

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

FRIDAY, APRIL 10, 2020
8:59 A.M.

Reported by:
Peter Petty

APPEARANCES

Members Present

Ben Belnap, Chair

Ryan Coe, Vice Chair

Angela Dickison, Panel Member

Staff Present

Christopher Dawson, Panel Counsel

Shauna Pellman, Auditor Specialist II

Applicants

Ronald Newton

Jane Andersen

Margo Morales

William Schmidt

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P R O C E E D I N G S

8:59 A.M.

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3 CHAIR BELNAP: Good morning. I want to call this
4 meeting back to order, coming out of recess.

5 I already checked. We have everybody on the line.
6 I want to remind everyone to silence their phones or any
7 other devices, and anyone here in the room, if there's an
8 emergency, just follow CSA staff instructions.

9 I want to welcome Mr. Ronald Newton to the
10 interview --

11 MR. NEWTON: Thank you.

12 CHAIR BELNAP: -- and we're going to turn the time
13 over to Mr. Dawson for the standard questions.

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

15 Mr. Newton, I'm going to read five standard
16 questions that the Panel has requested each Applicant
17 respond to.

18 Are you ready, sir?

19 MR. NEWTON: Yes, I am.

20 MR. DAWSON: First question: What skills and
21 attributes should all Commissioners possess? What skills
22 or competencies should the Commission possess collectively?
23 Of the skills, attributes, and competencies that each
24 Commissioner should possess, which do you possess? In
25 summary, how will you contribute to the success of the

1 Commission?

2 MR. NEWTON: Again, thanks for having me here.

3 It's quite an honor.

4 The Commission, to be effective, must be
5 goal-driven towards the goal that's been set up for us to
6 accomplish, and be transparent in our actions. In order to
7 achieve those goals, each Commissioner must bring a certain
8 degree of fairness to the process, a dedication to the
9 mission statement, open-mindedness to other points of view,
10 analytical data in going in, seeing what community
11 reactions are, community perceptions.

12 Those things are important. Respect, respect for
13 not only the community and people we talk to, but also for
14 one another, so that we accomplish our goals, that we walk
15 away with a collective feeling that we have accomplished
16 what we want, that people don't have -- you don't have
17 camps within your Commission that, you know, "I wasn't
18 heard and I wasn't listened to, and this isn't a fair
19 process."

20 So we really need to work as a collective, to make
21 sure that not only is the community heard from, but that
22 everybody in the Commission is heard from, and that all
23 ideas are weighed on their merits. With that comes
24 respect. Honestly, everybody always talks about "We want
25 to listen," and I'd push it further. We want to

1 understand, and we want to really understand how
2 everyone -- where they're coming from, and how that affects
3 the overall goal, and we need to be quite logical. You
4 sometimes need to put your passions aside.

5 Passions are good, to a point, but you need to be
6 logical in how you're going to determine whether a district
7 goes here or not here. What is logical? What makes sense
8 for that community? What makes sense for the state? Just
9 because -- you know, each district has sort of an overflow
10 to the next district.

11 You know, you set up one district. How does it
12 affect the next district? How does it affect the following
13 district? You know, there's a whole range of activities
14 that need to be addressed, and we have to show leadership.
15 We have to show leadership that we make a decision and a
16 recommendation that's based on facts and the proper
17 analyzation of data and community input.

18 What I bring to this is -- well, I certainly
19 believe I have all these qualities. Otherwise, I wouldn't
20 have mentioned them. But I also bring a kind of a
21 big-picture concept person. Yes, I can analyze the data
22 with the best of them, and get down to the weeds, but you
23 also need people that understand the big picture and are
24 goal-driven, and decision makers.

25 Every committee, every group you've ever been in,

1 they have different personalities and different strengths.
2 Some are more analytical than others. Some are more
3 big-picture than others. Some are more thoughtful than
4 others. I tend to -- after all the data is in, all the
5 analyzation is, I'm good at driving for a decision, driving
6 a goal, because you can sit and analyze things forever, but
7 there is a point when the Committee has to come together.
8 Everybody has been heard. Let's move on. Let's get a
9 decision made. Let's go for it.

10 That's one of the big strengths I bring, I think,
11 besides the normal being logical and fair, which I also
12 think I super am, but definitely the strength I'll bring to
13 the Committee is kind of that level, or make sure that
14 we're doing things correctly, to make sure that we're being
15 fair, to make sure that we're listening and understanding,
16 and then a decision needs to be made. So, thank you.

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

23 What characteristics do you possess, and what
24 characteristics should your fellow Commissioners possess,
25 that will protect against hyper-partisanship? What will

1 you do to ensure that the work of the Commission is not
2 seen as polarized or hyper-partisan, and avoid perceptions
3 of political bias and conflict?

4 MR. NEWTON: Well, this really drives to the heart,
5 why I even applied for the Commission to begin with. As I
6 stated in my application, I have a real concern about
7 what's going on this country, especially if you look at
8 some of the states back East and the South, where the
9 political parties have made the decision on how to
10 basically retain power, take away power.

11 California, from what I've examined, has been
12 pretty straightforward on how we do things, especially of
13 late. You know, this Commission is one example of that,
14 trying to take the political process out of it a little
15 bit, you know. Can you remove it entirely? No, you can't,
16 because people have their personal things, beliefs, but, if
17 you look at our map, you'll see that we -- there's very few
18 cases of what we call "radical gerrymandering," you know,
19 where we carve out a city to put it in another district, to
20 retain political power. That's not what we're about.

21 We're about representing the communities, you know,
22 and the people in the community -- that's my feeling -- to
23 ensure that everybody's vote counts, that I'm not -- that
24 we aren't creating districts just to retain power for
25 whatever party, doesn't matter. That's not fair to the

1 rest of the community. What we want to maintain is the
2 community's influence in a particular area, or what their
3 feelings are, their nature, their culture, whatever you
4 want to -- how you want to slice and dice it. But that's
5 what we want to look at, and what's fair.

6 Obviously, people are going to occasionally bring
7 their own policies in. You're going to be bombarded from a
8 lot of different sources, which the next question, I think,
9 addresses, and so I think my role in the Committee is to
10 certainly make sure that we stay goal-driven, and that we
11 maintain what our charter is, and our charter is to analyze
12 data, analyze the communities, make recommendations that
13 make sense for not only the community, but for the state,
14 and maintain -- California is on the leading edge of being
15 a fair and democratic, you know, entity, not like, you
16 know, what they're having in Maryland, for example, or
17 North Carolina, where they carve out a district and create
18 two power districts.

19 You know, that's not what it's about. It's about
20 making sure that everybody feels that "Hey, I was listened
21 to. I'm represented, and I can vote, and I can speak up
22 and be heard," and I think that's the overall goal, and my
23 role is not only to enhance that, but also to make sure my
24 teammates stay on track, and if somebody gets too political
25 or too -- what do you call it? - hyper-partisanship -- to

1 check them on it. You know, I have no problem doing that.

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

5 MR. NEWTON: I think the various actions, besides
6 what we just talked about, by being inside the Committee,
7 if somebody has an agenda, and, first of all, they should
8 check their agendas at the door, and we all have them, you
9 know. Anybody that says they don't have an agenda is not
10 correct.

11 As I said in my thing, I'm self-serving, in the
12 sense that I want my children and my grandchildren to be in
13 a state that is fair, and fair to all, and that's my
14 agenda. Other people have other agendas. Remove the
15 Committee for -- outside influences are going to be plenty.
16 You have, obviously, parties. You have people that are
17 already in power in certain areas that want to maintain
18 power, and maybe right, maybe right (sic). That's not my
19 decision.

20 You're going to be bombarded with special interest
21 groups, and as well you should be. You know, this is an
22 important thing. This determines what happens for the next
23 10 years. So yes, special interest groups are going to be
24 there, and when I talk about "special interest," I mean
25 community groups, community-driven groups, you know, all

1 sorts of -- you have to listen to them. You have to weigh
2 it, but you also have to dig deeper, and you have to find
3 out what else is there in the community, what other things.

4 How you find it is, you need to maintain anonymity,
5 basically. You know, you need to stay off social media as
6 far as what you're doing in the Commission. You're
7 operating as a closed department, basically, you know, your
8 decisions, your talks, your discussions, only to maintain
9 in the Committee. There will be a final report out, yes,
10 but, before that, you have -- you know, you kind of have a
11 lot of spirited discussions, but they need to stay inside.

12 People don't need to know you're on the Committee,
13 to be honest. You're not there to promote yourself outside
14 the Commission. I'm certainly not. You're there to do a
15 job, and so you need to control your publicity. You need
16 not to get in arguments with people. Debate is one thing,
17 but an argument, a special interest -- you don't need to
18 call people out.

19 You don't need to do that, disagreements. That's
20 not your job. The job isn't to engage in some spirited
21 debate. Your job is to analyze data, take in consideration
22 the factors that are in the community, et cetera, and make
23 a determination that's fair to all, you know. You're not
24 there to grab headlines, that's for sure, and, again, just
25 those things, anonymity, stay off social media, stay

1 private.

2 You know, it's like the best umpire, the best
3 referee in a game, is one that never -- somebody never
4 noticed, you know, to draw a sports metaphor. The game is
5 over, and nobody ever noticed what the ref -- he did a
6 great job, you know. It's when they notice the ref that
7 things are not going well, you know, and I had this in
8 work, and I had this in my coaching, and other stuff.

9 We have a common saying in coaching. We'll argue
10 to the death behind closed doors, but when we go out on the
11 field, we're one. We've agreed on a position, and we're
12 all sticking to it. We don't undermine each other. We
13 don't undercut each other, you know. It is a decision to
14 be made. So those are things you can do to offset special
15 interests.

16 You know, again, in summation, it's all the
17 appearance of impropriety. You know, anything you do is a
18 reflection upon you and the Committee, and if you're doing
19 anything that is questionable at all, you know, that
20 remotely can be construed as improper, then you need
21 not -- you should not -- you must not engage in that sort
22 of behavior. It's not correct. It's not what you're there
23 for. So, thank you.

24 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Question four: If you are
25 selected, you will be one of 14 members of the Commission,

1 which is charged with working together to create maps of
2 the new districts.

3 Please describe a situation where you had to work
4 collaboratively with others on a project to achieve a
5 common goal. Tell us the goal of the project, what
6 your role in the group was, and how the group worked
7 through any conflicts that arose. What lessons would you
8 take from this group experience to the Commission, if
9 selected?

10 MR. NEWTON: Sure. So many to choose from. As you
11 probably know from my application, I'm currently the school
12 board president of my school district. It's a
13 K-through-eight district here in South Ontario. I've been
14 on the board for 27 years, whatever, and I've been board
15 president for about half of that. Before that, I was with
16 Boeing Aircraft, the Boeing Company, changed title so many
17 different ways, but let me go to that particular one for an
18 instance.

19 For several years, I was a member of what they
20 called a "rapid response team," and, as such, we were -- I
21 was in supplier management, and, as such, we were basically
22 addressed to go in and take care of problems that Boeing
23 was having, be it at a supplier or be it at a facility, and
24 we were dropped in - particularly, I would be dropped into
25 a situation with a day, two-day notice, cross-country,

1 whatever, step into a situation where I'm the outsider come
2 in to tell people how to do things, or guiding people back
3 to the correct path.

4 To do that, you would have to bring a lot of
5 different disciplines together, a lot of different cultural
6 biases together. You know, as proud as I am of being a
7 Californian, as most of you know, you step outside
8 California, there's some real biases. You know, if you go
9 to Seattle, there's a bias against Californians, if you go
10 in the South. There's certainly a bias against
11 Californians back East.

12 So you have to -- first of all, you have to drop
13 in, overtake that, overcome that presumption. You have to
14 bring in people that may be from outside, technical
15 support, quality, logistical, a lot of different people,
16 and you have to take people that are already engaged in a
17 project, and the reason you're there is because they're
18 failing. There's no other reason you're there. You're
19 there because the project is failing, and you have to come
20 in and turn the project around right away.

21 To do that, you have to have collaboration with not
22 only people you're bringing in, but people that are there,
23 that are already there, and how you do that is, like I've
24 mentioned before, you analyze the problem. You listen to
25 what people have to say. You respect their point of view.

1 You try to understand where they're coming from,
2 "Why is it failing? Why is it not working? What have you
3 done that could be better?" not coming in to say, "You've
4 done something wrong," even though they may have. That's
5 not how you get people. You don't say, you know, "Wrong."
6 You sit there and say, "Okay. I understand what happened.
7 What else could we do?" You know, if I bring people in
8 from other areas, these are lessons they've learned from
9 projects they've been on.

10 How can we incorporate that here? How can we
11 get -- you respect people that are there, respect what they
12 have to say. Yes, they're not doing things right, but that
13 doesn't mean they're wrong. You know, that doesn't
14 mean -- they're just missing something, or missing on some
15 things. They bring that together.

16 Lessons learned from that, and lessons learned
17 early on, is not everybody is vocal, to be honest. Not
18 everybody is comfortable expressing their point of view,
19 and not everybody -- this is one thing I've learned. You
20 need to draw that out of people. You know, you need to
21 draw that out of people. You need to sit there and say,
22 "What do you think?" If you see someone not participating
23 in the group, you turn to them, "What are you thinking?
24 What's your opinion of this? What do you think?" Bring it
25 out, and you'd be surprised.

1 They are often very thoughtful and have great
2 ideas, but they're just -- for some reason, they're not
3 comfortable expressing them. You've got to bring it out.
4 I have the same issue on my school board. I have one board
5 member who never speaks up, never, and I constantly will
6 specifically -- "Hey. What are you thinking? What's your
7 opinion? What's your view on this?"

8 Okay. So that's one thing to do, and the other
9 thing is diffuse people. People get upset when they're not
10 listened to -- when they feel they're not listened
11 to -- I'll rephrase that -- when they feel they're not
12 respected. That's when people get upset. You've got to
13 give them the respect. You have to listen to them.

14 One of the bad traits I had early on was, I have a
15 tendency to be succinct in my answer -- you can
16 tell -- where I'm time-conscious, of your time, my time,
17 and when I understand a project, I have a tendency to end
18 the discussion. You know, I used to. And some people just
19 want to talk for a while about their thing. They want to
20 make sure you understand what their point of view is, and I
21 think you need to give them that respect. You know, you
22 need to listen to them, you know.

23 My son will sometimes call me up and have a
24 problem, and I've got all this great worldly advice, and he
25 doesn't want to hear any of it. He just wants to vent. He

1 just wants to talk. And the same thing is with people in a
2 group. You need to listen to them. You need to respect
3 what they have to say. You need to try to understand where
4 they're coming from, which is key, you know, and how that
5 might influence the rest of the group, "Hey. You know, he
6 has a valid point here. You know, I hadn't thought of it,
7 or somehow it's different, but let's listen to him."

8 When people think they've been listened -- when
9 people know they've been listened to, and they were given
10 respect, they can live with the decision, more times than
11 not. They'll simply say, "Okay. I made my point. They
12 listened. We discussed it. There were better points to be
13 made. I'm okay with that." People get mad, and people
14 walk away disgusted, and say, "This Commission," and have
15 no faith in the Commission when they're not listened to,
16 when a community group is not listened to, you know.

17 Those are the two big things I've learned in
18 running teams or in being part of a team, that, you know,
19 even if I'm not the leader, I make sure I draw people out,
20 and make sure I check people, cutting people off too soon,
21 and make sure that happens. I try to be very, very level
22 in how I deal with opinions. Thank you.

23 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Question five: A
24 considerable amount of the Commission's work will involve
25 meeting with people from all over California who come from

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

9 MR. NEWTON: Certainly. As I mentioned in my
10 application, I was raised to sort of be, for lack of a
11 better -- blind to other people as far as preconceived
12 notions. Do we all have preconceived notions? Of course
13 we do. Now, we're always leery of someone because of their
14 dress or their looks or whatever, you know. It may be
15 minute. We may not even think about it, but we are at
16 times, you know. I have a sister-in-law who can't stand
17 people running around in leotards. You know, she has a
18 prejudice against that. You know, who knows what you have?

19 My point of it is, the skills I've had is, I've
20 always dealt with people for what they are, you know.
21 Their intelligence is what I look for in a person. What do
22 they bring to the table? When I worked in Boeing, we
23 didn't care -- there was no caring, you know, what
24 background you were, or your gender, your ethnicity, or any
25 other item like that. It was "What are you bringing to the

1 table? What intellectual contribution are you making to
2 this project?" And that's what counts.

3 When I coach football, which I've coached for 40
4 years, you know, I'm looking at how good you are as a
5 player. That's the only thing that counts to me. I don't
6 care anything else about, you know -- yes, I care for them
7 as a person. I don't mean to say that I don't care for
8 those people. But as far as their abilities, I'm looking
9 for their ability. That's who plays. That's who gets more
10 playing time. That's who succeeds, is their ability, and
11 that's what I look at, and that's the way I was raised, you
12 know.

13 My dad was a contractor. He didn't care who you
14 were, because you'd get the job done. You know, if you
15 want to say there's a prejudice, that's his prejudice. If
16 you didn't get the job done, then he didn't keep you very
17 long, I suppose, and that's kind of the way I was raised
18 (sic). As I said in my intro, I grew up with a mixed
19 neighborhood, never thought of it was mixed, went to the
20 south, saw a totally different mix of people, and saw how
21 people reacted negatively to it, and it didn't make sense
22 to me. It still doesn't make sense to me. And so that's
23 how I handle it.

24 Experiences on a particular background. As a
25 school board member, our district, when I first joined, was

1 about half suburban and half rural. The rural has gone
2 away. The dairies have gone away. And it's filling out.
3 Anybody knows, Chino, Ontario, Eastvale, understands that.
4 The dynamics have changed. When I first moved here, the
5 district was 80 percent Caucasian. It's now 70 percent
6 Hispanic. That's a major shift.

7 You know, so, by respecting people, by listening to
8 them, I've been able to maintain a good feeling,
9 reelections, and, you know, why? Because I'm listening to
10 people, and their goal and my goal is the same. What's
11 good for their kid, that's all I'm concerned about, what's
12 best for their child. Doesn't matter.

13 Now, we've made some -- we may need some
14 adjustments, of course. We have more ESL classes. We have
15 more, different food programs and stuff that we didn't have
16 in the past because of the demographics of our
17 neighborhood, but those things have -- you have to do what
18 makes sense.

19 Also, with LCAP, you know, we need to listen to
20 each community, each school community, to find out what
21 their particular needs are. One school in our district is
22 totally different from another school in our district, and
23 their wants and needs and the parents are different. Sure,
24 there's commonality, but there's also subtle differences.

25 Finally, we're building out in the former dairy

1 lands. We're going to have five, six new schools over the
2 next five, six years. My big concern is, those people
3 moving into those neighborhoods have a totally different
4 neighborhood than what's existing, and I want to make sure
5 that quality of education stays the same across the
6 district, that the interests of each separate school
7 community is met, and that we retain that hands-on
8 approach.

9 So those are experiences I've had with a wide
10 variety of different backgrounds. My community is -- to be
11 honest, I don't really hang around with anybody in my
12 background, but, you know, those are different things that
13 I've seen and worked through, and on a daily basis.

14 So I keep the big goal in mind in our district, the
15 big goal is the welfare of the child, and that's the
16 overriding factor. Yes, I understand different cultures
17 have different needs, and we listen to them, and we make
18 adjustments, depending on what's needed by that community.
19 That's how you do it. You be respectful, you be level, and
20 you treat people fairly. Thank you.

21 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. We will now go to panel
22 questions. Each panel member will have 20 minutes to ask
23 his or her questions, and we'll start with the Chair, Mr.
24 Belnap.

25 CHAIR BELNAP: Good morning, Mr. Newton.

1 MR. NEWTON: Good morning.

2 CHAIR BELNAP: Let's start with just a rundown of
3 your education and employment history, just a few questions
4 about your career path. So you started a master's program
5 in philosophy after obtaining your bachelor's degree in
6 philosophy, but you transitioned over to law school. Can
7 you tell us about that switch from a master's in philosophy
8 to law school?

9 MR. NEWTON: Sure. So I went to school in New
10 Orleans. That's where I got my BA, at Tulane University,
11 and the goal always was to go to law school. That was
12 always the goal.

13 Unfortunately, New Orleans has quite a few
14 distractions, and it sort of negatively impacted some
15 grades, so I decided to go after my master's, and build up
16 my grades, also, and reapply to law school after I got into
17 the master program. The law was always the long-range
18 goal, but my love of philosophy kept me going into the
19 program. So that's kind of why the transition, to be
20 honest, with the master's, was to enhance my education in
21 prep for law school. Too many Mardi Gras.

22 CHAIR BELNAP: So you, after law school, obtained a
23 teaching credential?

24 MR. NEWTON: I did.

25 CHAIR BELNAP: Tell us about that. Why did you

1 obtain that? What did you do with it?

2 MR. NEWTON: Sure. Okay. So, about halfway
3 through law school, I got a job coaching, a part-time job,
4 in addition to the other part-time jobs I had while I was
5 going to law school, and I was going to law school at
6 night, basically, and, as a result of that, I also obtained
7 a substitute job in the school district, as a sub, and I
8 really enjoyed it. I really enjoyed the education.

9 I enjoyed teaching, et cetera, and, to be quite
10 honest, when I finished law school -- and no offense to any
11 lawyers in the audience -- I kind of was a little
12 disillusioned by the -- not so much the law, but as to
13 people that were practicing the law, many self-serving
14 people, et cetera, you know, and I'll be honest. I grew up
15 in the Perry Mason era, and that was how I viewed law, and
16 so it's just kind of reality, and I really -- when I
17 finished law school, I really liked teaching, and I kind of
18 wanted to go into that.

19 So I went and got my credential, and tried to get
20 on as a full-time job, made some logistical errors. I
21 wanted to stay in the district I was currently working at,
22 Fullerton, and so I didn't really look outside that
23 district too much. I did interview up north a couple
24 times, up in Chico and the carrot capital somewhere. I
25 forget. Anyway, that was my goal, was to obtain a

1 full-time position.

2 Then I fell in love, and wanted to get married, and
3 needed a job to -- because she had two children already,
4 and needed the kind of job that paid more than teaching
5 did, and so that's how I wound up in aerospace. So it was
6 kind of a weird course of action, I suppose. It certainly
7 seemed odd. But that's how I wound up in aerospace, and
8 not as a lawyer right off, you know. So love will do that.

9 CHAIR BELNAP: At Boeing, you worked there for 36
10 years, so I'm presuming that you found a passion. Why did
11 you stay with Boeing? And I understand you were a contract
12 negotiator, so how did that end up being the passion that
13 you pursued for most of your career?

14 MR. NEWTON: Yes. You know, what I liked about
15 aerospace -- and where I started was Hughes, who got out
16 and went to McDonnell Douglas, who got bought out by
17 Boeing. So, when I say, "Boeing," it sort of encompasses
18 all those guys, because they bought them all out,
19 eventually.

20 So what I liked about it was, it allowed me to use
21 my law training in contracts, in a sense, in my job as
22 negotiating contracts and writing contracts. So that was
23 the passion there. I did like the negotiations, and did
24 some very heavy ones, over a billion-dollar negotiations
25 with Raytheon and such.

1 There is a lot -- that is kind of a rush, you know,
2 but it is very passionate, because I worked on the defense
3 side, and you felt you were really doing something good for
4 your country, you know, that you were providing products,
5 you know, and it is exciting to see the end product in
6 action, you know.

7 Seeing an Apache helicopter take off is pretty
8 interesting. It's pretty thrilling. To see rockets
9 launched into space is exciting, you know. So the end
10 product is always exciting in companies like that, and so
11 those were the things I really liked about Boeing. That's
12 one reason I stayed.

13 You know, I'm really loyal. If you look, I was at
14 Boeing for 30-some years. I've been in the same house for
15 30-some years. I'm married to the same woman for 30-some
16 years. I kind of can find my niche, and I like it. I sort
17 of stay there and try and grow in there. So that was why I
18 stayed with Boeing.

19 CHAIR BELNAP: All right. Thank you. So, in your
20 time at Boeing, what types of analyses, particularly like
21 complex analyses, did you perform in your role?

22 MR. NEWTON: Conflict analysis? I'm sorry. Did
23 you say, "Conflict analysis"?

24 CHAIR BELNAP: Complex.

25 MR. NEWTON: Complex. Okay. Complex. Sure.

1 As in at Boeing, and most aerospace companies,
2 negotiations are done through the supplier management, or
3 through a negotiator such as myself. They don't
4 have -- the engineers, and the cost analysts, and quality,
5 and the DOD, and the Small Business Administration that you
6 deal with, they're there to support you, but you're making
7 the decision for Boeing. You're the only person authorized
8 by Boeing to commit Boeing, in supplier management.

9 So, in order to be effective, in order to go into a
10 supplier -- because you're not going to go into a supplier
11 with a big team, and suppliers could be a small company or
12 a major competitor like Northrup or Raytheon. You need to
13 know what you're talking about.

14 One thing that I know over the years is, I've
15 always entered to any job really kind of devoid of
16 knowledge, I mean, as far as a new job, you know, like
17 Boeing, and I didn't know supplier management. I didn't
18 even know what supplier management was. You know, that's
19 where I got hired. When I entered coaching, yes, I played,
20 but I didn't know how to coach, when I got on the school
21 board, you know. But what I do is I learn.

22 I learn, I learn, I learn, and when I think I
23 understand it, I learn some more, and I've always been like
24 that. I want to know -- if you tell me the flange isn't
25 right, show me what you're talking about. You're doing a

1 test on a product, show me what that test is. Show me the
2 manufacturing of it, so I can understand.

3 When I'm talking to somebody across the table, and
4 they sit there and tell me something, I can easily
5 understand what they're talking about, and if I don't know,
6 I'll ask the experts, of course, to enlighten me, but I
7 don't go into anything not knowing my job, and, you know,
8 it's -- and that goes back to even before I joined Boeing.

9 I used to work commission sales at Montgomery Wards
10 a long time ago, and to be a good salesman, you need to
11 know your product, and you need to really understand that
12 product. I mean, how many times have you gone and bought a
13 car, and you asked a question, and the other guy would come
14 running out and help you? He doesn't know the answer.
15 That's wrong. That's wrong. You need to know what makes
16 things tick, and how things work, and what's the basis of
17 your position.

18 So, if I come with a position that "Hey. I'm
19 offering you this amount of money," it's based on this,
20 this, and this, and it's not based on what you're telling
21 me, and I can only do that by understanding and diving into
22 the details, getting down into the weeds and finding out
23 how things work.

24 I never read a blueprint before I went to Boeing,
25 but now I can. So, you know, it's things like that. I

1 know how CAD works. I know how different systems work, you
2 know. Those are things -- you have to learn to be
3 effective no matter what you do.

4 CHAIR BELNAP: All right. Thank you. So, on the
5 same vein, still talking about your years at Boeing, how
6 does a contract negotiator have to exercise impartiality?

7 MR. NEWTON: Well, okay. You do have to exercise
8 impartiality, but remembering that the name on the badge is
9 Boeing, and you work for Boeing, but you do have to be
10 impartial because, to be honest, to be successful, you have
11 to make sure everybody is happy with the deal, okay, happy
12 with the contract.

13 You know, aerospace, companies like Boeing, used to
14 be accused of being bullies, to be quite honest, you know,
15 I come in, I've got the money, "Do what I tell you to do,"
16 et cetera, and as Boeing became more of an integrator, not
17 as a manufacturer, and companies, much like large companies
18 now, are almost all integrators, in the sense that, on a
19 plane, 90 percent of the plane is made somewhere else, by
20 different suppliers, and Boeing just puts it together.
21 That's probably not a good example of Boeing's current
22 problems, but that's the idea.

23 So, to do that, you need to see what the end goal
24 is, and the end goal is providing a good quality product,
25 on time, at a fair price to both companies. You know, it

1 doesn't do you any good to have a company go under that's
2 supplying you parts because you negotiate such a deal that
3 they can't make money. That doesn't help you. Then you
4 just have to qualify another supplier. That's timely and
5 cost-expensive.

6 So you want your suppliers to succeed. You want
7 them to do well. And so, by doing that, you need to be
8 impartial in the sense that "Hey. Yes. I could have
9 gotten a better deal in the short run, but it would have
10 been a bad deal in the long run."

11 So that's going back to what I talked about. Being
12 a concept person, you have to see how all the pieces fit
13 down the road. You just can't take things like how you
14 deal with people in a slice of time. You know, you have to
15 see the long picture, and to make sure that you're not
16 imposing terms on a company that it cannot meet, nor are
17 you giving up the store, either. So it's a tightrope that
18 you have to balance, and you have to justify it.

19 You have to go back to your management and say, "I
20 know you wanted it for X amount of dollars, but we're going
21 to pay this amount because it makes more sense, and this is
22 why it makes more sense," and you have to present that
23 picture to them, and they understand it. I've very rarely,
24 you know, ever met anybody that didn't understand the long
25 term of it, you know.

1 Now, there's haggling back and forth. Don't get me
2 wrong. But eventually you have to reach a point
3 where -- you know, I know it's trite to say, "Win/win," but
4 it really is. You win by having a supplier that performs
5 well, and to do that, you need to make sure you're level,
6 and not overbearing.

7 Did that answer your question?

8 CHAIR BELNAP: Yes, absolutely. Thank you.

9 So, for over four decades, you coached football?

10 MR. NEWTON: I did.

11 CHAIR BELNAP: How did your coaching experience
12 increase your understanding and appreciation for
13 California's diversity?

14 MR. NEWTON: Well, it has, tremendously. When I
15 first started coaching at this particular high
16 school -- and I've coached 42 of my 43 years at this high
17 school -- if you were driving by, you would think it would
18 be an affluent -- at the time, you would think it would be
19 an affluent Caucasian high school, and it was, to a certain
20 degree, although Fullerton encompasses both -- I don't know
21 if anybody is familiar with Fullerton. They have the
22 hills, which is where the high school sits, and it's a
23 fairly affluent area. It used to be. It still is. And
24 then it goes all the way down to the 91, which is more of a
25 normal urban setting in California, of mixed diversity.

1 A couple decades ago, there was a change in
2 demographics of the community, a heavy Korean influence, a
3 heavy Korean move-in, first generation. The children were
4 first generation. Many of them were born in Korea, but
5 some were born here, but most of them were born in Korea.
6 Their parents had come over here and had settled in that
7 particular area.

8 What was challenging to that was, one, the changed
9 demographic issue, you dealt with a different type of
10 student, in the sense that -- and I'm not trying to
11 stereotype anybody, but it's a well fact (sic) that
12 first-generation migrants or anybody want their children to
13 succeed academically. I mean, that is a major, major
14 important thing for parents that move here, no matter where
15 they're from, from England, from Scotland, from wherever,
16 and that was no less true there.

17 It was difficult because the parents didn't
18 understand the need for extracurricular activity in the
19 school, and it didn't matter if it was us, the band, the
20 chess club, whatever. They just didn't understand
21 why -- "You should be studying calculus. Why are you
22 playing an instrument?" you know, "Why are you doing this?"

23 So you kind of had to work through that with
24 parents, and speaking through their children, because the
25 parents are speaking nothing but Korean, and so you needed

1 to understand that the kid had some requirements
2 that -- you know, when I first started coaching, it was
3 like "Here's a brick wall. Go run through it," and the
4 kids would do it. Well, over time, it's "No. Explain to
5 me why you want me to run through the wall." And so you
6 have to change how you coach. You have to make sure you're
7 analytical, and explain to them why they're doing
8 something.

9 When we first had the change in demographics, you
10 had to understand that these kids sometimes had to leave
11 practice early, to go to tutor, and that was a little
12 different because you were always brought up, "Well, no.
13 Practice is practice. You're there for the full time. You
14 leave early, you're not going to play." Well, now you had
15 a different culture that you were dealing with, and the old
16 rules didn't apply. And so you had to adjust your style.
17 You had to adjust how you talked. You had to adjust how
18 you communicated to the kids and the parents.

19 Then, in the last five, six years, you're seeing
20 another change. There's been a big influx of Hispanics
21 into the school, again, another change. Now you have a
22 mix. You have all different -- you're coaching all
23 different backgrounds, and I'm just trying to categorize.
24 You have whites, you have Asians, you have Hispanics, you
25 have African-Americans, and they all have their own

1 particular parent requirement, so to speak, and what the
2 parents expect from them, and you need to adjust how you
3 coach, to make sure that they stay engaged in what I
4 consider important activities, any extracurricular
5 activity, and maintain their scholars.

6 You know, it used to be kids, "I can't play. I
7 can't spend the time. I have to go study, study, study,"
8 you know, and they were very grade-oriented.

9 MS. PELLMAN: You have two minutes remaining.

10 MR. NEWTON: Sorry. Anyway, and so it's just
11 changed over time. You have to -- I've been able to
12 accomplish more than, I think, most coaches over this time.
13 I change with the times. I change with the kids. I become
14 a better coach, a better teacher, as I go along.

15 CHAIR BELNAP: All right. Thank you.

16 So I have no further questions at this time. I'll
17 turn the time over to Mr. Coe.

18 VICE CHAIR COE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Good
19 morning to you again, Mr. Newton. Thank you for speaking
20 with us today, and thank you for being flexible to
21 reschedule this in light of the current events going on.

22 MR. NEWTON: Flexibility is the name of the game
23 right now.

24 VICE CHAIR COE: I appreciate that. I want to talk
25 about something you mentioned in your essays a few times.

1 A couple times, you mentioned you're deeply involved in
2 your community, in community engagement, and that you have
3 a deep sense of responsibility to give back to the
4 community on account of the example provided to you by your
5 parents.

6 MR. NEWTON: Yes.

7 VICE CHAIR COE: So my question is, how did your
8 parents set this example, and why do you think it had such
9 a profound impact?

10 MR. NEWTON: Sure. Well, at an early age, I mean,
11 like, early as I can remember, my mom was a member of the
12 General Federation of Women's Club, which used to be a lot
13 larger than it is now. It was a group that got together to
14 do good things for the community, basically, is what they
15 did, fundraisers, book drives, activities like that. Yes.

16 It had some social aspects to it, too, but I used
17 to always -- had to go along, being that age, and so I
18 always saw people working, giving up their time to make
19 their surrounding community better. So it was just kind of
20 a cultural thing that, yes, you know, that's part of the
21 routine. I'd go with Mom. Yes, I'm young, but, you know,
22 it grows on you after a while that these are people that
23 are sacrificing time, money, effort to make for others,
24 that they don't have to, you know. It's not necessary for
25 them to do it, but it's something they choose to do.

1 So I grew up with that, and Mom got to being
2 president of the state organization. So I always had that
3 belief that yes, there are groups that do well and do that,
4 you know. Both parents were a product of the depression.
5 I like to say, at my age, I'm one of those rare
6 second-generation Californians.

7 My mom was born up in Red Bluff, you know, so
8 that's unusual for people my age, to be second-generation.
9 So I always had kind of a really super loyalty to
10 California, but to the community. So that's kind of how I
11 grew up, and I've been on various city commissions and
12 committees, because that's where I felt most comfortable
13 with to join, and that was it.

14 Now, with my dad, he was a World War Two vet,
15 Marine. He didn't devote as much time to social issues,
16 although he was involved in the VFW and stuff, but he knew
17 the importance of the overall community, you know, that how
18 the community fares is important to how the family works,
19 you know. The success of the community helps the success
20 of the family, you know, in that community.

21 So he was certainly encouraging of supported
22 activities, and he would certainly go out and support Mom's
23 activities when it required additional assistance. He
24 understood the importance of it, and I was just -- you
25 know, I was an only child, and so those are the influences

1 that you're under, your parents, and you see that what's
2 important to them is important. So you think, "That makes
3 sense. It's important to me." So that's how they
4 influenced me.

5 VICE CHAIR COE: You mentioned in your application
6 in your discussion this morning that you have been coaching
7 high school football for over 40 years now, and I'm
8 wondering if that, you know, four decades of coaching, what
9 that may have taught you about teambuilding or
10 collaboration.

11 MR. NEWTON: Well, yes. Well, coaching is all
12 about teambuilding, to be honest, and I talked earlier
13 about -- let's start as a staff first. You work on a
14 staff, and even though you coach one element of the game,
15 and somebody else coaches another element, you're only
16 successful if the two elements blend in and support each
17 other.

18 In other words, currently I'm coaching defensive
19 line. Well, I'm only successful if the linebackers do
20 their job and that we work together, because they're
21 intertwined, and the DBs are intertwined with the
22 linebackers on how they perform. So you need to build the
23 whole team up, so everybody is on the same page, or at
24 least we're on the same defense, everybody is doing the
25 same technique, which is important, that you don't have one

1 person doing a technique that doesn't support the program.

2 In other words, different defenses require
3 different technique, other players, and when I talk about
4 "technique," stances, movement, how they drop, how they
5 cover. It's all different depending on the defense, and so
6 you need to make sure that everybody is on the same page
7 and everybody performs the same way, and there's been times
8 where that is the way I wouldn't have taught if it I had
9 been an independent person. You know, if I had been just
10 let go, do my stuff, I wouldn't have taught it that way,
11 but I understood the need that it be taught different to
12 support the overall program. So I do it that way.

13 So the players, to be successful, need to buy into
14 the program. They need to understand that "This is why
15 we're doing it, and this is how your contribution is going
16 to make us successful." Remember I talked about, when I
17 first started coaching, it was just "Yell at the kid and
18 make him do it." You can't do that anymore. You need to
19 make the kids understand their role in whatever you're
20 doing, and how it affects others. So, if you're not -- if
21 the kid doesn't understand he's supposed to do a certain
22 thing, there's consequences if he doesn't do it right. It
23 weakens other players' ability to perform.

24 If I just go off and do my own thing, I weaken the
25 fabric of what everybody else is doing. You know, if I

1 have a quarterback that just does his own thing, doesn't
2 run the play that's called, you know, he's out there on an
3 island. I mean, everybody else is off running a different
4 play, and he's doing something else. Well, you're not
5 going to be successful, you know. You're not going to be
6 successful if one person does his own thing.

7 So it is a teambuilding effort, for sure, and it
8 goes much deeper than just the players that play. It's the
9 support people, the backup players. They need to
10 understand how their role is in the success of the team
11 because, when we practice, the first-teamers practice
12 against the second- or third-teamers. Well, second- or
13 third-teamers need to understand that they must perform to
14 the best of their ability to make the first-teamers better.
15 So they're really probably working opposite their own
16 interests.

17 You know, their interest is obviously to be a
18 first-teamer, but the greater interest is to make that
19 first-teamer better, and so, by doing that, you need to be
20 better. You need to run exactly what we tell you to, when
21 we tell you to do it, so that they understand what they're
22 going to see on Friday night, and so they get better. So
23 you need to really reach down to the very last kid on the
24 roster. You need to do things right to make everybody
25 above you better. So it is a big teambuilding effort.

1 VICE CHAIR COE: Thank you. So, as you were
2 discussing earlier, your experience in coaching and
3 teaching has brought many diverse backgrounds into your
4 life, and you mentioned that also in your essays, and I'd
5 like to know what you think you have learned from the
6 people of diverse backgrounds that you've met about their
7 perspectives and their concerns and their preferences that
8 you think would make you a good representative for them on
9 this Commission?

10 MR. NEWTON: Sure, and I think I mentioned this to
11 you. When you strip everything away, all these people,
12 groups, individuals, families, however you want to
13 classify, communities, they all have the same basic goal.
14 They want to have a good life. They want their children to
15 succeed, better than they've had it, and they want to be
16 treated with respect, you know, and they want to be treated
17 as equals.

18 I think it's always hard to move out of your
19 comfort zone, you know, and the comfort zone is maybe the
20 zone you grew up in, or the people you work with, or you
21 hang around with, but, if you recognize that other people
22 have the same basic goals you do, and they're not in
23 conflict with one another -- I mean, we're not competing
24 for a job -- how can I help those people, or whoever the
25 individual is? And when I say "those people," I don't

1 necessarily mean a minority or anything. I just mean other
2 people. How do I help them succeed?

3 I think, with this Commission -- in fact, I know
4 with this Commission -- it's important that the
5 Commissioners understand that all Californians have that in
6 common. It doesn't matter who you are. They want to have
7 a good life. They want to succeed. They want their
8 children to succeed. They want their grandchildren to
9 succeed. So how does establishing districts help that
10 along? How do I maintain a community that wishes to remain
11 a community?

12 You know, I mean, there are communities that have
13 real identities in this state, and they want to retain that
14 identity, but they also want to be heard, and it's a fine
15 line, and I recognize that. It will be a difficult task,
16 but I think it's important to address those concerns, and
17 to always move forward on that premise that yes, when you
18 strip away everything, we're all in the same boat, you
19 know, we all have the same goals, and that's one thing I've
20 learned.

21 I'll be the first to admit that, you know, I've
22 entered relationships or things with preconceived notions,
23 you know, and the one year I didn't coach Sunny Hills, I
24 coached at a high school in Whittier, and it was all
25 Hispanic, almost all Hispanic, and I'm not saying I had a

1 preconceived notion of what coaching students like that
2 would be like, but I was quickly enlightened that they were
3 no different.

4 They were no different than the kids I had coached
5 at the other high school. They were no different than kids
6 I've seen at other high schools who play, and their parents
7 were no different. Yes, there were some subtle
8 differences. There were some cultural differences. But,
9 when you strip it all away, they're all the same. I know
10 that's maybe a trite answer, but it's something I really
11 believe.

12 VICE CHAIR COE: I have a similar question, but in
13 terms of geographic diversity.

14 MR. NEWTON: Sure.

15 VICE CHAIR COE: You know, people's interests and
16 their concerns could vary based on where they live, the
17 region in which they live.

18 MR. NEWTON: Yes.

19 VICE CHAIR COE: So I see that you're from San
20 Bernardino County. You mentioned having lived in the same
21 house for 37 years. You've been mostly based there. So
22 I'd like for you, if you could, to talk a little bit about
23 your experiences in other regions of the state, what you've
24 learned from the people there about their concerns and
25 their preferences that would make you an effective

1 representative for them on this Commission.

2 MR. NEWTON: Sure. Well, I was born and grew up in
3 Lakewood, which is right north of Long Beach. I don't know
4 if anybody knows where Lakewood, but it's right north of
5 Long Beach.

6 VICE CHAIR COE: My mom is from Lakewood, actually.

7 MR. NEWTON: What?

8 VICE CHAIR COE: My mom was from Lakewood. She
9 grew up down there. Yes.

10 MR. NEWTON: See, I knew there was something there
11 that -- you know -- and so I lived there for a while. Then
12 I lived in Fullerton. Then I've lived out here in San
13 Bernardino for 30 years, a little over 30 years. There is
14 a difference.

15 There is a definite difference in people in San
16 Bernardino County as far as how they -- it's a
17 commuter -- it's really a heavily commuter community. You
18 know, most of the -- now the jobs are starting to spring up
19 out here. You get, you know, Amazon and a few other big
20 companies with a warehouse out here, but, when we first
21 moved out here, everybody commuted into L.A. and Orange
22 County.

23 So you have that kind of bedroom community commute,
24 where there wasn't a lot of community identification,
25 because everybody left during the day. You know, everybody

1 returned at night, and so, you know, most of their time
2 wasn't spent in this community.

3 Now that's changed, and there's much more of
4 a -- you know, a feel that "Hey. I belong to the Inland
5 Empire," you know, "I belong out here. This is my area,"
6 and that's still different, though, than an established
7 area such as Long Beach, Lakewood, which has been there
8 forever, you know, and they're much more geared towards
9 environmental issues, perhaps more than San Bernardino
10 might be at times, although San Bernardino County certainly
11 works on that in the mountains.

12 L.A. downtown L.A. I worked in Lynwood and Compton
13 for years. That obviously has a different feeling, in the
14 sense that it is a much more enclosed community, in the
15 sense that people have a tendency to work in the community
16 area, and so there's much more community identification
17 with those areas of L.A., East L.A. My dad grew up in East
18 L.A., Garfield High, and so they have a different feel to
19 it.

20 The San Fernando Valley has a different feel to it,
21 in the sense that it's -- again, the community is spread
22 out now, as opposed to, say, Long Beach, where it's much
23 more concentrated, or Santa Monica, where it's
24 concentrated. You know, you get these communities
25 like -- which is much like, you know, San Bernardino. It's

1 spread out.

2 Obviously, San Diego is much more environmental, I
3 think, in tune. You have that large-city feel that they're
4 trying to achieve, but they're also achieving, you know,
5 very ecological balance on how they grow, you know, between
6 wanting to be more of a metropolis but still retain the
7 things that make San Diego beautiful, you know, the
8 beaches, the weather, the lifestyle.

9 San Francisco obviously is a lot different than
10 L.A. It's a much more urban feel. You know, sometimes I
11 really enjoy much more of a "New York on a hillside"-type
12 attitude, little neighborhoods, you know, each neighborhood
13 very -- self-identification, you know, or might be out by
14 Golden Gate Park, which has a totally different atmosphere
15 than, say, downtown. Oakland is, again, different, and you
16 have Berkeley right next to it, which has a totally
17 different feel, a college-town feel.

18 You know, Sacramento, while I'm not super familiar
19 with Sacramento, I've certainly been there numerous times.
20 It has certainly -- you can go outside of Sacramento in
21 like 10 minutes and you're out, you know, in the woods,
22 basically, you know, and it's a city within, like,
23 landscape (sic). I had relatives that grew up -- that
24 lived in Modesto, in Merced, again, farming communities,
25 industrial, totally different feel. Santa Rosa, again,

1 going up north, much more outdoorsy, the Tahoe area.
2 Terrain makes a difference, you know. Locale makes a
3 difference.

4 MS. PELLMAN: You have two minutes remaining.

5 MR. NEWTON: Okay. I'm sorry. So the beautiful
6 thing about our state is there is so much difference. You
7 can find -- anything in the United States, you can find in
8 California. Sorry.

9 VICE CHAIR COE: Thank you. No, no problem. One
10 question really quick in the time we have remaining. If
11 you were to be appointed to the Commission, which aspects
12 of that role do you think you would enjoy the most, and,
13 conversely, which aspects of that role do you think you
14 might struggle with a little bit?

15 MR. NEWTON: I would enjoy most hearing from the
16 communities, knowing what they're doing, find out more of
17 the tapestry that makes up California, understand it
18 better. The least, I don't know if there is a least. I
19 can't think of one. Maybe looking at raw census data. But
20 I would think the actual hands-on is the part I would enjoy
21 the most.

22 VICE CHAIR COE: Okay. I think I'm about out of
23 time. Thank you, Mr. Newton.

24 Mr. Chair, no further questions.

25 CHAIR BELNAP: Okay. We'll turn the time over to

1 Ms. Dickison.

2 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you.

3 Good morning, Mr. Newton.

4 MR. NEWTON: Good morning.

5 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: So I want to start out just
6 going back to -- you were talking about, in response to Mr.
7 Coe, that players need to understand their role on the
8 team, and what the team is doing, and how it affects
9 others. On the Commission, what role do you think you
10 would best fill, and what can the Commission do up front to
11 build a team that works together and in which each member
12 is conscious of how what they do may affect other
13 Commissioners or the Commission as a whole?

14 MR. NEWTON: Okay. You know, I'll be honest. I'm
15 more of a -- usually, if you look at a group, there's like
16 three or four categories, and I'm sure you're all taken
17 those tests where you find out where you were. There's the
18 fact miners, the people that really are into doing the
19 analysis. There are decision makers. There are the
20 alphas. There's, you know, the other thing.

21 To be successful at anything, you need a good blend
22 of those people, and you need to quickly recognize what
23 everybody's strength is, and basically make assignments or
24 make determination on activity that brings out everybody's
25 best, you know.

1 If you have someone that is not terribly analytical
2 as far as data, then that's the wrong person to put in
3 charge of analyzing the data, I mean, as the primary
4 person. Yes, everybody is going to analyze the data, but
5 maybe they're the ones that are going to -- you pick the
6 best person that can explain the data to everybody, that
7 can make it make sense.

8 Like I said, I think my best role is a goal-driven
9 person, in other words, to make sure -- I see myself as,
10 yes, doing the analysis, yes, learning from everybody, but
11 also making sure everybody stays on track, everybody keeps
12 moving, everybody is doing their role to the best of their
13 ability -- are we providing help to them, you know, so
14 they're not overwhelmed by whatever tasks they're
15 going? -- and to drive a decision.

16 That doesn't mean my decision. That just means
17 we've analyzed the data. We've talked to the people. We
18 know what the solution is. Okay. Let's move it now.
19 Let's move it along, not prematurely, not before all the
20 data is in, but when that comes, because, as many of you
21 know, you've probably been on committees where they just
22 can't pull the trigger, they just cannot pull the trigger
23 on the next step, and that's no fault of anybody. That's
24 just the way some groups are, and you need people that are
25 willing to nudge everybody else into that, but to keep

1 things level.

2 I can certainly do the analysis. I can certainly
3 be fair. I can certainly understand. But I think, to be
4 an effective committee, you need to identify everybody's
5 strengths, talk to everybody, find out what the backgrounds
6 are, and use those strengths. That's why they're on the
7 committee.

8 You want to use their strength, and everybody has
9 things they're stronger at than other things, and so let's
10 make sure that we're using them, and let's make sure that
11 they're heard, they're supported by the rest of the
12 committee, and then, also, if somebody needs something,
13 then who's going to step up and help them?

14 Let's get things done. Let's not let somebody sit
15 out on a limb by themselves. Let's get things done, but
16 let's also not give somebody a task that they're incapable
17 of handling --

18 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you.

19 MR. NEWTON: -- at least not without a lot of
20 training. Sorry.

21 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: That's okay. So, in your
22 essay on impartiality, you talked about that:

23 "Most opinions have a grain of good sense
24 and offer a valuable takeaway that often
25 can enhance, if not change, my own

1 opinion on a matter."

2 Can you give us an example of a time that -- a
3 specific example of when your opinion was changed based on
4 additional information or somebody else providing you other
5 information?

6 MR. NEWTON: Sure. Several years ago, as you may
7 or may not know, the school districts had a budget problem
8 throughout the state, which meant that cuts needed to be
9 made, and school districts are always reluctant to cut
10 anything, anybody or anything, but the fact remains, while
11 you owe it to the students, you also owe it to the
12 community to be fiscally responsible.

13 I felt that a certain program should be cut, and
14 this particular program was a yell squad that our middle
15 school that was recognized, that competed nationally and
16 was very well thought of, but it was a real expense,
17 because the district paid for everything, and not that I
18 particularly wanted it to be cut, but I felt it should be
19 cut. To be honest, it was an easy cut.

20 The community came and made a lot of good points,
21 particularly on the importance of what it meant to the
22 school and what it meant to the students involved, and what
23 it meant to the kids, and how they benefit in the long run
24 from it, that it was much more than just a song and cheer
25 organization. It was really a life-setting goal, where

1 they learned to work together as a team.

2 They learned school spirit. They learned to
3 balance academics with also doing other activities, which
4 is super important. You know, we balance work with life,
5 and basically it was right there, you balance schoolwork
6 with life, and they made some good presentations, and the
7 ensuing debate was still, you know, "How do we accomplish
8 this?"

9 The end result was that the parents picked up part
10 of the tab, so to speak, and did some more additional
11 fundraisers, and we made some adjustments in some other
12 programs to provide money for them. We didn't cut out any
13 other programs. We just made some adjustments, made it
14 lessen a little bit.

15 I was hard over on eliminating the program, but
16 then, when I saw the real boots-on-the-ground impact on
17 people -- you know, and that's the hard thing, when you're
18 in the decision making. Numbers are numbers. They're
19 cold, and, you know, they're easy to manipulate. But when
20 you deal with the people behind the numbers, that's when it
21 gets tough, and that's when you need to understand where
22 they're coming from and how important something is to them.

23 I think that would be true on the committee. I
24 mean, yes, it would be so simpler just to draw up a grid,
25 you know, but that's not reality. That's "How does that

1 impact the people in the group?" And that's one area that
2 I've really changed my mind based on the input I got from
3 others.

4 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you. You talked
5 earlier about how you need to consider how moving one line
6 might not affect just that district but could affect
7 surrounding districts. In the regulations, neighborhoods,
8 cities, counties, and communities of interest are all in
9 the same priority line.

10 MR. NEWTON: Right.

11 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: So, when those come into
12 conflict, what steps can the Commission take to ensure it's
13 getting all the information it needs to make its decision?

14 MR. NEWTON: Well, I think it goes beyond just
15 public hearings, to be honest, and I'm just touching on
16 something I wanted to touch on, also, and I'm answering
17 your question, too. The advocates are going to come out to
18 the public hearings.

19 I mean, that's the voices you're going to hear, is
20 the advocates, advocate this, advocate that, but the people
21 in the community aren't going to come to the meetings en
22 masse or anything like that. You need to get out and, like
23 I said, put boots on the group, talk to the local churches,
24 church leaders, PTAs, with, you know, what is really
25 impacting that area, and drawing lines, and where is the

1 change?

2 I mean, you know, is it fair to have each community
3 link up with, you know, some area deep inside of L.A.
4 County? I don't know, you know. I don't know. I haven't
5 done the research. But I can see where the two groups have
6 opposing goals, opposing points of view, you know, and so
7 why do I want to create conflict like that?

8 I don't necessary mean pigeonhole everybody in one
9 group, in one area. That isn't what I mean. But I think
10 you have to take into consideration that there is some
11 community interest in one area that isn't the same
12 community interest in another area, and how do I balance
13 that out so that one community doesn't overwhelm the other,
14 you know, in representation, because that's not fair to the
15 other. You don't want to sacrifice one community's
16 identity for the sake of another.

17 Now, is it a perfect world? No, and anybody that
18 tells you it's just going to be perfect is wrong, as we
19 know that, but you're going to try to strive to make sure
20 that community identification is -- to me, it's more
21 important than arbitrary county lines, to be honest.
22 County lines were drawn up 100 years ago or whenever, you
23 know, based on data at that time. You know, I think what's
24 more important is, it's the communities inside those areas,
25 and do they overlap?

1 Take the Inland Empire. Is Pomona part of L.A., or
2 is Pomona part of the Inland Empire, you know, and the mind
3 set? I don't know, but there is that back-and-forth where
4 you think, "Well, are they really here or there?" You
5 know, I mean, where is more commonality? Where would they
6 be best representative, you know? And maybe that crosses a
7 county line. I don't know, but those are the things that
8 the Commission needs to figure out. I think that's a
9 higher priority than arbitrary county lines that were
10 established a long time ago.

11 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you.

12 MR. NEWTON: I'm not sure that answered your
13 question.

14 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: It did.

15 MR. NEWTON: Sometimes I ramble on a little bit.
16 What was the question?

17 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Now you actually answered
18 one of my other questions that I listed here.

19 MR. NEWTON: Did I ramble?

20 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: No. What do you think are
21 some of the things that can influence a person's or a
22 group's preference when they're looking for representation,
23 and how could that differ in the various regions of the
24 state?

25 MR. NEWTON: Well, okay. Could you say it again?

1 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: What are some of the things
2 that may influence one, a person, or a group's preference,
3 when they're looking for representation, and how may that
4 differ between the various regions of the state?

5 MR. NEWTON: Okay. Well, honestly, I mean, I hate
6 to use labels, but, you know, certain areas are more open
7 to change than other areas. So, if you want to call it
8 "liberal/conservative," fine, if you want to call it
9 "status quo versus changing." Those have influence.

10 There are so many things that have influence in
11 people's lives, church, community, job location, jobs in
12 general. Honestly, you know, manufacturing areas, people
13 that work and live in that area, they have a different
14 point of view than people that live in the Silicon Valley,
15 you know. It's just different.

16 One thing about the state is yes, I mean, there are
17 the people in Southern California -- it's too simplified to
18 say Southern California is different than Northern
19 California, because being in Southern California is
20 different in itself. I mean, San Diego is different than
21 L.A. San Diego is different than Orange County. Temecula
22 is different than San Diego. You know, Modesto and
23 Bakersfield are certain different than San Francisco.

24 So people's preference is what's making it right
25 for them, and how do they maintain or enhance what they're

1 comfortable with, and not everybody is in the community
2 they want to be in, obviously, but a lot of people are, and
3 how do I maintain my community identity, be it you want to
4 call it "liberal" or "conservative" or however you want to
5 label it?

6 There are differences, and all states have it, to
7 some degree, and, like I said, I've lived in Louisiana.
8 New Orleans is certainly different than upstate Louisiana,
9 even more than Baton Rouge, you know, but not like
10 California. California has so many divisions, and I think
11 the role of the Commission is to understand the complexity
12 of the state, and how decisions made impact communities,
13 and it's a difficult task.

14 The breadth of the state is so huge, it is going to
15 be a difficult task to do, but I think that's what has to
16 drive us, is to maintain -- to understand what's important
17 to certain areas, and how does that work, and how
18 does -- for instance, let's just take an example of one
19 case I saw, not California.

20 Western Manhattan's district does not include
21 Eastern Manhattan, New York, but it winds down into
22 Brooklyn like a snake, and that's obviously been made to
23 make certain powers stay in power in a community,
24 regardless of what is best for that particular community,
25 especially in Brooklyn.

1 Now, I don't see that as a good thing, but then,
2 again, I don't know what was the basis of that. So it
3 could have been something totally different, but I think
4 you have to look at that. If you're going to do some sort
5 of arbitrary -- not arbitrary, but where moving districts
6 around to encompass communities, I think you have to be
7 careful with that, because how does that affect the
8 community next to you, you know?

9 I mean, how does that affect -- how do I maintain
10 it? If I split off half of Long Beach into Huntington
11 Beach, and their half into El Segundo, those are two
12 different mind sets. Huntington Beach and El Segundo have
13 two different mind sets of what they like in their
14 community, you know. One is a very laidback beach
15 community, and El Segundo is more of a manufacturing area.
16 So, I mean, you have to be -- have to recognize how you're
17 going to do things, and how one affects the other.

18 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you.

19 MS. PELLMAN: Two minutes, 49 seconds remaining.

20 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you.

21 So, if you were selected as one of the first eight
22 Commissioners, who are selected randomly, you would be
23 tasked with selecting the next six Commissioners to round
24 out the Commission. What would you be looking for in those
25 individuals?

1 MR. NEWTON: Okay. First thing I'd be looking for
2 is to make sure the diversity of the state is well
3 represented, so however you want to classify that. So, if
4 we have voids, or we have underrepresentation, be it
5 geographic or groupwise, I think you have to address that
6 first, okay, to make sure there's a balance in the state,
7 because that leads to credibility of the Committee in its
8 final decision. The more diversified and better
9 represented the state is in that Commission, the more
10 validity that Commission is going to have in its end
11 result, period. I think that goes without saying.

12 The second thing is, I think you need to look for
13 qualities that you might be missing. If you have eight
14 alphas sitting there, you're not going to get anything
15 done. You're going to need some people that can actually
16 get in the weeds and dig out the data, and help explain
17 that. I mean, you need to balance the Committee out. You
18 don't want eight people all the same. You want a nice mix
19 of people on the Commission that bring different talents to
20 the Commission, but also represent different elements of
21 the state.

22 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you.

23 Mr. Belnap, I have no further questions at this
24 time. I yield my time.

25 CHAIR BELNAP: All right. Thank you.

1 We'll turn the time over to Mr. Dawson.

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

3 Mr. Newton, I just had a couple follow-ups. I
4 wanted to talk to you about your time on the school board.
5 So you've been school board president for quite a long
6 time.

7 MR. NEWTON: Yes.

8 MR. DAWSON: So I take it that you have familiarity
9 with the Brown Act --

10 MR. NEWTON: I do.

11 MR. DAWSON: -- and the Public Records Act,
12 Political Reform Act. You've run meetings.

13 MR. NEWTON: Yes.

14 MR. DAWSON: Do you think that that is, in and of
15 itself, a skill that's useful to the Commission?

16 MR. NEWTON: I think it is, in the sense that the
17 Brown Act is good. You know, I know it gets a lot of fire,
18 but I think it's good, and one thing I note is that what we
19 do is, during public comment, you know, people talk to us,
20 and the Brown Act prevents us from acting on public comment
21 at that time. However, I always instruct the
22 superintendent to do a follow-up with that person, you
23 know, to find out what is causing their public comment,
24 what's the issue.

25 Now, again, we're a small district, and maybe L.A.

1 Unified can't do that, but we can, and so, somebody has a
2 problem, we'll direct the superintendent, "Hey. Have them
3 talk to the principal. You talk to the principal. Let's
4 get back to them with an answer. We can't answer it right
5 now, but let's get something back to that person."

6 So that's how we, or I, incorporate the Brown Act
7 in our group. The second thing is, obviously, we tightly
8 control our communication between ourselves when we're not
9 in session. We have training ahead of time. We do Brown
10 Act training. We're very aware of, you know, not crossing
11 that line.

12 MR. DAWSON: "Not crossing the line" in the sense
13 of having an inadvertent serial meeting?

14 MR. NEWTON: Yes, yes.

15 MR. DAWSON: It's actually Bagley- Keene, but, if
16 you know Brown, you'll know Bagley.

17 MR. NEWTON: Yes.

18 MS. PELLMAN: Mr. Dawson, we have just three
19 minutes, 24 seconds of the 90 minutes remaining.

20 MR. DAWSON: Okay. Thank you.

21 Just one quick follow-up. In your response to
22 standard question one, you said that the ideal Commissioner
23 should be logical, and I noticed that your BA was in
24 philosophy. Was logic your area of concentration?

25 MR. NEWTON: Actually, ethics, but logic was in

1 there. Ethics was my primary interest in the field, but I
2 think logic is very important. I mean, you have
3 to -- passion is one thing.

4 Passion is wonderful. Don't get me wrong. You
5 have to be passionate. But then you also have to temper
6 that with logic, "Okay. At what point do we set aside our
7 passion and make the best decision based on the facts,
8 based on logic?" Passion is part of that. Don't get me
9 wrong. But there's so much more to making a decision than
10 just knee-jerk reactions.

11 You know, we have to really think, and that's what
12 logic does, is it makes you think about the ramifications,
13 and how this will unfold in the long run, and so,
14 therefore, let's make the best decision, with the best
15 long-range goal, and I think logic is important.

16 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

17 Madame Chair (sic), I have no further follow-ups.
18 If any of the other Panel -- if any of the Panel members
19 do.

20 CHAIR BELNAP: Mr. Coe, do you have any follow-ups?

21 VICE CHAIR COE: No follow-up questions.

22 CHAIR BELNAP: Ms. Dickison?

23 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: No follow-up questions.

24 CHAIR BELNAP: I don't, either.

25 MR. DAWSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. With the time

1 remaining --

2 Madame Secretary, what's the time?

3 MS. PELLMAN: One minute, 40 seconds.

4 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

5 With the little bit of time remaining, I'd like to
6 offer you the opportunity to make a closing statement to
7 the Panel, if you wish.

8 MR. NEWTON: Certainly. I'm sure everybody has
9 thanked you, but I want to thank you especially for this
10 honor, and for the privilege of talking to you. It's been
11 a wild ride the last few weeks, and I certainly appreciate
12 what you all have to go through.

13 A hundred and twenty people is a lot of people, and
14 I understand that, you know, having interviewed people for
15 positions in our district, and jobs, as a manager,
16 sometimes you get a little hazy on some of them after a
17 while, but I hope that I've stood out a little bit on some
18 proven leadership in committees and work functions, and
19 that I have a very -- you know, everybody wants to say they
20 have an open mind, but I really feel I do have an open
21 mind.

22 You know, that doesn't mean I don't have issues,
23 you know. Like, my grandmother, she was 90, and couldn't
24 stand older people her age, because all they did was
25 complain about dying and their diseases, so she couldn't

1 stand being around them.

2 So I'm not always good around people my own age,
3 but, that aside, I work hard to remain level-headed and
4 openminded, and you saw from the letters of recommendation.
5 Those are all real, and I conduct very level-headed board
6 meetings, very open. Everybody walks away feeling they at
7 least were fairly heard. Now, they may not agree with the
8 decision. They were at least fairly heard. And I think --

9 MS. PELLMAN: That's 90 minutes.

10 MR. NEWTON: Okay. That's it? Thank you.

11 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

12 CHAIR BELNAP: All right. Thank you for being with
13 us.

14 We're going to go into recess now, and be back at
15 10:44 a.m.

16 MR. NEWTON: Everybody stay safe.

17 (A recess was held from 10:30 a.m. to 10:44 a.m.)

18 CHAIR BELNAP: I'm going to call this meeting back
19 out of recess. I want to welcome Ms. Jane Andersen.

20 Ms. Andersen, can you hear us?

21 MS. ANDERSEN: Yes, I can.

22 CHAIR BELNAP: All right. Well, we're going to
23 jump into the standard questions, and turn the time over to
24 Mr. Dawson.

25 MR. DAWSON: Thank you, Mr. Belnap.

1 Ms. Andersen, I'm going to ask you five standard
2 questions that the Panel has requested each Applicant
3 respond to. Are you ready, ma'am?

4 MS. ANDERSEN: Yes, I am. Thank you.

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

12 MS. ANDERSEN: Well, good morning, and thank you
13 for giving me the opportunity to speak with you today.

14 This question is basically "What makes a good
15 Commissioner?" Well, each Commissioner must come to this
16 job realizing how incredibly important this task is, how
17 difficult it's going to be at times, and how much it's
18 going to take, the amazing amount the Commission will
19 learn, and how rewarding it will be. Personally, I think
20 it's going to be a lot of fun.

21 To get this job done, each Commissioner must
22 possess three required attributes. They must be impartial,
23 they must have an appreciation for the demographics and
24 geographic diversity of California. They must have the
25 relevant analytical skills to complete the work, and more.

1 I believe all Commissioners need to be openminded.
2 They must have good communication skills, and they must
3 enjoy working on a team. They have to be active listeners,
4 looking for the meaning behind the words, trying to
5 understand what it is that people are saying.

6 They must respect each other and the public, and
7 believe that other people's opinions are just as valuable
8 as their own. They must be polite and considerate. They
9 must be patient, and I believe they should have a sense of
10 duty.

11 I believe Commissioners should be curious about the
12 different regions of our state, its varied people, and how
13 this redistricting will actually affect them. They need to
14 be truth-seekers, be willing to put in the time and the
15 work to find out what information that we have, and what
16 information that we still need.

17 The task of redistricting, actually drawing the
18 maps, the details of it, is very technical. All the
19 information that is brought in must be converted to
20 two-dimensional maps that will meet all the legal
21 requirements. To do this, all Commissioners must
22 understand the legal rules of this task.

23 They have to be comfortable and confident with data
24 and mapping, and the many revisions and iterations that
25 will happen. They need to be critical thinkers, and they

1 need to be able to prioritize data.

2 They also need to be flexible thinkers. They have
3 to be able to change their views with new information.
4 They need to be comfortable working under pressure and when
5 challenged. Additionally, they can't be naive. They have
6 to be aware of politics, and they should be self-aware.
7 What particular skills or competencies do you bring to the
8 Commission, and what do others have?

9 Collectively, I believe the Commission as a group
10 needs to have the administrative skills to hire a staff,
11 experts, schedule meetings, public communications, and
12 execute the Commission's plans. It must have the
13 experience and connections with community groups that are
14 typically underrepresented in our state to help bring these
15 communities into the process.

16 The Commission must have the technical expertise in
17 analysis and mapping to work both very technically with our
18 experts and, in plainer terms, with those people I call
19 "data users," to quickly digest, create, and explain the
20 maps so that they accurately reflect the entire group's
21 intentions.

22 The group needs to have the legal expertise to work
23 through the very difficult nuances of the Voters' Rights
24 Act and the criteria of the Voters First Act to keep the
25 Commission on task, with an eye on defending the maps and

1 the Commission's actions in court, if needed.

2 The group also has to have the political awareness
3 to keep the Commission from accidentally creating political
4 problems and minimizing outside political influence.

5 These skills and attributes that each Commissioner
6 should have, I possess all of them. I actually do approach
7 each job with an open mind and a positive attitude. I
8 consciously try not to have any preconceived ideas. I have
9 good communication skills, and I really enjoy working on a
10 team, which I basically do on every job.

11 I'm a good listener, and I really try to understand
12 what people are trying to tell me, particularly in
13 technical areas where people are trying to explain
14 themselves, but they don't have the right terms or words.
15 I'm very good at empathizing, and trying to pull that out
16 of them, "What are you actually saying now? Do you mean
17 this? Do you mean that?"

18 I think that's something I will bring to the
19 Commission, which are -- things that I bring to the
20 Commission is, I'm a registered civil and structural
21 engineer in the state of California. So what I typically
22 do in all my work is I take information, ideas,
23 three-dimensional things, sort out what's important, what
24 isn't important, and make them into two-dimensional
25 drawings, construction documents. This is virtually what

1 the Commission will be doing. We'll be making, taking lots
2 of information, and making it on a two-dimensional drawing.

3 I'm very good at spatial relations. I can quickly
4 see how drawing a line here, drawing a line there is going
5 to affect the rest of what the work is doing. You know, if
6 we make a change over here, now it immediately affects what
7 we did three sections over. I'm used to doing this as a
8 matter of course. This is what I do in my work. While I
9 used to work with new construction a bit, I primarily work
10 on existing structures, alterations, seismic retrofits, and
11 failure investigations and repair.

12 Typically, in that, you figure out what is there to
13 the best of your ability, and then you make a design based
14 on that, knowing that, as construction starts, what we find
15 is going to be different, and you'll have to make changes
16 on it. You have to quickly evaluate that in the field, on
17 the construction sites, and come up with changes.

18 So I am very used to working up, coming up with
19 multiple solutions, quickly evaluating them, and then
20 repeating until a final solution is found. In my work,
21 this process usually happens during construction or after a
22 failure, when a solution is needed now. So conflict and
23 result, working through that, is just part of the job. I
24 expect that to happen, and it's not something I shy away
25 from. You work through that as a team. That's just what

1 you do. With this experience and multiple reiterations
2 under pressure, I think I could help the Commission work
3 through the same process with the maps, faster and more
4 productively.

5 Additionally, structural work must conform to
6 building codes and local ordinances, and it's then reviewed
7 for compliance with all these codes. Now, you probably
8 realize building codes are legal documents, and while many
9 designers use building codes, I have extensive experience
10 in writing the buildings codes.

11 As members of the Structural Engineers Association,
12 which I've been on the board of directors of, and the
13 largest society of engineers, we actually write the
14 building codes for anything structural, forces, and that
15 become legal documents. So this perspective will be very
16 useful in keeping the Commission following the details of
17 the legal requirements as it pertains to the technical
18 aspects.

19 My experience in investigating and repairing
20 structural failures has taught me to always look at the
21 bigger picture before you take action, and follow the
22 effects of that action on the whole rest of the system, to
23 make sure we're not doing damage elsewhere. I believe this
24 mind set will help the Commission to consider multiple
25 solutions faster and prevent mistakes.

1 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

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

8 What characteristics do you possess, and what
9 characteristics should your fellow Commissioners possess,
10 that will protect against hyper-partisanship? What will
11 you do to ensure that the work of the Commission is not
12 seen as polarized or hyper-partisan, and avoid perceptions
13 of political bias and conflict?

14 MS. ANDERSEN: Hyper-partisanship is all too common
15 today, and it breeds distrust and hopelessness in our
16 democracy. This is one of the reasons I think it's so
17 important for the Commission to do its work in an open,
18 inclusive, and non-political manner. The Commissioners
19 must be polite and respectful of each other. They have to
20 have open minds and really want to work together. They
21 cannot have a political agenda, and they need to be able to
22 leave whatever politics you have at the door.

23 One of the rules of the Voters First Act is that
24 politics cannot be used as a criteria in redistricting.
25 When the group needs to consider a political implication of

1 any of its actions, we should be as objective as possible,
2 and we have to talk very civilly when politics comes up,
3 and I believe all political discussions, if they are needed
4 or happen to come up, we need to be very civil and
5 objective, also that, if discussions get too political, the
6 group should address it right away, but this is not the
7 time and place for that.

8 You know, we can talk politics after we're done,
9 and, additionally, we have to worry about politics on the
10 Commission, coming into it, and outside influences. So we
11 have to be -- you can't divorce yourself from politics,
12 because it's very real. I did read the Politico article
13 about how the 2010 Commission was influenced, and we have
14 to be aware of that, to avoid it. As a group, we should
15 get them to stay on task. I believe humor is always
16 something I use to keep people in tense situations very
17 technical, lighten it up, brevity, start the task again.

18 We have more in common than we do apart, and we
19 have one shared goal. We're all working on this together.
20 You know, you can deal with politics later. Let's, you
21 know, come -- I want the group to come to a consensus. If
22 someone has a concern, it should never be belittled. It
23 needs to be explored. We need to find out what that
24 concern is, and I believe the Commission should actually
25 behave as the Applicant Panel has done. You are all

1 different politics, from political parties, and you're
2 working together seamlessly. That's what the Commission
3 needs to do.

4 To make sure that the group is not seen as
5 polarized or hyperpartisan, the first thing I would do is
6 try to get to know each other. It's harder to put someone
7 in a buttonhole and say, "They're a Republican, they're a
8 Democrat, they think this" if you know the person, as,
9 again, we have more in common than we do separate, and I
10 think, you know, getting together, finding out what we
11 share is one of the first steps.

12 We should also go over the reports of the 2010
13 Commission, particularly the ideas they have about being
14 manipulated, and address what we think about that. The
15 other idea that I believe would really help avoid
16 partisanship is to have the technical and the legal
17 expertise in all three political divisions.

18 If the people in the group that are sort of leading
19 the legal interpretations and mapping the proposals are
20 from different political groups, when those technical
21 experts, you know, the ones that have stronger skills in
22 those areas -- when they agree, the other Commissioners
23 won't necessarily feel that they're being -- "That's coming
24 from the political point of view."

25 Also, all tasks that are seeking and contacting the

1 communities of interest and underrepresented groups should
2 be represented by all three political divisions, to both
3 maximize the camaraderie and participation. Throughout
4 this whole process, I will try to work to keep the group
5 together, on task, and with a positive attitude.

6 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Question three.

7 MS. PELLMAN: Quick time check. We have 15
8 minutes, 25 seconds.

9 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

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

13 MS. ANDERSEN: I'd say two problems. One we sort
14 of addressed, the issue of whether it's, you know,
15 political, coming internally in the group or from external
16 pressure. I believe the greatest problem, and a real fear
17 I have, is that the data that we get from the census will
18 be not even close to correct.

19 We already know that California typically
20 undercounts, and we're in danger of possibly losing a
21 representative. This is the first time this census is also
22 going on line, and with that, just as trying to connect in
23 today, people who are very good at -- you know, are very
24 comfortable with on-line work -- there are a lot of people
25 who aren't, particularly all the people who are older.

1 They're usually the ones who fill out the census all the
2 time. Now they're going to have trouble, and they think
3 they might do it right, and they won't.

4 As an engineer, one of the first things I do on a
5 job is I collect information that I need, and I check and
6 verify anything that's given to me, "How valid is this?"
7 So, when I first approached this group, I thought, "Well,
8 okay. What's the census data made of? How does it get
9 there?"

10 And I got involved in my county, and I live in
11 Alameda County, and so I first got involved with looking
12 into it, and it turns out that all the county supervisors
13 are all over this matter. They already know what areas in
14 their community that are hard to reach. They already are
15 aware of the ones we sort of think of right away, the
16 homeless people.

17 I live in Berkeley, and so college students are
18 notoriously hard to count. They all think "I either come
19 here from out of state, so I don't do that. I will do that
20 back home," but the emergency services that you need are
21 here, and so that's a particular group, and I already
22 mentioned the older people who are hard to count.

23 Turns out that the county had put together groups
24 to specifically deal with this, and they went out into the
25 communities and had town meetings to say, "Hey. What are

1 the people that we might, or other groups that you think we
2 might miss?" and took all that into consideration, and put
3 plans together.

4 I was involved in part of that. I'm a census
5 ambassador, and I was assigned just to work at libraries
6 and things like this. There was also a thing called
7 Sabbath Sunday, where they would have all the churches have
8 "Bring your census in, and we'll have people there to help
9 you." And then the coronavirus hits, and all of that has
10 stopped.

11 Now it turns out -- as I said, I'm a census
12 ambassador -- we're down to phone banks, and you know how
13 that's not working. They put special plans together to
14 deal with the homeless when we're getting the homeless
15 tested for COVID-19, and in doing so, they're actually
16 trying to say, "And, by the way, can we count you?" That's
17 only going so well, and now, of course, in senior citizen's
18 homes, no one is allowed in.

19 So I'm very concerned about how this is going to
20 affect the numbers, and I understand that that could have a
21 very significant impact on the Commission. I know the date
22 has already been kicked back two weeks. Who knows how much
23 longer that would happen?

24 But, on a positive note in this, one thing I found
25 is a way to contact communities of interest. The census

1 outreach managers, which virtually all, every district has,
2 they know who is hard to reach. They know who these hidden
3 communities -- they found them, and we should contact these
4 people first, and use their connections to bring people in
5 that the city council people don't necessarily know about,
6 and they have connections with social workers, people who
7 are on the margin.

8 These, I think, would be a very, very valuable
9 source of information for communities of interest which
10 often get overlooked, particularly if you say, "Well, let's
11 look for the leaders of the community." These aren't
12 necessarily the leaders, and these are the people who know
13 the facts on the ground, and I think this would really,
14 really help the Commission, whether I'm on the Commission
15 or not.

16 Additionally, because these people are sort
17 of -- they're in the shadows -- we might have to think of
18 different types of meetings. The big public meeting, where
19 you come and present, tend to be the people who are
20 represented come and speak at these meetings. Now, that's
21 not to say -- we definitely want those people, but we also
22 want other people.

23 So we should think about other kinds of meetings to
24 help bring these people in, where they'll feel comfortable,
25 maybe specific invitations to particular groups, rather

1 than just say a general "Please come in," say, you know,
2 "We really -- and we've set aside time for you. Please
3 come and speak with us." That's one idea I had for solving
4 these problems.

5 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

6 Question four: If you are selected, you will be
7 one of 14 members of the Commission, which is charged with
8 working together to create maps of the new districts.

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

16 MS. ANDERSEN: I had to think about this, because I
17 was coming up with different ideas. I ran it by my
18 husband, and he said, "Well, basically, that's what you
19 do." And I said yes.

20 As an engineer, every project I do, I'm working
21 collaboratively. I've never been -- well, I've been a
22 designer a little bit, who sits in their office and just
23 designs.

24 My specialty is out in the field. I do mostly
25 fieldwork and failure investigations. So I'm always

1 working with owners, with contractors, with the people who
2 witnessed it, who may know more about what happened than
3 they realize, and so I'm always working collaboratively to
4 achieve a common goal.

5 You know, my role, typically, in that group is to
6 figure out what has happened, come up with a structural
7 design, get it presented, presented to the inspector, or,
8 on repair jobs, I'm usually the inspector myself. I have
9 to say yes to what we did, and document it out to the fact,
10 "Does comply with the rules and regulations." When
11 conflicts arise, which they always do -- it's just part of
12 the job, so we're always coming up with solutions,
13 proposing it.

14 So I've been trying to choose an example of one of
15 these, and it's actually the crane accident in San
16 Francisco in 1989. It was a month after the Loma Prieta
17 earthquake. I actually have a picture of it behind me. I
18 don't know if you can see that. This was a -- basically,
19 there was a huge crane.

20 They were building a 20-story building, and they
21 tried to lift -- it was lifting a boom crane, and they
22 tried to lift it, and it came loose, swung around, and
23 launched itself, dropping the block, came flying across the
24 street, and hit this building, and actually what's behind
25 me is a 24-inch-deep wide flange twisted like a piece of

1 spaghetti.

2 The block same sailing off the hook, came sailing
3 off, landed in the elevator shaft, ripped the cables off.
4 They were like a cat o' nine tails, left a print across the
5 front of this building, and then the boom proceeded to
6 crash into this, bounced up, and crashed down the side of
7 the building, taking it out as it went.

8 Thank God there were only five people killed, the
9 crane operator, four of the crane people, and it
10 landed -- did crush a school bus below, which, thankfully,
11 only had the driver in it, and she was killed, but her 24,
12 22 people -- but it was obviously a tragedy, and it
13 happened right a month after the earthquake, so everyone
14 thought, "My God. Here we go again."

15 You know, the accident was very dramatic, and
16 everyone was on heightened awareness, and it was a scary
17 situation. I was called in. I had actually looked at this
18 building right after the earthquake to evaluate it, and it
19 did really well, the steel frame, had a reinforced concrete
20 core, had no damage.

21 So the owner -- actually, the building
22 manager -- called me up and said, "Hey. Please come and
23 help us." So I zipped over there, and actually was working
24 clearing off desks, because the firefighters were coming
25 through and knocking all the glass out of the remaining

1 open areas of the building so it wouldn't fall on people
2 below them.

3 So I was right there, and I was able to talk to
4 witnesses. Obviously, it was pretty obvious what happened,
5 and the repair is pretty straightforward. You replace in
6 kind. It was a very old building. It was all riveted, so
7 you had to come up with different connections. It's more
8 standard. The conflict that happened, though, which we ran
9 into --

10 MS. PELLMAN: You have four minutes remaining.

11 MS. ANDERSEN: -- sorry -- is trying to put it
12 together on the panels themselves. The exterior panels,
13 what was there, you couldn't do any more. It doesn't meet
14 code today. So we had to come up with something, and there
15 had been some conflicts on it, and on this, the contractor
16 said, "Well, what am I going to do?"

17 I just said, "Okay. Look. This is what I need.
18 We've got to make it safe. This is what we have. What do
19 you think?" And the two of us worked together in the
20 field, drawing up sketches, coming up with plans, and I
21 said, "Great. Let's try that." It kind of had to be
22 adjusted once they put it in place, but it worked.

23 What I was going to bring to the Commission about
24 that, the best jobs happen when you're open and honest. As
25 a group, you need to prioritize the requirements that you

1 need, so you consider all information in a sequential
2 order, addressing most important things first.

3 You're going to have a lot of authority. As an
4 engineer, I have that. You have to be very careful with
5 that authority. What you do affects others, and that's a
6 responsibility that is true of the Commission, and we have
7 to be very careful about what we're doing and how it's
8 going to affect Californians.

9 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

10 MS. ANDERSEN: I'm sorry. I've gone too long,
11 here.

12 MR. DAWSON: Madame Secretary, how much time do we
13 have left?

14 MS. PELLMAN: Two minutes, 30 seconds remaining.

15 MR. DAWSON: All right. Thank you.

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

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

24 What experiences have you had that will help you be
25 effective at understanding and appreciating people and

1 communities of different backgrounds and who have a variety
2 of perspectives?

3 MS. ANDERSEN: I'm going to go through this
4 quickly. As to skills, I'm a people person. I really
5 enjoy meeting and talking to people that are different than
6 me. I often seek them out, because I'm interested. I'm
7 actually genuinely interested in other people.

8 In a management review, I was told that I'm very
9 approachable, and my employees would be very comfortable
10 bringing their problems to me. I took that as a huge
11 compliment. I'm respectful, and I try to learn about other
12 people's backgrounds and cultures and approach them
13 accordingly.

14 As far as my experiences, I mentioned in my
15 demographic and geographic essay, my father was in the Air
16 Force, and I traveled all over. I've actually, on my own,
17 traveled around the world. I've traveled extensively
18 through the United States, all of California, by car,
19 train, and air. I've met a lot of different people of
20 different cultural backgrounds.

21 One thing that I think would give me a different
22 perspective is, I've often been the outsider. I was an
23 American starting school in England, in almost a British
24 convent.

25 MS. PELLMAN: Forty-five seconds remaining.

1 MS. ANDERSEN: I was the British kid who went to
2 school in Oklahoma. I was the Oklahoman up at college. My
3 college had only a few -- and only allowed women in shortly
4 after I got there, and I was a woman in engineering. I can
5 relate to people who feel apart.

6 I've used this experience to talk to people who are
7 reticent and quiet, and I'm often told ideas that people
8 don't feel comfortable bringing forward. I am usually the
9 messenger if -- I try to encourage them, but then I'm often
10 the messenger who brings these quiet ideas to the
11 forefront. I've actually --

12 MS. PELLMAN: That is 30 minutes.

13 MS. ANDERSEN: -- been the representative.

14 MR. DAWSON: All right.

15 MS. ANDERSEN: So I feel that that's one thing I
16 would --

17 MR. DAWSON: I'm sorry. I'm going to have to take
18 this time now to go to Panel questions. Each Panel Member
19 will have 20 minutes to ask his or questions.

20 We'll start with the Chair, Mr. Belnap.

21 CHAIR BELNAP: Ms. Andersen, where you were
22 answering question five, what I'd like to do is use some of
23 my time to have you finish that answer, because that was
24 where I wanted to go from the beginning of my questions,
25 anyway. So please finish the rest of question five, if you

1 have more to say.

2 MS. ANDERSEN: Okay. Well, I was going to go into,
3 you know, I've sort of been an outsider. You know, the
4 woman in engineering, that's been me. You know, I'm
5 usually the only woman in the room. That's very often.

6 I've also -- I've been the professional bringing
7 information to other -- working with other professionals,
8 which is one experience. I've also been the professional
9 who's out -- as I call them, "failures." I'm working with
10 the public, "What did you see?" you know, "How did you see
11 this?" I've had to be the person talking to people
12 who -- getting information out of them they don't even know
13 they have.

14 But then I've also -- I end up stepping back and
15 basically staying at home, and I've been then the person
16 who brings my professional experience to people who have no
17 idea about the built environment, and taught them how to
18 manage through that.

19 I did that, and one of the essays is about the play
20 yards at preschools, which I got into helping at
21 preschools, and then I've been the person who "You are not
22 supposed to tell us what to do. You are supposed to sit
23 there and listen to what we say," and that perspective is
24 very different, and that's one that I think I would make
25 the Commission aware of. All too often, I have relatives

1 in the Gold Country in Sacramento, and they often go, "Yes.
2 You guys from, you know, the big cities always want to come
3 and tell us what to do," and that's something I'd be very
4 sensitive of, and that's a perspective that I think I would
5 bring to the group.

6 I've met many people in different environments,
7 and, as building codes are different for different parts of
8 the country, we need to expect that what people in
9 different parts of the country -- that's different parts of
10 the state, I actually mean -- what they're going to want,
11 and what they're looking for in representatives.

12 How they want to be approached is going to be
13 different, and we need to be very considerate of that, and
14 don't be in a process of "Guess what we're doing for you."
15 It's "How can we help you? What would you like?" is the
16 perspective that I would like to bring on this. I think I
17 might just end it there, if you're to ask some questions.

18 CHAIR BELNAP: Yes, I'll ask some questions. So
19 you mentioned in your application and also just now that
20 your father was in the Air Force and you moved around quite
21 a bit. In the early '80s, you received your bachelor's
22 from Notre Dame, and also then went on to get a master's
23 from UC Berkeley in structural engineering, and that's
24 where it looks like your travels ended. I mean, it seems
25 like you stayed in Berkeley. So were you native to

1 California, and then moved here to get your master's, and
2 then stayed? Can you confirm that for me?

3 MS. ANDERSEN: No. I was actually born outside of
4 D.C., and we lived there and then went to England, and I
5 started school in England, and we traveled a bit in Europe,
6 and then we ended up going to Oklahoma, and lived there for
7 quite a while, but we would always drive -- you know, we
8 would take road trips, and we'd drive across the country a
9 lot. I ended up going to, you know, high school in
10 Oklahoma, and then went up to Notre Dame.

11 So I didn't come out -- I visited California. As I
12 said, I have -- my grandmother -- I have an aunt who lived
13 in Lincoln, who married someone, moved out here, and moved
14 out, and then, one by one, my grandmother and then her
15 relatives moved to Sacramento. So I have cousins in that
16 area, in the Gold Country.

17 So I came out to California in '75 for a trip, and
18 then I didn't come out again until I came out for the
19 master's, but I ended up, despite -- because I would
20 travel, and we went places all the time. I've lived within
21 five miles of that virtually ever since.

22 Now, I've traveled around the world. Between
23 that -- between -- I took my structural engineering exam,
24 and my husband and I got married like a year before that,
25 and I said, "Okay. We're not having children until we

1 travel." And we took off, left jobs, and took all our
2 money, and traveled around the world for a year, and then
3 came back, and I've been here ever since.

4 We travel to the East Coast. We travel up and
5 down. We've taken road trips, train trips through our
6 state, you know, and I've actually -- I did -- I was
7 working in engineering. I actually had to give -- I was
8 doing a huge job in L.A., so I had to move down there for a
9 couple of months, mostly travel, in terms of -- I hope that
10 explains.

11 CHAIR BELNAP: So how did these experiences while
12 you were traveling -- and I'm not just talking about your
13 adult life. How did these experiences increase your
14 understanding of and appreciation of diversity?

15 MS. ANDERSEN: Well, what I discovered is people
16 are -- there's -- well, okay. One difference
17 between -- well, we have more in common than we do apart.
18 In every different place, family is close, is more
19 important than most people realize.

20 There are -- how we treat each other -- it's kind
21 of like, the East Coast is more -- it's more conservative.
22 Like, when I -- it's more conservative. They're a
23 little -- you know, when you give them the chance to say
24 something, they're going to say something, where, as you
25 move, they're more sort of rigid in what you wear and how

1 you answer things. As you travel a little further west, it
2 gets a little more lenient. As you go west further and
3 further and further, it becomes more tolerant, more
4 appreciative of diversity, I found.

5 There are areas -- these are gross generalizations,
6 obviously, but, you know, I mentioned that I felt an
7 outsider in areas. From the day I drove into Berkeley, I
8 felt, "Wow. This is home," even though, you know, I'm a
9 Republican, and they say, you know, "In Berkeley? How did
10 that fit?" It's a very tolerant group. You know, we have
11 people of all types, and, you know, they don't look at, you
12 know, who -- you know, on the East Coast, it's "Well, where
13 did you come from?" In California, it's "Where are you
14 going?" And it's a very different tone.

15 My travels have -- you know, I've been able to sort
16 of compare and contrast. You know, as an engineer, I've
17 sort of -- I've often looked at things, and I look for
18 signals and signs, and I feel that's helped me to relate to
19 other people, and wait for the -- I also wait for them to
20 say things. You know, do they want to be approached? You
21 know, I never assume that I know more than they do. It's
22 taught me humility, almost, the traveling.

23 CHAIR BELNAP: Okay. Thank you. So now I want to
24 talk about -- focus on impartiality. In your impartiality
25 essay, you described the importance of having outside

1 review of your engineering designs. Should the Commission
2 seek outside input on its proposed districts? And, if so,
3 by whom should this -- who should this input come from?

4 MS. ANDERSEN: Let me just -- and I do want to
5 mention, on my impartiality essay, I felt wholly chagrined
6 when you were saying that "Oh, boy. It doesn't come across
7 as she's being very impartial. It's more like she's
8 talking to people into what she wants."

9 I read through my essay, and I went, "It read like
10 that," and I just wanted do just a quick (sic) on -- what I
11 was trying to say on that one is -- I brought my element in
12 because it was flexible, flexible thinking -- the other
13 engineer who came in, I went from a -- and this will help
14 in answering the question.

15 I went from a perspective of, you know, "Look.
16 I've got a good design, you know. Why are you critiquing
17 it?," to -- the other engineer that came in pointed out I
18 was looking at forces, and I had done a change in the rest
19 of the building just to replace something, but it was very
20 strong, and I'm talking about seismic upgrade, so if you
21 can imagine like an oak tree versus grass. An oak tree is
22 very stiff, and it doesn't move much, but grass bends.

23 Well, by putting in a very stiff element, I had
24 created more force that basically everything else, that
25 flexible stuff, had to take more force, and he pointed out,

1 "You know, if we don't put that in, if we put in something
2 more flexible, everything can flex," and it was a
3 completely different mind set. It was a much better
4 design, and that's what we went forward with, and I went
5 from, you know, "Who are you, critiquing my stuff?" to
6 "Whoa. I am never going to assume that I have done the
7 best design. I am always going to take what I've done and
8 have it evaluated." And with that in mind, we do have to
9 look at the designs that we draw, and we need to overlay
10 it.

11 Now, who we compare this with, we have to be very
12 careful, because, in -- I was able to pick, in my -- you
13 know, I was able to pick engineers. Like, I wanted to pick
14 the guy who was going to tear -- this one particular
15 example I'm thinking of, I had to do a very tricky design,
16 and I went to the guy who was tough, and I thought, "I want
17 him to tear this design apart. If there's an error, I have
18 to find it," because, again, what I do, you can't make
19 mistakes. People could die. It's very important.

20 Now, while I bring that seriousness, it's not quite
21 as serious to this, but it really does affect everybody.
22 So we should have our lines reviewed. We have to be very
23 careful about by whom, because, as again being from the
24 outside, the political influences, there would be a lot of
25 people that would say, "We'd be happy to help you review

1 that," and might change it so it benefits one political
2 party versus another political party. So I would look to,
3 probably, the census people themselves, the experts, to
4 critique this design, but yes, I do think it should be
5 reviewed.

6 CHAIR BELNAP: All right. Thank you.

7 Madame Secretary, can I get a time check?

8 MS. PELLMAN: Yes. Seven minutes, 18 seconds
9 remaining.

10 CHAIR BELNAP: All right. Thank you.

11 So I want to go to a part of your application, and
12 you weren't necessarily talking here about the Commission,
13 but I want -- my question is going to be how to apply it to
14 the Commission, and it's from your analytical essay. You
15 say:

16 "My design engineering experience
17 requires getting building criteria from
18 building owners or architects, gathering
19 and comprehending technical information,
20 and synthesizing that material into a
21 work product that ensures public safety,
22 meets the criteria, can be constructed,
23 and can be defended in court. This
24 experience allows me to distinguish
25 genuine concerns from disingenuous

1 assertions."

2 I think, from your testimony today, you're already
3 aware of the concerns from the previous Commission. So
4 what I want to know is, as a Commissioner, how would you
5 distinguish genuine concerns from disingenuous assertions?

6 MS. ANDERSEN: Well, part of that is, I
7 thought -- I was thinking about, you know, when people
8 present, and we should actually -- because it's an open
9 situation, and it should be an open situation, but we
10 should say, you know, "Who are the people presenting?" you
11 know, "Who are you? What do you represent, and,
12 additionally, do you have other connections, political
13 connections, you know, that you have not disclosed?" And
14 if people -- and then we need to investigate where these
15 comments are coming from.

16 Now, I don't mean, you know, attack them and, you
17 know, "I don't believe you," and that kind of stuff. I
18 have been to city meetings where, basically, the panel, the
19 commission, treats anyone who walks up in front of them
20 like dirt, quite frankly, and I was horrified, and we have
21 to be respectful, but we need to find out, who are the
22 people presenting in front of us?

23 Now, given our criteria of the rules that we need
24 to follow, and the Voters' Rights Act, I think we should
25 have a very good idea of, you know, what -- I believe I

1 mentioned, we need to prioritize what the criteria are, in
2 order as much as possible, so we know what we have
3 flexibility with, and when people bring comments forward,
4 we need to, you know, essentially fact-check it, and, we
5 basically, there will be pertinent things.

6 People who bring maps in, I would suggest that
7 chances are they've had a lot of help, and say, you know,
8 "Who helped you with this?," because, you know, the average
9 person -- like I say, the quiet person of communities of
10 interest that are hard to represent, I would think they
11 probably would not be bringing a map in. They would say,
12 "This affects me."

13 One thing I think is, if we have a tentative map
14 that we bring to the group, so we can actually talk about
15 it in a meeting, that might help people address that, if
16 they're really trying to say, "Well, you see, my community
17 is here, here, and here," versus "Well, I want the line
18 drawn over here."

19 Just the way they handle themselves would be a very
20 telling tale, and this is what I talked about a little bit,
21 maybe slight different meeting styles, to actually have it
22 maybe almost like a working drawing, kind of "Now, where do
23 you feel that you" -- you know, "Look. I live here." Then
24 you know that person is really -- you know, what he's
25 saying is valid, and he's actually trying to work through a

1 situation.

2 I believe that those techniques might help. I
3 would be very open to other Commissioners' ideas on this,
4 too, because I certainly don't have all the answers, and I
5 think the Commission, as a group, should go through all the
6 different ideas that everyone brings to the group.

7 CHAIR BELNAP: So I want to tease out a little more
8 what you mean by a "working meeting." Are you thinking of
9 a meeting where it's not just a public hearing, but,
10 actually, there are maps --

11 MS. ANDERSEN: Yes.

12 CHAIR BELNAP: -- available to people in the
13 audience, maps available on the screen? That's what you're
14 talking about?

15 MS. ANDERSEN: Correct, even like a -- you know,
16 when you have -- you know, "And here we've got a white
17 board, and you'll see now" -- "So where" -- "Can you tell
18 me" -- "Can you come up here, sir, and show where you
19 actually live?," because, one, when you get people
20 involved, immediately they become -- what their real
21 message is comes through.

22 You know, I do a lot of fieldwork, and often you
23 find, "Yes, you know, it turns out" -- basically, all the
24 pretenses fall away when you actually start doing some, you
25 know, working on it, "Now, we're thinking this," and,

1 visually, there are sort of different types of learners,
2 people who -- they are visual. They listen. They are, you
3 know, learning.

4 I find, if you try to approach people in different
5 manners, not just verbally, but actually visually, you find
6 the real message comes through. They drop away pretenses,
7 and you get to the truth of the matter. So I think that
8 might actually really help, and I understand we're actually
9 supposed to be -- the Commission is supposed to be
10 presenting maps to the public as well. So this would kind
11 of -- may do two stones at once -- two birds at once.

12 CHAIR BELNAP: All right. Thank you.

13 Madame Secretary, time check?

14 MS. PELLMAN: One minute, five seconds.

15 CHAIR BELNAP: Okay. I'll end my questions now,
16 and turn the time over to Mr. Coe.

17 VICE CHAIR COE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

18 Ms. Andersen, good morning to you. Thank you for
19 speaking with us today, and thank you for being flexible to
20 reschedule your interview in light of the current
21 situation.

22 MS. ANDERSEN: Yes. Thank you for allowing this to
23 happen and being so flexible.

24 VICE CHAIR COE: I want to talk about something
25 that you mentioned in your essays, and something you

1 mentioned earlier during the interview. You talked about,
2 in your field of structural engineering, how you, as a
3 woman, are essentially a minority in that field. In fact,
4 you give an example in your essays that you've had
5 construction workers ask you engineering questions that
6 they told you they would never have asked a man. I'm
7 wondering what you've taken from this experience that you
8 think will help make you a more effective Commissioner.

9 MS. ANDERSEN: I have had that happen, you know,
10 quite a bit. I've found that -- and engineering has
11 changed a bit. When I first was in, you know, there would
12 be handful of women. At engineering meetings, the lines to
13 the men's room would be out the door, around the corner,
14 and we'd walk in. We'd go, "Ha, ha, ha. Isn't this nice?"

15 What I've found, though, on job sites and in the
16 work environment, adding a different perspective really
17 helped. It actually broke through on construction sites.
18 It threw people off. It was "Whoa. I'm not used to my
19 standard 'I don't like what the engineer is going to say,'
20 and my usual posturing." It was enough to break the ice
21 and get to the task at hand.

22 I find, by adding diversity and adding different
23 perspectives, that really helps move a job along,
24 particularly because it gives more opportunity to look at
25 things in a different manner, and I bring that to the

1 group, just having lived it, and I expect -- like, that's
2 part of -- you know, I don't come in with preconceived
3 ideas, and I sort of don't allow other people to put
4 preconceived ideas on me. I'm like, "No, that's not going
5 to happen," in a very polite, respectful manner, but "This
6 is what we're doing, and this is the task, and we're going
7 to move on with the task."

8 I think, because I'm so used to being, you know,
9 "Who is she? What's going on here?" that I respect other
10 people who are also in the same situation. You know, I
11 would really like this Commission to look as diverse as our
12 state. It helps other people, you know, the public.

13 It helps them feel more comfortable in approaching
14 the group, which, as we're figures of authority, that's a
15 little hard, which is why I'm thinking we might try
16 different types of meetings, because people who are well
17 represented feel more comfortable approaching a Commission
18 in a public setting, where people who are not usually
19 represented, if they see someone that looks like them, it's
20 "I might talk to that person," and it helps change your
21 manner and how you approach things. So that's something I
22 think I would bring to the Commission.

23 VICE CHAIR COE: So thank you for that. You've
24 kind of touched on this next question a little bit already,
25 but, in your experiences and your travels, and the

1 encounters you've had with people of diverse backgrounds,
2 what is it that you've learned from them about their
3 concerns and their desires, their perspectives, that you
4 think would make you an effective representative for them
5 on this Commission?

6 MS. ANDERSEN: Well, okay. You know, thinking of,
7 say, like, you know, my cousins in the Gold Country, you
8 know, people who are, you know, more rural are more
9 independent. They have to -- you know, they're a little
10 more reticent at first, and then they open up more
11 than -- actually, I think city people are a bit
12 more -- you're kind of casual, quickly, on the surface, but
13 you never get beyond that.

14 I find rural people are more "Wait a sec. Who are
15 you? What are you doing?" And then, when they do open up,
16 they really open up, and, you know, they have a very
17 different community, and their concerns are -- how would
18 you say this? Their concerns are -- they distrust the
19 government, initially.

20 People who are -- they're used to being, "Oh,
21 great," told things, quite frankly, and they don't really
22 like it, and that's true whether it's in parts of, you
23 know, our northern states, through the agricultural area,
24 through the whole delta system. Their local concerns are
25 very -- you know, their priority.

1 You know, they aren't worried about, you know,
2 the -- they're worried about who the neighbors are.
3 They're not worried about "And what's going to happen to my
4 neighbors?" as opposed to "What are we trying to change?"
5 and things like that. It's more of an immediate concern,
6 and what things are actually affecting their lives.
7 They're not sort of looking for direction, I should say.

8 In representing different people of different
9 backgrounds, I think we can't -- you can't assume, "I know
10 what they want." You have to politely, respectfully, find
11 out from them what they want, and my travels have shown
12 that we can't pre-guess that. You know, you have an idea,
13 but you need to have the different perspectives to approach
14 them on their basis, and don't come in with a preconceived
15 idea. I don't know if that helped.

16 VICE CHAIR COE: Yes, and you actually started to
17 touch on the next idea I want to talk about, which is
18 communities of interest, the task in front of the
19 Commission, a rather challenging one, of trying to identify
20 communities of interest all across the state, and some of
21 those communities being more accessible, easier to
22 identify -- they're more likely to engage and bring forward
23 their perspectives -- and some of them are harder to
24 identify, for one reason or another.

25 So, as a Commission and as a Commissioner, what do

1 you think the Commission could do to identify communities
2 of interest across the state as thoroughly as possible, and
3 avoid kind of inadvertently missing some of these
4 communities of interest that are harder to identify?

5 MS. ANDERSEN: Well, as I sort of said on the one
6 issue, I would contact the census outreach managers in each
7 county, because they tend to know the districts. Like, in
8 Oakland, it turns out there's a group that I'd never heard
9 of, ever, and the name, it sounds like the Hong, you know,
10 the Hong Chinese, but it's more like -- it's like "Hmong"
11 or something.

12 I didn't quite -- and then the fellow left the
13 meeting, and I didn't get to talk to him after that, but
14 they're from Central America, and they bristle, I mean,
15 just bristle at the idea of -- on the census form, there's,
16 you know, "Are you Latino?" And they're like, "We're not
17 Latino. We're indigenous, and don't ever call us that,
18 because they oppressed us."

19 It is a very small group, but this outreach manager
20 has found that group, and she had made contacts with people
21 who -- virtually everyone in the room kind of went, "Wow.
22 I had never heard of that." And in a diversity as Oakland
23 (sic), that's unusual, because, you know, you have
24 virtually every other group represented.

25 So I would go to -- in each county, I'd look for

1 those outreach managers first, because they're trying to
2 count everyone in their county who is hard to count. Now,
3 I know we would also use -- you talk to -- I've heard
4 people say, "Try and talk to, like, the school districts,
5 you know, but not necessarily the" -- basically, we need to
6 go to -- not just say, "I'll go to the city mayor," or that
7 sort of stuff. They're politically connected already, and
8 while they might know, I think we need to look for other
9 sources, at people who -- like, talk to the social workers,
10 and, you know, "Where are cases coming from that might
11 not" -- and then find out who those contacts are.

12 I know this is not -- I know there are people on
13 the Commission, who applied for the Commission, who have
14 much stronger skills in this area, and I would look
15 to -- I'd throw different ideas out. I would be happy
16 to -- I'd love to be one of the foot soldiers trying to do
17 some of this, but I would really look for other people's
18 ideas on this as well. So those are a couple of things
19 I've thought.

20 VICE CHAIR COE: Thank you. So, even if you're
21 successful in finding public groups, some groups are less
22 comfortable engaging, coming forward, sharing their
23 perspectives, and that can be for a number of different
24 reasons that they're uncomfortable in engaging the
25 government or government bodies like this, but, since

1 getting as many perspectives as possible is as important
2 for the Commission to be able to do their job in the best
3 way, how do you think the Commission could make these types
4 of communities, these groups, feel comfortable to come
5 forward, share their perspective, in order to better inform
6 the Commission?

7 MS. ANDERSEN: Well, you know, I know that we have
8 to follow, you know, the Bagley-Keene Act in what we do,
9 but I would think trying to actually approach the people in
10 this group, like in as small a setting as we can, you know,
11 legally, that we can, to ask them, you know, "How can we
12 help you? Is there another type of way you would like to
13 speak with us, to give us information?" you know, whatever
14 that might be, and see, you know, how they feel. You know,
15 can we -- you know, "What are your concerns?"

16 We need to -- I think the Commission can't just go,
17 "Okay. Here are meetings. Come and talk to us." We have
18 to go out and find these groups, and ask, you know, "How
19 can we get you to talk to us? What can we do? We're
20 trying to draw maps, and we'd really like to do this for
21 you," which is one thing I believe we need to come across
22 as. We're not trying to take information from them. "We
23 want to make sure that you are considered. Your input is
24 very valuable and very needed."

25 I think that different perspective, different

1 angle, is what we really need to do in possibly smaller
2 groups, so it's not as daunting, doesn't seem like "I don't
3 want to come and talk to" -- you know, and particularly
4 some areas where they feel like they might get in trouble
5 for doing things like that, and so we have to be very
6 culturally aware whether even -- sometimes it's like,
7 "Okay. We can't send the women to that particular group,
8 because the men do the talking." You know, we have to be
9 sensitive to what the cultural aspects of particular groups
10 are as we approach them.

11 VICE CHAIR COE: Thank you. If you were to be
12 appointed to the Commission, what part of that role of
13 Commissioner do you think you would enjoy the most, and
14 what part of the role of Commissioner do you think might
15 cause you to struggle a little bit?

16 MS. ANDERSEN: Well, I like talking to people. I
17 would really enjoy, you know, meeting the people in the
18 state. You know, I'd love to be on some of the small
19 groups that we go out and talk to people, because I feel,
20 that way, you really see, you know, who is in the state,
21 and it would give you a much better idea of how to do the
22 job well.

23 Then, of course, I would love drawing maps. I
24 mean, I think, you know, when I first listened to the
25 training program, I actually looked at -- it was talking

1 about, you know, the packing, the cracking, and how, you
2 know, "But sometimes communities of interest" -- and he,
3 you know, had that one drawing when you say, "Okay. But
4 communities here and communities here," and my first
5 thought was "Well, you draw it around like that and make a
6 C shape." That made perfect sense to me.

7 You know, I noticed that, you know, the
8 compactness, that's a criteria that I would want to explain
9 thoroughly to everybody, because it doesn't mean it's just
10 a perfect box. That's a rule we'd work with, you know,
11 communities of interest. So drawing the maps and working
12 with those experts I would love, as well as, you know,
13 working with all the people involved. I'd really enjoy
14 that.

15 The part that I think I'm not so good at is then we
16 have to end up writing the report. As an engineer,
17 virtually every word I write down, I have to write it from
18 the perspective not of -- it can be understood, but I have
19 to write it from the perspective of "There's no way it can
20 be misunderstood," because, on drawings, what you write is
21 reviewed and analyzed, and it has to be 100 percent. So
22 I'm slow at writing.

23 I am very good at editing and getting the concepts
24 down, but, at the administrative part of stuff, I actually
25 have hired -- well, you know, hiring staff and things like

1 that -- I would look for other people to do that part, to
2 step up. I mean, I've done all of it, but that's not my
3 forte.

4 VICE CHAIR COE: Okay. Thank you.

5 Mr. Chair, no further questions at this time.

6 Thank you.

7 CHAIR BELNAP: Okay. We would turn the time over
8 to Ms. Dickison, then.

9 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you.

10 Good morning, Ms. Andersen.

11 MS. ANDERSEN: Good morning.

12 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: So I want to go to some
13 writings on your activities. So you mentioned that you
14 were an early contributor to anti-bullying and inclusion
15 curriculum. What was your role in that?

16 MS. ANDERSEN: Well, okay. You know, we've all
17 been talking about biases and things, and, you know, I
18 didn't think I had many until my children went to a
19 preschool, and they actually teach anti-bias.

20 I learned so much from that preschool, but one
21 thing I've never been able to tolerate are bullies. The
22 way I was raised is, my mother, she was from Australia, and
23 she was very blunt. She said, you know, "It's not a
24 question of don't you bully someone. It's don't you let
25 anybody else bully anybody." So it was a different

1 perspective, and I am quick to react when other people are
2 being pushed around. That's just not okay.

3 It turned out, in school, my oldest son, something
4 happened when he was in first grade, and there were some
5 bullying situations that happened, and this was a school
6 where, you know, they, you know, practice anti-bias, things
7 like this, and it was staggering. I won't get into the
8 details of what happened, but little kids, and the parents
9 were starting to talk, and I immediately went in to the
10 lower school head and said, "Do you know what's going on
11 here? You know, what are you going to do about it?" And
12 I've often been the person who would pop in and say, "You
13 know, this is what's going on."

14 She said, "You know, it has been a very long time
15 since we've had" -- you know, first call, she said, "Right.
16 I'm going to talk to parents. I'm going to do this about
17 the situation," and said, "But it's been a very long time
18 since we've actually had anti-bullying training in the
19 faculty, and I think it's time to revise all of that."

20 So the school, as a whole, started up the plan, you
21 know, and said -- and so I sort of stayed with it in terms
22 of, you know, following through and helping teachers, you
23 know, make sure that -- you know, I was part of, like, the
24 parent committee to make sure that every teacher got
25 trained, that sort of stuff, but it was very light.

1 It was like, it was a very, you know, "Of course
2 you're getting trained, and of course you're doing it this
3 way now," because the school was pretty heavy-handed once
4 they realized what was going on, but that sort of
5 dovetailed into a few things at the school.

6 You know, bullying and prejudice things can creep
7 in if you don't stay up with the training and keep it
8 going. There is a -- well, I could go into another example
9 of that, if you want, but I've sort of answered the
10 questions. Sorry.

11 Ms. Dickison, your microphone is off.

12 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Sorry about that. It looks
13 like you volunteered for a scholarship and mentoring
14 program for low-income high school students?

15 MS. ANDERSEN: Yes. This is something that, you
16 know -- okay. This is at Berkeley High. There are a lot
17 of students who come to the school and, you know, no one in
18 the family has gone to college, and this is a program
19 that -- it not only gives money -- you have to -- the
20 students have to fill out applications. They have to
21 apply, and the school gives -- this group gives money to
22 the students, but not just, you know, "Okay. You know,
23 here's a scholarship to go to college."

24 They actually -- you are assigned a mentor that
25 helps you go through, you know, how do you apply? What

1 happens when you're in school? You know, who can you talk
2 to? Because children come from backgrounds who, you know,
3 you're the only one in college in your whole family.

4 You know, there are a lot of things in college that
5 you can't relate to unless you've been to college, and
6 they've also moved away. So this is a mentoring program
7 that follows the children all the way through the four
8 years of undergrad, and it's an amazing program. We've
9 only gotten into that recently, so I haven't personally had
10 a -- haven't been assigned a student. So I don't have
11 personal experience with that.

12 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: All right. In your
13 diversity essay -- and you kind of talked about it a little
14 bit today, about that it's necessary to create
15 opportunities to make people feel comfortable to lend their
16 own voice. What steps do you think the Commission could
17 take to incorporate that type of thing into their work?

18 MS. ANDERSEN: In a public hearing, that's very
19 difficult, when you say, "Well, you're supposed to come and
20 talk to us," and that's why I was thinking of other styles
21 of meetings, or, actually, I can give a quick example of
22 that.

23 At the preschool that my children went to, when I
24 got involved in working on the playground, they have this
25 huge play yard, and the idea was that -- I told them,

1 "Look. You should put a master plan together. Get every
2 idea that you want, so then -- you can't afford to do it
3 all now, but you'll have the spots and places where you can
4 build that, or you can do that later," and, actually, you
5 know, many years later, I must admit it's worked
6 beautifully. It's amazing.

7 But during that process, trying to get the
8 teachers -- who are really, you know, excellent at what
9 they do, but trying to get them to come forward with their
10 ideas was difficult, because, as I realized, there's the
11 administration, and there are the teachers, and they did
12 not always feeling comfortable talking to them, but what I
13 noticed is -- because, on this preschool, again, it's
14 worked with anti-bias. It's very diverse.

15 The administrators, they would sort of
16 say -- they'd say, like, "You know, well, you know, I'm
17 wondering about this," and they'd kind of say, you know,
18 "Maria, I understand that you had this idea about this,"
19 and they would pause, and Maria, who was this wonderful,
20 kind woman, Hispanic, who actually later said, "You know, I
21 never felt it was my place to speak up," she felt
22 comfortable speaking up, because you created that pause,
23 and invited them.

24 You know, I think that's something that we could
25 probably bring to the Commission by addressing it, and

1 actually requesting people to come and talk, not just
2 waiting, not just sitting back. So, again, I'm saying this
3 Commission needs to go out and find this information.

4 We need to go and search for people who are
5 underrepresented, because -- and I know that it's a little
6 tough, because I understand there's lots of information
7 that comes to us, but I think it's kind of -- it might be
8 easier to sort through lots of information coming at us if
9 we just do a quick back-check on some of that,
10 going -- and, also, I'm also good at categorizing, "Okay.
11 Right. We've gotten this. It's all the same, dealing with
12 the same issues, same spot. This is different."

13 I think trying to approach people, and be creative
14 in how we get them to come to the meeting, is what we need
15 to do. It's where I'd try to -- that's where I would try
16 if I was on the Commission, try to get the Commission to
17 do.

18 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you. Just looking at
19 my notes. Many of my questions get asked when I'm the
20 last.

21 You mentioned earlier being a census ambassador,
22 and some of the concerns that you had pertaining to the
23 census, in maybe how accurate it will be, and the timing of
24 it, and I'll just ask you a question to address timing.
25 So, given the role the Commission has to play, and the time

1 that it needs to get its job done, and the possible delay
2 in the census, what skillset can you bring forward that
3 would help the Commission in planning its work and staying
4 on schedule?

5 MS. ANDERSEN: Well, you know, as an engineer, you
6 know, everything has to be done yesterday, you know, "Why
7 don't we have that design done?" So I'm very used to
8 working under pressure, and when we know we have a deadline
9 here, and we need to do this, I'm good at, you know,
10 creating a timeline of, you know, "We have to" -- you know,
11 and milestones along the way.

12 One thing, you know, I was kind of considering,
13 even, on the Commission, just in terms of often working
14 with -- work with the hardest parts first, because they
15 take longer, and a lot of the other parts will fall in once
16 you've worked out some of those details in the tougher
17 areas. That's an idea I would certainly bring to the
18 Commission.

19 In terms of the time frame, you know, we do
20 have -- I would venture forth with numbers and tentative
21 ideas, even, and, you know, stamp all of them "Draft,
22 draft, draft," but to get people to come in, and, you know,
23 try to collect information as much as possible,
24 giving -- you know, we'll get the American -- what's -- the
25 ACS survey.

1 You know, we have information from a couple of
2 years ago from the census, and if we just did kind of rough
3 things with that information, just to kind of ball-park
4 stuff, to try to get -- as the Commission itself, to try to
5 work through the whole process of "This is how we actually
6 apply those rules to it," because, often, you know, I
7 think, you know, when you list things, that's "Nice, nice,
8 nice," but, until you actually start doing some of the
9 work, you don't realize how much you need to work on it.

10 So I would sort of try to get us to essentially
11 jump right in as soon as possible, knowing that we're going
12 to change these maps later, and they will change, and
13 that's one thing I believe everyone on the Commission must
14 realize. They have to be comfortable with the idea that
15 we'll be making revisions.

16 This is not going to be "We make a map, done."
17 That's not going to happen. This will be modifying,
18 adjusting, modifying, adjusting, modifying, adjusting.
19 It's kind of like, you know, when you're working on a
20 puzzle. Only until the last piece is in are you done.

21 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Yes. So, if you were
22 selected as one of the first eight Commissioners, who are
23 all selected randomly, you would be tasked with selecting
24 the remaining six. What would you be looking for in those
25 remaining six Commissioners?

1 MS. ANDERSEN: Well, first of all, if I was one of
2 those eight Commissioners, I would be like, "Yes, yes." I
3 would be very excited. And then I would say, "Okay. Who
4 are we? You know, what do we look like? Where are we
5 from? What skills do we have? What do we need now? What
6 do we need?"

7 Hopefully, there's still -- you know, I know
8 there's a possibility that there might be just a total of
9 36 left, and so we have to be very careful of "Okay. You
10 know, we have" -- and make kind of like a whole -- again,
11 like a picture puzzle, you know, "We have this category
12 here. We've got one of those, we've got one of those."

13 I would like to see skill sets spread over the
14 whole group, but we need as much diversity in geography
15 and, you know, ethnicity as possible, also gender, because
16 we have to look like California as much as possible, but we
17 have to be able to do the job. So there will be some
18 trade-offs. You know, like it or not, there will be
19 trade-offs.

20 But I think, you know, we need to be able to get
21 the job done, and we need to be able to work together, too.
22 So I would hope that, if I was one of those eight, we could
23 use all the information that you three have been going
24 through, you know, these interviews, to review, you know,
25 who the people are that are left, and who we can pick to

1 make it a full Commission.

2 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you.

3 Mr. Chair, I have no further questions.

4 CHAIR BELNAP: All right. Thank you.

5 We'll now turn the time over to Mr. Dawson.

6 MS. ANDERSEN: Thank you.

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

8 Ms. Andersen, I just wanted to follow up on a
9 couple of your responses to the standard questions. I took
10 your response to the question about hyper-partisanship in
11 that you said you can't be governed by partisan concerns,
12 but you have to be sufficiently politically aware to guard
13 against -- I kind of lost you there. So the group needs to
14 be politically aware enough to basically understand when
15 they're not being political?

16 MS. ANDERSEN: No, no. I'm sorry. They need to be
17 politically aware to make sure that, you know, if we say,
18 you know, "I want to draw the line over here, and I think
19 that works," and say, "Uh-oh. We accidentally cut" -- you
20 know, "We created a political situation," you know, "We've
21 kind of played into" -- "We've sort of played into
22 creating, you know, eliminating political" -- well, not
23 necessarily political seats, because we're not really
24 supposed to consider that.

25 We don't want to create a political conundrum of

1 something that's like, by doing that, you very conveniently
2 have either eliminated a political party, or you've
3 actually kind of -- you've essentially done, you know,
4 "pack it and crack it," essentially, without intentionally
5 doing that, you know, because, I mean, we have -- that's
6 what I mean.

7 We have to be careful of internally not
8 accidentally doing that, and we need to be aware, to
9 evaluate the information that's being presented to us, to
10 make sure that we're not going, "Well, that map looks good
11 to me. We'll just use it," when it was put together for
12 political purposes.

13 MR. DAWSON: I see. All right. Thank you. I
14 wanted to follow up on a response you had about your
15 concern about the census data, particularly in light of the
16 COVID-19 situation, but your concern was a bit lessened
17 because of the response that Alameda County is taking?

18 MS. ANDERSEN: I'm --

19 MR. DAWSON: No, please.

20 MS. ANDERSEN: No. My initial concern was "Wow.
21 What is going to happen?" But I was very pleased
22 that -- and, sort of like this whole group, I'd say it's,
23 you know, how well things in government can work -- is that
24 they were all over this issue. Excuse me. I'm not used to
25 talking this long a time. They had the issue well at hand.

1 They hadn't just thrown up their hands, go, "I have no idea
2 what to do now."

3 They had been working on it, and had come up with
4 good ideas, and were busy implementing those ideas. That
5 made me feel very good that, eventually, we might
6 get -- actually, they did, say, as part of the ambassador
7 training this last time -- is that Alameda County actually
8 is one of the people who has the higher, you know,
9 responding rates. They're also low, of course, across the
10 area.

11 I did try to goof around with that map, the
12 mapping, but I didn't have the proper sign-in authority, so
13 I couldn't do it, to see, you know, how the whole state
14 looked, but I'm pleased to feel that there are people who
15 are really actively working on the situation. It hasn't
16 just gone, you know, "Too bad."

17 MR. DAWSON: Right. Okay. Thank you. That
18 answers my question.

19 Mr. Chair, I have no further follow-ups.

20 CHAIR BELNAP: All right. I also have no further
21 follow-ups.

22 Mr. Coe?

23 VICE CHAIR COE: No follow-up questions.

24 CHAIR BELNAP: Ms. Dickison?

25 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: No follow-ups.

1 MR. DAWSON: Okay. It's allergy season.

2 Ms. Andersen, with the time remaining --

3 Madame Secretary, how much time is remaining?

4 MS. PELLMAN: Three minutes, 40 seconds.

5 MR. DAWSON: Okay. Thank you.

6 Ms. Andersen, with the time remaining, I'd like to
7 give you the opportunity to make some closing remarks to
8 the Panel, if you wish.

9 MS. ANDERSEN: Well, thank you very much for
10 allowing me to be involved in this whole process. It's
11 been an honor, and I want to thank all of you for your
12 thoughtful and your careful work on this really important
13 job, and I don't mean this lightly. You actually are a
14 shining example of good government, and it really makes me
15 proud to be a Californian, with the way you've handed this
16 entire process.

17 I believe, you know, that I offer the experience
18 and perspective of a registered professional engineer,
19 representing the built environment, as well as a
20 stay-at-home parent. I'd love to be on this Commission,
21 and would serve it well.

22 Thank you very much for this opportunity, and
23 please, I hope you and your families are well and stay safe
24 in this crisis. Thank you.

25 CHAIR BELNAP: And thank you.

1 We're now going to go into recess, and we're going
2 to come back at 1:14 p.m.

3 (A recess was held from 12:12 p.m. to 1:14 p.m.)

4 CHAIR BELNAP: It being 1:14, we're going to get
5 started.

6 We want to welcome Ms. Margo Morales to her
7 interview. Can you hear us, Ms. Morales?

8 MS. MORALES: I can hear you perfectly fine. Thank
9 you.

10 CHAIR BELNAP: Okay. We're going to turn the time
11 over to Mr. Dawson for the standard five questions.

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

13 Ms. Morales, I'm going to ask you five standard
14 questions that the Panel has requested that each Applicant
15 respond to. Are you ready?

16 MS. MORALES: I'm ready.

17 MR. DAWSON: First question: What skills and
18 attributes should all Commissioners possess? What skills
19 or competencies should the Commission possess collectively?
20 Of the skills, attributes, and competencies that each
21 Commissioner should possess, which do you possess? In
22 summary, how will you contribute to the success of the
23 Commission?

24 MS. MORALES: So, in thinking about this question,
25 I reflected back on my time providing staff support to

1 commissions for the county of Los Angeles, and being a
2 member of two commissions for the city of Long Beach, and
3 then I thought about the work that this Commission has to
4 do. So my answer is not in any significant order. It's
5 just my thoughts on what I thought the skills and
6 attributes should be.

7 I believe that the ability to analyze and interpret
8 data and information is singularly important to this
9 Commission, given the volume of information that we will be
10 receiving over the course of our term, data about voters,
11 data about communities of interest, and then the
12 information that is provided by speakers that come and
13 address the Commission on issues that they think are
14 important to be considered as the Commission looks at
15 redrawing the district lines.

16 I think it's vitally important for this Commission
17 that at least a majority of the Commissioners have a
18 significant amount of time to devote to the work of the
19 Commission. In looking back at the report of the previous
20 Commission, I noted that that was one of the things that
21 they talked about, is the amount of time that was necessary
22 for each Commissioner to focus on the work in interpreting
23 the data, reading the voluminous comments that they
24 received from the various community meetings that they had.

25 I think it's also important for at least a portion

1 of the Commission to have an expertise or knowledge in the
2 deliberative process. To serve on any type of body that
3 has to come to group decisions, you need to have at least a
4 portion of that organization that understands how the group
5 dynamics work, and how to work within that body to come to
6 a consensus decision about how to move forward.

7 Then I think it's also important for the entire
8 Commission to have a strong sense of ethics, impartiality,
9 and a fidelity to the mission of the Commission. The
10 mission of the Commission is to make sure that district
11 boundaries are drawn that are fair, impartial, and take in
12 the needs of the community, and without that fidelity, you
13 can't do the work in a manner that is going to engender the
14 trust of the public.

15 So now as to the skills that I bring to the table.
16 I was an employee of Los Angeles County for more than 30
17 years. During the entirety of my time working for Los
18 Angeles County, I had to analyze some type of data. I
19 started out in a program that made low-interest loans to
20 the owners of rental properties so that they could provide
21 low-income people with affordable housing. I had to be
22 able to analyze the financial stability of the owners, and
23 their ability to maintain that property for the perpetuity
24 of the program.

25 Following that, I became a budget analyst for the

1 county of Los Angeles, which is the largest county in the
2 state of California and has an economy the size of most
3 states. So preparing budgets, analyzing the fiscal
4 solvency of the large departments that I was assigned to,
5 the Department of Health Services, the Sheriff's
6 Department, the District Attorney's Office, required me to
7 be able to analyze very complex figures.

8 At the same time, I was also required to analyze
9 legislative bills that were pending in Sacramento that
10 would impact the ability of the department I was assigned
11 to at the time to continue with their work. I also was
12 responsible for the development of policies and procedures.

13 Tracking my career and jumping to the end, my final
14 nine years working for the county of Los Angeles, I served
15 as the administrative deputy for the Department of Mental
16 Health.

17 As the administrative deputy, I was the executive
18 manager responsible for all administrative functions within
19 the department, budget and finance, human resources,
20 contracting, anything that was administrative, compliance.
21 So I had to be able to turn quickly on a dime, and be able
22 to analyze a variety of different data, interpret it, and
23 come to a decision about what was the best road forward for
24 the department to take.

25 One of the things I want to go back to that I think

1 at least some members of the Commission should have is the
2 ability to identify and analyze GIS data. It's been a long
3 time since I've worked with any GIS data. I'm hoping that,
4 if I am selected, it will be like riding a bicycle, and
5 I'll be able to get back on that bicycle and analyze it,
6 but, because it has been a long time, I may need to rely on
7 other Commissioners to help me walk through and
8 refamiliarize myself with GIS data.

9 Time is something that I have an abundance of right
10 now. I retired 18 months ago from Los Angeles County.
11 Having been used to working 13-, 14-hour days, as the time
12 for my retirement neared, two people that I respect very
13 greatly recommended that I not jump into all of the things
14 I kept telling people I was going to do, that I take a six-
15 month period of time to kind of assess where it was I
16 wanted to go, and one of the gentlemen actually said that
17 if I waited those six months, what I saw is my realm of
18 opportunity might be here now, but there would be other
19 things that would open, and the ability to be on this
20 Commission is one of the things that opened up as my six
21 months were coming to an end.

22 I have not signed on to do any of the things that I
23 thought I wanted to do, because I was looking for a larger
24 opportunity, something where I could really benefit the
25 community with the knowledge and skills that I have built

1 over my career, basically from the time I graduated from
2 college, almost 40 years ago, and so I'm very excited about
3 this opportunity, and being able to bring my skills. So
4 time is not going to be a problem. I do serve currently on
5 the Long Beach Ethics Commission, but we meet once a month,
6 and the time required for that is not significant.

7 The deliberative process. I have been a
8 participant in deliberative processes, and I'll get into
9 that in one of the later questions, since the time I was in
10 college. I served in student government when I was in
11 college, so I'm used to being part of a deliberative
12 organization from college and into my professional career,
13 having worked in -- and I hate the term "bureaucracy," but
14 I will use it here. I am very familiar with bureaucratic
15 processes. I am used to working with people who have a
16 variety of opinions, and helping come to a consensus. I
17 see myself as a consensus builder.

18 When it comes to a high level of integrity, that's
19 one of the things I was known for in my career in L.A.
20 County. The unions respected my ability to be impartial
21 when working on issues where an employee felt they were
22 treated unfairly, and I think what speaks the most highly,
23 currently, to my level of high ethics is that the city of
24 Long Beach just recently implemented a voter-approved
25 initiative to establish an ethics commission, and within

1 that ethics commission, the auditor of the city appoints
2 two members, the mayor appoints two members, and then the
3 four first sitting members appoint the remaining members.

4 I was selected by Mayor Robert Garcia to be one of
5 his two appointees, and if you look at my letters of
6 recommendation, both Doctor Sherin, who was the director of
7 Mental Health, and Patricia Castillo from Service Employees
8 International Union, talked about my impartiality. I think
9 it goes to say a long way that the mayor of Long Beach
10 feels that he can trust me to represent him on the
11 commission that addresses ethics.

12 One last thing that I think I bring to the table is
13 courage to do the right thing. Be it, in my professional
14 career, when I had to make a hard decision that maybe a lot
15 of people didn't agree with, I can make the right decision
16 to move us in the direction it needs to be moved.

17 As a member of the Long Beach Parks and Recreation
18 Commission, quite often, if somebody came to us with a
19 request for a waiver or a request to do a special project
20 that didn't meet the guidelines that we had set, I would be
21 the one to lead the charge that we needed to deny that
22 request.

23 So, in summary, I have 30 years of experience
24 working in the deliberative process, analyzing data and
25 information, and, as I said earlier, I do see myself as a

1 consensus builder.

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

8 What characteristics do you possess, and what
9 characteristics should your fellow Commissioners possess,
10 that will protect against hyper-partisanship? What will
11 you do to ensure that the work of the Commission is not
12 seen as polarized or hyper-partisan, and avoid perceptions
13 of political bias and conflict?

14 MS. MORALES: So I think one of the most important
15 things that Commissioners will need to do is to listen
16 without judgment, and it takes a lot of practice to be able
17 to do that, to just listen and formulate questions that
18 will help you to understand more clearly the position where
19 that person is coming from. It's something that I have
20 done repeatedly in my career in working with the unions.

21 I have had -- there are often times where the
22 unions come from a different position than management does,
23 and I needed to be able to listen very carefully to what
24 their concerns were, to see if there was a place that we
25 could come to of joint agreement.

1 Impartiality that I discussed earlier comes with
2 that listening. If you can listen through an impartial
3 filter, where you're not bringing any of your own personal
4 biases, then you have a better opportunity to really hear
5 what that person is saying, and having a cognizance of your
6 own biases and opinions, and being able to set those aside,
7 is also very important.

8 I think it's also important to be able to see the
9 big picture about where we're trying to go as a Commission,
10 and make sure that everything that's being done is leading
11 to those fair and impartial districts. Some of the things
12 that I think -- and those are things that I do in my
13 personal life. You know, we have those divides in my
14 family and among my friends, and I listen to what they have
15 to say, those that have positions that are different than I
16 am, and on both sides.

17 I find myself to be more middle-of-the-road, but I
18 have friends and family who are hyper-partisan to the
19 progressive side and hyper-partisan to the conservative
20 side, and I believe it's my role to understand where they
21 are, so that I can understand where these divides are
22 coming from in the community, and, hopefully, try to help
23 bridge some of those divides.

24 What I think the Commission can do to avoid the
25 perception of hyper-partisanship are some of the things

1 that are addressed in the former Commission's report, and
2 one of the things that they recommended that I really like
3 is the idea of rotating the Chair and Vice-Chair each
4 meeting between the representative bodies.

5 I think to have a Chair and a Vice-Chair
6 consistently from the same party will only lead to that
7 view in the public that this is a partisan process, it's
8 being driven by one party or the other, but to rotate it,
9 and have the different leadership, be it the Democrats, the
10 Republicans, or the other group, helps the public to see
11 that we are working together in a nonpartisan way to make
12 sure that we are developing districts that will address the
13 needs of the community, not the needs of a party.

14 I know, in some of the reading that I was doing on
15 the work of the last Commission, there was still the
16 perception, no matter what they did, that one of the
17 parties led the process more directly than one of the other
18 parties, and I think we have to be aware of that, and use
19 that to filter a lot of the work that we do, so that, as
20 we're developing processes and procedures, try and think of
21 "How is the public going to view that? What is the public
22 going to interpret that to be?"

23 In L.A. County, we always had -- we had a saying
24 when we would develop things, "How is that going to read in
25 the L.A. Times?" And I think that's something that, as

1 public servants, we all need to keep in mind. The policies
2 and procedures that we're developing, are they being
3 written in a manner that the public can interpret and
4 understand, and trust them?

5 MS. PELLMAN: We have --

6 MS. MORALES: One last thing. Am I taking too
7 long?

8 MS. PELLMAN: Just a quick time check. We have 14
9 minutes, 37 seconds remaining.

10 MS. MORALES: Okay. I was just going to say that
11 I'd be neutral in any comments that I would make.

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

16 MS. MORALES: So, in answering this question, I'm
17 going to answer a little differently than I would have
18 answered a month ago, because I think, with our changing
19 environment, the COVID-19 poses one of the greatest
20 challenges to the Commission going forward.

21 Now, the prior Commission wrote the guidelines on
22 how to set up the Commission to do the work of the
23 Commission. This Commission, having to operate under the
24 umbrella of COVID-19 and the possibility that we're still
25 not going to be meeting publicly for an extended period of

1 time, is going to write the guidelines on how a Commission
2 can work in a time of crisis, so that they will have
3 guidelines that a Commission that has to operate under
4 maybe a major earthquake or fire or some other natural
5 disaster will have guidelines for.

6 The impacts that I see coming out of coronavirus
7 right now are that the new initial Commissioners will be
8 set in June, and there's a possibility that we still may
9 not be able to meet face to face. That's going to create
10 challenges for the Commissions, and how do you set up
11 relationships with people, which are critical to be able to
12 work together as a large group, when you can't have that
13 personal interaction with people? So they'll have to find
14 ways of building relationships, even though the meetings
15 may be virtual, like these interviews are.

16 As the Commission goes out to meet with the public,
17 there may still be restrictions on how large the crowds can
18 be, and I know from reading the prior report the crowds
19 were very large. There may be people that want to comment
20 that aren't comfortable coming into the public.

21 So meetings and public input are going to
22 be -- have to be developed in looking at how to outreach to
23 people in a time where we're not meeting face to face or
24 we're having to limit the number of people that can come
25 into a room, and that awareness needs to be front and

1 center in building a continuity plan for doing this work,
2 which is something that I do have experience in. I built
3 the continuity plan that is in use by the L.A. County
4 Department of Mental Health.

5 The thing that I was going to talk about before
6 COVID-19 became so front and center in everything that we
7 do is the lack of trust a number of the members of the
8 public have in any governmental entity, and I think that
9 ties in with the previous question of hyper-partisanism. I
10 know, when I see my friends on social media talk about a
11 lot of their issues, it comes from a sense of distrust.
12 They don't trust the legislature, or any elected official,
13 or any agency of the government to do the right thing.

14 So I think, if we do a lot of the work that I
15 talked about in the previous question, we can overcome
16 that, but we need to be aware that, in addition to dealing
17 with that hyper-partisanship, we are also dealing with a
18 lack of trust in the public, and we need to make sure that
19 we are doing everything in the work of the Commission to
20 build the trust of the public.

21 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Question four: If you are
22 selected, you will be one of 14 members of the Commission,
23 which is charged with working together to create maps of
24 the new districts.

25 Please describe a situation where you had to work

1 collaboratively with others on a project to achieve a
2 common goal. Tell us the goal of the project, what
3 your role in the group was, and how the group worked
4 through any conflicts that arose. What lessons would you
5 take from this group experience to the Commission, if
6 selected?

7 MS. MORALES: While I was at the Los Angeles County
8 Department of Mental Health, the three unions that
9 represented the employees in our department approached
10 management about developing what is called a "just culture
11 program."

12 Just culture is something that emanates out of
13 Kaiser and the medical field, and what it endeavors to do
14 is to take a work action that had a negative outcome, study
15 what the employee did in that work action to determine how
16 that negative outcome came to be. Was it a simple mistake?
17 Were they not given the tools that they needed by
18 management? Was the policy that was in place unclear, or
19 did they willfully just ignore all of the effective
20 policies and procedures that were put in place and go
21 forward with an action that had a negative outcome?

22 The reason the union wanted us to look at
23 implementing a just culture policy is they felt that the
24 department was being overly punitive in issuing
25 disciplinary action against employees, and they felt that

1 if we could come to an agreement on how the program should
2 be structured, that we would then, as management, have the
3 opportunity to really look at what happened, and only apply
4 discipline to those instances where the employee had
5 willfully disregarded safety protocols and other procedures
6 that were in place.

7 So my role in the process was to give direction to
8 the staff that worked on a day-to-day basis with the union
9 on the development of a protocol. I then sat down with the
10 union to negotiate out those finer points where we were not
11 in agreement, and, again, I used the tool of listening to
12 what their concerns were, expressed my concerns.

13 In most instances, we could come to a middle ground
14 where we agreed on how we would go forward. In some cases,
15 one or the other of us relinquished, and we agreed to go
16 forward with a protocol, and then come back at a future
17 date to look at it, to see how that was working.

18 My concern going into that was that the work that
19 we were doing is much different than what was being done in
20 a medical (sic), and it wasn't quite as cut and dry, which
21 is what I'm hearing back now, is the major source of
22 challenge in dealing it (sic). What I learned is what I
23 learned early on in my career, is to listen and don't be
24 rigid.

25 You have to be flexible in working with something

1 that can be seen as being challenging, but just because I
2 think something is right doesn't mean that it always is
3 right. I have to be open to somebody explaining to me what
4 their concern is, and moving forward with it. So that's
5 what I learned, and that's what I applied to the
6 Commission, is just listen clearly and don't be rigid in
7 anything going forward.

8 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

9 Could I have a time check, Madame Secretary?

10 MS. PELLMAN: Yes. Seven minutes, four seconds
11 remaining.

12 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

13 Question five: A considerable amount of the
14 Commission's work will involve meeting with people from all
15 over California who come from very different backgrounds
16 and a wide variety of perspectives.

17 If you are selected as a Commissioner, what skills
18 and attributes will make you effective at interacting with
19 people from different backgrounds and who have a variety of
20 perspectives? What experiences have you had that will help
21 you be effective at understanding and appreciating people
22 and communities of different backgrounds and who have a
23 variety of perspectives?

24 MS. MORALES: So I was listening to the meeting of
25 the Panel where they were discussing this question, and at

1 the end of that meeting, I started reflecting back on my
2 life, and the activities that I've undertaken in the last
3 40 years since I was in college.

4 When I was in college, I had the opportunity to
5 serve in an organization called the California State
6 Student Association. It's a body that represents the
7 students at all -- at that time, there were 18 California
8 State University campuses. There's quite a few more now.
9 There was one representative to the CSSA from each campus,
10 and I'm not going to going to say we were the best and the
11 brightest, but we were the most passionate about politics
12 at the time, and we represented our various communities,
13 the campuses from Humboldt to San Diego.

14 We were Democrats, we were Republicans, we were
15 Independents. We were ethnic minorities, we were different
16 races, we were mixed women and men. We were gay, we were
17 heterosexual. We represented the totality of the
18 population of California, and that was my foundation for
19 what it means to work with a diverse population, and I
20 think that is part of why I have been so successful in my
21 career with Los Angeles County, is I took that experience.

22 Los Angeles County is a very diverse county. The
23 workforce in Los Angeles County is a diverse workforce. So
24 I have had experience working in that diverse workforce,
25 and one of the things I want to talk about is one of the

1 projects that we had in Mental Health, the Promotores
2 Project.

3 You know, in mental health, there are a lot of
4 barriers to people coming to seek mental health because of
5 cultural differences, and the Promotores was a program that
6 the executive management worked with the staff to develop,
7 and uses people from the community. It started in the
8 Latinx community, took people from the Latinx community to
9 go out into the community with our clinicians and talk to
10 people about what the opportunities were there for them to
11 use, and since I've left, that's also been expanded out to
12 the Asian and other communities.

13 The last thing that I want to talk about is, in my
14 role with Mental Health, I also participated in the
15 California Behavioral Health Director's finance committee,
16 which brought together representatives from all of the
17 counties in California. That gave me an understanding of
18 the different needs of the counties.

19 Now, as Los Angeles County, we were an entity in
20 and of ourselves because we were so large, and I took the
21 time to listen to the concerns of my colleagues from the
22 smaller counties about what they were encountering in
23 trying to provide services, and I think they expected me to
24 be the thousand-pound gorilla in the room and throw around
25 my weight, because of the size of our program, but they

1 came to respect me because I would advocate on their
2 behalf. It's very easy to advocate as L.A. County, because
3 everyone looks at us to set the standard, but to help bring
4 forward the struggles of the smaller counties was something
5 that I thought was important that I do at the same time.

6 So what I will bring to the table in my skills -- I
7 am a very compassionate person. I love working with
8 people. I love bringing out the best in other people, and,
9 as I've said throughout this, I am a listener, and I ask
10 questions to elicit more information.

11 Early in my career, somebody told me that I don't
12 have to like everyone that I work with, I have to respect
13 them, and that's something that I've always tried to
14 emulate. I have respect for everyone regardless of what
15 your position is, even if it is different from mine.

16 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

17 We'll now go to Panel questions. Each Panel Member
18 will have 20 minutes to ask his or her questions.

19 We will start with the Chair, Mr. Belnap.

20 CHAIR BELNAP: Good afternoon, Ms. Morales.

21 MS. MORALES: Good afternoon.

22 CHAIR BELNAP: I just want to clear up in my mind
23 some of your career path. So you graduated from California
24 State Polytechnic University in Pomona, and that was in
25 the --

1 MS. MORALES: We call it "Cal Poly" for short.

2 CHAIR BELNAP: -- Cal Poly -- early '80s, and then
3 I see that you worked nine years, between 2009 and 2018, as
4 the administrative deputy for the L.A. County Department of
5 Mental Health. That whole time with the Mental Health
6 Department, were you the administrative deputy, or did you
7 work into that position?

8 MS. MORALES: So I did not give you my entire
9 professional career, because it's a little long. I worked
10 in private industry for a while, and then I came to the
11 county, in a couple of other departments. No. The entire
12 nine years, I was the administrative deputy, with Mental
13 Health.

14 CHAIR BELNAP: So had you had experience in the
15 private sector that you were able to leverage to become the
16 administrative deputy?

17 MS. MORALES: No. So let me go back. So I worked
18 in the private industry from 1983 to 1986. I worked for
19 Crocker National Bank. I worked in lending support
20 services.

21 From there, I went to the Community Development
22 Commission of Los Angeles County, which is a quasi-county
23 agency. It was spun off from the county so that it could
24 turn a profit in case federal funding every disintegrated.
25 I worked there doing loans to people who had rental

1 properties in low-income neighborhoods, and we would give
2 them either a no-interest loan or a low-interest loan, and
3 help them secure Section Eight, so that they could get
4 market rents.

5 From there, I went to another part of that
6 organization, and I did environmental impact. I worked
7 with the environmental impact clearance process.

8 From there, in 1989, I left and went to the county
9 proper. I spent about six years with the chief executive
10 office -- at that time, it was called the chief
11 administrative office -- as a management analyst. I was
12 responsible for analyzing the budget requirements of, at
13 different times, the Sheriff's Department, Department of
14 Health Services, and District Attorney's Office.

15 I also did some special projects. They kind of
16 moved me around. I called myself the "utility player."
17 Wherever they needed somebody, I tended to be moved to help
18 them in that area.

19 I left the CAO in 1996, and spent 18 months -- and
20 I describe them as the most difficult 18 months of my
21 county career -- with the Department of Children and Family
22 Services, and only difficult in the fact of the work that
23 that department does in dealing with people who are in
24 distress and not treating their children well. There I
25 managed the foster care program, so I was responsible for

1 the staff that did the eligibility background on the
2 families that came in.

3 I left Children and Family Services in 1997, and
4 went to the Department of Parks and Recreation. There I
5 was an acting operations manager over the construction
6 division. Then I served as the director's special
7 assistance, and did a variety of special projects, made
8 sure things ran efficiently for him.

9 My last position there was as the head of the
10 contracts and golf division. So, in the L.A. County
11 Department of Parks and Recreation, there were 18 -- or at
12 that time, there were 18 golf courses that were contracted
13 out to various private entities for the management of, so
14 that we could generate a lot of revenue to support the
15 department.

16 We also had concession agreements at a number of
17 our parks. Raging Waters, which is a water-themed park at
18 Bonelli Park, was one of the concessions, horse
19 concessions, tennis, and then contracts for doing landscape
20 maintenance.

21 From there, I left, and I was the administrative
22 deputy in a small department that was called the Office of
23 Public Safety, and we provided the security services to all
24 of the county departments.

25 While I was there, the chief executive office

1 conducted a study, and made the determination that it would
2 be best to integrate public safety into the Sheriff's
3 Department, and at that time, I was fortunate enough that
4 the administrative deputy position in Mental Health became
5 open. I applied, and I was the selected candidate. So it
6 was really -- my experience to prepare me for that came
7 through my various positions within the county of Los
8 Angeles.

9 CHAIR BELNAP: All right. Thank you. That
10 definitely helps fill in some blanks for me.

11 I also want to talk about your experience on the
12 board of directors of two different organizations focused
13 on fair housing. Can you tell us, briefly, about the two
14 organizations and their efforts?

15 MS. MORALES: Sure. So let me start with the Fair
16 Housing Foundation of Long Beach. So any local government
17 that receives HUD funding is required to have a Fair
18 Housing presence, to ensure that there is equal access to
19 housing within the community. Most local governments in
20 California contract with an organization to provide that
21 service, and what Fair Housing does is they take complaints
22 from residents that maybe they have been discriminated
23 against.

24 A lot of the complaints when I was on the board
25 centered around families who were told that they were not

1 eligible to rent because they had small children, which is
2 not the case, and every once in a while, we ran into
3 situations where the landlord wanted people from one
4 demographic. They wanted an all-white population, and what
5 the staff would do, would then go out and do blind testing.

6 They would send actual people out who had credit
7 histories and financial wherewithal, to go out and see how
8 they were treated. Then they would meet with the property
9 owners, and, hopefully, try to get them to agree to an
10 educational process, so that they understood what the Fair
11 Housing laws were. As a member of the board, it was my
12 duty to help set policy and guidance for the executive
13 director.

14 The Fair Housing Congress, which is no longer in
15 existence, was an entity that the county of Los Angeles
16 contracted with, and then the Congress contracted with the
17 various Fair Housing organizations within the county to
18 provide those same services within the unincorporated
19 county of Los Angeles, and each of the
20 organizations -- back in those days, I think there were
21 about six different Fair Housing organizations that did
22 regional work, and each of us sent somebody to serve on the
23 Congress, the board of directors, so that it was fair and
24 impartial, and not one of the regional organizations felt
25 like one or the others was getting preferential treatment.

1 CHAIR BELNAP: How and why did you come to be
2 involved in those two organizations?

3 MS. MORALES: So, when I was an employee of the
4 county of Los Angeles, one of my jobs was to monitor the
5 work of the Fair Housing Foundation, and I found myself
6 very intrigued with the work that they did. I couldn't
7 serve on the organization when I worked for the CDC, but,
8 once I left and went to work for the county proper, I was
9 eligible to be a board member.

10 I liked the idea of being part of an organization
11 that fought for fair representation in housing. It spoke
12 to something within my need. I grew up with stories from
13 my father about the discrimination that he endured in being
14 funneled to a certain school, and being rapped on his
15 knuckles for not speaking English, and not being able to
16 swim except the day that they were going to clean.

17 So I've always had a strong desire to make sure
18 that I do what I can do to make our communities as fair and
19 impartial and as colorblind as possible for all residents,
20 and the work of the foundation spoke to me. I served on
21 the foundation board for an extended period of time. It's
22 something that I've thought about going back and doing in
23 my retirement, but, when I left, I felt that I'd given a
24 significant amount of time, and it was time to let some new
25 leadership come in and give guidance.

1 CHAIR BELNAP: All right. Thank you. I want to
2 talk to you now about your time as a parks and rec
3 commissioner. I'd like you to describe a difficult
4 decision that you had to make as a commissioner, and how
5 you had to exercise impartiality in this instance.

6 MS. MORALES: So I think one of the hardest
7 decisions I had to make is, there is a promoter that had
8 provided a blues festival for an extended, extended period
9 of time in the community, and we had encountered some
10 challenges with the way that he was administering the
11 program.

12 There were problems with parking, there were
13 problems with community, and we had given him some
14 guidelines as to things that we wanted to have happen, and
15 that was the 2017 festival. That didn't happen. The
16 director of the department had met with him before he came
17 before the commission, asking for another permit to have
18 the 2018 festival, and this is a gentleman that I had met
19 through various other organizations that I've been involved
20 in, and is always very pleasant with me, and is a very nice
21 man.

22 I know he has the deep desire to provide the blues
23 experience to people, but the event was in one of our major
24 parks. It was doing major disruption, and he hadn't done
25 what we had asked him to do the year before. He came in

1 making a lot of promises about what he would do, but I
2 believe that when somebody doesn't believe you the first
3 time, you can't give them a second chance. So I, in that
4 case, voted no.

5 One of my colleagues sitting next to me knew that I
6 was leaning towards voting no, based on the questions that
7 I was asking, and leaned over to me and said, "Why are you
8 going to vote no? Because this will just go to the city
9 council, and they'll overturn our decision." And I looked
10 at him and I said, "Because it's the right thing to do. We
11 have given him very explicit instructions on what we wanted
12 to see happen."

13 Gerardo Mouet, who was the director of Parks and
14 Recreation at that time, had met with him in advance and
15 told him what to do. It wasn't until Gerardo had told him
16 he was going to recommend to the commission that we not
17 approve his permit that he all of a sudden got things in
18 motion.

19 And so I voted no. One of my other commissioners
20 voted no. It was enough to defeat his permit, and, as we
21 later found out, it required a two-thirds vote of the
22 council, so he didn't get his permit, and there were quite
23 a few members of the council that thanked me for doing the
24 right thing.

25 CHAIR BELNAP: All right. Thank you for that

1 example.

2 Madame Secretary, time check?

3 MS. PELLMAN: Yes. Seven minutes, 19 seconds.

4 CHAIR BELNAP: All right. Thank you.

5 In your essay on appreciation for diversity, you
6 indicate that, in your work for the L.A. County Department
7 of Mental Health, you were involved in assessing the
8 effectiveness of the department's programs. In particular,
9 you were involved in determining whether cultural barriers
10 were keeping people from accessing services. Please
11 provide an example of a cultural barrier, and how the
12 department worked to overcome it.

13 MS. MORALES: So that would be the -- I'm going to
14 go back to the Promotores program that I spoke to in one of
15 my earlier examples. Within certain cultural
16 communities -- and the Latinx community is one of
17 them -- there are a lot of barriers to securing mental
18 health services, and not even just mental health services.
19 There are barriers to securing any governmental type of
20 assistance.

21 So the department had built the Promotores, that
22 would go out and meet with members of the community, and
23 I'm going to give you a very specific example of how we
24 used the Promotores in collaboration with the Department of
25 Public Health.

1 A few years ago, there was a very serious
2 environmental issue that was known as the Exide factory.
3 It was a battery recycling factory that had leached toxins
4 into the ground in one of our more low-income
5 neighborhoods, and the Public Health Department was having
6 trouble doing outreach to the members of the community
7 because of a lack of trust for governmental entities, to
8 try and help them get tested and understand they could no
9 longer grow vegetables in the ground. They needed to be
10 careful with their children going out and playing in the
11 public.

12 So we sent our Promotores, who were members of the
13 community, who could speak to the community members in a
14 language that they were comfortable with, because to send
15 an employee who speaks Spanish isn't the same as having
16 someone from your community come and speak to you, and
17 explain to you why you can trust this person.

18 So, through the partnering of the mental health
19 Promotores with the public health nurses, we were able to
20 significantly reach that community, help them to get
21 tested, identify those people that needed medical
22 attention, and then help identify those properties that
23 needed soil remediation and other things.

24 CHAIR BELNAP: Okay. Thank you. In your
25 analytical skills essay, you indicated that you performed

1 various analyses, I'd like you to walk us through an
2 analysis that you performed in your career that would be
3 analogous or similar to the work of the Commission.

4 MS. MORALES: So I'm going to go back to mental
5 health, because, in mental health in Los Angeles County,
6 the county is divided up into service provider areas, and
7 each service provider -- much like the state, the various
8 areas of the county have differing needs. The needs in the
9 Lancaster area are different than the needs in South
10 Central area.

11 So, as part of the deliberative process of the
12 executive management team, we would look at the allocation
13 of services and the allocation of funding to contracted
14 agencies, because we didn't provide all of the services
15 ourselves through our directly operated clinics. We also
16 had a network of clinics that were operated by -- some of
17 them are small community-based organizations. Some of them
18 are larger community-based.

19 So we had to look at the level of services that
20 were being provided, and the level of need. In looking at
21 need, we had to look at what their wait lists were, and
22 identify how we might be able to jigger the funding that we
23 needed in order to meet the need and increase funding to
24 the various organizations.

25 Within our own directly operated clinics, we had

1 to -- I had to be able to talk to them about how we could
2 address staffing requirements, and not just the staffing
3 requirements in terms of adding bodies, but, because the
4 space of our clinics was pretty much set, how we could
5 reallocate the space within the clinics to fit the growing
6 needs of the staffing requirements.

7 CHAIR BELNAP: All right. Thank you.

8 I have no further questions at this time. I'm
9 going to turn the time over to Mr. Coe.

10 VICE CHAIR COE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

11 Good afternoon to you, Ms. Morales. Thank you for
12 taking the time to speak with us, and thank you for your
13 flexibility in rescheduling during this uncertain time
14 here. We appreciate that.

15 In your essays, you mention that you're a member of
16 the Sons and Daughters of the 40th Division Korean War
17 Veterans, and I'm wondering what, specifically, is your
18 connection to the 40th Division?

19 MS. MORALES: My father is a Korean War veteran.
20 He served in the 40th Division, and it's a very unique
21 division. The 40th Division, when they were in Korea,
22 their general noticed that the community that they were
23 guarding in Gapyeong. Their school had been destroyed, so
24 he asked every member of that division to donate a dollar.

25 With that money, they built a school, and their

1 relationship with the community of Gapyeong has continued
2 since that time. The community was so grateful for the
3 school that they built that they named the school after the
4 first member of the division, who died in the Korean War.
5 It was named the Kenneth Kaiser School.

6 Schools in Korea can no longer be named after a
7 person, so, when they rebuilt the high school, they named
8 the library after Mr. Kaiser, but the Gapyeong School, the
9 men in the 40th Division have raised money every year since
10 then, and give \$2,000 scholarships, one to a female student
11 and one to a male student that's graduating.

12 It's our goal as the sons and daughters to continue
13 the legacies of our fathers, because they have such a deep,
14 abiding affinity for the community that they served, and
15 that community has such an unfettered love and respect for
16 them.

17 I was very fortunate that, in 2016, I was able to
18 accompany my father to Korea, where the community had
19 raised a memorial in recognition of the work that the men
20 of the 40th Division and another division had done for
21 them, so I got to see firsthand how appreciative the Korean
22 people are of what our men and women did for them. So
23 that's what that comes from.

24 VICE CHAIR COE: Thank you for that insight. So
25 one of the things in a letter of recommendation, as an

1 auditor by trade, that caught my eye was that, during your
2 work with the county of Los Angeles, you uncovered some
3 embezzlement of funds by a county member, by a member of
4 management in the county, and then you then worked with
5 counsel within the county on litigation that resulted in a
6 significant portion of the funds returned to the county. I
7 recognize that there might be some sensitivity here, but,
8 to the extent that you're able, can you tell us a little
9 bit about that?

10 MS. MORALES: So, when I joined the Department of
11 Mental Health, my chief deputy had some concerns about how
12 a certain contract was being handled, and asked me if I
13 could do some research, because she felt this member of
14 management was really thwarting her ability to look at the
15 records.

16 Part of what reported up through my chain of
17 command was our fraud unit. In the county of Los Angeles,
18 there's the Auditor-Controller's Fraud Unit, and then each
19 department has a fraud unit. Sometimes they refer items
20 back to us. Sometimes we start doing our own
21 investigation.

22 In this case, we did a forensic review of some of
23 her e-mails, and identified some things that were
24 troubling, and at that point, we went to the County
25 Auditor-Controller, knowing that they could do a deeper

1 dive into what was happening.

2 They did the final uncovering of the embezzlement,
3 took the item to the DA. Judge threw out the case at the
4 end of -- before it really went to trial, but yes, the
5 board decided that it was egregious enough that they wanted
6 counsel to go back, go to court, and recover some of the
7 funds. Did you want me to talk about what the people were
8 doing?

9 VICE CHAIR COE: No. I was thinking more along the
10 lines of -- in the auditing trade, we have a phrase
11 we -- you know, for professional skepticism on things, and
12 where that can lead you sometimes, and I was just -- I was
13 curious how, I guess, to the extent you're able to talk
14 about it, how you found the embezzlement that was
15 occurring.

16 MS. MORALES: So I didn't find it specifically. As
17 I said, I identified e-mails that looked troubling to me,
18 that identified work that this employee was doing with
19 somebody else, and that there may be funds going someplace
20 that weren't there, but that's why, at that point, I took
21 it to the County Auditor's staff. They can do more
22 forensic reviews. They also are sworn investigators, so
23 they can do a criminal investigation.

24 They took it over from me at that time. They would
25 ask me for information, and I would provide them with

1 copies of contracts, copies of checks that had been cut.
2 So I provided them with the trail, and then they went to
3 the DA, who took it from there.

4 VICE CHAIR COE: I see. So the reason I was asking
5 is, one of the problems that the previous Commission, the
6 first Commission, wrote about having encountered was, in
7 their visits to different communities to get community
8 input, that they encountered some people who may have been
9 representing themselves as people, members of the
10 community, and they weren't actually members of the
11 community, and they had other interests for being there.

12 With the experience that you had, I was wondering
13 if you thought that you would have, potentially, a keen eye
14 for this, or if you would have an advantage in looking out
15 for these types of things with this current Commission, the
16 new Commission that's being formed.

17 MS. MORALES: I read that in their report, and I
18 think it's something that the new Commission needs to be
19 aware of. I think I'm a pretty good read of people. I've
20 had to read a lot of people during the course of my career,
21 and I can identify a way of working with them, but, as I
22 said, also, in my earlier responses, I ask questions. And
23 so, yes, I do have a healthy skepticism about a lot of
24 things, and that is why I would be asking questions of
25 people. Yes. Yes, I do believe that I would be strong in

1 that area.

2 VICE CHAIR COE: Thank you. I'd like to move on
3 to the topic of impartiality for a moment. Mr. Belnap
4 asked you a question on this. I wanted to -- there was a
5 sentence in your impartiality essay I wanted to ask you a
6 question about. You say that:

7 "Impartiality means stepping aside and
8 participating in the decision-making
9 process if a situation arises in which I
10 have a conflict of interest."

11 I'm wondering if you can provide us with an example
12 of a time where you've had to do this.

13 MS. MORALES: Certainly. So, as a member of the
14 Parks and Recreation Commission, we vote on fee waivers,
15 and one of the fee waivers that came before the Commission
16 on an annual basis was a fee waiver for a group called the
17 Long Beach Community Band. They practiced in one of our
18 facilities.

19 My husband is a member of the community band, so I
20 could not participate in the decision of whether that fee
21 waiver should be granted or not, because it benefitted my
22 husband. The band didn't have to pay for the rental space.

23 Where it was even a bigger issue was during my
24 tenure with Los Angeles County in the Office of Public
25 Safety, and then Mental Health. One of the areas that

1 reported to me was procurement, and procurement of
2 vehicles.

3 Especially in Public Safety, all of our vehicles
4 were Ford Crown Victorias. I could not participate in any
5 decisions about purchasing of vehicles. I had to have my
6 staff work with someone else, because my husband and
7 I own -- I think we still own -- Ford stock.

8 So I recused myself from having any decisions on
9 any procurement of any vehicle, even if it was Toyotas,
10 because I didn't want to give the impression that I was
11 helping myself, and it was well known throughout the
12 departments that my husband and I owned Ford stock, so that
13 I would not be participating in any vehicle decisions.

14 VICE CHAIR COE: I see. One other thing that you
15 were mentioning -- I think it was in response to a question
16 Mr. Belnap asked, or it may have been a standard question.
17 I don't exactly remember when you mentioned it, but you
18 mentioned the importance of the members of the Commission
19 being cognizant of their own biases in doing their work.

20 How can an individual -- how does an individual
21 come to recognize and be cognizant of their own biases, and
22 ensure that those do not interfere in their decision-making
23 capabilities?

24 MS. MORALES: You know, it's a hard process to go
25 through. It's something that Los Angeles County was

1 sending managers through towards the end of my career,
2 really working to make sure that people understood what a
3 bias is, and I think it's something that you have to be
4 willing to be self-reflective about, and not everyone can
5 be self-reflective, but, to the extent that you can, you
6 have to be honest with yourself about where your biases are
7 coming from.

8 We've all lived extensive lives. We're all
9 imprinted with things that have happened to us, and it's
10 basically just trying to make sure that you're not
11 filtering it through that, that you're really -- it's that
12 self-reflection, coming to know who you are, what your
13 values are, and then applying them, and then asking
14 yourself where that decision came from, just to ensure that
15 you didn't impose any bias.

16 VICE CHAIR COE: Do you think that you're skilled
17 in doing this for yourself?

18 MS. MORALES: I do. It's something that was
19 imprinted on me when I was in college, and I think it
20 comes, also -- you know, to look at me, most people don't
21 see a Latina. I get that I'm from -- people ask me if I'm
22 Italian and a number of other things.

23 When I was younger, and my hair was darker, and I
24 used to get a really good tan, people knew I was Latina,
25 and so there were times where I had bias directed towards

1 me, and having had that experience, having been stopped by
2 police when I was young, twice, and asked questions about
3 why I was in a certain place, I want to make sure that I
4 don't make somebody else feel uncomfortable by asking them
5 questions that are not relevant.

6 So, when I would build my staff, I sought the best
7 person, not looking at who they were or trying to fill some
8 specific tally of gender, race, or ethnicity. I looked at
9 skills. So it's something that's very important to me.
10 There have been times where I have been accused of not
11 being unbiased, and when that happens, I take a step back,
12 and I really examine what was going on at that time, and
13 figure out what I did that gave that person that
14 impression.

15 VICE CHAIR COE: Thank you. I'd like to move on
16 for the appreciation for diversity essay that you wrote,
17 and in that essay, and in some of your testimony today, you
18 talk about your opportunities you've had to work with many
19 different people of diverse backgrounds, and I'm wondering,
20 in your interactions with people of diverse backgrounds,
21 what you've learned from these people that you think would
22 make you an effective representative for them, for the
23 diverse population of the state of California, on this
24 Commission.

25 MS. MORALES: So I think we have more similarities

1 than we have differences. We all want to be respected. We
2 all want to be appreciated for what we bring to the table,
3 our unique skills and attributes. We all want to know that
4 we are living in a world where our children and our
5 grandchildren are going to have the opportunity to be the
6 best that they can be, and, in the workplace, employees
7 want the opportunity to do their best work, and to be
8 recognized for their best work.

9 That goes back to what I was talking about
10 developing the just culture with the unions, in that
11 employees, they're going to -- we're all going to make a
12 mistake now and again, and nobody wants to be beat up for a
13 mistake, but you want to learn from that mistake, and have
14 the opportunity to grow and be a better person.

15 VICE CHAIR COE: A similar question, but in lines
16 of geographic diversity. People that live in different
17 parts of the state may have different preferences,
18 different concerns, based on where they live, and if you
19 could tell us a little bit about your experiences in other
20 regions of California, and what you've learned from the
21 people in those regions, their perspectives, their
22 concerns, and their preferences that you think would make
23 you an effective representative for them on this
24 Commission.

25 MS. MORALES: Sure. And I should say I'm a little

1 bit of a numbers geek. One of the things that I love to do
2 after every election is go to the Secretary of State's
3 website and look at the map, and look at the different
4 voting patterns within the state. So I am cognizant of how
5 different regions of the state vote, and so to talk about
6 that, I'm going to talk a little bit more about my work
7 with some of the rural counties in mental health, because
8 they had some of the same problems that we had as a large
9 county. It's just that they had fewer people to work with
10 and manage them.

11 So it's not that life is that different, really, if
12 you get down to the bare nuts and bolts of it. Everyone
13 goes to work in those areas, but they're more compressed
14 because the geographic area is spread out, where the
15 services may be more compact, and so they had more
16 difficulty in reaching some of the farther reaches of their
17 county.

18 Actually, I saw more similarities between us. If
19 you really get to know the people, then there were
20 differences. I mean, they would be flabbergasted when I
21 would talk about dollar figures, and the number of people
22 that we served, but, when we got down to really talking
23 about the nuts and bolts of a program, they had the same
24 issues that I did. It was just, mine were magnified
25 because the county was so much larger, and they had

1 different difficulties because of geographic spread.

2 VICE CHAIR COE: I see. Thank you.

3 Madame Secretary, a time check, please.

4 MS. PELLMAN: Yes. Two minutes, 45 seconds
5 remaining.

6 VICE CHAIR COE: Thank you.

7 Ms. Morales, if you were to be appointed to this
8 Commission, which aspects of the role of Commissioner do
9 you think that you would enjoy the most, and, conversely,
10 which aspects of that role do you think would cause you to
11 struggle a little bit?

12 MS. MORALES: So I would definitely enjoy the
13 public outreach part of it, getting to hear from the
14 communities of what the areas of concern are to them. I
15 would enjoy the analytical part of it, again. It's
16 something that I'm realizing I am kind of missing in not
17 working now. So the ability to roll up my sleeves and
18 really dig into some data and exercise my brain cells would
19 be fun again.

20 I think the part that I will struggle with, and I
21 think most people would struggle with, is when there's
22 animosity from the public, but it's not anything that's
23 going to be new to me because, as a commissioner for Parks
24 and Recreation, there were times when people would come and
25 they would be very angry about a decision that we made, and

1 I would listen to them, but, because of the public meeting,
2 I know that there wasn't the opportunity to really engage
3 in a dialogue with them. But I take that personally, when
4 there's animosity, because I wonder if there's something
5 that I could be doing to help alleviate their fear.

6 I understand that that animosity is coming from a
7 place of fear, and I think that's where a lot of the hyper-
8 partisanship comes from, also, is a place of fear that, you
9 know, there's so much misinformation out there right now
10 about one party -- it can be "The Democrats are evil," "The
11 Republicans are evil," or vice versa, coming from both
12 sides, and I think we have to really work through that
13 noise to help each other understand that the bottom line
14 is, we all want to make this place a good place for the
15 future, and we have to find a way --

16 MS. PELLMAN: Twenty seconds remaining.

17 MS. MORALES: -- of working together to make that
18 happen.

19 VICE CHAIR COE: Okay. Thank you, Ms. Morales.

20 MS. MORALES: Thank you.

21 VICE CHAIR COE: Mr. Chair, no further questions.

22 CHAIR BELNAP: Ms. Dickison, we'll turn the time
23 over to you.

24 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you.

25 Thank you for meeting with us this afternoon, Ms.

1 Morales.

2 MS. MORALES: Again, my pleasure.

3 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: I want to take you back a
4 little bit off of Mr. Coe's questions.

5 In your diversity essay, you talk about your time
6 at the Department of Mental Health, and one of the things
7 that caught my attention was where you talked about the
8 tools, and how they didn't work for every community, and
9 that what makes a community -- that there's different
10 things that prevent a community from seeking mental health
11 services.

12 As far as the work on the Commission, how could you
13 translate what you learned from your work there to work on
14 the Commission, and reaching out to those communities that
15 maybe aren't as engaged as others?

16 MS. MORALES: And I think that's a good point. So,
17 having that knowledge that not everything works in every
18 community, not every community reads the newspaper, not all
19 communities even have access to technology to know what's
20 happening, as a diverse Commission, I would need to listen
21 to some of the suggestions from other members of the
22 Commission who represent communities that I may not have a
23 lot of experience in about their ideas of how we reach out
24 to those communities.

25 I might look at how we could even look at some of

1 the people that did communicate with the Commission the
2 last time, to see if we could reach out to them, and maybe
3 they could help us with some focus groups on how we could
4 reach out to communities that have not traditionally
5 participated, and I would take some of what I learned in
6 Mental Health about working through the community, the
7 Promotores, and the same thing with the focus groups.

8 If we can engage other members of the community,
9 maybe some of the people that apply that aren't appointed
10 to the Commission would be willing to come back and talk to
11 us about how they see outreach happening to the community.
12 I think there are a number of different things that we
13 could do.

14 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you. I'll look at my
15 notes for a minute. Many of my questions get asked.

16 MS. MORALES: That's the challenge of being the
17 last questioner.

18 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: I should say many of my
19 questions get answered as we go through. Let's see. So
20 there's been a couple touches on your essays on
21 impartiality. Could you give an example of making a
22 decision in which you had had your mind made up but, after
23 you got additional information, you changed your mind, and
24 something that's specific?

25 MS. MORALES: Well, I'll go back to the just

1 culture program that we developed with the unions, because,
2 when it started, I was very skeptical. I didn't think that
3 we were being overly harsh in our implementation of
4 discipline, and I was skeptical.

5 Just culture started in a medical environment,
6 where it was applied when there was a negative outcome for
7 a patient. The clients in mental health, you know, you
8 can't stitch a cut wrong. You can't leave a tool in them.
9 The work that Mental Health does is more nebulous, because
10 you're working with a person through communication, and
11 even the work that is being done by administrative staff is
12 not always that cut and dry.

13 So I was very skeptical about how it could be
14 implemented, even if it was something that we should be
15 doing, but, as the union kept talking to me, I listened to
16 what they were saying, and then we had a situation in my
17 human resources staff, where, before we had actually
18 finalized the policy, my HR manager showed me how she was
19 going to use the tool of just culture.

20 We had an employee who was sending out notices to
21 candidates, letting them know that they could contact us
22 for interviews, and she hit the send button not realizing
23 that attached to what she was sending them was a list of
24 all of the candidates with their Social Security numbers.
25 Yes. We weren't able to retrieve it back immediately. It

1 got out to most of the people. We had to do credit
2 monitoring for them, send out a lot of apology letters.
3 But my HR manager went through the steps that she went
4 through, and it wasn't a simple "She hit the button." The
5 system that she was using didn't have a failsafe that gave
6 her a warning or showed her that anything happened.

7 So, as my manager went through the process that she
8 went through, identifying how this error had happened, it
9 reinforced to me why we needed to implement the just
10 culture, because there had been a time she probably would
11 have received a written reprimand.

12 Instead, the HR manager talked to her and consoled
13 her, because she was distraught over the fact that this had
14 happened, and I knew that selling just culture to the other
15 managers was going to be tough, but, because that was what
16 sold me on the fact that it was something we needed to do
17 going forward, I used that as my selling point to help the
18 other managers see why it would be good for us to do within
19 the department.

20 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Okay. Thank you. So, when
21 you were working at the Department of Mental Health, did
22 you do any work in determining, like, locations or
23 neighborhoods or communities of interest within the county?

24 MS. MORALES: Tangentially. The deputy directors
25 for programs -- well, actually, no. Tangentially. As part

1 of the executive management team, at one point in time, one
2 of the deputy directors came and indicated that we had a
3 severe overcrowding problem at our Arcadia clinic, because
4 there were more clients coming than could manage the
5 system.

6 So we had to look at where the participants were
7 coming from that were seeking services there. Based on
8 that, we identified that -- Arcadia was our easternmost
9 clinic -- that we should open a clinic in the San Gabriel
10 Valley someplace.

11 It was sent up to my staff and I to work to
12 identify a location that would be geographically cohesive,
13 to provide the needs of those clients that would be coming
14 to provide services, and then I had to go to the city
15 council in the city of Covina, where we ultimately located
16 the clinic, to explain to them why it was important for
17 them to have this clinic in their community, help them to
18 understand that it was not going to increase the number of
19 homeless coming into their community, because the homeless
20 don't come to a freestanding clinic to provide services.
21 The homeless are provided services wherever they are by our
22 field and mobile teams.

23 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Okay. Thank you. So you
24 talked about your experience with the 50-odd counties on a
25 board?

1 MS. MORALES: The Finance Committee of the
2 California Behavioral Health Directors.

3 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: That was it. What did you
4 learn on that about the different needs of the different
5 regions with that throughout California?

6 MS. MORALES: So I don't know that there were
7 different needs. The mental health needs were fairly
8 similar. There were some ethnic and cultural needs. The
9 Fresno County had more Laotian needs than some of the other
10 counties. They spoke to us about that, and we didn't have
11 a significant Laotian population in L.A. County.

12 What I did learn is, not all counties can provide
13 all services. So, in some of the more rural counties, they
14 would work collaboratively to -- one county would have the
15 inpatient services that they would all need. But yes,
16 other than maybe some differences in -- and we weren't
17 talking treatment so much there. We were more focused on
18 finance, and working with the state to make sure that we
19 were getting the pass-through or federal monies.

20 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Okay. Thank you. So, if
21 you were selected as one of the first eight Commissioners,
22 which are all selected randomly, you'd be tasked with
23 selecting the next six. What would you be looking for in
24 those individuals?

25 MS. MORALES: So I would be looking for people that

1 would complement those of us that are on the first eight.
2 So I would be hoping to get to know the other seven,
3 understand what their strengths are, and then looking for
4 people that complement those strengths by filling in any
5 weaknesses that I think are missing within the Commission.

6 It's something that I've been doing right now in
7 the Ethics Commission for the city of Long Beach. The four
8 first commissioners were appointed, two by the mayor, two
9 by the auditor, and then the four of us that were seated
10 first picked the next three. So we had people that
11 applied. We interviewed them, and we looked for people
12 that we thought brought strengths to our weaknesses.

13 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you. What would you
14 ultimately like to see the Commission accomplish?

15 MS. MORALES: What I would like to see the
16 Commission accomplish are boundaries for all of the various
17 districts that have to be drawn, that are fair, impartial,
18 and take in the communities of need, that don't divide up
19 communities, keep those communities that have importance
20 together, and maps that the public trusts, that the public
21 believes are in the best interests of our legislative
22 future.

23 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you.

24 Mr. Chair, I have no further questions at this
25 time.

1 CHAIR BELNAP: All right. Thank you.

2 We'll turn the time over to Mr. Dawson.

3 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

4 Thank you being here, again, Ms. Morales. I wanted
5 to ask you a little bit more about your work on the Ethics
6 Commission.

7 MS. MORALES: Sure.

8 MR. DAWSON: You said you were appointed by the
9 mayor?

10 MS. MORALES: Yes.

11 MR. DAWSON: And that was in October of last year?

12 MS. MORALES: Yes.

13 MR. DAWSON: How long is your term?

14 MS. MORALES: I believe my term is two years.
15 They're trying to rotate us, so that we don't all go on and
16 off at the same time.

17 MR. DAWSON: So fall of 2021?

18 MS. MORALES: About, yes.

19 MR. DAWSON: Is this position paid, or per diem, or
20 what?

21 MS. MORALES: We receive a stipend of \$200 per
22 meeting.

23 MR. DAWSON: Okay. So per diem. Do you file a
24 Form 700?

25 MS. MORALES: Yes.

1 MR. DAWSON: The decisions that it makes, are they
2 based on the Political Reform Act, or does the city have
3 its own code?

4 MS. MORALES: So we are pretty open right now,
5 because it's a brand-new commission. We are going to be
6 reviewing all of the city's policies, procedures, election
7 rules, lobbyist ordinances, and seeing if there are things
8 that we think need to be strengthened, if we think they're
9 strengthened enough. That's one of -- well, our first
10 order of business was selecting the first three -- the next
11 three -- so that we have a fully seated (sic).

12 Then what we will start to do is to come up with an
13 agenda of things that we want to address, but some
14 community members have already been coming to talk to us
15 about areas that they think we need to be looking at, the
16 lobbyist rules. Actually, a lobbyist came in and talked to
17 us about some things that he thought weren't strong enough
18 in the lobbyist rules.

19 So we have a lengthy list already that we've been
20 putting together of things that we want to work on, but the
21 other thing that we need to incorporate in there is that we
22 will be seating the city's redistricting commission.

23 MR. DAWSON: Interesting. Kind of like --

24 MS. MORALES: Yes. The ordinance that created the
25 Ethics Commission took redistricting out of the hands of

1 the mayor and the city council.

2 MR. DAWSON: I'm sorry. That was done by city
3 ordinance?

4 MS. MORALES: Yes. It was voted on by the voters
5 of the city, in I think it was 2018.

6 MR. DAWSON: So you'll be doing much like the Panel
7 is doing here?

8 MS. MORALES: Actually, the staff will be doing
9 what the Panel is doing, and then we will have the final
10 interview, yes, but we've been looking very close -- the
11 staff has been looking very closely at what the Panel has
12 been doing, to try and mirror it.

13 MR. DAWSON: I'm glad somebody is watching.

14 MS. MORALES: Why reinvent the wheel?

15 MR. DAWSON: So that leads me to your statement
16 about the decisions. The decisions that the commission
17 makes, are they final decisions, or are they
18 recommendations to the city council?

19 MS. MORALES: They are final decisions. It's an
20 autonomous commission.

21 MR. DAWSON: Okay. I don't know enough about it,
22 but, if it turned out to be that there was a conflict
23 between service on the commission and service on the
24 California Redistricting Commission --

25 MS. MORALES: I would resign from the commission.

1 MR. DAWSON: You would --

2 MS. MORALES: I would resign from the commission,
3 from the Ethics.

4 MR. DAWSON: Okay. Thank you. No further
5 questions.

6 CHAIR BELNAP: Okay. Mr. Coe, do you have any
7 questions?

8 VICE CHAIR COE: I have no additional questions,
9 Mr. Chair.

10 CHAIR BELNAP: Ms. Dickison?

11 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: I have no additional
12 questions.

13 CHAIR BELNAP: I do not have any questions, either.

14 MR. DAWSON: Great. Thanks.

15 Madame Secretary, time check, please.

16 MS. PELLMAN: Yes. Seven minutes, 15 seconds.

17 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

18 Ms. Morales, with the time remaining, I'd like to
19 offer you the opportunity to make some closing remarks to
20 the Panel, if you wish.

21 MS. MORALES: Thank you. So I would just like to
22 say I am very excited about this opportunity. I had looked
23 at applying 10 years ago, but I knew, with my workload at
24 Department of Mental Health, I didn't have the time to
25 devote to it. I have the time to devote to it now.

1 I think I bring a unique set of skills among the
2 Democratic candidates. I looked at some of the information
3 that I could find on the other candidates, and saw there
4 were a significant number of attorneys. I bring a
5 government background. I understand government rules. I
6 understand government procedures. I have an appreciation
7 for open meeting laws and Public Record Act. I can help my
8 other Commissioners through those hurdles.

9 If you haven't worked in -- and I said I hate the
10 term "bureaucratic," but I will use it here. If you
11 haven't worked through a bureaucratic process, I know it
12 can be frustrating. If you look at my letter from Doctor
13 Sherin, he indicated that that was one of the strengths
14 that he appreciated when he first came to the department,
15 was that I helped him navigate through the bureaucratic
16 process.

17 I see possibilities, not roadblocks. I work within
18 the rules, but I know how to get things done, and I know
19 some of the commissioners that I worked with in Parks and
20 Recreation, that was one of the things that they
21 appreciated, also, is that I could reinforce what the staff
22 was explaining to them, and why it was important.

23 I have a deep, abiding love for this state. It has
24 been my home my entire life. I went into public service
25 because I had the desire to make the community the best

1 that it can be, and make the community the best it can be
2 for every resident, and that's why I want to be part of
3 this Commission.

4 I want to help shape the future of California. I
5 don't want to do it through elective office. I know that
6 that's not where I want to be. I am a policy person, and I
7 think that this best matches with my skill set, and I hope
8 to make the final cut.

9 Thank you very much for the time. It's been nice
10 having this to look forward to, and it was nice to be able
11 to get dressed today.

12 CHAIR BELNAP: Thank you for being with us.

13 We're going to go into recess now. We'll reconvene
14 at 2:59 p.m.

15 (A recess was held from 2:39 p.m. to 2:59 p.m.)

16 CHAIR BELNAP: All right. The time being 2:59,
17 we're going to come back out of recess.

18 I want to welcome Mr. William Schmidt to his
19 interview. Mr. Schmidt, can you hear us?

20 MR. SCHMIDT: I can.

21 CHAIR BELNAP: Okay. We're going to turn the time
22 over to Mr. Dawson for the standard five questions.

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

24 Mr. Schmidt, I am going to ask you five standard
25 questions that the Panel has requested that each Applicant

1 respond to. Are you ready, sir?

2 MR. SCHMIDT: I am.

3 MR. DAWSON: First question: What skills and
4 attributes should all Commissioners possess? What skills
5 or competencies should the Commission possess collectively?
6 Of the skills, attributes, and competencies that each
7 Commissioner should possess, which do you possess? In
8 summary, how will you contribute to the success of the
9 Commission?

10 MR. SCHMIDT: I think that the Commission as a
11 whole, and each individual Commissioner, needs to have a
12 sense of fairness. California is very diverse, both in
13 terms of different nationalities, different religions,
14 different environments, in terms of urban, rural,
15 manufacturing, whatever, and in looking to draw appropriate
16 lines, the most important thing is going to be to try to be
17 fair, to make sure each segment, each demographic, is
18 fairly represented, has an opportunity to have their voice
19 heard.

20 As part of that, the Commission as a whole, and
21 each individual Commissioner, will need a sense of duty,
22 and that is to actually do what they said they're going to
23 do, to continue to move forward towards reaching a decision
24 on where the appropriate lines are going to be drawn. In
25 doing that, I gather we will be hearing from any number of

1 different witnesses.

2 Everybody has their own biases, and the Commission,
3 and each Commissioner, I think, has to realize that, and
4 realize that they need to work past their biases. To do
5 that, you need to have an open mind. You have to actually
6 listen to what people say.

7 You need the ability to communicate clearly, and
8 that's more for the individual Commissioners, whether it's
9 communicating with each other or communicating with any
10 witnesses. You need to ask questions that are
11 understandable. When you're speaking, you have to speak in
12 a manner that can be easily understood.

13 One of the other things that I think -- and this is
14 perhaps more for the individual Commissioner, but also for
15 the Commission as a whole -- is we have to understand the
16 difference between facts and opinions. I believe that, in
17 drawing the various lines, we're going to be looking at
18 facts, not opinions, and we have to realize the difference
19 between relevant facts and irrelevant facts, and focus on
20 the relevant ones.

21 Finally, the Commission as a whole, and each
22 individual Commissioner, needs to have the ability to, for
23 lack of a better term, pull the trigger, to actually make a
24 decision, not get hung up in the process.

25 I think I possess the various attributes that the

1 Commissioners need. I have the ability to be fair and
2 impartial. I think I had that ability before becoming an
3 administrative law judge for the courts. That is, as a
4 judge, one of the paramount things that you're looking for
5 is to be fair and impartial in rulings, in dealing with
6 witnesses, attorneys, litigants, whoever is before you.

7 The other thing that I think I'm pretty good at is
8 being goal-oriented. I like to continue moving towards the
9 goal. I like to be through with things early. You know,
10 back when I was writing appellate briefs, I would not wait
11 until the last hour, where I'd have to pull all-nighters to
12 get a brief in on time. You start early, you get it done.
13 That will give you an opportunity to review it, polish it
14 to the extent it needs to. So I think I'm goal-oriented,
15 and I think that's what the Commission, and each
16 Commissioner on it, needs to have.

17 The other thing is, we all need to be sensitive to
18 others, tolerant of different views. One of the pitfalls I
19 think people can fall into is automatically categorize
20 someone. If you have a highly educated person, too often
21 they'll belittle those with little education. Those that
22 may not have as much education as others may belittle the
23 "pointy-heads."

24 As an attorney, for example, one of the things that
25 we would do is, we were always hiring experts. An expert

1 doesn't mean you have to have an MD or PhD after the end of
2 your name. Frequently, our experts would have no more or
3 less than a high school education. We may need a truck
4 mechanic, a truck driver, any number of things. So you
5 need to be sensitive to everyone, irrespective of their
6 status, their social position. Most people have something
7 to offer. It's something I realized early.

8 I think that I can communicate reasonably well.
9 It's something I've had to do in court, speaking with
10 jurors, arguing cases. So I think I have the attributes
11 that would make me a good Commissioner.

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

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

24 MR. SCHMIDT: Paramount, I think, still is being
25 fair and impartial in what you do in working with people.

1 We need to realize that, even though our society has become
2 hyperpartisan, this should not be a partisan endeavor.
3 It's not a political endeavor. This is an opportunity to
4 draw lines so members of our state have an opportunity to
5 have a voice, to be heard, and to do that, you don't need
6 to be partisan.

7 We need to realize the fact that someone else has a
8 different point of view, be it political, religious, or
9 whatever. It doesn't make them an enemy. It doesn't make
10 them wrong. It's simply a different position, a different
11 belief.

12 I think that one of the things that I would do, and
13 I would hope any other Commissioner would do, to avoid
14 hyperpartisan (sic) is, you don't talk about politics
15 during the Commission meetings. Again, this isn't a
16 political issue so much as recognizing there are different
17 demographics in our state, and they should all have a
18 voice. It's not that one demographic is better or worse
19 than another. You don't lionize one and demonize another.
20 You just recognize there are differences in our state, and
21 they should all have a voice. Yes. I can't really think
22 of anything else.

23 You know, if you do have -- whether it's a witness
24 or another Commissioner that seems to be lapsing into some
25 hyperpartisanship by attacking a party or an individual

1 because of their affiliation, I would, and I would hope
2 other Commissioners would, simply remind them that that's
3 not the way to proceed, it's not the way to reach a fair
4 and just result to draw appropriate lines for our
5 community. So that's kind of all I can think of at the
6 moment.

7 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Question three: What is
8 the greatest problem the Commission could encounter, and
9 what actions would you take to avoid or respond to this
10 problem?

11 MR. SCHMIDT: I think the biggest risk, partly
12 because you do have, ultimately, 14 people with differing
13 political views and probably other views, socioeconomic
14 standing, there is the potential for bickering, which is
15 going to slow the process.

16 Again, what the Commissioners -- what I would do
17 is, if it appears that you are lapsing into some kind of
18 political or other bickering, simply remind people, you
19 know, "This is what our goal is. This is what we intended
20 to do," and it was one thing that can be effective.

21 I noted, as an attorney, as a litigator, one of the
22 things at a trial is, when you're voir direing the jury,
23 you're asking them, you know, "Can you follow this law? If
24 this is the law, if this is what the judge tells you, can
25 you and will you follow it?" At the end of the case, when

1 you're down to your closing argument, I think it's
2 typically effective to remind the jury, "This is what you
3 said you would do. Now please do it."

4 I think that you can have the same interplay with
5 the Commission if you end up getting into the bickering,
6 spending too much time not going towards your goal, is
7 remind them, "This is what we promised to do. This is what
8 we signed up for." And I think that, typically, that will
9 be effective in getting people to move forward
10 appropriately.

11 MR. DAWSON: Question four: If you are selected,
12 you will be one of 14 members of the Commission, which is
13 charged with working together to create maps of the new
14 districts. Please describe a situation where you had to
15 work collaboratively with others on a project to achieve a
16 common goal. Tell us the goal of the project, what
17 your role in the group was, and how the group worked
18 through any conflicts that arose. What lessons would you
19 take from this group experience to the Commission, if
20 selected?

21 MR. SCHMIDT: You know, professionally, typically,
22 we did not work collaboratively with others. On occasion,
23 you would have some major litigation with multiple
24 plaintiffs and/or multiple defendants. I was almost always
25 on the defense side, doing insurance defense work, and you

1 would collaborate with other defense counsel. You would
2 divvy up some of the discovery.

3 Typically, because probably well over 90 percent of
4 cases are resolved through a settlement, you're working
5 towards that. The one thing, though, that makes that so
6 much different than I think what we have here is, as a
7 litigator, your bottom line is you owe a duty to your
8 client to do the best thing you can for your client, and
9 that may well not be what's the best for anyone else.

10 So, in terms of actually collaborating with others,
11 I was, and still am, on the high school reunion committee.
12 There's 10 or 12 of us, and I worked on the 45th and 50th
13 high school reunion. One of the nice things is, everyone
14 pretty much is able to get along. It's not necessarily
15 that we were friends or even knew each other in high
16 school.

17 I was from a large high school, with over 600
18 graduates in my class, but one of the things that we
19 learned is, most things can be resolved through consensus.
20 People will have different ideas. We can talk through them
21 and, as a general rule, you're able to come up with a
22 resolution on any particular issue that is acceptable, I
23 think, in our case, to everyone, even though some might not
24 have been completely delighted with it.

25 So I think what you take away from that is, you

1 need to be respectful to the other members of the group.
2 If you're doing that, they will probably be respectful in
3 kind, and you're more apt to be able to move towards
4 whatever your goal may be.

5 In the case of our reunion, it was having a good,
6 safe time, having a good venue, having good food, and, at
7 the end of it, having enough seed money left so, five years
8 from then, we can start the process all over for another
9 fun reunion. I think some of that can be taken with the
10 Commission, again, respectful towards others, and everyone
11 working towards a common goal, and not insisting it's your
12 way or the high way.

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

18 If you are selected as a Commissioner, what skills
19 and attributes will make you effective at interacting with
20 people from different backgrounds and who have a variety of
21 perspectives? What experiences have you had that will help
22 you be effective at understanding and appreciating people
23 and communities of different backgrounds and who have a
24 variety of perspectives?

25 MR. SCHMIDT: As a kid, my dad worked for Goodyear

1 Tire and Rubber Company, and every move was a promotion, or
2 every promotion was a move. As a result of that, for quite
3 a while, we moved around a lot in California. That
4 included living in South San Gabriel, Fresno, Modesto,
5 Sacramento, at one point, Phoenix, Arizona. So I grew up
6 moving around a bit.

7 Since then, I have lived -- again, after getting
8 out of law school, I started off practicing down in
9 Southern California, in Los Angeles, living in Burbank,
10 North Hollywood, Toluca Lake. Where we practiced was
11 pretty much every county from Santa Barbara to the north,
12 down to Orange County to the south. We typically didn't
13 hit San Diego. And then we've go over as far as Riverside
14 and San Bernardino.

15 Once I moved back up to Sacramento, my work carried
16 me all over Northern California, pretty much from the
17 Oregon border down to Fresno, from the Nevada border over
18 to the Bay Area. So I've had a lot of opportunity to meet
19 different people in different areas. I've lived in the
20 city, rurally. I'm in a rural area now, Wilton,
21 California. In part of college, I was up in Plymouth,
22 California. I've been in Carmichael, Sacramento. So I've
23 lived all over.

24 Doing that, I've also had an opportunity to meet a
25 wide variety of people. Partly, from high school up

1 through law school, most of my experience was working with
2 the public. I worked at some convenience stores, 7-Eleven,
3 Handyman Trees (phonetic). I worked at the Weinstock's
4 Department Store when it was still around. I sold Cokes at
5 the California horse race, worked selling Christmas trees
6 at the Christmas tree lot, unique, just so many people
7 working with the public.

8 As an attorney and as a judge, again, you're
9 meeting just a vast variety of people, probably every
10 ethnicity that's in California, every socioeconomic level.
11 So I've had that opportunity.

12 Talking about diversity, I think I put in one of my
13 essay questions that, as a kid in South San Gabriel, one of
14 the families that I was best friends with the boy was a
15 Hispanic family. We'd trade ethnic foods.

16 In Carmichael, we had some refugees from the Middle
17 East. They were Islamic. Again, we'd trade foods. I've
18 got an aunt who is half-Chinese that was adopted by my
19 grandmother. My daughter is married to a Hispanic
20 gentleman. One of my best friends since high school is
21 Japanese, whose parents were in the internment camps. I
22 have seen so much diversity, and come to realize people are
23 people. Most people are good, and they're looking to do
24 well by other people.

25 I think these experiences would help on this

1 Commission as you travel all over California listening to
2 people from different demographics. That's one of the
3 things where I don't think I would have any biases or
4 prejudices that would get in the way of trying to give
5 everyone a voice in our government.

6 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. We will now go to Panel
7 questions. Each of the Panel Members will have 20 minutes
8 to ask his or her questions.

9 We'll star with the Chair, Mr. Belnap.

10 CHAIR BELNAP: Good afternoon, Mr. Schmidt.

11 MR. SCHMIDT: Hello.

12 CHAIR BELNAP: You were an administrative law judge
13 for roughly eight years. How is being a judge similar to
14 the role of a Commission, and how is it different?

15 MR. SCHMIDT: First of all, how it's different is,
16 when I'm presiding, I'm the boss, pretty much. How I would
17 expect it to be the same is, again, you're working with a
18 wide variety of people. One of the differences between
19 being an administrative law judge and a Superior Court
20 judge, as a litigator, I would get unhappy when the judge
21 would interject himself with a witness or herself with a
22 witness. Typically, the attorneys do the questioning. As
23 an administrative law judge, it's different. Frequently,
24 you have parties that aren't represented, and part of your
25 job is to bring out from them, through questions, whatever

1 information you need. I'm guessing that, as a Commissioner
2 with different witnesses, you're probably also going to be
3 wanting to do that.

4 One of the other things that you're looking for,
5 whether it's as a judge or as a Commissioner, is whether or
6 not the person speaking, that's answering questions, is
7 being frank and honest, or whether they're trying to pull
8 the wool over someone's eyes.

9 You're always trying to weigh testimony, weigh
10 answers, for the probability that it's true or not true,
11 and, again, you're trying to separate opinion from fact,
12 relevant facts from irrelevant facts. I'm guessing that,
13 as an administrative law judge and as a Commissioner, you'd
14 be doing the same thing.

15 CHAIR BELNAP: All right. Thank you.

16 MR. SCHMIDT: Well, one other thing I should say,
17 completely different, is yes, as an administrative law
18 judge, you would have the opportunity to speak with other
19 judges, if you had questions, but, by and large, you are on
20 your own in reaching your decisions. I think that, with
21 the Commission, it would be a collaborative effort, where
22 you would really want to be cooperating with your
23 co-Commissioners. That's all.

24 CHAIR BELNAP: My follow-up to that is, having come
25 from an environment where you were the presiding judge, you

1 were presiding over the proceedings, and now to be one of
2 14, how do you think you will react to the difference?

3 MR. SCHMIDT: I think that I am pretty good at
4 getting along with everyone, making sure everyone has an
5 opportunity to have their say. As a judge, you do have a
6 duty to run your courtroom. If I'm not in my courtroom,
7 it's not my job to run everything. Again, whether it was
8 on my high school reunion committee or as a Commissioner,
9 it's a collaborative effort. Everyone has points of view.
10 They should all be weighed, examined, given credence.

11 CHAIR BELNAP: All right. Thank you. In your long
12 career in the law, have you worked on any voting rights
13 cases or issues?

14 MR. SCHMIDT: I have not.

15 CHAIR BELNAP: Okay. How familiar are you with the
16 laws related to redistricting?

17 MR. SCHMIDT: I am not.

18 CHAIR BELNAP: If you are selected to be on the
19 Commission, what do you think you -- what kind of research
20 would you do? What efforts would you put into becoming
21 familiar with those laws?

22 MR. SCHMIDT: Well, one of the things that you
23 always do is you start off with the statutes and the
24 regulations. You examine them. I would assume, but don't
25 know, that there may well be legal cases, that is, reported

1 appellate cases that may help explain some things.

2 You look at that, and, of course, one of the
3 things, as I understand it, that we're going to be doing is
4 having any number of witnesses, some of whom are probably
5 intimately familiar with the laws and regulations
6 surrounding voting district, Voting Rights Act, that sort
7 of thing, and you're certainly going to want to listen to
8 those people.

9 So a lot of it is self-education. You know,
10 especially as a litigator doing insurance defense, one of
11 the things we constantly did is have to re-educate
12 ourselves on new things that we knew nothing about. You
13 know, one day I've got airbrakes on a truck that failed. I
14 didn't know anything about that.

15 Another day, it may be paint guns. I had a case
16 where a woman was shot in the eye with a paint gun and
17 died, and we ended up having to learn all about paintball
18 guns. So you're constantly learning new areas as a
19 litigator, especially doing insurance defense, where you're
20 apt to be retained on any kind of a lawsuit where there may
21 be insurance available.

22 CHAIR BELNAP: All right.

23 MR. SCHMIDT: So it's kind of how I do it, just
24 personal research and listening to experts on the matter.

25 CHAIR BELNAP: All right. Thank you. So, in your

1 essay in appreciation for diversity, you mentioned that
2 you've assisted immigrants working towards citizenship and
3 obtaining DACA status. How and when did this volunteer
4 opportunity come about?

5 MR. SCHMIDT: It's through the Sacramento Food
6 Bank. My wife volunteered there on a regular basis, and
7 periodically they would have workshops. The first one was
8 when they were first going to -- after President Trump was
9 elected, and they were looking to extend the DACA status,
10 and so the food bank was looking for attorneys to assist in
11 that project, and I volunteered.

12 They had a second, similar one six, 10 months
13 later, and again I volunteered at that one, just helping
14 people that would like to become citizens stay in the
15 country and become citizens.

16 CHAIR BELNAP: And how do you assist them?

17 MR. SCHMIDT: Primarily, filling out the forms for
18 them, with them. You know, there are various questions
19 that would have to be asked, including "Have you been out
20 of the United States for longer than" -- I forget how long
21 it was, so long -- "If so, why?," looking at potential
22 interactions with the legal system, and whether or not that
23 might preclude them becoming a citizen. So it's partly
24 a -- we would get briefed by, again, people that really
25 worked in immigration law.

1 They would assist the other attorneys in knowing
2 which questions to ask when you see a red flag, bring it to
3 the actual immigration attorney for them to examine it and
4 determine, "Well, is this person probably going to make it,
5 or maybe not? And maybe it's better that they don't even
6 apply, because they may open themselves up to deportation."

7 CHAIR BELNAP: And how often did you participate in
8 this effort?

9 MR. SCHMIDT: I only did that on the two occasions.
10 That's the only two that the Sacramento Food Bank has had,
11 at least that I am aware of, in the last couple of years.

12 CHAIR BELNAP: Were these daylong efforts?

13 MR. SCHMIDT: Pretty much, yes. I'd start in the
14 morning and go through lunch, and, typically, I think we
15 had finished up by like 3:00 in the afternoon, usually,
16 3:00, 4:00 o'clock.

17 CHAIR BELNAP: And why did you decide to
18 participate in that effort?

19 MR. SCHMIDT: You know, it's important to me. I
20 realized that we really are an immigrant country. My
21 great-grandmother was an immigrant from Italy in 1912.
22 I've actually been back and visited family in Italy
23 multiple times.

24 As I said, we have the refugee family from the
25 Middle East. They were just a sweet family, good people.

1 I've had people help with my landscaping when we built the
2 house out here. He's now a citizen. He was an immigrant
3 from Guatemala. His brother, who also helps and is a
4 citizen now, has talked about the hardships in Guatemala.

5 You know, you hear all the time about some of the
6 problems down in Mexico, the poverty. You realize that the
7 immigrants are a necessary part of a lot of our economy,
8 and I want to be as helpful to people as I can, within the
9 limits of the law, and that includes all immigrants.
10 That's why I volunteer to assist them.

11 CHAIR BELNAP: All right. Thank you. So you
12 touched briefly on a refugee family from the Middle East.
13 Were you saying they were a neighbor of yours, or that you
14 sponsored them in your home?

15 MR. SCHMIDT: No, they were a neighbor. There were
16 a next-door neighbor. At, what was it, the end of Ramadan,
17 they would give us some of their ethnic foods. At the end
18 of -- during Christmas, we'd give them some of our baked
19 goods. They had kids that were a little older than ours.
20 We just enjoyed them. They were different, you know.

21 CHAIR BELNAP: All right. Thank you.

22 Madame Secretary, can you give me a time check?

23 MS. PELLMAN: Yes. Nine minutes, 12 seconds
24 remaining.

25 CHAIR BELNAP: All right. Thank you

1 So you've mentioned in your testimony today that
2 each person has their own set of biases that they have to
3 set aside. What biases have you identified in yourself,
4 and how do you mitigate those internal biases?

5 MR. SCHMIDT: You know, probably one of the first
6 biases that I see is education. Education has always been
7 extremely important to me. It's something that we really
8 tried to see that our kids valued, and so probably, yes,
9 I've got somewhat of a bias based on education, but, as I
10 also said earlier, I recognize that education does not
11 equal intelligence.

12 I've got a neighbor a couple of doors down. I
13 think he's a high school graduate. I don't know how many
14 times I have called on him to assist me with issues here in
15 the country that I'm not familiar with, and he is. So,
16 while he may not have the degree after his name, he's every
17 bit as smart as I am, and he has different skill sets. I
18 recognize that. I think I can do that with whatever other
19 biases there may be.

20 CHAIR BELNAP: All right. Thank you. And you just
21 used a phrase that caught me off guard. You said, "Here in
22 the country." I assumed you were from Sacramento and that
23 you were living in the suburbs, or are you in some rural
24 area?

25 MR. SCHMIDT: It's fairly rural. Where I am, the

1 smallest parcels, and I'm on one of them, is five acres.
2 There's cattle raising, farming. There's lots of vineyards
3 out here. It is in the country. You know, Wilton, if
4 you're not familiar with it, it's a bit south of
5 Sacramento, a little bit east of Elk Grove.

6 CHAIR BELNAP: Okay. I see. That's on your
7 application. It just got by me. Yes, I'm familiar with
8 Wilton. Living in Wilton, what -- have you always lived in
9 Wilton? How many years are we talking about?

10 MR. SCHMIDT: A little over five years.

11 CHAIR BELNAP: Five years. So, having moved to
12 Wilton and lived there for five years, what kind of
13 perspective has that given you on the needs and desires of
14 people in rural California?

15 MR. SCHMIDT: One of the things that I've seen in
16 this community is, by and large, my neighbors, those I come
17 in contact with, are much more conservative than you'd
18 typically find in Sacramento.

19 It seems to me, in Sacramento, so many of the
20 people I interacted with were state workers, and they
21 tended to be somewhat more liberal. Out here, you have
22 more people that are farmers, ranchers, tradespeople, and
23 they just tend to be more conservative than the city
24 people.

25 CHAIR BELNAP: Okay. I don't have any further

1 questions. I'm going to turn the time over to Mr. Coe.

2 VICE CHAIR COE: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and good
3 afternoon, Mr. Schmidt. Thank you for taking the time to
4 speak with us today, and certainly I thank you for being
5 flexible to reschedule this in light of everything that's
6 going on.

7 I wanted to ask you, in your application, I noted
8 that you say that you recently took a geology course and
9 lab at a local community college. So, as has been
10 discussed, you're an attorney, and someone who previously
11 studied government and law, so I'm curious as to why
12 geology, and why at this point in your life?

13 MR. SCHMIDT: My oldest son is a geologist. He's,
14 I don't know, about two months short of getting his PhD in
15 geology, and just traveling around, you go into places like
16 southern Utah, places up in the Sierras. You just
17 see -- down by the ocean -- you see these geological
18 formations, and it's just so interesting to see how they
19 were formed, why are they there?

20 Between that and then my son being a geologist, I
21 just thought it would be fun, and it was something to do.
22 I was retired. I enjoyed the education, taking the class.

23 VICE CHAIR COE: Thank you. In your essay on
24 impartiality, you speak about your time as a small claims
25 court pro tem judge, and also as an administrative law

1 judge. I'm wondering if you can provide us with a specific
2 example, from these experiences or any other experience,
3 where you had to set aside your self-interest and make a
4 difficult impartial decision?

5 MR. SCHMIDT: You know, I don't think, either as a
6 small claims judge or as an administrative law judge, I
7 ever had to set aside my own self-interest. If I had a
8 self-interest, I would have recused myself. One of the
9 things that I would see is people that made bad decisions,
10 or that had a lifestyle that I didn't necessarily agree
11 with, and be able to set those aside and just look at the
12 facts in front of me, the law in front of me, and make a
13 decision based on the facts and the law.

14 VICE CHAIR COE: Would there be a better example
15 outside the role of being the judge?

16 MR. SCHMIDT: Gee. Well, you know, one area that I
17 have had to ignore self-interest, to some extent, is I'm a
18 trustee on my late father-in-law's trust, along with two of
19 his daughters, and one of the things that is always
20 available as a trustee is making decisions that would be
21 more beneficial to me and my wife, his third daughter, and
22 it's just something I haven't done, I wouldn't do, I
23 couldn't do.

24 You're always looking to be fair, especially if
25 you're expecting other people to pay you back in kind. I

1 expect people to be fair to me. I try to be fair to them,
2 and when you're doing that, even though you have a
3 self-interest, you may need to forego that self-interest if
4 it's not the fair thing to do.

5 VICE CHAIR COE: Thank you. I wanted to go back to
6 something that you -- part of your response to standard
7 question one, something I thought I understood you to say.
8 I'm talking about skills or abilities that the
9 Commissioners will need to have, and one of them being
10 "understand the difference between facts and opinions," and
11 that the Commission will be looking at facts, but not
12 opinions.

13 So much of the input that the Commission will be
14 receiving is very much, you know, the harder type of data,
15 the census information and things that are more fact than
16 opinion, but a lot of it is also input from the
17 communities, the things that would steer more towards an
18 opinion or a perspective or a preference for the local
19 communities.

20 So my question is, how do you go about considering
21 both types of data, the kind of harder data, the
22 quantitative stuff that isn't really arguable, and the more
23 qualitative "squishy" data, if you will, that are more
24 preference and opinions of the local stakeholders? How do
25 you go about taking both of those things into consideration

1 when making decisions for the Commission?

2 MR. SCHMIDT: You start off by -- when an opinion
3 is being expressed, you have to evaluate the factual basis
4 for the opinion. As both an attorney and as a judge,
5 sometimes, but more as an attorney, we're constantly
6 dealing with expert opinions, and those opinions have to be
7 based on a factual basis, and so what you're doing with any
8 opinion is looking at what underlies it? What's the basis
9 for that opinion? Does that make sense?

10 Too often, people will express an opinion that is
11 really more of a prejudice. It does not have a factual
12 basis. Those you need to completely ignore. If it's a
13 true opinion with a factual basis, you examine the factual
14 basis and see, does it make sense? So I think that's how
15 the two are interwoven.

16 VICE CHAIR COE: Okay. Thank you. So, in your
17 essays and some of your testimony today, you talked about
18 the opportunities you've had in living in various places,
19 or the places that your work has taken you, all across
20 California, to meet very different people, people of
21 diverse backgrounds and cultures, and I'm wondering what
22 you have learned from your interactions with these
23 different people, these different groups of diverse people,
24 what you've learned about their perspectives, their
25 concerns, that would make you an effective representative

1 for the diverse population of California?

2 MR. SCHMIDT: You need to, I think, a lot of times,
3 put yourself in the position of whoever it may be.

4 Probably one of the areas that you hear about now, and
5 there seems to be some controversy, is, for example, the
6 Black Lives Matter issue, and, you know, the response for
7 many people is "All lives matter. Blue lives matter."

8 While that is true, you need to look at it, I
9 think, a lot of times, from the perspective of the person.
10 If it happens to be a person of color, you can look at so
11 many of the injustices that can happen.

12 You look at some of the statistics on, for example,
13 if the death penalty is being imposed, how more frequently
14 it's going to be imposed on a person of color, rather than
15 the white person. You look at the number of people that
16 are stopped, apparently, just because of their color. They
17 happen to be Black in a white neighborhood.

18 I always remember hearing of one case down in Los
19 Angeles with a particular Black individual. I didn't know
20 him. And he was stopped multiple times by the police
21 because he liked to walk in a white neighborhood. I don't
22 remember if it was Beverly Hills or where it was, but
23 ultimately he ended up having to sue the police and get a
24 restraining order so they would quit, essentially,
25 harassing him.

1 So I think that's one of the things that you look
2 at. As I say, one of my best friends since high school is
3 Japanese. His folks were in the internment camps. I
4 remember going to his grandmother's birthday one time in
5 Walnut Grove, down the river. I was the only Caucasian
6 there. Other than my friend speaking English to me,
7 everyone else spoke Japanese.

8 You just get an appreciation for people and their
9 perspectives by being around them, listening to them,
10 interacting with them. If the only thing you have seen is
11 your own kind, whether it's white, brown, black, you know,
12 whether it's Christian, Jewish, Muslim, if all you do is
13 interact with your own, you're never going to gain that
14 other perspective. I think I've have the chance to see the
15 other perspective, both professionally and just socially
16 with neighbors, friends, growing up.

17 VICE CHAIR COE: Okay. Thank you. I'd like to
18 talk a little bit about -- one of the biggest challenges
19 facing the Commission is going to be identifying
20 communities of interest all throughout the state. Some
21 communities are rather easy to identify. They're more
22 engaged. They're easier to find. Some are less easy to
23 find. They're not as obvious or as engaged, for a variety
24 of reasons.

25 As a Commissioner, how could you go about

1 identifying communities of interest all across California,
2 paying particular attention to not inadvertently
3 overlooking some communities that might be harder to find?

4 MR. SCHMIDT: You'd probably have to go out and
5 look at -- I think that -- you know, it just now occurred
6 to me that one of the areas that you could explore is
7 social workers, who probably often deal with disaffected
8 communities, whether it's homeless, areas with immigrants.

9 So I think partly what you do is you actively seek
10 out different communities, and I think you can start doing
11 that partly through social workers, probably some religious
12 leaders, certainly just reading the newspapers. You see
13 things driving around. Like, I realize that we've got a
14 big Vietnamese population. I've got some long-time family
15 friends that are Chinese, and so they've taken me to
16 Chinese neighborhoods, to the restaurants there to eat.

17 So there are many different ways that I think
18 you're going to become attuned to the different
19 demographics. You probably need to explore all of them
20 through various mediums, you know, different types of
21 witnesses, reading, and just actively seeking out who's out
22 there. You know, you've got gay neighborhoods, Black
23 neighborhoods, Chinatowns, Koreatowns. You need to explore
24 them all.

25 VICE CHAIR COE: So, once you find them, some of

1 them, some communities, may be uncomfortable engaging in
2 government, that they're not typically ones that would come
3 forward and share their perspectives and their opinions,
4 but since as much community input as possible is important
5 for the Commission to be able to do their job to the best
6 of their ability, how would you go about making some of
7 these communities that feel less comfortable engaging in
8 these types of processes -- how would you go about making
9 them feel comfortable enough to come forward and share
10 their perspectives with the Commission?

11 MR. SCHMIDT: You know, and I don't know how the
12 Commission meetings work. One of the things that I know
13 could help in court sometimes is, you have an ally there.
14 So, if you've got someone there, people that are a little
15 bit reluctant to come forward, if you can have one of their
16 leaders, whether it's a church leader, an activist in their
17 community, even if they're not speaking, if they can come
18 and just be in the audience, and essentially offer moral
19 support to some of the people that might otherwise be
20 hesitant to speak up, that's certainly one way.

21 The other thing is, I think you need to be careful
22 in the way you ask questions, and also in your body
23 language, so you don't give the impression that you're
24 somehow disrespecting a person or disregarding what they're
25 having to say.

1 VICE CHAIR COE: Is something like that, body
2 language and the way you're conducting yourself -- is that
3 different by culture?

4 MR. SCHMIDT: You know, I think it may be, yes, and
5 I seem to recall reading or seeing that, in some
6 cultures -- and I couldn't tell you which ones -- it's
7 impolite to look someone directly in the eye. Others, you
8 know, you don't shake hands. You don't use your left hand,
9 in some cultures, to interact with another person
10 physically. So yes, there are certain things that I think
11 will vary by culture. I'm vaguely aware of what some of
12 them are. I could certainly be educated on more of them.

13 VICE CHAIR COE: Okay. Thank you. So, if you were
14 to be appointed to the Commission, which aspects of that
15 role do you think that you would enjoy the most, and,
16 conversely, which aspects of that role do you think might
17 cause you to struggle a little bit?

18 MR. SCHMIDT: I think the more enjoyable part would
19 just be the interaction with witnesses and other
20 Commissioners, and doing something that you think is
21 worthwhile for the community, for the state, you know, and
22 that is drawing the lines for the, you know, next 10 years'
23 worth of voting. To me, that's just attractive.

24 It's funny. One of the things I did not like that
25 much as an administrative law judge working on the

1 Affordable Care Act is about 95 percent of our hearings
2 were by telephone, which I did sitting in the chair I'm
3 sitting in now. You lost the human interaction. You know,
4 we didn't even have video on that. It was just by
5 speakerphone. So just the interaction is one of the things
6 that's enjoyable.

7 I think what can be more difficult, ultimately, it
8 is deciding between competing interests, which one is going
9 to have to essentially predominate. You know, you have to
10 draw a line someplace, and it may somewhat disenfranchise
11 some people that would not be disenfranchised if you moved
12 your line, you know, four streets to the left. I think
13 that can be hard, but it's a decision that has to be made.

14 As a judge, you're frequently making decisions that
15 aren't easy, because you're sympathetic with who's before
16 you or what the circumstances are, but, you know, you have
17 a job to do, and you do it.

18 VICE CHAIR COE: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Schmidt.

19 Mr. Chair, no further questions at this time.

20 CHAIR BELNAP: Ms. Dickison, we'll turn the time
21 over to you.

22 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you.

23 Good afternoon, Mr. Schmidt. So I know it's been
24 mentioned that you talked -- you know, you worked with
25 assisting immigrants with citizenship or DACA, and

1 assisting tenants with landlord -- yes, tenants with
2 landlord-and-tenant issues. What motivates you to do this
3 type of volunteer work?

4 MR. SCHMIDT: Well, for one thing, of course, I'm
5 retired, so I have the time to do it, although, even before
6 I was retired, I volunteered as a small claims pro tem.
7 The other thing is, the legal profession has been good to
8 me, and this gives me a chance to give back to it. There
9 are a lot of people out there that can't afford a lawyer,
10 that do need legal help.

11 Legal Services of Northern California is a terrific
12 organization that provides a lot of assistance. I only
13 worked on the landlord-tenant stuff -- actually, I did a
14 little bit of insurance coverage stuff for a couple of
15 their clients. But they do things for senior citizens,
16 Medi-Cal issues. I think it's a responsibility of lawyers
17 to give back. I did some pro bono working. I can do more
18 now.

19 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you. You talked
20 about, as administrative law judge, losing the human aspect
21 when you had to do the conference calling?

22 MR. SCHMIDT: Right.

23 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Yes. How do you think the
24 situation with COVID-19 may affect the work of the
25 Commission?

1 MR. SCHMIDT: Well, it may well result in more
2 instances like this, where you've doing things by video or
3 by telephone call. Video is certainly better than just a
4 phone call, because you can actually see people and judge
5 their reactions, and if that's something you do, you live
6 with it.

7 It's still a job that has to be done, just as doing
8 the Affordable Care Act litigation that I was doing had to
9 be done. Sometimes I got to do it in person with the
10 litigants. That was more enjoyable, more rewarding, if you
11 will. To the extent that we can do that with the
12 Commission, despite the COVID-19, I think that would be
13 great. If you can't, you can't. You live with it. You
14 work with it.

15 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you. Given the
16 current situation, there's concern about the census, and
17 the ability -- you know, undercounting and whatnot. What
18 steps do you think the Commission can take to kind of
19 figure out what to do if there is an undercount, or if the
20 census is delayed, and it has to expedite its work?

21 MR. SCHMIDT: Well, if you have to expedite the
22 work, you work longer hours. You work weekends. You work
23 until the job is done. That's something I certainly
24 learned as an attorney, and also as a judge, in making sure
25 you got your decisions out. So that part there, you just

1 do whatever is necessary to get the job done. And I'm
2 sorry. I forgot the first part of your question.

3 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: You have some concern about
4 undercounting?

5 MR. SCHMIDT: Undercounting, yes. I'm not sure
6 what could be done about that. If you've got the census
7 material, that's going to, presumably, be the best
8 evidence.

9 You know, we may have witnesses that can somehow
10 demonstrate that a particular demographic is undercounted,
11 that it perhaps extends further than what you thought, you
12 know, and, again, that's something where you just have to
13 evaluate the testimony, the evidence, and decide what, if
14 anything, can we do about that, to make sure that this
15 undercounted population has a voice in the government, a
16 fair voice.

17 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you. What do you see
18 as your role -- what do you think would be your role as
19 part of the Commission?

20 MR. SCHMIDT: One of the 14 Commissioners that is
21 trying to make sure that the Commission as a whole stays on
22 track, moving towards the ultimate goal in a timely fashion
23 to get the lines drawn, and what that means is, if people
24 are getting off track, kind of remind them, "This is where
25 we're going. This is what we need to get done, and this is

1 our deadline," and then certainly whatever input each of us
2 would have in deciding where a particular line should be
3 drawn.

4 I think, largely, what I would look at -- I think
5 that part is a given, where the lines are going to be
6 drawn. That's what the job is. What I think I could be
7 good at doing, also, is making sure people stay on task,
8 that they're going towards the goal.

9 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: I'm just looking at my
10 notes, here. So you talked about in your essay, and you
11 mentioned it today, having relationships or knowing
12 different people, in particular, one of your best friends
13 being of Japanese descent, and his family having been
14 detained. What did you learn from these individuals that
15 would help you in connecting with communities of interest
16 in other parts of the state?

17 MR. SCHMIDT: Well, you know, I think mostly what
18 it does is it makes me comfortable dealing with people of
19 any ethnicity, because I have dealt with people of many
20 ethnicities. I've been friends. I've got family that are
21 of different ethnicities. And so, again, it makes me
22 comfortable dealing with them, asking them questions, being
23 able to have, I guess, empathy for whatever their position
24 may be.

25 You know, one of the things that I still kind of

1 get a little bit of a chuckle about is, my dad was a Pearl
2 Harbor survivor, and I think it was my 21st birthday. They
3 threw a birthday party, and so the Japanese friend's father
4 came to the house, and knocks on the door. The first thing
5 he says to my dad, "So sorry about Pearl Harbor," and it's
6 one of the things -- yes.

7 Both of them were able to laugh, and it's one of
8 the things that I think got my dad. So he really didn't
9 any longer have any prejudice against the Japanese, even
10 though he fought throughout the Pacific. His ship was hit
11 in Pearl Harbor. You just get to identify with people. As
12 I say, you can have the empathy with them, and appreciate
13 their diversity.

14 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you.

15 So the first eight Commissioners are selected
16 randomly, and then they are charged with selecting the next
17 six. What would you be looking for in those six
18 Commissioners?

19 MR. SCHMIDT: I would be looking for probably more
20 diversity. I'm assuming that I will have a fair amount of
21 information about the other seven Commissioners that were
22 chosen by lottery, and I think it would be good to
23 diversify as much as you can, within reason.

24 You still ultimately, though, are going to be
25 looking for people that can work well together, and that

1 appear to be fair and impartial, although I think that this
2 Commission -- I mean, this process -- has done a lot
3 towards ensuring that whoever ultimately is selected for
4 the Commission, or within that Panel to be selected, will
5 be fair and impartial. You guys have done an amazing job
6 setting this stuff up, in my view.

7 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you. What would you
8 ultimately like to see the Commission accomplish?

9 MR. SCHMIDT: Timely get the lines for the next set
10 of elections drawn, fairly, where you do have a good
11 representation, where there is enough people in a given
12 area that they should really have a separate voice, if you
13 will, that they get that opportunity.

14 You know, I looked at -- I guess the most recent
15 one is the gerrymandering in Wisconsin. I think it was
16 North Carolina and Maryland where cases went to the U.S.
17 Supreme Court on a couple of them, because the Republicans
18 gerrymandered so badly Democrats weren't fairly
19 represented, and the other one, Democrats gerrymandered so
20 badly Republicans weren't fairly represented.

21 I don't want to see that happen, not only just
22 Democrats and Republicans, but also if you had a large
23 enough gay community that's concentrated enough, you know,
24 it may be incumbent to make sure that they have an
25 opportunity to have a voice. If you have a large Black

1 area, again, the lines should be drawn in such a fashion
2 that they have a voice, or a Koreatown, whatever.

3 So, again, it's giving people a voice where there
4 is enough of a concentration that it makes sense to draw
5 the boundary to include them, to give them a voice.

6 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you.

7 Mr. Chair, at this point, I don't have any
8 additional questions.

9 CHAIR BELNAP: All right. Thank you.

10 Mr. Dawson.

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

12 Thank you again, Mr. Schmidt, for being here with
13 us. We talked a little bit about your legal career. Did
14 you always want to be a lawyer?

15 MR. SCHMIDT: No. I kind of stumbled into it.

16 MR. DAWSON: From?

17 MR. SCHMIDT: I took the law school admission test
18 on a whim. The only law school I was at all familiar with
19 was McGeorge, so I said, "Well, send the results there."
20 Some months later, my dad asked me, "Gee. Do you know a
21 girl by the name of Sue Revelle (phonetic)?"

22 I said no. He said, "Gee. You know, she said she
23 saw your scores on the LSAT, and you ought to apply." I
24 finally figured out it was an old girlfriend from high
25 school that was in admissions at McGeorge. But for her, I

1 may not have been a lawyer.

2 MR. DAWSON: Okay. Thank you.

3 MR. SCHMIDT: But I love the job. It's been a
4 terrific profession for me.

5 MR. DAWSON: Well, I understood that you said that
6 when you were in private practice, you largely did
7 insurance defense. Is that correct?

8 MR. SCHMIDT: Correct.

9 MR. DAWSON: And does that mean your clients were
10 the insurance companies?

11 MR. SCHMIDT: Technically, no. The insurance
12 company retained us, paid the bill, but it really was the
13 person being sued. If it's an auto accident, it's the
14 driver. If it's a construction defect case, it's the
15 contractor. Those are our clients, and they always had to
16 be given priority, sometimes not making the insurance
17 company real happy.

18 MR. DAWSON: I see. And in your litigation career,
19 I understood that, you know, you were often choosing
20 juries. What counties were you practicing in?

21 MR. SCHMIDT: I'm sorry. What was that?

22 MR. DAWSON: What counties were you practicing in?

23 MR. SCHMIDT: Gee. In Sacramento, obviously,
24 Sacramento. I had park districts that I represented in
25 Solano County. We did a lot of public entity work, so I

1 represented park districts, school districts, in Yuba
2 County, Sutter County, Placer, El Dorado. I had
3 construction defect cases down in Fresno, which is as far
4 south as I got. I remember a couple of slip-and-falls in
5 the Bay Area, in Marin. Yes.

6 Then, when I was down in Los Angeles, as I said,
7 you know, we did Santa Barbara, Ventura, San Bernardino,
8 Riverside, Los Angeles, Orange County. Those were the main
9 ones, but I've been in courts in all of them, and certainly
10 with the opposing people in all of those counties,
11 including various different states. I've been to
12 Washington, D.C., Detroit, San Antonio, various places for
13 depositions.

14 MR. DAWSON: So this sounds like a pretty broad mix
15 of communities from urban to suburban to rural. You were
16 choosing juries. Do you think that maybe your experience
17 in jury selection in these various different kinds of
18 counties gives you an insight or a perspective on the local
19 communities, and could you bring that to the Commission?

20 MR. SCHMIDT: I think so. You know, one of the
21 things I had noticed is, in your more rural county, they do
22 tend to be more conservative, less, I guess you'd call it,
23 suit-happy, "Gee. You slipped and fell. Well, it's your
24 own fault," you know, if you happened to be in Sutter
25 County. If you're downtown Los Angeles, you're looking

1 around, "Let's see, here. Who's got a deep pocket that I
2 can get into?"

3 Then the juries would frequently mirror that, more
4 willing to give money away if you're in San Francisco or
5 downtown Los Angeles than if you're in Sutter County or
6 Yuba County, and yes, you judge your jurors the same way,
7 depending on which side of the case you're on. I had some
8 plaintiff cases, also, so there I'm looking for the
9 sympathetic juror, "Who's going to like my client?"

10 MR. DAWSON: Understood.

11 Thank you, Mr. Chair. Those are all the follow-ups
12 I had.

13 CHAIR BELNAP: I don't have any further follow-ups.
14 Mr. Coe?

15 VICE CHAIR COE: I have no follow-up questions.

16 CHAIR BELNAP: Ms. Dickison?

17 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: I have no follow-up
18 questions.

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

20 Madame Secretary, what is our time left in the 90
21 minutes?

22 MS. PELLMAN: It's 21 minutes remaining.

23 MR. DAWSON: All right. Thank you.

24 Well, Mr. Schmidt, with the time remaining, I'd
25 like to offer you the opportunity to make a closing

1 statement to the Panel, if you wish.

2 MR. SCHMIDT: Well, mostly I'd like to thank all of
3 you for considering me, getting me this far in the process.
4 For me, this has been a real education on seeing -- I
5 wasn't really familiar with the last Commission and what
6 they did, but, seeing this process from start to finish, I
7 am very impressed with it.

8 I would welcome the opportunity to play a part in
9 keeping California as a state with a lot of diversity,
10 that's fair, that's impartial. I do not want to ever see
11 California become a Wisconsin, North Carolina, Maryland,
12 with all of their gerrymandering.

13 It would be for me a real reward working on this
14 Commission, working with the other Commissioners, and
15 ultimately fashioning voting maps that make sense, that are
16 fair, that gives everyone in our state, to the extent
17 possible, a voice in our government.

18 You know, we've got a great government, and one of
19 the ways we keep it that way is giving everyone a voice. I
20 think that's all I have. Thank you.

21 CHAIR BELNAP: All right. Thank you, Mr. Schmidt,
22 for being with us.

23 We're now going to go into recess, and reconvene
24 Monday morning at 8:59 a.m.

25 (Thereupon, the Applicant Review Panel meeting was

1 recessed at 4:09 p.m.)

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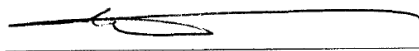
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IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 22nd day of April, 2020.



PETER PETTY
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