2 was a lot of hiring done under affirmative action. And,
3 subsequently, I think people felt like after that initial
4 employment wave some of their concerns weren't being met as
5 far as assignments, and promotions, and things. So, they
6 got together to sort of create an advocacy group to try to
7 get the agency to be more responsive. And, yeah, I was a
8 member and I was elected to represent them. I think my
9 term was a year.

10 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. And then, returning to
11 Mr. Belnap's questions about you started law school at
12 Golden Gate in '69, you received your JD from JFK
13 University in 2001. And was that when you were at the
14 agency, at SSA?

15 MS. OFFUTT: I started there in 1971. I had
16 taken a leave of absence from Golden Gate and tried to work
17 and go to night classes. I did not finish that. In 19 --
18 let's see '98 is when I retired. Just before I retired, I
19 had started JFK, which is all evening classes. So, I had
20 just maybe a year of going to class and working, but I was
21 not -- I did not -- I was not working when I finished JFK.

22 MR. DAWSON: I see. Did you ever practice
23 independently as a lawyer?

24 MS. OFFUTT: No, I did not. I did not pass the
25 bar.

1 MR. DAWSON: Okay. I have no further questions,
2 if any of the Panel Members have any additional questions?

3 CHAIR COE: Ms. Dickison, any additional
4 questions?

5 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: I do not have any
6 additional questions.

7 CHAIR COE: Mr. Belnap?

8 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: No further questions.

9 CHAIR COE: I have no further questions, Counsel.

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

11 Ms. Offutt, with the time remaining I'd like to
12 offer you the opportunity to make a closing statement to
13 the Panel.

14 MS. PELLMAN: We have 12 minutes remaining.

15 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

16 MS. OFFUTT: Thank you. I haven't had a job
17 interview in a long time. But I did think about what this
18 means. As I had indicated, I voted for the Commission and
19 I realize that 2020 is just its second time to operate.
20 And that's pretty momentous. The first Commission really
21 established what is going to happen and why this is
22 important. And I see this opportunity as an opportunity to
23 build on what was done and to, if possible, improve it.

24 I didn't -- I started this application when I
25 read about the paucity of applicants last fall. I think

1 that serving the public is important. I've tried to do
2 that in my career. And this is the most important thing
3 that can be done and it's going to affect us for the next
4 ten years.

5 So, I thank you all for your questions. I hope
6 I've answered the best I can. And I hope we all get
7 through this terrible crisis that we're going through well.
8 Thank you.

9 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

10 CHAIR COE: Thank you, Ms. Offutt. Thank you for
11 taking the time to speak with us today.

12 Our next interview is scheduled for 3:00 o'clock,
13 so we will be in recess until 2:59.

14 (Off the record at 2:35 p.m.)

15 (On the record at 2:59 p.m.)

16 CHAIR COE: Okay, seeing as it is 2:59, I'd like
17 to bring this meeting of the Applicant Review Panel back
18 to order.

19 At this time, I'd like to welcome Ms. Jennifer
20 Pae for her interview for the Citizens Redistricting
21 Commission. Ms. Pae, can you hear us okay?

22 MS. PAE: Yes, I can hear you.

23 CHAIR COE: Fantastic.

24 MS. PAE: Can you hear me?

25 CHAIR COE: I can, yes, great.

1 MS. PAE: Okay, great.

2 CHAIR COE: Thank you for being here. I'd like
3 to turn the time over to Mr. Chris Dawson for the five
4 standard questions, please.

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

6 Ms. Pae, I'm going to ask you five standard
7 questions that the Panel has requested each applicant
8 respond to. Are you ready, ma'am?

9 MS. PAE: I am ready, thank you.

10 MR. DAWSON: First question. What skills and
11 attributes should all Commissioners possess?

12 What skills or competencies should the Commission
13 possess collectively?

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

16 In summary, how will you contribute to the
17 success of the Commission?

18 MS. PAE: Great. So, aside from the obvious, of
19 course, the ability to be impartial, appreciation for
20 California's diversity, and relevant analytical skills, I
21 thought about this in the context of what each individual
22 Commissioner versus the collective. And I sometimes that
23 actually is intertwined. So, my answer speaks to both I
24 would say.

25 First and foremost, the importance of being able

1 to work well with a team. It's going to be incredibly
2 important for every Commissioner to be able to come into
3 this and, hopefully, work through any challenges that might
4 arise without fracturing the Commission. So, coming up
5 with collective decisions are going to be really important.
6 And in order to do that, the ability to work well in a team
7 is going to be really important. And I see that coming to
8 light in the ability to build relationships.

9 So, building a relationship based on respect and
10 trust, and being able to really listen to each other is
11 going to be key. And as we listen to each other,
12 hopefully, we can have -- the Commission will have open,
13 honest, and healthy conversations to come to a collective
14 decision.

15 I would also find that it's important that the
16 Commission and the Commissioners be able to analyze
17 information, a lot of information that will hopefully
18 result in the best outcome.

19 With that being said, I think it's important that
20 the Commission is goal driven and that ideally it should be
21 through a consensus. And that being able to work together
22 as a team to come to those decisions could be done in a
23 healthy way.

24 So, knowing those things what -- what attributes,
25 and competencies, and skills do I have, I recognize that no

1 one can be all things, right. I mean that's the beauty of
2 working in a team together, and that's something that I'm
3 very familiar with and have done my entire life, both
4 personally and professionally. So, being able to
5 collectively bring our talents together is going to be
6 really important.

7 My background in community organizing, trainings,
8 facilitation, being able to listen to each other and come
9 together is something that I've always rooted myself in.
10 And also, recognizing that we all have a leadership --
11 different leadership styles. That ability to be a natural
12 collaborator, which is something that I've also grew up
13 with. I mean, growing up with very limited resources, with
14 a single parent, in the Central Valley, and being able to
15 work our way through to be the first in my family to go to
16 college, I learned very early on the value of hard work.
17 So, that's another key skill that I would say is important.
18 And being very committed to the Commission to do all the
19 work that's necessary.

20 And finally, I would say that I would hope that
21 there's a deep -- on my -- at least on my end there is a
22 deep knowledge of fair elections and democracy issues. So,
23 my experiences working with Care About California, and the
24 League of Women Voters of California, you know, all through
25 a nonpartisan lens, and having worked with researchers,

1 academics, and community leaders this is something that
2 I've done as part of my career and would hope to be able to
3 contribute as part of the Commission. So, I see that as a
4 key value.

5 So, and then the other example I would bring up
6 is my familiarity with redistricting process. I see that
7 also as an asset to the Commission and not having to start
8 from scratch, or having a steep learning curve. Having
9 been a part of EBAVEC, the East Bay Asian Voter Education
10 Consortium in 2010, as their Outreach Director, having been
11 a part of the process to reach out to community members
12 about redistricting, identifying communities of interests,
13 even proposing potential maps for the Commission. That has
14 -- is something that I'm familiar with and would love to be
15 a part of on the other end to work with other
16 Commissioners, and once again as a team, to come up with
17 the best maps possible. Right. So, I would say my
18 professional and my personal experiences have really led up
19 to this moment. And I would say my dedication and hard
20 work to the Commission, and to the state is something that
21 is of value and would be deeply proud to be a part of.

22 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Question two. Work on
23 the Commission requires members of different political
24 backgrounds to work together. Since the 2010 Commission
25 was selected and formed, the American political

1 conversation has become increasingly polarized, whether in
2 the press, on social media, and even in our own families.

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

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

9 MS. PAE: Yeah, so the first thing that comes to
10 mind is staying goal driven. And in any campaign that I've
11 been a part of, whether it was around fair elections, or
12 education access it's really important to keep to this
13 overall goal and vision. And I would hope that's really
14 brings us together. And finding the commonality between
15 folks is really important. So, I go back to this important
16 piece around relationship building.

17 I think it's going to be important on the front
18 end to do some grounding and what we call community
19 agreements. It's just is just an organizing term to
20 understand how we all -- or how the Commission will all be
21 able to work together, and staying true to those
22 agreements, and continuing to build relationships with each
23 of the Commissioners. Understanding what drives people,
24 what their values are, and hopefully there is some
25 connection that you could, and I would hope, be able to

1 overcome any sort of political divisions. I'm a firm
2 believer to overcome the politics of division, you really
3 need to have a politics of inclusion. So, understanding
4 where everyone is coming from is going to be really
5 important.

6 And I would say, also, a sense of compassion and
7 willingness to work together is going to be incredibly
8 important. So that any sort of tensions that might arise,
9 that that -- and hyperpartisanship that we can hopefully
10 avoid could be done just really being able to ground people
11 at a human level.

12 As far as what will I do to ensure that the work
13 of the Commission is not seen as polarized, it's going to
14 be incredibly important to be transparent. The process is
15 just as important as the goal.

16 So, I mentioned this earlier, having open,
17 honest, and healthy conversations is going to be very
18 important. Finding that common ground. And having had
19 experience in kind of teasing out everyone's, or at least
20 the people in rooms that I've been in, in facilitation or
21 in training, really speaking to who they are as a person
22 and hoping to come together despite any sort of division,
23 that is something that I can bring to the Commission.

24 The final piece that I would lift up is, you
25 know, being able to avoid perceptions of political bias and

1 it's going to be incredibly important for the Commission to
2 be -- to have an impactful and effective public education
3 and engagement process. I think it's going to be important
4 that this nonpartisan body takes out any political bias by
5 engaging in the community in all the ways that can be done.

6 And as we're doing this interview now, like this,
7 not only is there access through the internet and being
8 able to engage people online, just is important is going to
9 be able to engage people who may not have access to the
10 internet, right. So, how to be able to convey this
11 information in a way to keep the public engaged and
12 informed, so that they can also provide input.

13 Because at the end of the day all of this is
14 going to be that much better and stronger when more people
15 are involved in it.

16 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Question three. What is
17 the greatest problem the Commission could encounter, and
18 what actions would you take to avoid or respond to this
19 problem?

20 MS. PAE: Yeah, so I actually had -- I know it
21 says the greatest problem, but I actually have a couple I
22 would lift up. The first thing, being able to come to an
23 agreement. Being able to find consensus when you're
24 working with a very diverse body it could potentially be a
25 challenge to be able to navigate through a disagreement

1 where folks may not be able to compromise.

2 So, being able to work through that conflict is
3 going to be important. For me, naturally, I try and
4 resolve conflicts, which is my innate ability having grown
5 up in a single-parent household, and like trying to figure
6 out all the things, as well as the work that I've done
7 professionally. So, being able to navigate through those
8 tensions I think may potentially be a challenge.

9 The second that I thought of is, you know,
10 there's a lot of work to do, and being able to absorb a lot
11 of data, and being able to find a common solution while
12 educating the public, and Californians, and engaging the
13 public within I would say a shortly -- with a somewhat
14 short timeline, right. I mean there is a time frame that
15 all of this work needs to be done.

16 An example of this is my time on the Oakland
17 Community Police and Advisory Board. We had to analyze a
18 lot of data around community policing, including maps of
19 neighborhood council activities and figuring out how to
20 best improve community policing efforts.

21 It was clear the board did not always agree and
22 sometimes I would find myself in a facilitator role
23 sometimes, due to intense personalities I would say. But
24 the key once again being goal driven to come up with
25 recommendations that everyone can agree on to provide to

1 the City of Oakland around best practices, and how to
2 navigate those challenging dynamics.

3 So, I would just end by saying it would be
4 important to address these challenges by being solutions
5 oriented, be committee to doing a job, and serving the
6 public with the best intentions.

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

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

16 What lessons would you take from this group
17 experience to the Commission if selected?

18 MS. PAE: So, as I thought about this question
19 what really came to mind was my first appointment to a body
20 to serve. And that happened right out of college. I was
21 -- once again, I mentioned I was the first in my family to
22 graduate college. And through my experience as an
23 undergrad was elected to serve as the U.S. Student
24 Association Vice President and then President. In that
25 capacity, you know, at 21 years old I'm managing a national

1 organization with over a million dollar budget, and a dozen
2 staff. And I was essentially serving as the student voice
3 on national federal issues.

4 And during that time the Department of Education
5 appointed me as the primary negotiator for representing
6 students on what they called the Negotiated Rulemaking
7 Student Loan Committee, just Student Loan Committee for
8 short. And the body was made up of university
9 administrators, government officials, various stakeholders
10 and we were all obviously very politically different.

11 And as the only young person in the room, I look
12 really young, I looked even younger then, and really the
13 only woman of color in the room, had to negotiate with
14 these stakeholders and, you know, we had to come up with
15 recommendations on a multitude of student loan regulations,
16 and they all had to be decided by unanimous consent.

17 So, you know, my role once again I came in to try
18 and build relationships, to understand these various
19 perspectives with the stakeholders. And there was
20 definitely a disagreement around the approach that -- on
21 how to regulate the student loan industry, and their
22 relationships with university administrators.

23 So, at the time it was uncovered through the
24 media that there were student loan officers that would
25 essentially bribe university administrators to be the ones

1 up forefront to, you know, get these student loans to --
2 you know, to get more attention to the student loans they
3 were offering.

4 You know, the point was not to point -- we didn't
5 want to point fingers, we just needed to figure out a
6 solution. And it was a challenge to navigate through what
7 that solution could be. Ultimately we found a common
8 ground and the language that could be used for the
9 Department of Education to regulate these kinds of
10 relationships.

11 So, I would say what I've learned from that
12 process, which essentially influenced my professional
13 career, the first being quick to learn and I really do
14 enjoy the details and the process. We reviewed a lot of I
15 would say pretty tedious administrative laws, and had to
16 discuss every single one of them to come to a unanimous
17 decision.

18 The second is the ability to listen. I knew that
19 sometimes I had to temper my personal opinions, as the only
20 student representative, in favor of the consensus and how
21 to best serve, you know, the greater good. And being able
22 to work collectively and negotiating to develop the best
23 package of reforms for the Department of Education.

24 And then, the third thing that I drew from this
25 experience is the ability to compromise. Not everything I

1 wanted to pass was recommended. And we knew that we had to
2 come up with a collective agreement through these, you
3 know, discussions and debates sometimes.

4 And for the recommendations we couldn't agree to
5 there were potentially other avenues that it could get
6 resolved. So, for example, if it wasn't in the purview of
7 the Department of Education then there was an alternative
8 route through -- the policy changes potentially through
9 Congress, in a bipartisan way.

10 So, I would say that experience in and of itself
11 really set the framework for my professional career, having
12 been really thrown into a process like that and learning
13 very quickly how to navigate that environment. And then,
14 from then on in any position and role that I've served,
15 I've taken those same experiences and lessons to heart
16 knowing what it takes to work collaboratively.

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

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

25 What experiences have you had that will help you

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

4 MS. PAE: Uh-hum. I'll just start off by saying,
5 you know, as someone who looks like me, right, relatively
6 young, as a woman of color, there were a lot of young
7 Californians in the state who are more diverse culturally
8 and politically. And for me to be able to understand those
9 dynamics and be able to navigate those kinds of spaces it
10 gives a huge asset to the Commission.

11 And I would say my unique experiences in the
12 State of California. I mean being the first in my family
13 to be born here, in a place like Santa Clara, in the South
14 Bay, and then growing up in a place like Modesto, because
15 it was an affordable place to raise two young girls, for a
16 new immigrant like my mom. And going to church in
17 Stockton, and Merced, and going to school not only in
18 Modesto, but in Empire.

19 Really, growing up in the Central Valley I have
20 had unique experiences there. And then, being able to go
21 to college in San Diego, where I am now, and then growing
22 up and having my first career in D.C. for a couple of
23 years. Coming back to California because I'm deeply
24 committed to this state.

25 To the Bay Area where I found a community in

1 Oakland and in San Francisco. I mean, I even ran for
2 office in my mid-20s. I'm the same age my mom was trying
3 to figure out how to navigate this country.

4 To then going to Sacramento, and our state's
5 capitol, being able to support and help my mom, and my
6 aunt, and my grandmother.

7 You know, all of those experiences living in
8 Northern California, being down here in Southern
9 California, I have a very unique perspective
10 geographically. I mean, I've visited more than half of the
11 counties so far. Hope to visit all of them, all 58
12 counties at some point. That gives me a very unique
13 experiences in the state that I can relate to the folks
14 across the state.

15 So, I would say personally that this is what
16 draws me to the Commission is understanding the
17 geographical diversity of the beautiful state that we're
18 in.

19 On the professional side, my career has been
20 really met with meeting different people that are not like
21 me, right. That people of different race, gender, sexual
22 orientation, age, ability, and political background.

23 Every job that I've had required me to be able to
24 build relationships with people that are not like me. And
25 a big part of that is having compassion and understanding,

1 right, and being able to hear people, and what their needs
2 are.

3 So, an example of that, when I served with the
4 League of Women Voters of California, I was responsible for
5 what we called, it's a long title, The Best Practices
6 Manual for Official Voter Information Guides. And we did
7 work with every single county in the state. And during the
8 research phase we hosted focus groups, and did data
9 collection, meeting with various stakeholders, election
10 administrators, civil rights groups, voting rights groups,
11 frequent and what I'd like to call potential voters, and
12 community members to come up with a set of recommendations.

13 You know, one of the most poignant experiences I
14 had was when we were in a focus group at a library, meeting
15 with what we call low literacy individuals, and talking
16 them through voter information guides. It came to light
17 that he was an ex-felon and he didn't know that he could
18 vote. And this was something that, you know, I wanted to
19 share that he could in the State of California, and
20 registered him right on the spot, right. Because we're
21 fortunate in California that we have online voter
22 registration.

23 So, my ability to connect with folks and
24 grounding in my personal experiences growing up in the
25 state, and as well as now having a -- having family not

1 inside the country even. My husband's family is in Mexico.
2 So, the pre-COVID-19 we would be able to travel down to
3 Mexico and visit family members. And, you know, being able
4 to understand what it's like to grow up in a limited
5 English proficient home, where not everyone has a college
6 degree. You know, those kinds of personal experiences
7 matter and -- but I've been fortunate to be a part of.

8 The last example I'll bring up for this last
9 question is my work in electoral reform. So, as part as
10 FairVote California, you know, it was -- you know we met
11 with everyone across the political spectrum throughout the
12 state to talk about fair elections and fair representation.

13 So, you know, an example of this is in Santa
14 Clara there was an electoral reform issue coming before the
15 ballot and having met with community groups, labor groups,
16 business groups, and people from all political backgrounds.
17 I sat down with folks from not just the Democratic Party,
18 the Green Party, Libertarians, Republicans, yeah, I would
19 even say Peace and Freedom, or those who are not affiliated
20 to any party to be able to come up with what the
21 recommendation could be for a city like Santa Clara.

22 Eventually, the city advanced a ballot measure
23 that some of the community members didn't support, and
24 there was division that I was, yeah, having to try to
25 navigate through.

1 You know, besides that example, you know, I most
2 recently remember sitting down with a national Republican
3 leader in Orange County to find common ground on local fair
4 elections there. So, although we didn't politically agree
5 we found, once again going back to the first question, how
6 to connect on a common set of goals and values to be able
7 to find a way to be able to work together.

8 So, as I stated before, you know, one of my core
9 values is around inclusive politics and finding ways that
10 we can all connect to each other, you know, regardless of
11 difference in race, and gender, and ethnicity, sexual
12 orientation, age, ability, you know, all of those things.
13 So, that is definitely a core value of mind and something
14 that I've done both personally and professionally and would
15 be thrilled to be able to include through the Commission.

16 MR. DAWSON: Great, thank you.

17 We will now go to Panel questions. Each Panel
18 Member will have 20 minutes to ask his or her questions.
19 We'll start with the Chair, Mr. Coe.

20 CHAIR COE: Thank you, Mr. Dawson.

21 Good afternoon again, Ms. Pae, thank you for
22 taking the time to speak with us this afternoon.

23 I wanted to talk about something you mentioned in
24 your first essay. You said you were involved in providing
25 input to the first Citizens Redistricting Commission ten

1 years ago. So, I'd like to hear a little bit about your
2 involvement with the Commission and how you participated
3 with that effort.

4 MS. PAE: Yeah. So, I was brought on as an
5 outreach director for the East Bay Asian Voter Education
6 Consortium, so largely just in the East Bay, to reach out
7 to Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, and educate them
8 about the redistricting process.

9 The first was around what we're going through
10 now. It was even just trying to get Asian Americans and
11 Pacific Islanders to apply to the Commission. Inform them
12 of what it was, why they could potentially serve, and help
13 them -- oh, and encourage them to apply. So, that was one
14 of the first steps.

15 And then, when it came time to -- when the
16 Commission was already established, then reaching out to
17 various stakeholders to participate and come up with
18 recommendations, or just letting the Commission know what
19 they cared about. And we would help them through mapping
20 tools, and even just like educating them on what this all
21 meant, and like finding themselves on the map. And what
22 they found is their community of interest and being able to
23 share that with the Commission.

24 So, it was really helping them through educating
25 them about the redistricting process, as well as

1 encouraging them to just be active, and submit testimony,
2 or testify. And working together, sometimes, to talk
3 through as a community what they would recommend to the
4 Commission.

5 So, that was, you know, I was a part of ten years
6 ago. I don't know what it's like now. But I do value that
7 this kind of community engagement is important otherwise
8 you may not have voices that may not -- you may not be able
9 to hear from just because they just don't know that this
10 even exists.

11 CHAIR COE: So, did you take anything away from
12 that experience? I mean you just mentioned community
13 involvement, the importance of that. But on top of that
14 did you take anything else away from that experience that
15 you think might help in your work on this Commission,
16 should you be appointed?

17 MS. PAE: Yeah, as I mentioned before being
18 comfortable with maps and being familiar with data is going
19 to be important, and that's something I'm very comfortable
20 with and would be -- you know, would want to try and be
21 helpful with to be able to analyze the data. So, that
22 first comes to mind.

23 The second I think would be ensuring that there
24 is a community engagement process so that you -- so that
25 the Commission does hear from various community leaders, or

1 community organizations in whatever way that makes sense.
2 Whether that's statements they provide, or testifying
3 before the Commission, having that kind of engagement by
4 really any community leader or organization, or individual
5 is going to be really important so folks can feel
6 comfortable to come to the Commission and not feel so
7 intimidated by the process. Because we know that it's
8 going to impact their lives and so it's going to be
9 important for the Commission to be able to be that open and
10 transparent body for folks to feel that they could come
11 forward and share. Share, you know, what they would
12 recommend or what their experiences are like that the
13 Commission should hear about and figure out what to do
14 going forward.

15 CHAIR COE: Thank you. I read in one of your
16 letters of recommendation, and you mentioned your time in
17 Washington, D.C., and in one of your letters of
18 recommendation it talked about in 2007, the work that you
19 did helping put forward legislation known as the Dream Act
20 to increase access to higher education.

21 Can you tell us a little bit about that effort
22 and what that experience -- what you took from that
23 experience that could be beneficial to the work of this
24 Commission?

25 MS. PAE: Yeah. So, the Federal Dream Act,

1 different from the California Dream Act which I also tried
2 to help and support years ago, the Federal Dream Act would
3 allow undocumented -- young, undocumented people to, you
4 know, be able to access, find federal financial aid and
5 potentially pass the citizenship.

6 And then, in large debate on the federal level,
7 whether it was through educational access or through
8 immigration, being in D.C. at the time it was really
9 important to come, to have a bipartisan effort and bill.
10 And we had champions at the time. Senator McCain, Senator
11 Durbin, Senator Kennedy, kind of these lions and pillars in
12 Congress, and being able to work with them was important,
13 work with them and their staff to not only develop whatever
14 iteration of that bill was going to be, but also trying to
15 work across party lines and get the vote to have this bill
16 passed.

17 Unfortunately, during my time there it didn't.
18 But through that experience working with various
19 stakeholders, you know, you obviously had your what we call
20 the dreamers really heart and center, because these were
21 the people that were directly impacted. But also, finding
22 other allies that came from the faith community, the
23 business community, you know, once again across the
24 political spectrum to be able to lift this issue up and
25 hopefully have it passed through Congress, despite it not

1 happening at the time.

2 And then, you know, years later we're now seeing
3 that it was through Obama's administration it was a
4 deferred action, the childhood arrival being an executive
5 authority instead. So, I was essentially in that early
6 stages of the Federal Dream Act, being able to use those
7 skills around, as I mentioned being able to meet with
8 people, build relationship despite, you know, where we all
9 come from to hopefully come to a common understanding and
10 goal on this particular issue.

11 CHAIR COE: Thank you. Switching gears a little
12 bit to your essay on impartiality, and in that essay you
13 discuss your role on the Oakland Community Policing
14 Advisory Board. And you say that you frequently took on a
15 facilitator role to ensure the process was fair and
16 everyone was heard, and this meant finding the balance
17 between fairness and advocating for my own ideas and
18 opinions.

19 So, how does one go about navigating that and
20 finding the balance between fairness and advocating for
21 their own ideas and opinion?

22 MS. PAE: Yeah. So, looking back at my
23 experience on the Oakland Community Policing Advisory
24 Board, I mentioned this on the previous question, there
25 were some really intense personalities on the board. And

1 there were several moments that it got so heated, you know,
2 voices got elevated and, you know, folks were really
3 frustrated. And for me, it is really hard to work through
4 an environment like that. And if anything, it will turn
5 people away from wanting to be able to work together.

6 So, as far as my role as a facilitator, I would
7 find ways to essentially chair the meeting to come back
8 together in a way that was going to be more productive and
9 be able to address whatever discussion we were having to
10 come to a decision.

11 This balance piece is a delicate one I would say.
12 You know, once again my commitment to fairness is very real
13 and my views of fairness might be different from a
14 colleague's. Right. So, I think this is where having a
15 conversation, finding if there's some middle ground or a
16 way to compromise, and being able to compromise ultimately
17 is where, you know, finding the ability to advocate for my
18 own ideas, or it might be to temper those to find a common
19 ground. So, it's a very delicate place to be, I would say.
20 But if you come in it with the right intention and
21 hopefully with the right set of goals and values that you
22 could compromise, and you could come to an agreement.

23 And so, that's what we had to do as part of this
24 board in particular. And it was just -- I would say it's
25 particularly challenging because of personality dynamics

1 more than anything. I wouldn't say it was because of major
2 disagreements on any sort of issue. It was largely, and
3 this is why relationships matter so much, it was really
4 personality differences where people just didn't like each
5 other. I wouldn't generalize it people but, you know,
6 there were a couple individuals that just didn't like each
7 other.

8 So, I would hope that we would avoid those kind
9 of conflicts on the front end and be able to set up a set
10 of, you know, ground rules that folks can adhere to. Not
11 only in ways to be able to work together, but also just to
12 find consensus and be able to compromise.

13 I hope that answered your question.

14 CHAIR COE: It does. I'm going to kind of build
15 off that right now, though. We've discussed compromise and
16 we've discussed, I think you mentioned making -- being able
17 to make decisions for the greater good, even if it's not
18 necessarily your preference. But I'm wondering if you can
19 give us a specific example of a time where you had to set
20 aside a preference or your self-interest and make a
21 decision that was difficult, impartial in that same way?

22 MS. PAE: Yeah. I'll go back to the example that
23 I lifted up in my application for the Santa Clara Ballot
24 Measure Campaign. My inclination was to follow the
25 community recommendations for what they wanted on the

1 ballot. However, the city determined a different ballot
2 measure, and this was really a method of elections for
3 their local -- for their local races, mayor and city
4 council.

5 You know, once again, my personal inclinations
6 would be to align with the community. However, I had to
7 step aside and say this is what the City of Santa Clara is
8 recommending, this is what I am going to be advocating on
9 behalf of. And that's where I had to really switch gears.
10 And, you know, despite wanting to go one direction
11 personally, I had to go in another direction
12 professionally. And, you know, despite all those
13 challenges at the end of the day all the folks that I
14 interacted with throughout the effort, they were on both
15 sides of the ballot measure campaign, I can still turn to.
16 So, at least I can end that experience not having any
17 major, you know, hard feelings despite not going with my
18 personal gut and instincts at the time.

19 CHAIR COE: Thank you. I want to go back to
20 something you mentioned briefly, already, and I think that
21 was in the context of your work in the Bay Area during the
22 last redistricting, and identifying communities of
23 interest. That's obviously going to be a huge task in
24 front of this Commission in identifying communities of
25 interest statewide. And some of those communities are

1 easier to identify, they're more engaged, more eager to
2 identify themselves. Some are less so, less engaged,
3 harder to identify.

4 So, I kind of have a two-part question on this.
5 And the first is, as a Commissioner how would you go about
6 identifying the communities of interest statewide and avoid
7 unintentionally overlooking some of these communities that
8 are harder to identify?

9 MS. PAE: Yeah, that is a great question. You
10 know, I can't speak to the answer because I can't speak for
11 everyone, right. But my hope is through the process that
12 we would be able to -- the Commission would be able to
13 engage with community leaders, community organizations.
14 Once again, whatever these community interests, however
15 they define themselves. You know, business interests,
16 faith interests. There's a whole -- there's a whole gamut
17 of things that this could potentially encompass.

18 I don't -- it's not my job to tell the community
19 what their interest is, right. My hope is that this
20 process would bring to light these folks, individuals and
21 groups that come together to inform the Commission.

22 I think the question that you have around
23 unintended -- unintentionally leaving out folks is a really
24 important one and I would be very cognizant of that because
25 I don't want to leave anyone behind. This is where that

1 outreach and engagement is so important by the Commission
2 to ensure that they've done their due diligence.

3 Because otherwise, if you just leave it to the
4 powers that be, potentially the only people that may come
5 forward to the Commission are those that have the
6 resources, the time, the money, the capacity to come
7 forward.

8 So, I would hope that as the Commission moves
9 forward to identify these communities of interest that
10 there's not only an ability to listen to those folks that
11 come forward on their own, but that there is an engagement
12 process for folks that may not be inclined to come forward
13 that they are aware of the process, that they should, would
14 hopefully want to be a part of the process to weigh in on
15 their map, and the redistricting lines because it will
16 impact their lives going forward.

17 CHAIR COE: So, the second part of this question
18 you've kind of touched on a little bit and you've talked
19 about making people feel comfortable to come forward, and
20 engage the Commission, and provide their perspectives.

21 There are some communities throughout the state
22 that are nervous about that. They're not necessarily
23 comfortable about doing it and there could be a lot of
24 different reasons for it.

25 So, my question is how? How do you engage those

1 communities to get them to feel comfortable --

2 MS. PAE: Yeah.

3 CHAIR COE: -- coming forward to share their
4 perspectives with the Commission.

5 MS. PAE: Yeah.

6 MS. PELLMAN: A quick time check. We have five
7 minutes remaining.

8 MS. PAE: Okay, thank you.

9 CHAIR COE: Thank you.

10 MS. PAE: Great question. I would say that it's
11 important to reach out to and identify both in traditional
12 ways whether it's, you know, determining what are the
13 nonprofit organizations that might be out there, or
14 community centers, or hubs. You know, how the people are
15 organized and come together, and reach out to them
16 directly.

17 And then, potentially, even thinking about
18 nontraditional ways of engaging folks. It might be through
19 ethnic media, online digital strategies, traditional media.
20 Right, like what are ways that we could potentially break
21 through the noise of all the things that people are
22 inundated with to have them aware of the Redistricting
23 Commission and reach out to them in both nontraditional,
24 and traditional ways. So that they feel that they are not
25 only aware of the process, but they're encouraged to submit

1 testimony or testify.

2 And I would say where the Commission meets is
3 going to matter. And, hopefully, post-COVID-19 that we're
4 able to meet in person and go into these hard-to-reach
5 places and letting the public know, and the community know,
6 you know, as soon as possible that they can come and
7 hopefully not feel intimidated. To be able to speak in
8 whatever language they're comfortable in or to be able to
9 communicate in whatever ways that they feel comfortable in
10 will be important.

11 CHAIR COE: Thank you. If you were to be
12 appointed to the Commission which aspects of that role do
13 you think that you would enjoy the most and, conversely,
14 which aspects of that role do you think you might have a
15 hard time or struggle with a little bit?

16 MS. PAE: Yeah, the Commission is incredibly
17 exciting to me and like being able to be a part of it would
18 be amazing. So, there's a lot of it that I think really
19 excite me about it and would want to be a part of from, you
20 know, being able to take the Census data and being able to
21 analyze all this data to be able to distill it in a way to
22 produce these maps that are going to be fair and,
23 obviously, very impactful going forward. So, that all in
24 itself and the future impacts that they're going to have
25 are really important and would be honored to be a part of.

1 The challenge, I think it would be, you know,
2 with a body like this being able to move through any
3 disagreements or, you know, any challenges that folks may
4 have that we just can't agree. You know, working through
5 tension is going to be potentially a challenge. And it's
6 one that I welcome, but I also recognize that that could
7 potentially fracture the Commission, which I hope it
8 wouldn't. And that the Commissioners themselves are so
9 committed to making sure that this is a success that they
10 will put any sort of opinions or beliefs aside for the
11 benefit of, you know, the state, really, ultimately, that
12 they can be able to work through those challenges together.

13 CHAIR COE: Okay, thank you. I think I'm just
14 about out of time, so I will go ahead and yield my time and
15 turn the time over to Ms. Dickison for her questions.

16 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Good afternoon, Ms. Pae.

17 MS. PAE: Good afternoon.

18 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: So, you talked earlier
19 about, you know, all the places you had lived, and talking
20 about living as far north as Sacramento. In living in all
21 those various places what did you note about the different
22 communities and how they were located, you know where they
23 lived might influence their needs and what they were
24 looking for in a representative?

25 MS. PAE: Yeah. Obviously, they're all very

1 different and for different ways, and for different
2 reasons. You know, well, I think the first that comes to
3 mind is how people either come together or not.

4 In a place like the Central Valley things are
5 much more spread out, right. There's a lot more
6 agricultural land, there is a lot more space, you have to
7 drive everywhere, potentially, you can't rely on public
8 transit. You know, the education system might be a bit
9 different. I mean I'm thinking back like my middle school
10 no longer exists. It was closed down in the City of
11 Empire. So, the needs of the Central Valley are going to
12 be different from, say, the Bay Area where folks are much
13 more densely populated, right. So, are there -- you know,
14 from the schools, to the markets, you know, are there what
15 we call dead zones of being able to access groceries, to
16 being able to use public transit much more heavily. I
17 relied on the BART and the Muni much more in the Bay Area
18 because that's just something, you know, I could do.

19 To compared to San Diego County where being in a
20 coastal town the life experiences on the coast are going to
21 be very different from more inland, east county, and even
22 if you go so far down to the border town, and living closer
23 to the border which is just a 15 minutes away from me,
24 right. Those all shape people's life experiences in many
25 ways and being able to access different resources, which

1 then translates to who do they want to see in their
2 representative, potentially. And do they understand the
3 community's needs, whether it's transportation access, food
4 access, being able to communicate to the community in
5 different ways, potentially even reflect the community
6 based off of race, or gender, or political leanings. Those
7 all come into play I would imagine, just having gone
8 through those experiences personally.

9 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thinking about those areas
10 that might be less populated, that when you go further up
11 north they may be more difficult to even get to.

12 MS. PAE: Yeah.

13 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: What do you think the
14 Commission can do to encourage participation in the process
15 in those areas?

16 MS. PAE: Yeah. I don't want us to just assume
17 in default to strictly doing things online because in many
18 ways some communities don't have access to, you know,
19 broadband internet on a regular basis. So, what that means
20 is potentially reaching out to people in nontraditional
21 ways. Like I mentioned, whether it's through the mail,
22 through the radio, through I don't know if there's a budget
23 for television because that is quite expensive. You know,
24 the other ways that we could reach people, aside from
25 online. I think online is oftentimes the default and what

1 we would assume is the easiest because you could reach
2 more people within a shorter -- with more limited
3 resources. So, not just access through the website, but
4 how do you potentially reach people through social media?
5 There's a lot of different strategies that can be used
6 there. Potentially, especially reaching younger people
7 through, you know, platforms like Facebook, Twitter,
8 Instagram. I'm not on TikTok, you know, and any of these
9 other ones. But who knows, you can be creative in thinking
10 about how to reach potential younger folks.

11 But as you think about folks who are kind of
12 outer, you know, who may be farther away, who may be more
13 distance from each other, I would lean on them in many
14 ways. Like how do you get your information? How do you
15 get your news? How do you communicate with your colleagues
16 or your community? Are there ways that we can learn from
17 them on how they interact with people on a regular basis.

18 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you. I think you
19 mentioned earlier reaching out to community leaders in
20 communities to connect with them. One of the things that
21 the last Commission noted was there were times that they
22 thought that some of the people that were providing input,
23 public input about communities weren't necessarily a part
24 of the community they were providing input about, but were
25 actually, you know, looking to push their own agenda.

1 What do you think the Commission can do to look
2 out for that or guard against that?

3 MS. PAE: Yeah. That's a very good point. Not
4 every individual can speak on behalf of an entire
5 community. You know, we run into issues -- I've seen that
6 in my professional career where they may, I guess like take
7 that space and say I can speak on behalf of all of them,
8 when we all know that communities are very unique and
9 diverse in of itself.

10 Speaking on behalf of the Asian American
11 community, like I say that even in how I'm prefacing this,
12 I can't do that, right, and nor would I want to.

13 So, when thinking about who comes forward, you
14 know, what -- where do they come from? Are they -- not
15 just like geographically, but what are they involved in,
16 how are they involved in them? What are the ways that
17 communities might be coming together? Are they a part of
18 it or not. I think it's important to just hear from
19 whoever's testifying or whatever public comments come
20 forward, or that get submitted, is this person really
21 speaking on behalf of whatever set of community they want
22 to speak on behalf of, or are they really speaking on
23 behalf of themselves.

24 I think there is a delicate balance, though,
25 because my life experiences, as I shared earlier, it speaks

1 to me but, potentially, other people may have had the
2 similar experiences that I've had. So, there is a delicate
3 balance the Commission is going to have to navigate through
4 and hearing from individuals versus organized groups
5 versus, you know, any sort of entities that are coming
6 forward collectively, and be able to decipher that
7 information.

8 But I think it's very important early on to reach
9 out through that public engagement process in hopes that
10 you -- that the Commission is reaching out to the people
11 that, or the organizations that do interact with a broad
12 set of communities on a regular basis.

13 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: You spoke earlier about
14 during the last redistricting effort you did some work in
15 creating maps and whatnot, and you talked about communities
16 of interest. What did you learn in doing that about
17 communities of interest that you may not have known about
18 in your own area prior to doing that work?

19 MS. PAE: Yeah. All of it was really interesting
20 and fascinating to me because that is -- I'm always curious
21 about people, and whether they are as individuals or as
22 communities. So, learning things from, as I shared earlier
23 if it's, you know, spread out and disparate like as far as
24 it's not densely populated, how do folks see themselves or
25 come together or not. And, you know, whether or not

1 there's a business district even, like considering that as
2 a community of interest. Does it make sense to keep that
3 all together or, you know, split right. Like I've seen
4 local maps when -- under the California Voting Rights Act,
5 when local elections go from at-large to district
6 elections, and I've seen those kinds of conversations play
7 out. You know, where communities like potentially Korea
8 Town wants to stay together, but in the end has to get
9 split up because of varying dynamics and other competing
10 interests, other competing community interests in the city,
11 like Los Angeles.

12 So, there is a big delicate balance that needs to
13 be weighed heavily and this is where I value the input of
14 those community leaders and community members to speak on
15 behalf of their lived experiences to share that. And
16 because I, obviously, have not lived there. I don't know
17 what it's like.

18 And hearing things like about where a community
19 center is located, or a school district, or a business
20 district, you know, all of that matters.

21 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: So, just speaking about
22 weighing the different communities that you were just
23 talking about, when -- excuse me -- cities, counties,
24 neighborhoods and communities of interests, they aren't --
25 they don't have priorities in the regulations. So, with

1 that in mind, how do you think the Commission should work
2 about trying to figure ways to determine how to weigh
3 those, should they come in conflict with one another?

4 MS. PAE: Yeah. That is where I think tensions
5 may come up, right. It's where do you weigh -- or how do
6 you weigh these potential conflicts around existing
7 boundaries, like cities and counties, school districts,
8 water districts, who knows, right, compared to what will
9 result in Assembly, Senate, and Congressional Districts
10 that may go out ide of those lines. This is where that
11 community engagement process is really valuable to hear
12 from people directly about their lived experiences and what
13 they see as an important aspect of their community that
14 should not be separated, but should be kept together.

15 And this is where the value of the Commission, in
16 its diversity of political background, geography, lived
17 experiences can come together to discuss and weigh all of
18 these options to hopefully come to a decision. I think, I
19 know it's idealistic in me to think that, yes, this is all
20 really hard and we're just going to come up with an answer.
21 I would imagine it would require multiple conversations
22 and, you know, having the community weigh in heavily to be
23 able to decide like what is the best option. And sometimes
24 the best option doesn't please everybody, unfortunately.
25 And so, then, that's where the discussion, the healthy

1 debate, and the compromise will be really important going
2 forward.

3 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you. Do you think
4 there is or should be a role for advocacy on the
5 Commission?

6 MS. PAE: There should be a role for advocacy in
7 the respect that there are folks, just like any organized
8 body, whether you're lobbying your local electeds, state or
9 national representatives, I would imagine the same could be
10 said for this Commission that the folks that are most
11 directly impacted can come forward and submit their
12 comments, testimony, statements, whatever it is. That in
13 and of itself is a form of advocacy because you are asking
14 for the Commission to take your recommendations, right.
15 So, that in of itself I think is a healthy part of the
16 process so we can hear from people who are directly
17 impacted. Because the Commission itself can't know all the
18 things as an entity, right. It's going to be reliant on
19 data, first, like to see where people are. And, you know,
20 the hope is that it's good data. And, of course, there's a
21 lot of fear about what this means going forward with the
22 Census and COVID-19 happening right now.

23 But with data, and with the kind of narrative
24 piece around it, around people speaking to that data, and
25 it's both quantitative and qualitative, to then be able to

1 hear from folks that would be advocating on their own
2 behalf. On their own behalf.

3 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: What about advocacy within
4 the Commission itself?

5 MS. PAE: I think that one's going to be a bit
6 tricky, right. When the Commission members or the
7 Commissioners have an opinion, and potentially a strong
8 opinion about what they think should be the solution, what
9 will ultimately end up happening is you will see people
10 advocating for their idea, or for their solution, right. I
11 think that's a delicate balance because potentially a
12 Commissioner's idea could be adopted by everyone and
13 there's a unanimous agreement, and that's done, that's
14 great.

15 Or, it could result in a divide of difference of
16 opinion. So, what will ultimately end up happening is
17 you'll see advocacy internally, should we go with this one
18 or this one, or should we find a compromise. So, I think
19 that may play out in some ways, potentially, within the
20 Commission as you're trying to come up with a decision.

21 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you.

22 MS. PELLMAN: You have five minutes, ten seconds
23 remaining.

24 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Okay, thank you. Let me
25 look at my notes real quick. So, the first eight

1 Commissioners are selected randomly and then they are
2 tasked with selecting the next six. If you were selected
3 as part of the first eight, what would you be looking for
4 in those other six Commissioners?

5 MS. PAE: I think back to one of the earlier
6 questions about what qualities we would hope for in a
7 Commissioner, as well as the Commission itself, as a whole.
8 I would hope that the first eight that are selected, and if
9 I was to be one of them, we would come together and really
10 assess like where's the Commission at right now? In this
11 body, as it is standing, are we under or over represented
12 in various ways that we potentially could be better at
13 reflecting the State of California.

14 And, you know, that could look like a number of
15 things. It could be based on geography, based on political
16 leanings, based on life experiences, all of those I would
17 actually want to take into account to ensure that the
18 Commission is -- you know, is best positioned to be able to
19 hear the kind of diverse voices that are across the state,
20 and we wouldn't want to leave anybody out.

21 We know that this is a very incredibly
22 competitive process so, you know, everyone that's gotten up
23 to that point should meet the criteria to be able to serve
24 on the Commission. But on top of that it's like, well, how
25 are we best going to be complementary with everyone, and

1 see if there's any voices that might potentially be missing
2 out, and weigh that, and be able to discuss it together and
3 hopefully come to a consensus somewhat easily to decide who
4 would be the final Commissioners.

5 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you.

6 Can I get a time check?

7 MS. PELLMAN: Yes, two minutes, 50 seconds.

8 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Okay, thank you. One last
9 question. What would you like to see the Commission
10 ultimately accomplish?

11 MS. PAE: You know, the obvious thing of being
12 able to create maps that are going to be fair and be able
13 to help -- I mean, I just want to take a step back. And,
14 you know, what this Commission's all about, and how this
15 Commission got set up is historic. And, really, California
16 is leading the way in many ways. And I would, you know,
17 want to continue that legacy of just having gone -- having
18 seen it play out in this first iteration and now we're in
19 the second redistricting process with this Commission. To
20 land at a place where the maps that are created are
21 implemented and that results in fair -- in a more
22 reflective democracy. That at least is where I'm coming
23 from. And in hopes that the end goal of creating these
24 maps that will obviously impact not just the most immediate
25 elections, but really what is to come going forward in the

1 kinds of policy changes that may come up from these folks
2 that get elected into office, to the lives that are
3 impacted. Not just in the next ten years, but going
4 forward.

5 So, I see this as an incredibly important job and
6 role. And the success of the Commission, for me, is being
7 able to land in a place where we all are in agreement about
8 what these maps are going to look like, and that there's
9 been community engagement, and buy in, and that all these
10 stakeholders have been able to be a part of the process, as
11 well, and that will result in some good maps for these
12 communities and for the state going forward.

13 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Okay, thank you.

14 I have no more questions, Mr. Coe.

15 CHAIR COE: Thank you, Ms. Dickison.

16 Mr. Belnap, the time is yours.

17 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Thank you. Good afternoon,
18 Ms. Pae, thanks for being with us.

19 MS. PAE: Thank you.

20 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Most of my prepared
21 questions have been asked, so I want to go through your
22 employment history from your application, and ask you a few
23 questions about the organizations that you work -- you've
24 worked for now, and that you've worked for in the past.

25 MS. PAE: Okay.

1 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: So, you currently work for
2 re:power?

3 MS. PAE: Well, so I actually submitted an
4 addendum to my application. I'm no longer at re:power
5 since November of last year. I've been consulting,
6 actually, to a number of different -- in a number of
7 different capacities. From project management, to
8 organizational development, campaign planning, you know,
9 facilitation and training. So, I'm basically my own boss
10 right now. And in some ways it adds to the flexibility of
11 what's going in the midst of COVID-19. So, I'm very
12 familiar, I mean I have worked from remotely I mean since
13 2012, I want to say.

14 But I'm very committed to this Commission process
15 and want to be able to serve in the best possible way. So,
16 honestly, I'm looking for any future employment that's
17 going to be flexible to be able to serve on the Commission.

18 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay.

19 MS. PAE: So, that's where I'm currently at.

20 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: So, to re:power, tell me
21 about that name. What does it imply, I'm --

22 MS. PAE: Regarding Power. It's re, it's like
23 when you send an email subject line, Regarding Power.
24 That's what it is.

25 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: And what was the purpose --

1 what is the purpose of that organization?

2 MS. PAE: Largely training to be able to train
3 organizations, and individuals, and team leaders around
4 what we call grassroots organizing campaigns. These are
5 around issue areas that folks are impacted by. Electoral
6 campaigns, and what we call movement technology. So,
7 that's around digital organizing, and data and analytics.

8 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: And how does the
9 organization further those purposes? Like what are your
10 activities that you engage in?

11 MS. PAE: Yeah. So, twofold. One was through
12 partnerships, so working with organizations that needed
13 support in any of those types of trainings. And the second
14 is through public training, so having a process -- and this
15 is a national organization, so if a public training around
16 data and analytics is to be hosted, then people would
17 essentially apply to attend.

18 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: And how does the
19 organization get its funding?

20 MS. PAE: So, through partnerships, as I
21 mentioned before, and through donations, individual donors
22 and foundations.

23 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay. So, can you name any
24 specific improvements in governance that re:power was
25 trying to get implemented?

1 MS. PAE: Oh, yeah. So, I came into the position
2 largely to help create a new program, a new project called
3 the Progressive Governance Academy. And this was to help
4 newly elected officials to understand how to govern. And
5 that could go so far as how to, you know, how to hire and
6 manage staff. How to set an agenda. How to work with
7 community members. Just some basic trainings and
8 principles for new elected officials, largely at the local
9 and state level, to be able to effectively serve.

10 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: And where, in terms of
11 geography, was most of your work?

12 MS. PAE: Yeah. Because California is the way
13 that it's set up, most of the work that I've done
14 nationally has not been in California, actually. It's been
15 in states outside of California. So, the trainings that
16 have been done around governance, in particular, there was
17 -- the first training I think was in Pennsylvania, which I
18 believe I mentioned in my application. There was a
19 training that I was a part of in Texas, and in Florida.

20 And these were -- I mean, and this was largely
21 smaller, intimate trainings for new elected officials,
22 under a dozen or so, as they are trying to navigate new
23 elected life.

24 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: So, you mentioned, you said
25 because California is the way it is, most of your training

1 was outside of California. I'm not following.

2 MS. PAE: Yeah.

3 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: What is it about California
4 that caused most of your training to be outside of
5 California?

6 MS. PAE: I would say most of the need came from
7 folks outside of California. As new elected officials in
8 Pennsylvania, and in Florida, and Texas were trying to find
9 ways to get support, they reached out and, you know, is
10 there any way that you can help us navigate through these
11 sets of questions that we have, right. So, whether that
12 was in a facilitator role, or in a training role, we came
13 in to help provide those kinds of resources to them. So,
14 it was largely based on need, more so than anything else.

15 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay. And I'll ask this
16 question, it relates to re:power, but I guess it will apply
17 to any of the other -- others that I'm going to ask about.
18 Any of the groups, re:power, FairVote, API Vote, any of
19 them engaged in lobbying or fundraising for candidates?

20 MS. PAE: Let me think. I'm going back through
21 all the jobs that I've had. No candidate -- yeah, no
22 candidate endorsements or, you know, putting in like --
23 yeah, I'm looking back through here. Yeah, especially more
24 recent, there weren't any like PAC funds or anything like
25 that to run like an independent expenditure in support or

1 on behalf of a candidate.

2 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: So, I understand that most
3 of your work was outside of California, at least for
4 re:power. But did you have any work with particular
5 elected officials in California?

6 MS. PAE: No.

7 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: No.

8 MS. PAE: No. If anything, I would say in
9 previous roles like at FairVote California, where we worked
10 on electoral issues that we would meet with elected
11 officials, whether it was local or state, to just inform
12 them on different electoral systems.

13 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay. I do want to move on
14 to FairVote. So, you've written a description in your
15 application about what it's purpose is, so I get that.
16 What were its activities to further those purposes?

17 MS. PAE: Yeah, I mean there were a lot of I
18 would say community education and community engagement.
19 So, there were presentations, or meetings, where I would
20 speak on potential electoral systems. And, yeah, I would
21 say that was a big part of it. So, this is a kind of an
22 outreach done to talk with various community organizations
23 or leaders, and that could potentially include elected
24 officials if they're -- as I mentioned around the
25 California Voting Rights Act, if there potentially might be

1 a lawsuit that the local electeds might want to think about
2 what their options are. If it was to continue the way that
3 their elections are already functioning, or if they wanted
4 to move to districts, or some other form of proportional
5 representation. This kind of goes into the nitty-gritty of
6 policy.

7 But, you know, that was probably the way that we
8 would engage with elected officials. But largely it was
9 through working with electoral reform advocates, or civil
10 rights groups, or community groups to talk about is this
11 electoral system working for you or not? Or, you know,
12 just educating them on electoral systems outside of the
13 state and then even just thinking about national elections,
14 and how they function, and whether or not it's working for
15 the community.

16 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay. So, with re:power,
17 you were there since February 2019. And I don't have your
18 amendment in front of me. When did you end your employment
19 with them?

20 MS. PAE: In November.

21 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: In November, okay.

22 MS. PAE: Uh-hum.

23 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Why did you feel like it
24 was time to move on from that organization?

25 MS. PAE: There were a number of reasons. I

1 think, you know, I was brought in in many ways because they
2 were going through an organizational transition. They were
3 -- they had rebranded, had -- were thinking about new
4 programs, and so I came in to partially support them and
5 through that transition. As the transition progressed,
6 they were going through some changes internally and at that
7 point it -- there was, yeah, just changes internally, and
8 so it made sense not to be there anymore, and be able to be
9 more flexible, and be able to consult on my own.

10 But that doesn't mean that it's forever. I share
11 that I'm a consultant, sometimes by choice, but sometimes
12 not. I like being able to -- be fortunate to be able to
13 work and be able to pay the bills. But at the end of the
14 day I would like to ultimately end up somewhere that will
15 be flexible with a job, with the Commission as well.

16 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay, thank you. So, a
17 similar question with FairVote. You were there two years,
18 four months, and then you moved on. What were your reasons
19 for moving on from that organization?

20 MS. PAE: Yeah, the FairVote position, as well as
21 the position at the League of Women Voters of California,
22 it was largely grant funded. And so, as a nonpartisan
23 organization, having secured a -- I was in a foundation
24 grant to be able to do the work that I was hired to do.
25 And when that work was done, the position was no longer

1 there.

2 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay, thank you. I'm
3 familiar with the League of Women Voters, so I'm not going
4 to ask about that.

5 But 18 Million Rising, where does it get its
6 name? Who's the 18 million?

7 MS. PAE: Yeah, at the time, in 2012, there were
8 18 million Asian American, Pacific Islanders in the
9 country. The rising part got added because that number is
10 continuing to grow because Asian Americans and Pacific
11 Islanders are the fastest growing in the country amongst
12 racial groups. So, the -- that's where the name comes
13 from.

14 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay, thank you. I don't
15 want to ask all the same questions that I did about the
16 other. But I guess it was a nonprofit or is a nonprofit?

17 MS. PAE: Yes, it is a nonprofit, nonpartisan
18 organization.

19 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay. And your role as
20 campaign manager, what did that -- what did that mean?
21 What did you do on a day-to-day basis?

22 MS. PAE: Well, as part of the founding staff,
23 really helped to figure out what the organization's purpose
24 was going to be, and it was largely to be able to what we
25 say organize Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders online.

1 So, all of it was done through online platforms, like
2 email, Facebook, Twitter. Instagram wasn't as heavy back
3 then.

4 So, the role that I played was really around
5 civic engagement. So, nonpartisan civic engagement efforts
6 to register, educate, and get out and vote in the Asian
7 American and Pacific Islander community, using these social
8 media and online tools. So, had worked with I want to say
9 over 80 community organizations nationally. Some of these
10 groups are national or local, that all are geared to
11 towards Asian American and Pacific Islanders to partner
12 with them. To help support them as they were running their
13 civic engagement campaigns. And, you know, thinking about
14 different ways that we would reach these potential voters,
15 whether it was through YouTube videos that were
16 conceptualized, and produced, and distributed. Oh,
17 YouTube's another platform right. So, how do videos play a
18 role in potentially educating the public. That was the
19 tool that we used at 18 Million Rising.

20 In addition to facilitating staff meetings, and
21 hiring and managing of staff, and fellows, and volunteers.

22 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay, thank you.

23 Madam Secretary, a time check?

24 MS. PELLMAN: You have seven minutes, 13 seconds.

25 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right, thank you.

1 For, for 18 Million Rising, a similar question
2 just before what's the funding structure?

3 MS. PAE: Yeah, similar to the other nonprofits,
4 largely donors and foundations.

5 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay, thank you. And I can
6 tell from the history that you moved on from 18 Million
7 Rising to League of Women Voters. Can you tell me about
8 that transition?

9 MS. PAE: Yeah.

10 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Why did you move on?

11 MS. PAE: Yeah, that was at a point where I moved
12 from the Bay Area to Sacramento, and so being closer to my
13 family and, yeah, there was -- that was a life transition
14 that happened. And as I was looking for the next job, some
15 friends and colleagues had approached me because the League
16 had secured a grant to be able to do, as I mentioned, the
17 project that I managed, the data driven best practices
18 manual for voter information guides. And so, I got hired
19 on and was in Sacramento for that time period.

20 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right, thank you. So,
21 going back a little bit deeper in the history here.
22 PowerPAC.org, you worked for them for just a small period
23 of time. Help me -- help me understand then name,
24 PowerPAC.

25 MS. PAE: Yeah, that's interesting. Because the

1 PowerPAC and Majority for Justice entities is both what we
2 call a (c) (3) and (c) (4). These are IRS tax statuses. And
3 during my time at PowerPAC, building power in traditionally
4 underrepresented communities, at my time there we -- I
5 mentioned the Federal Dream Act. I also worked
6 collaboratively on the California Dream Act. So, this is a
7 state bill at the time to be able to provide state
8 financial aid for young, undocumented people that were
9 going to college and universities in California.

10 So, that was one major campaign that I was a part
11 of while I was at PowerPAC. In addition to, I mentioned in
12 my resume, looking at voter files, voter registration
13 status, and trying potentially to reach out to folks that
14 have not been engaged in the electoral process. To reach
15 out to them in different ways, and essentially what we call
16 organize them to be able to participate in the election.

17 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay, thank you.

18 I have no further questions, Mr. Chair, yield the
19 rest of my name.

20 CHAIR COE: Thank you, Mr. Belnap.

21 Mr. Dawson?

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

23 Ms. Pae, I wanted to follow up on a couple of
24 things that I noticed. When you were responding to
25 standard question one, you talked about your familiarity

1 with redistricting, and I have in my notes here that you
2 participated in outreach for the 2010 Redistricting
3 Commission.

4 Reading through your essays I take it this means
5 your work at -- I'm just going to mispronounce the acronym,
6 EVAVEC.

7 MS. PAE: Yeah, EVAVEC.

8 MR. DAWSON: EVAVEC. Okay, so tell me about
9 that. From what I gather, you were reaching out to
10 community groups representing the API community and then
11 helping them reach out to the Redistricting Commission?

12 MS. PAE: Yeah, so I believe on one of the --
13 this was another question earlier. So, there was twofold.
14 One was to encourage Asian American and Pacific Islanders
15 to apply to the Commission, so letting them know that this
16 process was even happening. What is the redistrict
17 process? Reaching out to community leaders, and community
18 organizations to encourage them to apply.

19 And then the second part, as you stated, it was
20 to come before the Commission and either submit a public
21 statement, or testify about -- and speak about their
22 community of interest. And this was largely just in the
23 East Bay. There were other groups around the state that
24 were doing similar type of work. But my work was solely
25 focused on the East Bay hosting community workshops to

1 inform them of the process, giving them updates on what the
2 Redistricting Commission had done or were doing. You know,
3 providing some -- I guess you would call them trainings,
4 just to get them familiar with a mapping tool to see where
5 their community is, and be able to vocalize, written or
6 verbally, with what they would hope to be -- yeah, just to
7 speak on behalf of what their community -- what their
8 community makeup was, where they would hope to see some new
9 redistricting lines drawn. So, that was the role that I
10 played in outreaching to various community leaders, and
11 organizations.

12 MR. DAWSON: And as a result of these outreach
13 efforts, these groups submitted proposed maps themselves?

14 MS. PAE: Yeah. Some -- so there was -- so, my
15 work was only in the East Bay, but it was a part of a
16 statewide effort on behalf of Asian Americans and Pacific
17 Islanders. So, if my memory serves me correct, the
18 statewide collaborative I believe submitted some maps. At
19 the local level, or the folks that I was reaching out to in
20 the East Bay, we would help support them in being familiar
21 with the mapping tool, and wanting to share what they
22 thought could potentially be a map. So, that was how it
23 was broken up differently.

24 So, I didn't necessarily weigh in on the state
25 maps, like across the state. Only helping support these

1 individuals and organizations to be able to be familiar
2 with the process and be able to submit testimony that could
3 potentially support a map to keep their communities
4 together.

5 MR. DAWSON: And do you have personal experience
6 in mapping software as part of this work?

7 MS. PAE: Yeah, so I got to be able to, I guess
8 play around with the mapping tool and see how it functions,
9 how it works. Because if I wanted my -- if I wanted the
10 community folks that I was interacting with to be familiar
11 with it, then I needed to be, too.

12 There was -- I don't know if it was a firm, or a
13 consultant that also helped in some capacity to also
14 navigate through how to use the mapping software.

15 MR. DAWSON: I see.

16 MS. PAE: And share that information to us as a
17 community.

18 MR. DAWSON: Did you, yourself, ever make public
19 comment or a recommendation to the 2010 Commission?

20 MS. PAE: I believe I might have.

21 MR. DAWSON: Okay, thank you. I wanted to ask
22 you, I was looking at your activities essay, and you
23 mentioned that in -- you were a 16th Assembly District
24 Delegate for the California Democratic Party 2011-2013.
25 What does an Assembly District Delegate do?

1 MS. PAE: Yeah. What do they do? So, I was
2 brought in to essentially run as, what they called a slate.
3 And there were -- I don't even remember how many of us
4 there were, but we were on a slate, and it was elected
5 through what they called a caucus. And I got elected as
6 part of the caucus process. And then, when there were
7 votes, I guess, within the California Democratic Party
8 through a convenings, was able to participate in those
9 party elections as well.

10 MR. DAWSON: This is at the state's convention
11 level?

12 MS. PAE: I believe so.

13 MR. DAWSON: Okay. But was this part of
14 formulating the Democratic Party platform, the various
15 policy positions?

16 MS. PAE: I believe so.

17 MR. DAWSON: Okay. And that's not a paid
18 position?

19 MS. PAE: No, definitely not.

20 MR. DAWSON: Okay. All right, thank you.

21 MS. PELLMAN: We have five minutes, ten seconds
22 remaining.

23 MR. DAWSON: Oh, thank you, Madam Secretary.

24 I think those were all of my follow-up questions.
25 Mr. Chair, if any of the Panel Members have any follow ups?

1 CHAIR COE: Thank you, Mr. Dawson.

2 Ms. Dickison, do you have any follow-up
3 questions?

4 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: I do not have any follow-up
5 questions.

6 CHAIR COE: Mr. Belnap?

7 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: I do not.

8 CHAIR COE: Okay, Counsel, I don't have any
9 follow-up questions as well.

10 MR. DAWSON: All right, thank you.

11 Ms. Pae, with the roughly five minutes remaining
12 in the 90-minute period, I'd like to offer you the
13 opportunity to make a closing statement to the Panel, if
14 you wish?

15 MS. PAE: Sure. I just want to say thank you.
16 I'm just incredibly grateful to have been a part of this
17 process. I know how tough it is to be able to determine
18 who are the best Commissioners or the best applicants to
19 move forward. So, I just want to extend my gratitude to
20 all of you on the Applicant Review Panel, the State
21 Auditor's Office, and the staff that have worked so hard,
22 and being so attentive to ensure that you have the best
23 Commission applicants going forward. I'm honored to be a
24 part of that pool.

25 I want to speak to the unique time that we're in,

1 in the midst of COVID-19. This is a new normal that we may
2 potentially be in. And going forward, if you haven't heard
3 already, I'm incredibly flexible and quick to adapt, and
4 recognize that we may need to continue to adapt in this
5 new, changing reality. So, whether it's through Zoom, this
6 is like my everyday life, speaking to people online over
7 the video conference, to figuring out ways to engage with
8 people in new, and creative, and nontraditional ways.

9 And the last thing I'll bring up, I'm really
10 proud to be a Californian. Being the first in my family to
11 be born here, not only in this country, but in this state,
12 I'm very deeply committed to this state and the success of
13 who we are, and what we will become in the near future.
14 I'm deeply passionate about fair representation and making
15 sure democracy works in all the ways that it comes and
16 shows up in the local, state, and national level. It would
17 really, truly be an honor to serve as a Commissioner
18 knowing the significant impacts it will have, not just on
19 my family, but on your families, and our communities for
20 generations to come, right. We've seen a lot of changes
21 just in the last ten years and I would imagine a lot more
22 changes are going to happen in the next ten years, just
23 even seeing what's happening during this global pandemic.

24 So, I hope that you've seen through my interview
25 and through my application how incredibly committed I would

1 be, and hardworking I would be to serve as a Commissioner.
2 And I just want to thank you for your time and wish you the
3 best of luck as you continue these interviews. I know it's
4 a lot to take in. And wishing you a healthy and safe time
5 going forward.

6 CHAIR COE: Thank you, Ms. Pae. Thank you for
7 taking the time to speak with us this afternoon.

8 Our next interview is scheduled for tomorrow,
9 9:00 a.m. So, we will be in recess until 8:59 tomorrow
10 morning.

11 (Thereupon, the Applicant Review Panel meeting
12 recessed at 4:27 p.m.)

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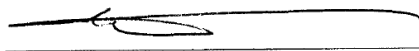
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IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 29th day of April, 2020.



PETER PETTY
CER**D-493
Notary Public

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IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 29h day of April, 2020.



Barbara Little
Certified Transcriber
AAERT No. CET**D-520