

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

In the matter of:

Citizens Redistricting Commission (CRC)  
Applicant Review Panel (ARP) Public Meeting

621 Capitol Mall, 10th Floor  
Sacramento, California 95814

MONDAY, April 13, 2020

8:59 A.M.

Reported by:  
Peter Petty

## APPEARANCES

Members Present

Ryan Coe, Chair

Ben Belnap, Vice Chair

Angela Dickison, Panel Member

Staff Present

Christopher Dawson, Panel Counsel

Shauna Pellman, Auditor Specialist II

Candidates

Maria Williams Slaughter

Renee Lias

Vincent Sheu

Steve Hsieh

I N D E X

PAGE

Maria Williams Slaughter	4
Renee Lias	49
Vincent Sheu	99
Steve Hsieh	153
Recess	189
Certificate of Reporter	190

## P R O C E E D I N G S

8:59 a.m.

1  
2  
3 CHAIR COE: The time being 8:59, I'd like to call  
4 this meeting out of recess. Before we get started just the  
5 standard announcements for those in the room and who do it  
6 virtually, please silence your cell phone and other devices  
7 while the meeting is in session.

8 Those in the room, if you have to take a call while  
9 the meeting is in session, please take it outside in the  
10 hallway. And, again, for those in the room, in case of  
11 emergency, please follow the instructions of the State  
12 Auditor's Office staff.

13 At this time we'd like to welcome Maria Williams  
14 Slaughter for her interview this morning. Can you hear us,  
15 Ms. Slaughter?

16 DR. SLAUGHTER: Yes, I can. Good morning.

17 CHAIR COE: Good morning. Thank you. I'm going to  
18 turn the time over to Mr. Dawson to ask the five standard  
19 questions, please.

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

21 Dr. Slaughter, I'm going to ask you five standard  
22 questions that the Panel has requested each applicant  
23 respond to. Are you ready?

24 DR. SLAUGHTER: I am. Thank you.

25 MR. DAWSON: First question. What skills and

1 attributes should all Commissioners possess? What skills  
2 or competencies should the Commission possess collectively?  
3 Of the skills, attributes and competencies that each  
4 Commissioner should possess, which do you possess? In  
5 summary, how will you contribute to the success of the  
6 Commission?

7 DR. SLAUGHTER: Okay. Well, I believe that all of  
8 the Commissioners should collectively possess a number of  
9 skills. They should be ethical. They should have an  
10 appreciation for differences, be collaborative, respectful.  
11 Just as you guys are being, they need to be flexible and  
12 adaptable, depending on situations that come up. Everybody  
13 needs to be professional at all times, have a high level of  
14 emotional intelligence. Be effective communicators, team  
15 players. Be able to comprehend a pretty significant amount  
16 of varied data. Remain objective, be impartial and stay as  
17 organized as possible.

18 I think the most important is to recognize the  
19 significance of this opportunity. There's not many chances  
20 that just the general public gets to ensure that  
21 Californians are appropriately represented. And so, the  
22 Commissioners need to really recognize that, the importance  
23 of this. And of those skills, you know, everybody can't be  
24 100-percent in all of them. And so it's good to have, you  
25 know, the 14 people that can work together to bring their

1 strengths.

2 I believe I possess all of the ones I mentioned,  
3 but my strong suits are being organized, looking for areas  
4 where things can be improved, be more effective, be more  
5 efficient. I enjoy taking in large amounts of data and  
6 making sense of it all. I just have a natural curiosity.  
7 And then I'm a particularly good listener. And one of my  
8 other skills is just being very collaborative, a team  
9 player.

10 And then your last question was about contributing  
11 to the success of the Commission. I think --

12 MR. DAWSON: Correct.

13 DR. SLAUGHTER: -- I think that being respectful of  
14 the process, demonstrating professionalism, ensuring  
15 application of fair and consistent practices as this goes  
16 along are where I contribute the most.

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 hyperpartisanship? What will you

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

4 DR. SLAUGHTER: For the first part of the question,  
5 I think it's just really a willingness to join the  
6 conversation. So, everybody's not going to have the same  
7 experiences, same background, and it's going to be  
8 important to understand the reasons why people have their  
9 particular views. You might not agree, but at least you  
10 can listen and hear what they're saying to kind of better  
11 appreciate how they came to be -- or how they came to have  
12 those understandings of politics and the way that things  
13 work.

14 As a Member of the Commission, I think it would be  
15 important to remain objective when you're hearing a lot of  
16 different -- when you're given a lot of different input. I  
17 think it's very important to find common ground. No matter  
18 how different everybody is, there's at least one small  
19 place where we have the same story.

20 I think that it's important as things go along if  
21 there are significant issues, that we find the right time  
22 and place to call them out and have a discussion about it.  
23 Most of those things are not -- you know, shouldn't be done  
24 in the public, they should be done with the Commission to  
25 make sure that we present a unified front as we're doing

1 the business of the State.

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 DR. SLAUGHTER: I look at everything as an  
6 opportunity for improvement when there are problems. But I  
7 think that, you know, when it comes to being represented, I  
8 think that everyone becomes passionate, and as you're  
9 having public meetings and encounters with different people  
10 of different backgrounds, different experiences, I think  
11 that will be the most significant opportunity for  
12 improvement. People are passionate about what their  
13 feelings are, what their causes are. I think the other  
14 thing that will -- that may come up is that there are  
15 people that have particular agendas, that want those  
16 pushed, and might not be as adept at sharing both sides of  
17 the story or, you know, the other side of the issue.

18 So it's important, again, for the Commissioners to  
19 remain objective, to ask questions, to let them know that  
20 they're being heard, that we're listening. And  
21 particularly in California where, you know, there's a lot  
22 of diversity here, not only geographic but in every aspect  
23 you can imagine. So it's just important to listen, ask  
24 questions and get a good, solid foundational understanding  
25 of the points that people are trying to make.



1 MR. DAWSON: Question four. If you are selected  
2 you will be one of 14 Members of the Commission, which is  
3 charged with working together to create maps of the new  
4 districts. Please describe a situation where you've had to  
5 work collaboratively with others on a project to achieve a  
6 common goal. Tell us the goal of the project, what your  
7 role in the group was, and how the group worked through any  
8 conflicts that arose. What lessons would you take from  
9 this group experience to the Commission, if selected?

10 DR. SLAUGHTER: So, over the past 20-plus years  
11 I've done a number of projects, multi-million-dollar  
12 projects, but I think the one that kind of set the course  
13 for the way I do everything is the first project that I was  
14 given, and that was just an equipment replacement. It was  
15 a \$15,000,000 project for equipment replacement and a  
16 building renovation. And the facility was in Torrance,  
17 California. It was a 24/7 operation. And about 500 people  
18 there, 300 square feet. So a land-locked 300,000 square  
19 feet -- a land-locked building on a superfund site. So any  
20 kind of problem that you could think would happen, did  
21 happen in that project.

22 There hadn't been a significant project in the  
23 facility for at least a decade prior, so a lot of the  
24 people that were involved were new to this kind of process,  
25 and my role was being the project manager start to finish.

1 So, I wrote the request for funding, managed the budget,  
2 hired the staff, held the regular meetings, dealt with the  
3 internal support and also the external contractors.

4 So in that project I had a team of about 25 folks  
5 for, I'm going to say 18 months, where we had to -- besides  
6 putting a new piece of equipment in, we had to move a lot  
7 of people around. And a lot of the folks there kind of  
8 were experts in their particular field, but really didn't  
9 venture and talk to other departments unless they really  
10 had to. So everybody kind of had their own responsibility  
11 and kind of kept to that. But this project, because it  
12 impacted the whole organization, it was really important to  
13 ensure there was communication across the board. You know,  
14 keep everybody on the same page.

15 And so my most critical responsibility was  
16 communicating with everybody. And so that entailed weekly  
17 meetings, weekly update meetings. Doing the quarterly  
18 updates to the plant, to let them know where things were.  
19 Celebrating even the smallest wins, so that people remained  
20 engaged in the process. Getting people out of their  
21 comfort zone. So, before I mentioned, people weren't  
22 really talking to each other on a regular basis. This kind  
23 of forced everybody to, you know, engage with each other,  
24 get feedback from everybody, and try to compromise when  
25 necessary. But just making sure that everybody was focused

1 on the same goal. And so what it taught me was that, you  
2 know, it's not just about technical aspect of anything,  
3 it's -- you have to take -- you have to use all different  
4 kinds of experiences and knowledge and talents to achieve a  
5 goal. Especially no matter how daunting it is, if  
6 everybody has their eye on the same objective, it makes it  
7 a little easier to get there.

8 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Question five. A  
9 considerable amount of the Commission's work will involve  
10 meeting with people from all over California who come from  
11 very different backgrounds and a wide variety of  
12 perspectives. If you are selected as a Commissioner, what  
13 skills and attributes will make you effective at  
14 interacting with people from different backgrounds and who  
15 have a variety of perspectives? What experiences have you  
16 had that will help you be effective at understanding and  
17 appreciating people in communities of different backgrounds  
18 and who have a variety of perspectives?

19 DR. SLAUGHTER: Well, the skills I bring, I think  
20 it just runs across the board is, I listen to people and I  
21 make sure that I at least can empathize with where  
22 everybody's coming from. I recognize everybody's not the  
23 same, so it's important for me to see where those  
24 differences are and, you know, make sure that I acknowledge  
25 them and appreciate them. Some of the ways that -- some of

1 things that I've done that will help me be effective is  
2 that I've been on diversity councils, diversity and  
3 inclusion councils. So I've trained people on recognizing  
4 any inherent biases and helping to reduce those. I have --  
5 I teach at Cal State Long Beach, and there's a variety of  
6 students in my classes. And one of the key components of  
7 making sure that the class is productive and that students  
8 all get along, is emphasizing the importance of recognizing  
9 diversities, diversity and appreciating that.

10 As I mentioned before, you know, there's always  
11 some small piece of everybody's experience that is similar.  
12 So, there's always some common ground you can find to at  
13 least start a conversation or further a conversation.  
14 Let's see. I just, I make sure that, you know, people I  
15 believe are the most important aspect of anything. So I  
16 take that as the first order of business, making sure that  
17 I have a good understanding of, you know, how people see  
18 things. And then once that hurdle is crossed, then  
19 everybody else kind of falls into place.

20 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. We will now go to Panel  
21 questions. Each of the Panel Members will have 20 minutes  
22 to ask his or her questions. We'll start with the Chair,  
23 Mr. Coe.

24 CHAIR COE: Thank you, Mr. Dawson.

25 Good morning again, Dr. Slaughter. Thank you for

1 taking the time to speak with us today.

2 In one of your letters of recommendation, they  
3 indicated that you were recently recognized as one of the  
4 50 phenomenal women in science, technology, engineering and  
5 mathematics.

6 DR. SLAUGHTER: Yes.

7 CHAIR COE: And I'm wondering if you could tell us  
8 a little bit about that and why were you were recognized in  
9 this way.

10 DR. SLAUGHTER: Sure. I was actually nominated by  
11 someone who works at Cal State Long Beach. When I was  
12 working there I was a faculty advisor for the National  
13 Society of Black Engineers. And then continued to be a  
14 faculty advisor in different roles in the colleges, not  
15 only College of Engineering, but the College of Liberal  
16 Arts and the associated student body. And part of my  
17 responsibility, I believe, was to, you know, help other  
18 people see what's out there, what opportunities are out  
19 there. And so my focus was on, you know, exposing STEM to  
20 individuals that might not be aware of all the  
21 opportunities that are out there. And so several, I  
22 believe several hundred people were nominated, but everyone  
23 had an interview, a face-to-face interview, talked about  
24 their experiences. And the ultimate objective of that  
25 selection is, the members that were selected are going to

1 be in a museum to kind of encourage young women in STEM,  
2 and also we're going to put together a curriculum to help -  
3 - Saturday classes that also focus on STEM. And so, out of  
4 the hundreds of people that were interviewed, I was  
5 selected to be one of the faces.

6 CHAIR COE: And you said that, that they're going  
7 to have you, the 50 of you in a museum or something about  
8 you in a museum?

9 DR. SLAUGHTER: They're going to have our pictures  
10 in a museum, and it's going to be interactive where, you  
11 know, the kids will push a button and it will tell a story  
12 about our backgrounds. So that the kids will get a better  
13 idea of, you know, you can come from anywhere and become  
14 anything. And so it will be in a museum, and also there  
15 will be a book dedicated to the 50 of us.

16 CHAIR COE: Okay. Thank you for telling us about  
17 that.

18 DR. SLAUGHTER: Okay.

19 CHAIR COE: In your essay on impartiality you  
20 mention how you were, you were selected to serve as a  
21 Skelly Officer, which entails providing an objective review  
22 of proposed discipline and an employee's response for some  
23 matter that is in dispute. Did you seek out that role, or  
24 did someone seek you out for that role?

25 DR. SLAUGHTER: I was sought for that role. I

1 always look at things objectively. I think it's just my  
2 technical background. And I know there's more than one  
3 side to everything. And so, someone in the human resources  
4 division recognized that, and requested that I become a  
5 Skelly Officer, not just for my department, but for the  
6 university as a whole.

7 CHAIR COE: And why do you think that they sought  
8 you out for that, that particular person? Was there  
9 something that you had done that you think had made some  
10 type of impression on them?

11 DR. SLAUGHTER: I think it was, I had had to levy  
12 some disciplines previously, and I know they have been  
13 exposed to the way I came up with the level of discipline  
14 and the reasonings behind it. And I believe that that's  
15 the reason I was selected, or at least one of the reasons I  
16 was selected.

17 CHAIR COE: In the same essay on impartiality, you  
18 talk about how you've been successful in your career by  
19 making well thought out decisions based on careful analysis  
20 of all factors. I'm wondering if you can give us a  
21 specific example of a time when you had to make a  
22 difficult, impartial decision that maybe involved setting  
23 aside your preference or self-interest?

24 DR. SLAUGHTER: Sure. Disciplined related or just in  
25 general?

1 CHAIR COE: Any example would be fine. Yeah.

2 DR. SLAUGHTER: Okay. All right. Let's see. I  
3 think that -- it's hard to get away from the discipline now  
4 that it's stuck in my head. But --

5 CHAIR COE: If you have a good example there, that  
6 would be fine.

7 DR. SLAUGHTER: Okay. All right. So there --  
8 without using names, things, most of this is confidential.

9 CHAIR COE: Yeah.

10 DR. SLAUGHTER: I had several people coming to me  
11 when I started at one position with concerns about an  
12 employee. And in lieu of just acting on what people were  
13 telling me, I met with that employee, got some background,  
14 and then set out on a course to see if I saw the same  
15 behavior, and then address it as I saw it. I started out  
16 just doing that, just I'd have one-on-one meetings and talk  
17 about, you know, what I observed, but found that that  
18 didn't help that employee. They needed like on the spot  
19 kind of attention. And so, so then I changed it from just  
20 the one-on-one meetings to, as soon as I observed something  
21 then I'd catch that employee outside of that meeting and  
22 talk to them right then, so that they had a good idea of  
23 what I'm seeing, what other folks are seeing, to hopefully  
24 have them address it.

25 Unfortunately, it turns out that they just couldn't



1 make the change, the switch, but we tried everything  
2 possible first in order to remain as impartial as possible.  
3 Just tried every possible remedy until even that employee  
4 recognized that this just wasn't a good fit for them, and  
5 subsequently they left the organization.

6 But that just demonstrates impartiality because I  
7 can't just listen to -- although I appreciate what's coming  
8 from the employees that are, that sought me out, I still  
9 have to see the other side, and see if there's anything I  
10 could do about it before we move forward with significant  
11 discipline.

12 CHAIR COE: Thank you. So, in your appreciation  
13 for diversity essay you mention how much work you've done  
14 at your workplace and beyond to increase inclusion for  
15 diverse groups of people.

16 DR. SLAUGHTER: Uh-huh.

17 CHAIR COE: Particularly, as you mentioned before,  
18 for encouraging women to pursue science, technology and  
19 engineering and mathematics careers. So from your  
20 interactions with the diverse groups of people you've met,  
21 what have you learned about their needs and desires and  
22 preferences that you think would make you an effective  
23 representative for them on this Commission?

24 DR. SLAUGHTER: I've learned that -- well, a couple  
25 of things I've learned is that, you know, everybody has a

1 different reason for wanting to pursue a particular career.  
2 And that it's just opened my eyes to the fact that there's  
3 a wide variance of opportunities available.

4 So, even right now, it's extremely evident, like there's  
5 folks in the same school district that don't have access to  
6 the internet if they're not at school. Things that most  
7 people think are readily available and easy for everybody  
8 to secure, it's just not the case. And I've found that  
9 students sometimes don't want to share that on a wide  
10 scale, of course, but -- because they don't realize that  
11 there's support out there. If they say something it's more  
12 about making sure they aren't ostracized by their friends.  
13 So it's just -- so even in this, in the Long Beach Unified  
14 District, school district, which has 80,000 students,  
15 there's still this wide gap of, wide gap in resources that  
16 are available.

17 CHAIR COE: Okay. Similar question, but more in  
18 line with diversity in the geographic sense, you know,  
19 people in different regions, different concerns and  
20 preferences. And then I see that you, you're from Los  
21 Angeles County. So I'm curious to hear about your -- or  
22 you currently reside in there anyway. I'm curious to hear  
23 about your interactions with people from different regions  
24 of the State, your experiences in different regions of the  
25 State. What you learned there that you think would make

1 you an effective representative of the people in the  
2 different regions of California.

3 DR. SLAUGHTER: Sure. Yeah. I'm from -- I'm in  
4 Los Angeles County now, but I'm from Kern County. And I  
5 have a smile on my face because when I take my kids there,  
6 they call it the olden days, even now, right. Because  
7 there's a significant difference between L.A. County and  
8 Kern County, not as much as when I was younger, but still  
9 quite a bit.

10 One of the examples is something -- some basic  
11 needs as water. Like there's areas in Kern County that --  
12 although it's an agricultural area, there's places that  
13 don't have water, homes that don't have water still.  
14 There's a different emphasis on education than there is in  
15 L.A. County. So there's a widespread difference just in a  
16 couple of hours' drive, one part of California to another.

17 I -- my family, my father's side of the family is  
18 from Arkansas. So, if we think Kern County's the olden  
19 days, it's even worse there. So, it's just them coming  
20 from Arkansas, landing in California, and the differences  
21 there, the ones I've been exposed to in terms of the wide  
22 economic gap between people that might live a couple of  
23 miles away from each other in Kern County. Just the  
24 different industries that are focused. So, in Kern County  
25 it's more oil fields and agriculture. Where here, it's

1 more technological and just -- there's just a wide variety  
2 of exposure you get as you travel even a couple of hundred  
3 miles in California, and I recognize that that expands  
4 throughout the State.

5 CHAIR COE: Okay. Thank you.

6 Madam Secretary, a time check, please?

7 MS. PELLMAN: Yes. Eight minutes, 24 seconds  
8 remaining.

9 CHAIR COE: Great. Thank you.

10 So, Dr. Slaughter, one of the biggest jobs the  
11 Commission will have would be identifying communities of  
12 interest all across the State, and some of these  
13 communities are easier to identify than others. Some are  
14 more engaged and more obvious and easier to find. Some are  
15 less so, and may be less obvious and harder to identify.  
16 As a Commissioner, how would you go about identifying  
17 communities of interest, particularly, how would you go  
18 about not inadvertently overlooking some of these  
19 communities that may be harder to identify?

20 DR. SLAUGHTER: I think I would, I'd just continue  
21 to take the approach I have now. So, I consider myself a  
22 connector. I'm involved in a number of different  
23 organizations that are not congruent, but as I was saying  
24 before, there's just these little pieces of experience that  
25 kind of tie everybody together.

1           For this kind of opportunity, I would take that  
2 into account, like the -- it's all about communicating with  
3 the people that you're exposed to, to get the word out  
4 about the opportunity. You're seeing a lot of  
5 advertisements about the Census and the importance of that,  
6 and this -- you need to take that same approach to make  
7 sure that the opportunity to be properly represented is  
8 made available to everyone.

9           So, it's about having little conversations with  
10 people, emphasizing the importance of, you know, making  
11 sure that your voice is heard. Public participation is  
12 extremely important. And that's where I'm, I still find it  
13 interesting that there's so many ways out there to join a  
14 conversation, but still not a lot of people engaged. And  
15 so, just my responsibility would just be to keep ensuring  
16 that people are made aware of the opportunity, and to  
17 hopefully bring them in so that they can share their  
18 experiences and their needs with the Commission.

19           CHAIR COE: Thank you. Some of those communities  
20 may be less engaged or do not feel comfortable necessarily  
21 coming forward to government bodies and sharing their  
22 perspective, and that could be a for a variety of different  
23 reasons if they have concern about that. But since  
24 gathering as much input from the communities in the State  
25 is vital to the work of the Commission. How would you go

1 about making some of these communities that are a little  
2 concerned about coming forward and sharing their  
3 perspective, how would you make them feel comfortable  
4 coming forward to share their perspective with the  
5 Commission?

6 DR. SLAUGHTER: If -- it depends. So, if it's --  
7 if I can be involved in making sure that they're  
8 comfortable, I'm more than happy to do that just by having  
9 a conversation. If -- I recognize that there are some  
10 communities that would be much more comfortable with  
11 representation from someone that looks like them or talks  
12 like them, or they believe has their same experience. And  
13 so reaching out to that particular representative would be  
14 the most important thing to do. And sharing with that  
15 representative the importance of having comprehensive  
16 involvement or widespread involvement. And then keeping  
17 myself open and available to participate, you know, as that  
18 representative believes is appropriate. That would be how  
19 I would go about it.

20 MS. PELLMAN: You have four minutes, 15 seconds  
21 remaining.

22 CHAIR COE: Thank you, Madam Secretary.

23 Dr. Slaughter, if you were to be appointed to the  
24 Commission, which aspects of that role do you think that  
25 you would enjoy the most, and conversely, which aspects of

1 the role of Commissioner do you think you might struggle  
2 with a little bit?

3 DR. SLAUGHTER: I don't -- as I mentioned earlier,  
4 I think everything's an opportunity, right. So, I don't  
5 think that -- there was nothing that I saw in looking  
6 through the information available that I wouldn't enjoy. I  
7 think that this experience would be tremendous. I think my  
8 strong suits are more on the lines of, you know, the  
9 listening, getting people engaged in terms of having them  
10 speak and me listen. And getting -- making sure that a  
11 process is transparent, open, and that we go about it in an  
12 organized and thoughtful fashion. And I -- until we start  
13 the process, I'm not comfortable saying that I'd be  
14 uncomfortable with. I don't know. But, again, I think all  
15 aspects would be, you know, welcome.

16 CHAIR COE: Okay. Thank you.

17 DR. SLAUGHTER: Okay.

18 CHAIR COE: At this time I don't have further  
19 questions, so I'm going to go ahead and turn the time over  
20 to Ms. Dickison.

21 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you, Mr. Coe.

22 Good morning, Dr. Slaughter.

23 DR. SLAUGHTER: Good morning.

24 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Welcome. So, when I was  
25 looking at your application, I noticed that you said your

1 employer was currently transitioning to bi-district. Is  
2 that the City of Carson?

3 DR. SLAUGHTER: Yes. The City of Carson was my  
4 employer at the time. I'm not there anymore. But they are  
5 going to -- they were considering district elections.

6 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Do you know if they  
7 transitioned?

8 DR. SLAUGHTER: They have not at this point.

9 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Were you involved in that  
10 process at all?

11 DR. SLAUGHTER: Not involved, only peripherally.  
12 So at the council meetings there was discussion, and I  
13 attended a couple of the public meetings to just hear what  
14 the public was contributing. And out of curiosity I did  
15 one of the participation kits to see how that works. But  
16 other than that, no, I was not involved.

17 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Okay. You talked about  
18 that you have a grasp on, you know, how moving boundaries  
19 could impact the community. Can you talk about that a  
20 little bit?

21 DR. SLAUGHTER: Sure. So, my understanding is that  
22 when you're doing redistricting, you can have an impact on  
23 the political power in an organization. When you're  
24 considering how to do this, you have to look for  
25 congruency, like if -- in terms of geography, in terms of



1 population, you have to consider what the constituent --  
2 how the constituents fit. So, you have to look at what  
3 their views are, what their focus is on, and see if you can  
4 come up with an area that would appropriately represent  
5 that constituent, constituent's focus.

6           When doing these participation kits, at least the  
7 ones that came from other residents of Carson, it became  
8 clear that, you know, you could draw the lines a lot of  
9 different ways. And that the benefit in drawing the lines  
10 in certain ways, you could see what benefit that had on  
11 that particular area, or how that impacted who would be  
12 elected in that particular district.

13           So -- and I'm not sure if I'm, if I've got your  
14 question completely, but the emphasis of the, of changing  
15 the boundaries, is that changing those does have an impact  
16 on the representation that results from the votes.

17           PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Do you think the boundaries  
18 should be drawn in a way that would impact who would be  
19 elected?

20           DR. SLAUGHTER: I don't think that. I think that  
21 the boundaries going to dictate what's going to happen. I  
22 don't believe that we're drawing boundaries to get certain  
23 people elected. We're drawing the boundaries to make sure  
24 that people -- the people's voices are heard appropriately.

25           PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you for clarifying

1 your --

2 DR. SLAUGHTER: Okay.

3 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: So, in your diversity essay  
4 you talked about you're, you were a member of the -- or you  
5 were the Inclusion Ambassador and a member of the Diversity  
6 Council of RR Donnelley.

7 DR. SLAUGHTER: Yes.

8 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: I don't know if I said that  
9 right.

10 DR. SLAUGHTER: Yes.

11 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Your letter of  
12 recommendation stated that you were on the steering  
13 committee for that, is that correct?

14 DR. SLAUGHTER: That's correct. Yes.

15 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Okay. What did you learn  
16 from that process, from that steering committee, that would  
17 be beneficial to the work of the Commission?

18 DR. SLAUGHTER: I think the most important thing  
19 was -- we had several trainings, but one of them was about  
20 basically unconscious bias. And we looked at this diagram  
21 that showed what people are most focused on when they are  
22 looking at someone and forming an opinion about them. And  
23 it's more about what they actually see, like things that  
24 people can't change about themselves, their skin color,  
25 their hair color. You can't -- you're just born with

1 those, right -- well, maybe not your hair color. But  
2 you're born with your skin color and other things that, you  
3 know, you can't change, but people have already formed a  
4 bias without knowing all the other pieces of you. And I  
5 think that was the most critical takeaway for me, is that,  
6 yeah, you'd have to -- it's important that you look beyond  
7 what you see in order to technically actually see a person.

8 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: So, you've already talked  
9 about -- or you talked about with Mr. Coe that you were on  
10 the status of women -- the Commission on the Status of  
11 Women. And so you also served as a faculty advisor for the  
12 Feminist Organization Reclaiming Consciousness and Equity,  
13 FORCE?

14 DR. SLAUGHTER: Yes.

15 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Can you tell us about that  
16 organization and what your role is?

17 DR. SLAUGHTER: Sure. At the time -- I'm not an  
18 advisor now, but at the time that I was, it was just to  
19 help the student, you know, kind of guide the students on  
20 how to get their word out to campus. You know, how to  
21 approach things that they were concerned about. Say, if  
22 there was an event happening that they felt was  
23 counterproductive to their mission, they wanted to know  
24 what the best way to go about effecting change, or at least  
25 starting a conversation to make sure that their concerns

1 were heard.

2           And so my role was to provide them with some  
3 insight, have them bounce ideas off of me. Talk to them  
4 about the pros and cons of the direction they wanted to  
5 take. And then, you know, as college students trying to  
6 figure things out, helping them, helping guide them, but  
7 not telling them exactly what to do. Just helping guide  
8 them on what approach would be the best.

9           PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: What motivates you to serve  
10 in these capacities?

11           DR. SLAUGHTER: As I mentioned before, I just --  
12 people are the most important thing. Like once you have  
13 established a foundation that -- established a relationship  
14 with people, then everything else that you do becomes more  
15 enjoyable. You're not just working for your own good,  
16 you're working for the good of a community. And that's  
17 always been my approach. I just appreciate the opportunity  
18 to work with groups or in teams or with individuals, and  
19 have everybody benefit from our interactions or  
20 relationships.

21           PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you. You've talked  
22 about how you like to work in teams and about teamwork that  
23 you've done, and you've talked about being a good  
24 organizer. How can you use those skills to -- or what have  
25 you learned from your development of those skill sets that

1 will assist you in -- or the Commission as a whole, in  
2 developing a team early on?

3 DR. SLAUGHTER: I think that the things I can, the  
4 things that I would be able to use on a commission would be  
5 just starting us all off on the right foot. Coming into  
6 something like this, you know, I think there are occasions  
7 where people want to kind of establish the roles  
8 immediately. And I think it's important to make sure that  
9 we -- that there's a collaborative relationship first.  
10 That we know a little bit about each other. We're going to  
11 be working together for at least a year. And so, getting  
12 to understand the other members of the team, and getting to  
13 a point where we're comfortable talking to each other about  
14 things that may be uncomfortable, is how you, how you set  
15 the foundation for doing the best that you can do as a  
16 Commissioner.

17 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you. In your essay  
18 you talked -- on your analytics, you talked about being a  
19 member of the Long Beach Unified School District Drop Out  
20 Prevention Committee.

21 DR. SLAUGHTER: Uh-huh.

22 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Where you looked at the  
23 root causes and proposed mitigation measures to increase  
24 the number of high school graduates.

25 DR. SLAUGHTER: Yes.

1           PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Can you describe the  
2 analysis that you did, including the data that you used for  
3 that?

4           DR. SLAUGHTER: Sure. So that was, there was a  
5 staff member from Long Beach Unified that collect -- or  
6 that provided us with all the data. Some of it's  
7 confidential. So we would get it from her. It included  
8 test scores, starting at K, K through fifth, and the middle  
9 school and high school. It -- she provided us with  
10 attendance rates, the costs associated with students  
11 missing school. She provided us with some surveys that had  
12 been done of teachers and administrators. Let's see what  
13 else. Just a bunch, a significant amount of data  
14 associated with those items. Most of it though was related  
15 to test scores and student grades.

16           And then we took that data -- because there was, I  
17 want to say there were eight people on the, on that  
18 commission. We took that data and started identifying some  
19 high level concerns like -- it became readily identifiable  
20 that fifth grade was the -- actually, third to fifth grade  
21 was the point at which you see a significant decline in the  
22 number of -- particularly girls, but in the number of  
23 students that were taking math or taking accelerated  
24 classes. You saw that even in the third or fifth grade, it  
25 went down. So that when they got to middle school and high

1 school, there was only 10-percent of what had been 100-  
2 percent of students, moving in a positive direction, a  
3 favorable direction in terms of staying in school,  
4 attending in a regular basis, and taking upper level math  
5 and science courses.

6           And so what the most significant finding was that  
7 we needed to start focusing on third, fourth, fifth  
8 graders. Before all of the emphasis had been on kids that  
9 were in middle school or on their way to high school. And  
10 by then, based on the data, it's too late. And so, our  
11 presentation to the board was that you need to start much,  
12 much earlier if you want to maintain, maintain attendance,  
13 maintain engagement for students, and have a more  
14 productive ground in middle school and high school.

15           PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you.

16           MS. PELLMAN: We have six minutes, seven seconds  
17 remaining.

18           PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you.

19           If you are selected as one of the first eight  
20 Commissioners, which are selected randomly, you would be  
21 tasked with selecting the remaining six Commissioners.  
22 What would you be looking for in those individuals?

23           DR. SLAUGHTER: Well, again, it goes to making sure  
24 we have a great understanding of the first eight and what  
25 their strengths are, and what they can bring to the table.

1 And then look for the gaps in the remaining six, to make  
2 sure that the Commission is as -- has a comprehensive  
3 outlook on things. Covers all bases in terms of geography,  
4 background, experience, so that it's a cohesive group of  
5 individuals. And that, you know, the pieces that are  
6 missing in some aspect can be filled by someone else.

7 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you.

8 Can I get a time check?

9 MS. PELLMAN: Yes. We have four minutes, 35  
10 seconds.

11 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Okay. Thank you.

12 What would you like to see the Commission  
13 ultimately accomplish?

14 DR. SLAUGHTER: Well, I would like to see the  
15 Commission be successful, and that success is making sure  
16 that we adhere to the administrative and legal requirements  
17 of a really good redistricting process. And that the  
18 success that the initial Commission had is basically  
19 repeated this time. And so that this becomes something  
20 that the entire State has a really good appreciation for.  
21 And hopefully that it spurs the additional applicants for  
22 your 2030 State of California.

23 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you.

24 DR. SLAUGHTER: Okay.

25 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Mr. Coe, I have no



1 additional questions at this time.

2 CHAIR COE: Thank you, Ms. Dickison.

3 Mr. Belnap, the time is yours.

4 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Good morning, Dr. Slaughter.

5 Thank you for --

6 DR. SLAUGHTER: Good morning. Sure.

7 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: So you indicated that you're  
8 not with the City of Carson anymore. When did you end your  
9 employment with them?

10 DR. SLAUGHTER: It's been about a month now.

11 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Why did you move on from the  
12 City of Carson?

13 DR. SLAUGHTER: Well, I had a -- in addition to  
14 teaching and doing some special consultant work for the  
15 Chancellor's Office, I have a business that I decided to  
16 devote more time to at this point that is focused on  
17 continuous improvement and productivity. And this pandemic  
18 that we're going through kind of makes you change your  
19 perspectives about some things, and my own business gives  
20 me the opportunity to spend a little more time with my  
21 family and kids, even after this is over.

22 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: So, what is the business that  
23 you're in? I didn't quite hear that.

24 DR. SLAUGHTER: It's just a business consulting.  
25 So it's a variety, I offer a variety of services. Most of

1 it's in, has been in the manufacturing arena, where I do,  
2 it's called Lean Six Sigma, so it's a methodology for  
3 improving the effectiveness or productivity of whatever  
4 industry it is.

5 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay. Thank you. So, I also  
6 want to ask about you were a director -- well, first you  
7 were associate director, then you moved on to director,  
8 promoted to director at CSU Long Beach. What was your role  
9 for those five years at CSU Long Beach as director?

10 DR. SLAUGHTER: As director I was responsible for  
11 the facilities management department. So that department  
12 has about 120 people. And because it's one of -- it's the  
13 largest non-academic department, we had our own like human  
14 resources staff, finance staff, in addition to the  
15 warehouse fleet, electricians, plumbers, custodians, just  
16 all of the technical aspects of running a facility.

17 And so for the five years that I was there, I was  
18 responsible for managing that department from a technical  
19 standpoint and also from a personnel standpoint. So we get  
20 the job done in terms of making sure that the environment  
21 was conducive for learning, but going hand in hand with  
22 that was making sure that the employees that worked for me  
23 enjoyed what they were doing.

24 And so I would -- we established some classes for  
25 them. Made sure that they took advantage of the

1 opportunity to go to school, because it's free if you work  
2 there, but a lot of people hadn't taken advantage of that  
3 before. And then establishing new opportunities. I  
4 developed an apprenticeship program so that, as an example,  
5 someone that was a custodian could eventually become a  
6 painter, and set themselves up long term for additional  
7 promotions and additional opportunities.

8           And then, you know, part of it is PR work, so not  
9 just working with my department, but making sure that the  
10 entire school was aware of what we did and how we could  
11 help. That we had a lot of interaction with students as  
12 well. We brought students over when we moved to -- from a  
13 manual system for tracking work orders to an automated  
14 system. I had, I involved students from the College of  
15 Business to come in, meet with my staff to talk about our  
16 processes, map everything out, and see which direction we  
17 should take. So, it wasn't about just working in that  
18 department, but working for the university as a whole to  
19 make things better.

20           PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: So you went from CSU Long  
21 Beach to then the City of Carson. Tell us about that  
22 transition. Why did you decide to go from CSU Long Beach  
23 to the City of Carson?

24           DR. SLAUGHTER: So, I had been at CSU Long Beach  
25 for eight years in total. And there just becomes a time,

1 at least for me in the jobs, in all the jobs that I've had,  
2 where I think that what I can do for an organization has  
3 been done. And if there's an opportunity for me to help  
4 another organization do something, then that's where I seek  
5 to move.

6 For Carson in particular, I think on my application  
7 it will say, "I was a special consultant for the  
8 Chancellor's Office." And one of the things that I was  
9 tasked with doing was evaluating different opportunities to  
10 have the 23 campuses save money. And it came across  
11 someone's desk that the City of Carson had decided to lease  
12 vehicles, or lease vehicles from a particular agency,  
13 instead of buying them for their fleet. And so I was  
14 tasked with evaluating whether or not that would be good  
15 for Cal State. And so I did some research, and actually my  
16 input to Cal State was, no, no one should ever do that.  
17 And in seeing that, seeing -- recognizing that probably  
18 wasn't the right decision to make, then my natural  
19 curiosity is to say, "Well, why did they decide to do it?  
20 And then as I'm looking, it turns out that that, the  
21 position was open, and so I applied for it, the position  
22 for a Director of Public Works which oversees fleet was  
23 available, and I applied.

24 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right. Thank you. So  
25 you mentioned that as CSU Long Beach, maybe elsewhere,

1 you've been a Skelly Officer, and also you've done  
2 investigations into personnel matters. Was that just at  
3 CSU Long Beach or have you done that elsewhere?

4 DR. SLAUGHTER: And elsewhere. Actually, when I  
5 started at RR Donnelley, that was the first opportunity I  
6 had to become involved in personnel matters. And it was  
7 just -- I think I was the only one available that day, and  
8 so they asked me to sit in on an investigation, so that  
9 there would be both a female and male in the investigation  
10 process. And I, so I listened to some interviews that were  
11 conducted related to a complaint. And based on that  
12 experience and what followed, I started becoming more  
13 involved in that aspect of personnel management.

14 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right. Thank you.

15 DR. SLAUGHTER: Uh-huh.

16 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: So as a public works director  
17 for the City of Carson, how did you need to exercise  
18 impartiality, and then can -- give us an example of  
19 exercising impartiality in that role.

20 DR. SLAUGHTER: Let's see. There's so many. And,  
21 again, I have to be pretty general with most of them. I  
22 guess one that sticks out is, as the Director of Public  
23 Works, you know, my charge is to make sure that the  
24 infrastructure is in good condition. So that's the roads  
25 and the meetings. Anything in the right-of-way. Anything

1 in the public right-of-way. And that's a very sensitive  
2 subject for constituents. Everybody pays their tax dollars  
3 and expects that, you know, their particular area in front  
4 of their house should be the focus of funds that come in.

5           And so, when I got to Carson I thought it was  
6 extremely important to kind of establish some baselines.  
7 In the past it had been, a constituent would call in and  
8 basically, based on where they were in the food chain, that  
9 attention might get immediately paid to their area. But it  
10 was -- I emphasized to my staff, it's important to look at  
11 the whole picture, not just that one, although it's  
12 important, but to look at the entirety of the decisions  
13 that we're making. And so when I got to Carson I  
14 established some baselines. So we had people come in and  
15 help us determine, you know, exactly how much need we had  
16 in terms of, in terms of street repair, in terms of  
17 sidewalk repair, and then prioritize those needs.

18           And so I was able to move the department from just  
19 basically firefighting and taking care of things that are  
20 important but not a safety issue, to moving to where we're  
21 taking care of things that are, you know, higher on the  
22 priority list. And then it also allowed us to have the  
23 story behind it that we could share with the constituents  
24 like -- so that we go out providing customer service,  
25 letting them know that their needs are important, but also

1 saying, we have \$100,000,000 in need, and we only get  
2 \$7,000,000 a year. So, although this is important, it's  
3 probably three or four years out on the list unfortunately.  
4 We're working to get more funding, we're doing all these  
5 things, but for right now we have to focus on it. And  
6 although some constituents, you know, didn't want to hear  
7 that news, they're more receptive to it because now you're  
8 giving them the whole picture, instead of just saying, no,  
9 I can't do it. So I think that that impartiality has been  
10 extremely beneficial to the work that I do in terms of  
11 public works.

12 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right. Thank you. So  
13 just out of curiosity, when you went over to the City of  
14 Carson, did you end up looking into why they were leasing  
15 vehicles, and did you make a change or?

16 DR. SLAUGHTER: Well, we started looking at it, and  
17 we actually stopped leasing them, but there's no change  
18 made yet. And it takes -- it's taking a while. It's  
19 Government.

20 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: I know.

21 DR. SLAUGHTER: So, we couldn't do everything at  
22 once, but they are working on it.

23 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay. As you look over the  
24 course of your career -- and, also, you've had a fairly  
25 long and prestigious academic -- I wouldn't call it career,

1 but you made -- you got you MBA. You have a Master's  
2 Degree. You also have a Doctorate in Educational  
3 Leadership. As you look over that time period of your  
4 education, and also your career, when were you happiest?

5 DR. SLAUGHTER: When was I happiest? Well, I'm  
6 happiest doing things that help other people. So, I think  
7 the whole time just in varying degrees. So, when I'm in  
8 school, you know, I'm not happy because I'm in school. But  
9 I'm happy about being able to take certain pieces of what  
10 I'm learning in school and apply them to my work life, my  
11 home life. So, I guess a good analogy would be, I am -- I  
12 don't really like to practice. I used to play sports, so I  
13 didn't like the practice part of it, but I liked all the  
14 games situations. That's when I'm my happiest. And I  
15 think the same thing goes for just, you know, this in  
16 general. You're practicing all the time, but when you're  
17 able to apply the things that you learned and understand,  
18 that's when I'm the happiest.

19 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: So, in your career, when did  
20 you feel like you were helping people the most?

21 DR. SLAUGHTER: I think that all throughout, it's  
22 just at varying degrees. So, when I was at Cal State Long  
23 Beach, I felt like I was helping people the most when I was  
24 able to provide other services or help them look at things  
25 differently. So, being a faculty advisor and helping



1 students recognize what they're already good at, and then  
2 their potential to succeed. Helping my own staff recognize  
3 that they're just not doing one little service, they're  
4 impacting an entire college, entire university.

5 Having my kids recognize that hard work does pay  
6 off. And that, you know, if you're focused on something  
7 and you do it, you feel good about the accomplishments that  
8 you've made. And also helping my kids see that, you know,  
9 you can't always stay in your comfort zone, you have to do  
10 things that help you stretch, and figuring out what you're  
11 really good at and what you should leave to someone else  
12 that's better than you to do.

13 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right. Just out of  
14 curiosity, which sports did you play?

15 DR. SLAUGHTER: Actually, I did cross country, I  
16 did volleyball and basketball and softball.

17 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay. You mentioned  
18 something -- this is going to be my last question. You  
19 mentioned something about the Commission needing to work  
20 together for a year, or at least a year. As you -- if you  
21 were selected on the Commission, in your mind what's the  
22 time horizon for your service on the Commission?

23 DR. SLAUGHTER: Well -- and I know there's training  
24 that goes at the beginning of this, but from the  
25 information I read, I thought it was from August to August.

1 That in -- at the -- towards the end of August you have to  
2 have everything to the Legislature in order for them to  
3 make their decisions.

4 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: And then after that?

5 DR. SLAUGHTER: And -- well, after that, for the  
6 next 10 years, you're really are an ambassador. That  
7 you've done the work. I saw that the 2010 Commissioners  
8 are involved still. At the beginning, I was on a couple -  
9 - at least one of the calls where they were talking about  
10 their experience, and the benefits of serving on the  
11 Commission. So, it's not just -- the year is what's, you  
12 know, legally required to get you to the next thing, to get  
13 you to the next step. But this is a long-term commitment  
14 that you have, because once you're a Commissioner, you're  
15 pretty much a Commissioner.

16 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: And are you committed to  
17 staying with it long term, through the entire 10-year  
18 period?

19 DR. SLAUGHTER: Definitely.

20 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay. Thank you.

21 All right. No further questions.

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

23 Mr. Dawson.

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

25 Good morning again, Dr. Slaughter.

1 DR. SLAUGHTER: Good morning.

2 MR. DAWSON: I wanted to ask you a little bit about  
3 your time at Long Beach State. It appears that you were  
4 working on -- you were doing grad work, working on your  
5 doctorate while you were acting as director?

6 DR. SLAUGHTER: Yes. I started my doctorate  
7 program in 2009 and graduated in 2012. So, when I was  
8 working there, I was also attending school there, yes.

9 MR. DAWSON: Wow. That must have took quite a bit  
10 of time organization.

11 DR. SLAUGHTER: It did. One of the benefits though  
12 is because of the environment, because everybody's always,  
13 you know, learning and trying to meld everything together,  
14 my dissertation was focused on something that was important  
15 to the Chancellor's Office. And so it all kind of worked  
16 together and made the time fly.

17 MR. DAWSON: And did that also sort of mesh with  
18 the classes you were teaching as an adjunct?

19 DR. SLAUGHTER: Yes, it did. My -- so my emphasis  
20 is -- was on quantitative research and, in particular, on a  
21 project called, Synergy, where the Chancellor's Office was  
22 trying to save money on the administrative side of the  
23 house, so that more money could be focused on the  
24 educational side of the house. So, it was a matter of  
25 looking at how things worked, and trying to streamline

1 processes or at least have the 23 campuses work together  
2 when they could, instead of having silos at 23 campuses for  
3 every single activity that was done.

4 And so the emphasis was to, you know, determine  
5 what things could be done as a single unit as opposed to 23  
6 individual units.

7 MR. DAWSON: I see.

8 DR. SLAUGHTER: And --

9 MR. DAWSON: Do you think that -- I'm sorry. Go  
10 ahead.

11 DR. SLAUGHTER: -- and part of the result was that  
12 -- of that was, established these two-day process  
13 improvement classes, and started going to each of the 23  
14 campuses to show people how to look at their processes and  
15 how to streamline them, how to start communicating across  
16 the spectrum, both on campus and off campus, to make things  
17 easier or better. That went really well, and so it  
18 expanded to where when we started teaching not only CSU,  
19 but also the community college colleges, and also the UC.  
20 So the three higher ed systems then became involved in  
21 this.

22 MR. DAWSON: Do you think that would -- that work  
23 would have any relevance working not with 23 campuses, but  
24 with 14 Commissioners?

25 DR. SLAUGHTER: Well, I think that kind of work, or

1 looking at things differently, having a different  
2 perspective is always important no matter, you know, what's  
3 -- what kind of work you're doing. Just having different  
4 eyes on the way something works is extremely important.

5 MR. DAWSON: So -- and then I just want to follow-  
6 up on the, you know, the question about, you know,  
7 quantitative research. Your work as a consultant and also  
8 as an engineer you obviously have to have confidence in the  
9 data that you're relying upon. Do you have any concerns  
10 about the Census data that will be coming out, especially  
11 in light of the current COVID-19 situation?

12 DR. SLAUGHTER: Right off the bat, I wouldn't have  
13 any -- I haven't seen any of the data, but I wouldn't have  
14 any concerns right off initially. I think that -- I looked  
15 at the information the other day about how many respondents  
16 there are, close to 50-percent already, which is I think  
17 really good. I think that people -- this COVID might help,  
18 might be helping to have people recognize the importance  
19 of, you know, quantifying their households, and making sure  
20 that going forward, you know, that they get everything that  
21 they're supposed to in terms of representation.

22 So, again, not having looked at the data, I can't  
23 say whether I'd have a concern about it or not, but at this  
24 point I do not.

25 MR. DAWSON: Okay. Thank you. In your work as the

1 Director of Public Works at Carson -- and I'm not that  
2 familiar with Carson. Is it a large city?

3 DR. SLAUGHTER: Carson's a mid-sized city. It's -  
4 - they have about 94,000, a population of 94,000, and it's  
5 19 square miles.

6 MR. DAWSON: Okay. So relatively compact?

7 DR. SLAUGHTER: Relatively.

8 MR. DAWSON: When -- I'm sorry. Go ahead.

9 DR. SLAUGHTER: I'm sorry. The -- so relatively  
10 compact only because really half of the area is more  
11 industrial. So, all the residents in a pretty small area  
12 compared to the industrial area.

13 MR. DAWSON: Well, in -- when you were working as  
14 the Director and you were -- there was a proposed project,  
15 was there public input? Were there public meetings on the  
16 projects?

17 DR. SLAUGHTER: It depends on the situation. So a  
18 lot of the projects that we were working on when I was  
19 there were federally funded or had some other funding  
20 involved. And so, the public input comes from the concerns  
21 that we get initially, but when we -- after we secure the  
22 funds, then it's, you know, no longer has that public  
23 aspect. We keep the public involved by continuing to meet  
24 with them, talk about the status, or give their input about  
25 what's happening.

1           On a smaller level, there's some, there's projects  
2 where maybe a certain neighborhood floods more than  
3 another, and -- because those are done by our own funds,  
4 then the public has more input to those.

5           MR. DAWSON: Well, that was sort of where I was  
6 going with that. In our work in public works, were there  
7 times when you had, really had to take into account the  
8 local neighborhoods and the differences from one area to  
9 the next?

10           DR. SLAUGHTER: Definitely. There's -- Carson was  
11 incorporated in 1968. And parts of it were developed then,  
12 and parts were recently developed. So, there's different  
13 needs in different areas of the city, and each time there's  
14 a request, all those things have to be taken into  
15 consideration before we move forward.

16           MR. DAWSON: So even in a city as small -- or  
17 relatively small and geographically and compact as Carson,  
18 were there different flavors to different neighborhoods  
19 that only the folks who live there might be aware of?

20           DR. SLAUGHTER: Definitely. And that's why for  
21 their attempt to move to bi-districts, it definitely came  
22 out in the participation kits, where there are definitely  
23 different levels of importance for even things like related  
24 to infrastructure across the different areas of the city.

25           MR. DAWSON: Okay. Thank you. I think those were

1 all my questions. I have no further follow-ups.

2 Mr. Chair.

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

5 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: No, I have no further  
6 follow-up questions.

7 CHAIR COE: Thank you.

8 Mr. Belnap, do you have any follow-up questions?

9 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: No further questions.

10 CHAIR COE: I have no further questions, counsel.

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

12 Madam Secretary, what is our time left in the 90  
13 minutes?

14 MS. PELLMAN: Sixteen minutes, 25 seconds.

15 MR. DAWSON: All right. Thank you.

16 Well, Dr. Slaughter, I want to offer you the  
17 opportunity to make some closing remarks to the Panel, if  
18 you wish, with our time remaining.

19 DR. SLAUGHTER: Well, I do appreciate this  
20 opportunity to virtually meet with each of you and talk  
21 about my background and skills and competencies. I hope  
22 that I was able to convey, you know, what you're looking  
23 for in terms of a Commissioner. Again, I recognize the  
24 significance of the opportunity and, additionally, I  
25 appreciate you guys, your willingness to do this via Zoom



1 at this point, to make sure that the work gets done on  
2 time. This has felt like an interview, and so I -- but a  
3 good conversation in there as well. So I do appreciate the  
4 opportunity, and look forward to hopefully working with the  
5 -- as a Member of the Commission.

6 CHAIR COE: Okay. Thank you very much for your  
7 time today, Dr. Slaughter.

8 DR. SLAUGHTER: Thank you.

9 CHAIR COE: Our next interview is scheduled for  
10 10:45 a.m., so we will be in recess until 10:44 a.m.

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

12 (Back on the record at 10:44 a.m.)

13 CHAIR COE: 10:44 a.m. I'd like to call this  
14 meeting out of recess. At this time I'd like to welcome  
15 Ms. Renee Lias for her interview this morning.

16 Ms. Lias, can you hear us?

17 MS. LIAS: Yes, and it's actually pronounced Lias.

18 CHAIR COE: Lias. Okay. Apologies for that, Ms.  
19 Lias.

20 MS. LIAS: That's okay.

21 CHAIR COE: Thank you for being here this morning.  
22 I'd like to turn the time over to Mr. Chris Dawson for the  
23 five standard questions, please.

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

25 Ms. Lias, I'm going to ask you five standard

1 questions that the Panel has requested each applicant  
2 respond to. Are you ready?

3 MS. LIAS: Yes, I am.

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

11 MS. LIAS: I think that all Commissioners should  
12 possess the skills to communicate effectively, and that is  
13 being able to ask both closed-end and open-ended questions  
14 to ascertain the relevant information. I believe that each  
15 Commissioner should be impartial and objective. The  
16 Commissioners should be able to analyze data and transport  
17 that data or export that data in layman's terms, so that  
18 it's easily understandable. I believe that each  
19 Commissioner should have the ability to collaborate with  
20 the other Commissioners, review all the information that's  
21 available and reach a consensus.

22 The skills I have are mostly through my work, but  
23 through regular life as well. I've been an Administrative  
24 Law Judge for 11 years. In that capacity I've had to  
25 question witnesses and parties. I've had to do credibility

1 assessments. I've had to draft decisions in layman's  
2 terms, so that the parties can understand the reasoning and  
3 analysis of the decision that was made.

4 In terms of collaboration, all my decisions go to  
5 board members. Sometimes those board members don't  
6 necessarily agree with the written decision, so we're able  
7 to discuss the law, the facts, and usually come up with a  
8 consensus as to what the findings and the conclusions  
9 should be.

10 I also possess the skills to collaborate with  
11 people of different backgrounds. I worked as a workplace  
12 investigator, and as a workplace investigator, I, too, have  
13 to do credibility assessments, and sometimes work with  
14 other investigators to come up with a clear, concise fact-  
15 finding report. I don't always necessarily agree, but when  
16 presented with the evidence, I am able to at least be  
17 objective about the findings. So those are some of the  
18 things that I believe a Commissioner should have, and I  
19 believe that I have those skills, communication skills, the  
20 ability to be impartial, the ability to be objective, the  
21 ability to reach a consensus based on the evidence.

22 I also believe a Commissioner should be able to  
23 analyze data. I have done that as a trial attorney for the  
24 Department of Transportation. That included analyzing  
25 traffic accident data. It included reviewing design of the

1 highways and expressing those designs to lay people in  
2 terms of a jury, and how accidents occur based on the  
3 construction and -- of the highway. So, I believe that  
4 analyzing data and putting it in layman's terms is an  
5 important skill as well that I have.

6 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Question two.

7 MS. LIAS: You're welcome.

8 MR. DAWSON: Work on the Commission requires  
9 members of different political backgrounds to work  
10 together. Since the 2010 Commission was selected and  
11 formed, the American political conversation has become  
12 increasingly polarized, whether in the press, on social  
13 media, and even in our own families. What characteristics  
14 do you possess and what characteristics should your fellow  
15 Commissioners possess that will protect against hyper-  
16 partisanship? What will you do to ensure that the work of  
17 the Commission is not seen as polarized or hyper-partisan,  
18 and avoid perceptions of political bias and conflict?

19 MS. LIAS: I think that that sort of piggybacks on  
20 the first question. I know that each Commissioner will  
21 come into this role with certain values, biases, implicit  
22 mostly, because I think we all have implicit bias. I've  
23 taken classes on implicit biases, and so I believe that  
24 most of us do have those. I think that it is important to  
25 recognize, especially if someone brings it to your

1 attention, to recognize that implicit bias, and to come to  
2 a conclusion based on objectivity, impartiality, which I  
3 know that it can be sometimes difficult to do. I know that  
4 partisan politics plays a lot, but I also know that when it  
5 comes to taking care of business, issuing decisions.

6 I was an arbitrator, and in my work as an  
7 arbitrator, I had to set aside my personal opinions and  
8 values. As an Administrative Law Judge I have to set aside  
9 my personal opinions and values, and really just look at  
10 the facts of the case, apply the facts to the law. I've  
11 done that for 30 years now. Notwithstanding my views about  
12 issues, I've had parties appear before me who were not so  
13 implicitly bias, but just very bias parties that have made  
14 racial comments, sexual comments, oppressive comments,  
15 offensive comments. Notwithstanding those comments, I was  
16 able to set aside those comments and come up with a  
17 rational, reasonable, well-reasoned decision. And I  
18 believe that working with the Commission we will have to do  
19 the same thing.

20 I know that the selection will be Republican,  
21 Democratic and Independent. And so just on that level, I  
22 know there would be some differences, however, it is my  
23 hope that we can meet and review all the documentation,  
24 review the information that we're receiving from the  
25 public. Set our differences, our political differences

1 aside and come up with a consensus so that the mission of  
2 the Commission can be served.

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

6 MS. LIAS: Interestingly enough, I think that  
7 question two sort of rolls over to question three. I think  
8 that one of the biggest problems that I can see is partisan  
9 politics and our individual values. And I know that values  
10 and views are derived from experiences, and I realize that  
11 my experiences as a Black woman growing up in East Oakland  
12 is very, very different from many others, and probably will  
13 be very different from the Members of the Commission.  
14 While I think one's experience can add to a discussion and  
15 it should, because I think that it enlightens all of us if  
16 we can understand a perspective of another person.

17 The bottom line is to be fair, to be objective, to  
18 be impartial, but to allow each Commission member to  
19 express their values, their concerns and their views. But  
20 to come back to what the common goal is here, and to apply  
21 the rules of law to what we need to do. But I think that  
22 partisan politics is probably going to be the biggest --  
23 one of the major issues. But I do believe that despite  
24 that, and I've done it successfully, you can set aside  
25 those things, your views, your values, and set aside your

1 experiences. They do add to the discussion, but ultimately  
2 the goal of the Commission is what's important. As is in  
3 my profession, applying the law to the facts, doing an  
4 analysis based on the facts, not on my personal opinion,  
5 not on my political views, not on my race, not on my  
6 gender. However, you know, there's definitely a level of  
7 sensitivity that one must possess, and I don't think that  
8 any member should really set aside what they believe and  
9 feel in a discussion. And I think that opens, opens things  
10 up to a bigger discussion, and I think, ultimately, you do  
11 get to a goal if you allow each person to sort of speak  
12 what they feel, and then you come back to what you need to  
13 do. And I think it's very doable.

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

24 MS. LIAS: One of the experiences that I had was  
25 working as a workplace investigator. There were

1 approximately 45 witnesses to be interviewed. There were  
2 three investigators, and I was one of the three. There was  
3 also an assistant. And we were all charged with  
4 interviewing a specific number of witnesses. And when we  
5 came together we realized that there was a lot of  
6 disagreement in the facts, and we had to do credibility  
7 analysis.

8 I came in with the opinion, based on my interviews,  
9 that certain witnesses were credible and certain witnesses  
10 were not credible. And, unfortunately, the other  
11 investigators came in with differing opinions. So what we  
12 had to do, our goal was to get a concise, objective, fact-  
13 finding report together. And in order to do that we had to  
14 reach a consensus on which witnesses were credible and  
15 which witnesses weren't credible. And so we had to discuss  
16 each witness and present the information and the facts that  
17 we had in coming up with our assessment. So we were able  
18 to do that.

19 It wasn't without struggle, and it required me to  
20 sort of take a step back and listen to my colleagues. In  
21 particular was the one witness that I, along with the  
22 assistant, thought was not credible at all. And we were  
23 sort of steadfast on that position, but when presented with  
24 the evidence from the other two investigators and their  
25 interviews, and putting all the facts together after



1 meeting several hours on this entire mission, we were able  
2 to reach a consensus as to the credibility of the  
3 witnesses. And we were able to put together a report that  
4 was 120 pages long, with a credibility analysis that I felt  
5 very comfortable with, after the information was presented  
6 to me in the manner in which it was presented.

7 I think the same thing would happen with the  
8 Commission, that there will be some disagreement. And my  
9 hope is that we can sit down and we can go over how we  
10 reached a decision. I think that's key, in going over the  
11 different steps that you took to reach a particular  
12 decision, either assessing credibility or facts. I know  
13 that each person can hear things differently. And just  
14 going over all of that information, I think that if you can  
15 present as a member, present the facts and the evidence,  
16 and sometimes remind a colleague what was said and done,  
17 then I think that a consensus can be reached.

18 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Question five. A  
19 considerable amount of the Commission's work will involve  
20 meeting with people from all over California who come from  
21 very different backgrounds and a wide variety of  
22 perspectives. If you are selected as a Commissioner, what  
23 skills and attributes will make you effective at  
24 interacting with people from different backgrounds and who  
25 have a variety of perspectives? What experiences have you

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

4 MS. LIAS: So, I can start with just growing up. I  
5 grew up in East Oakland, which was pretty much African  
6 American community. So for the first, you know, 10 years,  
7 15 years of life, that was all I knew. I made a decision  
8 to go to a high school that was outside of my district, so  
9 that I could get exposed to more diversity. So I went to a  
10 high school that was very diverse, and that the first thing  
11 I learned was the differences amongst the different  
12 cultures, but the commonalities of all people. And I think  
13 that that was good. I'm glad I made that decision to go to  
14 that high school. I still have some family in East  
15 Oakland. I'm able to communicate with them,  
16 notwithstanding the fact that I've gone on and moved to a  
17 different community.

18 I've worked in -- as a -- in law enforcement, so to  
19 speak. I worked for BART as a police cadet for a short  
20 time when I was in high school -- I'm sorry, in college,  
21 and so that gave me some exposure to the law enforcement  
22 community. I also had, as a trial attorney for the  
23 Department of Transportation, I did a lot of work  
24 interviewing and preparing CHP officers as witnesses. So  
25 that gave me some perspective on the law enforcement angle.

1 Lastly, some of my investigations have been involving  
2 sheriff's departments, so that has given me a greater  
3 insight and understanding of that community.

4           When I was in high school I worked for the  
5 Department of the Army, and that exposed me to military  
6 life, the life of military personnel. I've had the  
7 opportunity to work with children of various ethnic  
8 backgrounds. I was an attorney with the County of Alameda,  
9 and I worked in juvenile dependency, so I had to interact  
10 with children who were in foster care system. I also sat  
11 on the board, a non-profit board. Their goal and mission  
12 was to ensure the safety and welfare of children.

13           As an Administrative Law Judge, I've had parties come  
14 in, age ranges from 18 on up, different ethnic backgrounds.  
15 The same thing with employers, different ethnic  
16 backgrounds, different cultures. A lot of hearings with  
17 translation, either Mandarin, Spanish, just different  
18 translations. That gives you an understanding as well of  
19 different cultures and different meanings to the words that  
20 we use in English. When it's translated it's very  
21 different, so that has exposed me to a sensitivity and  
22 awareness of communication with those who have English as a  
23 second language or who don't quite understand English.

24           I've worked with the Department of Transportation as an  
25 attorney. I had expert witnesses with PhD's, accident

1 reconstruction, MD's, doctors who have testified on behalf  
2 of the department. I had to prep those doctors for  
3 deposition and testimony, as well as the expert witnesses.  
4 The expert witnesses included individuals in medicine,  
5 engineering, accident reconstruction, biomechanics,  
6 economics, but it also included prepping witnesses that  
7 worked for the Department of Transportation, maintenance  
8 workers, secretaries, other support staff, the chief of  
9 maintenance departments, engineers that were employed by  
10 the department.

11 I've also had to interview in my workplace  
12 investigations various people of different backgrounds.  
13 Some individuals who came from other countries, individuals  
14 who are students, well educated, some not so well educated.  
15 So my exposure to people in the State of California has  
16 ranged from those without a high school diploma to those  
17 with PhD's, those individuals of different racial  
18 backgrounds, socioeconomic backgrounds, different  
19 challenges. I consult with a non-profit, and that non-  
20 profit works with developmentally challenged adults. And  
21 I've had to meet with those individuals on my consulting  
22 projects.

23 So I believe that overall I've had a lot of  
24 experience with different people. I've traveled to, I  
25 believe, 42 of the 58 counties in my work. I've tried

1 cases in San Luis Obispo County, which is definitely a  
2 different jury pool than Alameda County where I've tried  
3 cases. Sonoma County, there were definite differences in  
4 the way jurors communicated, and there were differences in  
5 how they perceived me. And some of the language that was  
6 used to describe me.

7 I remember one specific incident doing jury voir  
8 dire in San Luis Obispo County. I was referred to as a  
9 "colored girl." And that was a bit surprising, but at the  
10 same time that was just sort of the way things were back in  
11 the late 80's -- actually, it was the 90's that this  
12 happened. It took me aback, but I understood that as I  
13 traveled along California that perceptions about different  
14 people and different groups, the perceptions were very  
15 different. But I have had the experience from Los Angeles  
16 up to Mendocino County, and it's a very diverse group of  
17 people that I've had to interact with. Has it impacted my  
18 decision to be fair and impartial? No, not really. Has it  
19 offended me sometimes? Yes, but it never keeps me from  
20 doing the job that I need to do.

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

24 MS. LIAS: Okay.

25 MR. DAWSON: We'll start with the Chair, Mr. Coe.

1 CHAIR COE: Thank you, Mr. Dawson.

2 Good morning again, Ms. Lias. Did I get that right  
3 this time?

4 MS. LIAS: Good morning.

5 CHAIR COE: Thank you for taking the time to speak  
6 with us today. I wanted to ask you about something you  
7 said in your first essay, the essay on why you wanted to  
8 serve on the Commission. In that essay you say that you  
9 have felt limited in your ability to help improve the  
10 quality of life of others, despite having served as a Big  
11 Sister in the Big Brother/Big Sister program, and years of  
12 service to non-profit agencies, including one dedicated to  
13 ensuring the welfare of foster children.

14 MS. LIAS: Uh-huh.

15 CHAIR COE: So having served in these ways, why do  
16 you think you still feel compelled to do more to help  
17 improve the lives of others?

18 MS. LIAS: I just feel for me it's -- I should go  
19 back. One of the reasons I was able -- I was -- I had to  
20 limit my participation, was I'm a mother of two, and I had  
21 to spend time raising my children. And they're both adults  
22 now, so now I see that I have this window of time where I  
23 can do more. I just believe that I wanted to serve on the  
24 board for EBCLO a little longer, but time constraints  
25 wouldn't allow me to continue. And that was something that

1 was very difficult for me.

2           My -- I'm always wanting to do the best job I can  
3 do, and if I can't give 100-percent, then I feel that I  
4 shouldn't be a part of it. And that was the case with the  
5 board. At that time with full-time work, doing some  
6 investigation work, raising my son and daughter, it was  
7 just difficult to be at a level where I wanted to be, that  
8 I could add quality to that board. And that's why I felt  
9 like I was limited in being able to do that.

10           The same thing with the Big Brother and Sister, my  
11 career and raising my family sort of -- of course, my  
12 children took priority. And, again, they're adults now so  
13 I have a lot more time. So I was limited because of family  
14 and career, but as I wind down my career as an  
15 Administrative Law Judge, I see that I'm having more time.  
16 In the workplace investigations, that's something I can say  
17 yes or no to. So it gives me a lot of time to do other  
18 things, and I really do want to do other things.

19           I love helping children, and so I'm looking for a  
20 new season in life where that I can pursue that. But I did  
21 feel limited because I had too many things going on at one  
22 time. But my children are adults, and they're doing what  
23 they do, and so I have a lot more time and I can give a lot  
24 more, because I'm compassionate, I'm thoughtful. I care  
25 about people a lot, and I enjoy helping people. That's who

1 I am, and I've always been that way. So I do look forward  
2 to being able to do more work in helping others.

3 CHAIR COE: Thank you for that, that perspective.  
4 I'd like to shift gears to the essay you wrote on  
5 impartiality for a moment, and I want to read a passage  
6 from that and then ask you a question. So I that essay you  
7 wrote, "although I certainly have compassion, sympathy and  
8 empathy for an aggrieved party, as an Administrative Law  
9 Judge and as an arbitrator, I have been able to set aside  
10 these feelings and issue rulings and decisions based on the  
11 facts and the law." So my question is, without violating  
12 any confidentiality rules, can you give us an example of  
13 one of these times where you had to set aside your feelings  
14 when making a ruling?

15 MS. LIAS: Okay. I can think of one instance. I  
16 was -- this is at the beginning of my career as an  
17 Administrative Law Judge. I got a case. It was one of my  
18 hearings during my first year, I believe. It was a  
19 disability case. And the party that came in -- usually in  
20 the disability cases the Employment Development Department  
21 is the other party, and then the claimant, the party who's  
22 seeking benefits.

23 So, this particular claimant, a woman, came in and  
24 she wanted to extend her disability benefits. She had  
25 breast cancer, and it still gives me chills to talk about



1 it. But she had breast cancer, and she had to have a  
2 double mastectomy. And she came into the hearing and she  
3 cried, pleaded, and just asked for an extension of her  
4 benefits, because she said that she just wanted to get  
5 reconstructive surgery because she no longer felt like a  
6 woman. And that touched me. I -- it, as you can tell, it  
7 happened, you know, nine, 10 years ago and I still remember  
8 it. And I understood what she was saying. I could still  
9 hear -- my heart could feel her, but the law wasn't on her  
10 side. And so I just had to, you know, write the decision  
11 based on the facts and the law, and the law would not  
12 provide for her to get extended benefits. There are lots  
13 of things that go into whether or not a party is eligible  
14 for benefits, and she didn't meet the requirements, and  
15 that was unfortunate.

16 I had a second case in disability as well, where an  
17 individual wanted to take paid family leave. It was a  
18 gentleman who lived in, I believe he lived in Southern  
19 California. And he wanted to take paid family leave so  
20 that he could care for his sister who was dying of cancer.  
21 And he wanted to leave his job and move up and stay with  
22 her because she wanted to stay in her own home. So he  
23 wanted to get paid family leave.

24 At the time that case came up, the law did not  
25 recognize siblings as caregivers in paid family leave. I

1 want to say that case came up in somewhere between January  
2 and June, because effective July 1<sup>st</sup> the legislature amended  
3 the law to include siblings, but at the time I got the case  
4 the law wasn't in effect at that time. And it sort -- it  
5 broke my heart that the timing was all wrong. That if he  
6 had waited until July 1<sup>st</sup>, then his situation would have  
7 been totally different. And so I had to explain in my  
8 decision that that wasn't the law at the time that he  
9 wanted the benefits, even though it would be the law, you  
10 know, a few months down the road. And that was very  
11 difficult.

12 In the medical malpractice arbitrations that I've  
13 done, sometimes the parties are aggrieved pretty bad, where  
14 there's a misdiagnosis or what they contend to be a  
15 misdiagnosis. And you can tell just listening to the  
16 parties, reading the documents, that there's a lot of pain  
17 there. These people are sick, and they believe that part  
18 of the problem was malpractice.

19 And my -- you know, it's like the -- I have to  
20 apply the standard, and whether or not this rises to the  
21 level of malpractice even though these people are hurting.  
22 So that's what I mean about that. I'm able -- while I feel  
23 it, and I feel it even as I talk to you, I understand what  
24 my role is. And even as a litigator, the same thing. As  
25 an advocate for the Department of Transportation, I had to

1 deal with a lot of wrongful death cases and serious  
2 injuries, but my, you know, my job was to advocate for the  
3 Department of Transportation.

4           And I had one case where I had to depose a mother  
5 who lost her son, and she cried in deposition, but my  
6 position had to be for the department, that there was  
7 nothing wrong with this highway. I'm sorry for your loss.  
8 And I could feel it. You know, as a mother, I couldn't  
9 even imagine, you know, what she was going through. But  
10 I've had to do it from the beginning of my career in  
11 probably every job I've had. And so it's not always easy  
12 because I'm a very compassionate and caring person. At the  
13 same time I have a job to do. It sounds a little bit  
14 callous, but I just sort of have to focus on that job with  
15 -- and I do it still with acknowledging that they're  
16 hurting. And you can do that. You can acknowledge that  
17 they're feeling what they feel, but you still have to focus  
18 on your job.

19           And one example I have is, I had a -- it was the  
20 last case that I tried in Alameda County. It was a  
21 wrongful death. The allegations included a defective  
22 highway design. A motorcyclist was killed, and he had a  
23 wife and two children. And they sued the department, and I  
24 was the lead attorney on that case. And taking the  
25 depositions of the wife, the surviving spouse, the

1 children, that was very difficult for me because there was  
2 a lot of pain.

3           The case went to -- and even in those cases, even  
4 where there is a little percentage of liability, you know,  
5 in the analysis you always look at, you know, the cost to  
6 try the case. In legal terms, we look at nuisance value.  
7 And so you offer a nuisance value. Her attorney didn't  
8 take it, so the case went to trial, and the department  
9 prevailed in the jury trial. But the one thing that sticks  
10 out to me most is after the case was over, the plaintiff,  
11 the wife, sent me a note and her note said, you know,  
12 basically -- and I still have it. But the note said, "Dear  
13 Ms. Lias, I just want to thank you for the level of  
14 respect, compassion and professionalism that you showed to  
15 me and my kids." And that made me feel good because I was  
16 still -- I was able to advocate but still be compassionate,  
17 still be respectful. And that has been sort of my guide  
18 throughout my career.

19           CHAIR COE: Thank you for sharing that perspective.  
20 Appreciate that.

21           MS. LIAS: You're welcome.

22           CHAIR COE: That kind of leads well into my next  
23 question, in that in the work of the Commission not all  
24 decisions that the Commission will be making are attached  
25 to things like concrete facts and -- or legal guidelines.

1 And much of the information the Commission will be  
2 obtaining to do their work is, for lack of a better term,  
3 more squishy. It involves perspectives, concerns and the  
4 feelings of different people from around the State.

5 MS. LIAS: Uh-huh.

6 CHAIR COE: And so my question is, how do you blend  
7 kind of that more concrete, the hard data, the stuff that's  
8 like the Census information or legal guidelines, how do you  
9 blend that with kind of the softer data, based more in  
10 feelings and emotion when making decisions?

11 MS. LIAS: If I understand your question, when  
12 someone -- I've had to do that. When someone's expressed  
13 an opinion of value or belief, I've been able to  
14 acknowledge that like in my workplace decisions. Even  
15 though it doesn't necessarily have to directly relate to  
16 the issues, sometimes people just want to know that you've  
17 heard them and that you've acknowledged their position and  
18 what they want to say. And so by including that  
19 information, then they know that you've heard them and that  
20 you acknowledge their position, even if the conclusion is  
21 not aligned to what they want.

22 However, I also think that if you have a group of  
23 people sort of expressing the same type of concerns or  
24 issues, I think that that needs to be looked at and it  
25 needs to be considered in making a decision. If you have a

1 bunch of people saying the same thing and having the same  
2 issues, I think that that has to be addressed directly and  
3 head on.

4 CHAIR COE: Okay. Thank you. Switching topics a  
5 little bit. You mentioned in your essays and in your  
6 testimony today that you've worked with many people across  
7 the State, diverse groups of people, different backgrounds  
8 in selected juries or interviewing folks for investigations  
9 you've conducted, among others. From your interactions  
10 with all of the diverse people you've met, what do you  
11 think you've learned about the needs and the preferences,  
12 the desires of different groups of people that would make  
13 you an effective representative for them on this  
14 Commission?

15 MS. LIAS: I think the first thing that I've  
16 learned -- I took a mediation class many, many years ago.  
17 And the one thing that I've learned the most, I think  
18 probably the most important thing, is when someone speaks  
19 to you, you need to sort of validate what they've said.  
20 And you do that by saying, I hear that you're saying  
21 whatever it is. I think that that's -- you know, you  
22 repeat the statement, so to speak. And I think that once  
23 they see that they feel a level of comfort with you.

24 I know that there are groups of people who, during  
25 my interview, who look at me as an equal, and so sometimes

1 it's really easy to interview them. Those who sort of look  
2 up to me -- I don't want to use the word, dumb down, but  
3 what I do is try to meet them at a level where they're  
4 comfortable. And so that means speaking, using words that  
5 they're comfortable using, acknowledging what they're  
6 saying. And so in my interactions with people I've had to  
7 do it a lot. I've done it with young people, for example.  
8 They talk in a different jargon, very different than we do.  
9 And I don't necessarily adopt their jargon, but I  
10 understand and I relay back to them that what you're saying  
11 is, this wasn't fair because of. And so just having  
12 interactions with different people you learn what they're  
13 comfortable with when you're communicating with them. And  
14 then you just sort of get to the level, their level of  
15 communication, so that they'll feel like they're being  
16 heard.

17 CHAIR COE: Thank you.

18 MS. LIAS: Uh-huh.

19 CHAIR COE: So one of the biggest tasks the  
20 Commission will face is identifying communities of interest  
21 all across the State of California. Some of these  
22 communities are rather easy to identify and find. They're  
23 more engaged and it's easy to identify them. Some are less  
24 engaged, are harder to identify, and they're kind of more  
25 hidden. As a Commissioner how could you go about

1 identifying communities of interest throughout the State  
2 and kind of voting inadvertently, overlooking some of these  
3 less obvious, harder to find communities?

4 MS. LIAS: I'm not sure what you mean by harder to  
5 find. Geographically harder to find or politically?  
6 They're just not involved in the political sphere?

7 CHAIR COE: It could be a combination of both of  
8 those things. There may be folks that are less engaged for  
9 a variety of reasons --

10 MS. LIAS: Right.

11 CHAIR COE: -- but they're still a community of  
12 interest. And when they're harder to identify, and kind of  
13 what can we do to try and find as many of these groups as  
14 possible?

15 MS. LIAS: That's a --

16 MS. PELLMAN: Quick time check. We have three  
17 minutes, 15 seconds remaining.

18 CHAIR COE: Thank you.

19 MS. LIAS: Are you there?

20 CHAIR COE: Yes. Go ahead.

21 MS. LIAS: Okay. So I believe that one, one method  
22 is outreach. I'm using social media, which I don't use  
23 much, but using social media and other information to get  
24 out to the communities, so that they can feel a part of the  
25 process and feel like their voice is going to be heard. So



1 inviting those individuals to public meetings, so that they  
2 can be heard. And distributing that information about  
3 community input to all the counties, and then within the  
4 counties to those areas that are less accessible and where  
5 sort of quiet in terms of the political process. So I  
6 would believe that outreach is the number one way to get  
7 those folks involved.

8 CHAIR COE: So, some of those communities, even if  
9 you find them, they may not feel comfortable coming  
10 forward, just they don't want to engage the Government for  
11 one reason or another. But since gathering as many  
12 perspectives as possible is so important to the Commission,  
13 what could the Commission do to make those groups that may  
14 not feel comfortable coming forward to actually feel  
15 comfortable enough to come forward and share their  
16 perspectives?

17 MS. LIAS: Letting them know that there will be no  
18 retaliation or repercussions for them coming forward. That  
19 I don't -- I'm unclear as to whether or not, I don't  
20 believe so, but I'm unclear as to whether or not they  
21 necessarily have to identify as individuals. Sometimes it  
22 would work to have sort of a group leader who can present  
23 those issues for those individuals who are less inclined to  
24 come forward. How do you go about doing that? You can do  
25 that as well in advertising. That our goal is to hear from

1 as many people as possible. While we recognize that some  
2 people don't feel comfortable challenging the Government,  
3 perhaps submit your claims to a community representative or  
4 your concerns to a community representative and have that  
5 person come to the meetings to express the concerns of  
6 those who don't seem to be willing to come forward. That's  
7 one option.

8 CHAIR COE: Thank you.

9 Madam Secretary, one more time check, please.

10 MS. PELLMAN: You just have 20 seconds remaining.

11 CHAIR COE: Okay. Great. I'm going to go ahead --  
12 thank you, Ms. Lias, for --

13 MS. LIAS: Thank you.

14 CHAIR COE: -- for your answers. I'm going to go  
15 ahead and turn the time over to Ms. Dickison for her  
16 questions.

17 MS. LIAS: Okay. Thank you.

18 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you, Mr. Coe.

19 Good morning, Ms. Lias.

20 MS. LIAS: Good morning. How are you?

21 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: I'm good.

22 MS. LIAS: Good.

23 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Welcome today. So, I'm  
24 going to carry along Mr. Coe's, what he was just discussed  
25 a little bit. In your analytics essay you talk about your

1 experiences as an Administrative Law Judge and as a judge  
2 pro tem. And that you've had to make credibility  
3 assessments of witnesses?

4 MS. LIAS: Yes.

5 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: And you and Mr. Coe were  
6 just talking about reaching out to these groups that might  
7 be hard to reach. And you talked about maybe a community  
8 leader or a group leader. One of the things that the last  
9 Commission noted was they felt there were instances in  
10 which someone would present themselves as a, as they were  
11 representing a community, when actually they may have  
12 actually be trying to further their own agenda. So, based  
13 on that conversation and your experiences, how can it  
14 assist the Commission, your experiences assist the  
15 Commission in determining if those giving comment -- excuse  
16 me (coughing) -- are truly speaking for a community?

17 MS. LIAS: You can elicit information to see if  
18 they're speaking for a community. You can ask questions  
19 about how many members, who presented what, some details  
20 about the individuals that had presented information to the  
21 group leader. And I think that by those answers you'd be  
22 able to make an assessment as to whether or not the leader  
23 or the -- yeah, the group leader or community leader is  
24 really setting forth the agenda of those that are in that  
25 community. I think an assessment can be determined by

1 asking specific questions to ensure that that person's  
2 personal agenda is not being furthered, but that that  
3 person is very much speaking regarding the community  
4 members, members of the community that have come to him or  
5 her.

6 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you. In your  
7 diversity essay you talked about your experiences in  
8 selecting juries and investigating workplace business.  
9 What did you learn from those experiences about  
10 California's diversity that gave you an appreciation for  
11 that diversity?

12 MS. LIAS: Well, I can say in my experiences I've  
13 worked with, interviewed, presented in front of people of  
14 all backgrounds, as I expressed before, from the layperson,  
15 the maintenance worker, the secretary, interviewing those  
16 individuals, to the PhD's and the MD's. In terms of ethnic  
17 backgrounds, I can't even begin to -- let's see, tell you  
18 that I've worked with every group of people as an  
19 Administrative Law Judge. The claimants are from various  
20 backgrounds. I've had to interact with Asian Americans,  
21 Filipinas, Latina, the Latina community or Latinx, Black  
22 community, the White community, just in my work. You get -  
23 - in the legal system you're going to get people who have  
24 been aggrieved or who are fighting for their rights, and  
25 you're going to get them from all backgrounds. And that's

1 what I've had. It's sort of hard to quantify really,  
2 because I've -- I cannot think of a group of people that I  
3 haven't worked with on some level in the last 35 years.

4           And then from a socioeconomic gamut, I've worked  
5 with CEO's and executive directors. I've worked with  
6 owners of businesses, and I've worked with Government  
7 employees rank and file, non-profit, people all over the  
8 spectrum. So it's, like I said, "It's hard to quantify,  
9 but I can say that every -- I've worked with, you know,  
10 folks who are here on temporary visas working, you know,  
11 from all sorts of -- from various continents and  
12 countries." So, it's just been so much. I can't -- you  
13 know, I know that I've worked with folks from continent --  
14 probably every one. The only one that I can think of that  
15 I haven't worked with somebody was Antarctica, but  
16 otherwise, I've worked with somebody from the other six  
17 continents in some level, mostly as an Administrative Law  
18 Judge.

19           PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: In that capacity, did you  
20 learn anything about those individuals, about their needs  
21 or experiences, that might lead to an understanding of what  
22 could influence, what could influence their preference when  
23 it comes to representation?

24           MS. LIAS: I don't know that I could necessarily do  
25 that. I think that one of the things I got out of it --

1 the common denominator for the parties as an Administrative  
2 Law Judge was to basically get benefits. So that's what  
3 everybody's seeking. Now, how to go about getting that is  
4 very different. And the level of how they communicate's  
5 very different. I know that, you know, there is for  
6 certain cultures, there's a higher level of respect for  
7 what they perceive as authority. And so sometimes it takes  
8 a little more work to get the facts from the case. And  
9 then there's the level where there's a level of confidence,  
10 that not much is done. But the common goal is for them to  
11 get benefits. So, in terms of their values, sometimes it  
12 comes out, most times not, that comes out a lot more in the  
13 workplace investigations.

14 And, again, it's not about what they need or want, it's  
15 just about them wanting to be heard, their values, their  
16 views considered. And, you know, you can have, as you may  
17 have heard, eye-witness testimony. You know, one person  
18 will hear or see something, and the next person will hear  
19 or see something different. And they truly believe that.  
20 And so it's really important not to invalidate what they  
21 believe. To understand what their believing. Their goal  
22 is just to be believed as truthful. So, it's not like it  
23 would be in this setting, in the Commission setting, it's  
24 really in Administrative Law Judge work. It's about, I  
25 need my money, I need my benefits, and they present their

1 case. And like I said, some cases are more difficult than  
2 others, just gathering the relevant facts. And workplace  
3 investigations, the common thing is to be believed. My  
4 story is accurate. I'm telling the truth. That's my view.  
5 And that's what they look for in the report. That when you  
6 write the report, that you've acknowledged that this was  
7 their perception. And that's about it in terms of those  
8 things. It's just pretty much a common goal in both  
9 arenas.

10 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Okay. Thank you. You and  
11 Mr. Coe talked about impartiality as it pertains to your  
12 work as --

13 MS. LIAS: Uh-huh.

14 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: And most of the discussion  
15 revolved around what was required.

16 MS. LIAS: Uh-huh.

17 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Can you provide an example  
18 of setting your own interests or views aside in a context  
19 where it wasn't a requirement that you do so?

20 MS. LIAS: That it wasn't a requirement that I do  
21 so? Yes, as a consultant for the non-profit organization.  
22 Just, you know, providing my feedback and feelings about  
23 how certain issues should be addressed. And as a board  
24 member for East Bay Children's Law Office, being able to  
25 present my position with, you know, with my feelings about

1 certain things as it relates to the needs of the children  
2 and the juvenile dependency program, and what changes I see  
3 would be beneficial. So, in those environments I'm able to  
4 do that. It really doesn't have anything to do with legal,  
5 per se. I mean, there's always the backdrop because you  
6 are running companies and boards. There's a legal  
7 backdrop. But a lot of the information is related to my  
8 life experiences as a mother, as a Black woman. So I can  
9 bring those views and experiences to the board, which I  
10 did. And knowing children from my neighborhood whose  
11 grandchildren were in foster care, so I can give a personal  
12 touch to that and tell them what my views were. Where I  
13 didn't have to be impartial or objective, but just to  
14 present my views and my opinion as to the best way to  
15 approach a particular issue.

16 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you. Based on your  
17 experiences, what do you see as your role on the  
18 Commission, should you be selected?

19 MS. LIAS: My role would be to review the Census  
20 data, review the maps, analyze all the data. Get input  
21 from the public. Review any policies, laws and regulations  
22 and practices from the first Commission. And meet and  
23 collaborate with my colleagues to come up with a consensus  
24 on redistricting.

25 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: So that pretty much that as



1 a team member?

2 MS. LIAS: As a team member. I was a team leader  
3 for the Department of Transportation, so I had to assign  
4 cases, but I worked with those individuals on my team as a  
5 group to come up with strategy, to come with settlements,  
6 to go over all the facts and the evidence to make  
7 decisions. It wasn't always easy. You have strong  
8 opinions. But for the most part, we were able to get it  
9 done.

10 And I do it, too, with the board now as an  
11 Administrative Law Judge. There will be differences  
12 amongst the board members with the decision that I've  
13 issued, and I'll get questions about why I reached the  
14 conclusion I reached, and I will provide them with the  
15 facts and the law as to why I reached the conclusions.  
16 Sometimes they agree and sometimes they disagree.  
17 Ultimately, they make the decision in that situation, but I  
18 will express my view and why I came up with what I came up  
19 with.

20 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you. Using your  
21 experience as an Administrative Law Judge, and what you  
22 just talked about in having defensible decisions, do you  
23 think your experiences will -- how do you think your  
24 experiences will assist the Commission in ensuring that its  
25 decisions are defensible?

1 MS. LIAS: I would perceive what -- listening to  
2 everybody's views, going over the information that they  
3 have gathered in order to reach their decision, looking at  
4 that from an objective level, because I believe that, you  
5 know, we all miss things. And so by reviewing everything  
6 we can see where things were missed or misinterpreted, or  
7 just wasn't accurate. It was inaccurate information. And  
8 reviewing that and going over everything with my  
9 colleagues, and then coming up with a consensus. But I  
10 think that it's important for everyone to be able to say  
11 why and how they came up with what they came up with, and  
12 then we come up with a defensible position, as you say,  
13 based on the facts, based on the data, and that's it.

14 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you.

15 MS. LIAS: Yeah.

16 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: If you were selected as one  
17 of the first eight Commissioners, which are selected  
18 randomly --

19 MS. LIAS: Right.

20 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: -- you would be tasked with  
21 selecting the next six.

22 MS. LIAS: Okay.

23 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: What would you be looking  
24 for in those individuals?

25 MS. LIAS: I'd be looking for diversity in race, in

1 age, in gender. Common sense approaches, if that's a way  
2 of -- if there's a way I can analyze that. The ability to  
3 communicate, both verbally and in writing. Experiences to  
4 some degree. Life experiences is very important I think.  
5 So those are some of the things I'd look for. Definitely  
6 diversity in those areas that I mentioned. I think it's  
7 important, because as has been pointed out, and we all know  
8 California is diverse and I think it needs to be a  
9 representation of all the people that occupy the State.

10           And so it's important to have the diversity in  
11 those areas, but also one's ability to communicate, one's  
12 life experiences that may be different from the next  
13 Commissioner, because I think that if you have different  
14 experiences, you have different views, and then you can  
15 come up with better solutions, most objective solutions,  
16 not based on one way of thinking but several ways of  
17 thinking.

18           PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you.

19           Can I get a time check, please?

20           MS. PELLMAN: Yes. Four minutes remaining.

21           PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you.

22           One last question. What would you like to see the  
23 Commission ultimately accomplish?

24           MS. LIAS: I'd like to see the Commission  
25 accomplish what its goal is, and that's to have the

1 redistrict based on the needs of every resident of this  
2 country, based on the needs of the voters. I'd like for  
3 those who haven't been involved in the process to become  
4 involved in the process. To feel like their vote matters.  
5 I'd like those individuals to know that they are going to  
6 get representation, and that representation requires them  
7 to be a participant, and, you know, what the representation  
8 means.

9           Not so long ago, you know, my father wasn't able to  
10 vote. And I think that in some ways the right to vote is  
11 taken for granted. But I know all that he went through to  
12 be able to get the right to vote. So very passionate about  
13 people exercising their right to do that, and to do it in a  
14 fair process, in a process that they will be presented  
15 based on what they -- based on their needs and what their  
16 standing is in this, in this State.

17           PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you very much.

18           MS. LIAS: Uh-huh. You're welcome.

19           PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Mr. Coe, I have no further  
20 questions.

21           CHAIR COE: Thank you, Ms. Dickison.

22           Mr. Belnap, the time is yours.

23           PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right. Good morning, Ms.  
24 Lias.

25           MS. LIAS: Good morning.

1           PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: As an attorney have you ever  
2 worked on any voter rights issues?

3           MS. LIAS: No, I haven't. I worked for Alameda  
4 County Counsel, and of course that's, that group got  
5 questions about, you know, voter registration, ballot  
6 issues. But I never personally worked on any voter issues,  
7 except a personnel issue that somebody worked for the  
8 Registrar of Voters and had some personnel issues. But  
9 directly -- so the Registrar of Voters was my client on the  
10 personnel case, but nothing to do with elections or  
11 anything like that.

12           PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right. Thank you. How  
13 familiar are you with the legal criteria associated with  
14 the work of the Commission?

15           MS. LIAS: I'm really not that familiar. I know  
16 that generally in -- you know, but I know the legal  
17 standards, and the standards vary depending on the type of  
18 cases. In the civil round it's a preponderance of the  
19 evidence standard and clear and convincing. Of course,  
20 criminal is, you know, beyond a reasonable doubt. I'd be  
21 apply to apply whatever standard needs to be applied.

22           PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: If you were selected to be on  
23 the Commission, how would you familiarize yourself with  
24 this criteria?

25           PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Reading, reviewing

1 information from the 2010 Commission, but reviewing the  
2 law, the regulations, California Code of Regulations.

3 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay. Thank you. So if you  
4 were selected to be on the Commission, it'd be a fairly  
5 intense year or so of work, and then I think the work would  
6 taper off. How would you fit this fairly intense year of  
7 work into your -- into the time requirements of being an  
8 Administrative Law Judge?

9 MS. LIAS: Into the -- I didn't hear the last part  
10 of your question.

11 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Into the time requirements of  
12 being an Administrative Law Judge?

13 MS. LIAS: Okay. As I said earlier, I'm actually -  
14 - don't want to necessarily put this on public record, but  
15 I'm actually winding down my career. And I notice that the  
16 bulk of the work will start from August to August. Until I  
17 wind down my career -- I've worked for the State for a  
18 number of years so I have a lot of leave time on the books.  
19 And so just as I have done independent work outside of my  
20 work as an Administrative Law Judge, I just use my vacation  
21 time to do what I need to do to work on other projects. I  
22 don't foresee that as being a problem at all because I have  
23 enough leave time to carry me through for several months.  
24 And thereafter, the plan was to look at retirement. So I  
25 think that probably before midway in this first year

1 process, I probably won't be working full-time.

2 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay. Thank you.

3 MS. LIAS: Uh-huh.

4 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: So what skill sets and types  
5 of expertise would you like see within the 14  
6 Commissioners?

7 MS. LIAS: Skill set, again, the ability to  
8 communicate, the ability to listen, and appreciate and  
9 understand someone else's view. The ability to analyze  
10 data, including technical data, which is not always easy.  
11 I've had to do it with my expert witnesses -- excuse me,  
12 and in reviewing medical reports, the ability to analyze  
13 that data.

14 The ability to treat each person that's appearing  
15 before the Commission in a public hearing with respect,  
16 consideration, compassion, and being thoughtful. And  
17 making them feel a level, the public feeling a level of  
18 comfort in addressing the Commission. So, you know, not to  
19 be demeaning, not to be condescending. That's very  
20 important for a person to feel like they're valued, and  
21 that's, you know, a key to effective communication. That's  
22 part of communication.

23 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay. In the pool of  
24 applicants, you may not know this, but it is, it's in the  
25 applications that's public, we have quite a few lawyers.

1 As you're looking at the skill set and expertise that the  
2 14 Commissioners should have, do you have thoughts on how  
3 many lawyers should be in that group of 14?

4 MS. LIAS: Definitely not 14. You know, I really  
5 don't have a number. I think that having a few, so if I  
6 have to give a number, maybe three. I think that -- and I  
7 don't necessarily fit in this group, but I don't -- you  
8 know, lawyers -- this is tough because I don't, you know,  
9 definitely don't want to bash the profession. But I've  
10 always seen myself first as a person. Practicing law is  
11 what I did and -- or what I do. And so, if that lawyer can  
12 first be a person, I think that that's important. I've  
13 always prided myself on just being who I am, and then my  
14 livelihood or my career was that in law. I never put  
15 myself on a pedestal because I went to law school or became  
16 a lawyer. I'm just sort of down to earth. And so if we  
17 could get three or four down-to-earth lawyers, that would  
18 be great.

19 I think that the Panel should be mixed. I think we  
20 should have both professional and non-professional. I  
21 think we should have people of all ethnic backgrounds and  
22 socioeconomic backgrounds. I just think that diversity  
23 adds a lot. So, by having more than a few attorneys, I  
24 think you -- I think diversity is compromised a bit. So,  
25 if I had to give a number, three, maybe four. I do



1 understand that most lawyers have the ability to analyze  
2 data and information, and can come up with well-reasoned  
3 decisions. But I also know engineers who analyze data and  
4 accountants who have analyzed data, and they would be  
5 equally as good. It's almost like with sort of a jury  
6 pool, you don't want one of the same. And whenever I would  
7 do a jury, I would look at who would best serve this  
8 particular case, and it tended to be people of diverse  
9 backgrounds, so that they could add their information to a  
10 discussion. There are times when, you know, there's one  
11 issue that maybe an accountant knows about but an attorney  
12 doesn't and a secretary doesn't. But then there's another  
13 issue within that case that a secretary may know about,  
14 that the accountant and the attorney have no clue about.

15 I've worked from, started working when I was 14. I've  
16 worked as a clerk. I've been an office assistant, too. I  
17 know what it's like to be clerical. I've been -- I've  
18 worked as a paralegal. I've worked as an attorney, as a  
19 judge, as an investigator. I've been on boards. And so  
20 I've had different roles. And it would be nice to have  
21 people who have had different roles, and not just practice  
22 law or been an accountant, but other roles, on boards, as  
23 volunteers, as parents, as children, as, you know, as  
24 students. I taught a paralegal class, so I have experience  
25 as a teacher. I taught at Cal State East Bay Paralegal

1 Program. So, it's really about the experience more than  
2 the title, I guess is what I'm saying in a nutshell.

3 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right. Thank you.

4 MS. LIAS: Uh-huh.

5 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: So as you visualize yourself  
6 on this Commission, what part of the role of the  
7 Commissioner will you enjoy, and what part do you think  
8 you'll struggle with?

9 MS. LIAS: The part I think I'll enjoy is  
10 collaborating with the other members, but I think meeting  
11 people. I enjoy talking to people. I enjoy getting  
12 people's views about different things. I just, I like  
13 people, so I -- I think I would enjoy that part. And then  
14 working together to put together a project, to see a  
15 project to its end. So, working from step one all the way  
16 through the end to see a project to completion.

17 One of the things I probably won't enjoy as much,  
18 but, you know, it sort of comes, is some of the, maybe  
19 dealing with some of the computer software. When I first  
20 started working, we barely had e-mail. So learning new  
21 technology it's been a process for me. I can say that that  
22 will probably be the thing that I dislike most.

23 When I first learned how to read a map, it was a  
24 paper map. It wasn't a map on a computer. And I applied  
25 for a job as a 911 operator for CHP back when I was in

1 college, and part of that process was reading a map. I  
2 didn't know I was good at it until I took the test, and I  
3 realized, I'm pretty good at this. So, doing a map on a  
4 computer might be a little different for me. So it's  
5 probably some of the computer software that I probably  
6 won't enjoy, but I know that it's a part of what has to be  
7 done.

8 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right. Thank you.

9 MS. LIAS: Uh-huh.

10 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Madam Secretary, time check?

11 MS. PELLMAN: Yes. Nine minutes, 40 seconds.

12 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right. Thank you.

13 So, Ms. Lias, if you were not randomly selected as  
14 part of the first eight Commissioners, why should those  
15 eight select you for one of the six remaining positions on  
16 the Commission?

17 MS. LIAS: Because I'm committed to whatever I'm  
18 assigned to do. I'll work hard at whatever I'm assigned to  
19 do. I have the ability to travel throughout the State. I  
20 have the time to travel, so I don't have any time  
21 constraints right now.

22 I am able to be objective, to be impartial. I'm  
23 able to relate to friends and families from the intercity,  
24 and strangers. And I'm able to relate and communicate with  
25 those who are from different backgrounds than myself. So,

1 I'm very diverse in my group of friends and colleagues. I  
2 appreciate and respect the diversity. I'm a strong writer,  
3 and I have pretty good analytical skills, but most  
4 importantly, I have good people skills. And I just enjoy  
5 working with people, people of different backgrounds,  
6 understanding their needs, showing compassion and  
7 appreciating their views. And -- but most importantly, I'd  
8 be committed to getting the job done, and I have that time  
9 to do so.

10 I think my experience sort of speaks for itself, in  
11 that I am able to do some of the requirements. I'm able to  
12 read and interpret law. I'm able to analyze data. I'm  
13 able to be impartial. I'm able to be objective. But in  
14 addition to that, I'm a people's person and I have respect  
15 for people, and I think that that's important. And I  
16 collaborate and work well with colleagues.

17 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right. Thank you.

18 Mr. Chair --

19 MS. LIAS: You're welcome.

20 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: -- I have no further  
21 questions.

22 CHAIR COE: Thank you, Mr. Belnap.

23 Mr. Dawson, the time is yours.

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

25 Thank you again for being here, Ms. Lias.

1 MS. LIAS: You're welcome.

2 MR. DAWSON: What was, what was appealing to you  
3 about becoming an ALJ?

4 MR. DAWSON: You know, when I first started at --  
5 well, let's go back. Litigation was a lot a work, and I  
6 didn't have a lot of control over my calendar. Any given  
7 day I was in San Francisco, next day Santa Cruz, next day  
8 San Luis Obispo, and at that time I was raising my two  
9 children. And that made it very hard to, to navigate, to -  
10 - it was just very difficult on home life. Fortunately,  
11 you know, I had a community, a village, so to speak, to  
12 help me with my children. But litigation is something that  
13 you don't really turn off, even when you're at home. And  
14 so I realized the impact that it was, you know, having, the  
15 amount of time I wasn't able to spend with my children.

16 My children are out of the equation now, so to  
17 speak, because they're adults now. And I have a daughter  
18 in college, and my son lives and works down in Southern  
19 California, so that's not part of the equation. But that  
20 was one of the reasons that I applied to be an  
21 Administrative Law Judge.

22 I had taken a mediation class. I had done the  
23 judge pro tem work, and I believed that I would be good at  
24 gathering facts. I believed that I would be good at  
25 eliciting testimony through direct questions. I know that

1 my litigation has helped me to get the information I need  
2 from witnesses and parties, and I wanted to be, you know,  
3 sort of a fact finder and make decisions based on the law.  
4 And that's why I decided Administrative Law Judge work. And  
5 it was also pretty predictable in terms of schedule. Yes,  
6 I had to travel, but I knew three weeks ahead of time. And  
7 it was pretty much a 40- to 50-hour week. Litigation could  
8 be 80 hours a week. And so I wanted to have something more  
9 concrete and definite. And so I decided to do that.

10           And I also knew that being an Administrative Law  
11 Judge would allow me to meet different people and talk to  
12 different people, and that it has given me. And when I was  
13 in the field, I was an Administrative Law Judge, I think we  
14 did eight to 10 hearings a day. So I would meet 10 new  
15 people every day and -- at least 10, sometimes 20 if it was  
16 a two-party case. And that was exciting to just meet  
17 different people.

18           And, you know, I love writing, and so this allowed  
19 me -- in litigation you write motions and briefs, but as an  
20 Administrative Law Judge, you really write a decision, and  
21 you're able to write the relevant facts and you're able to  
22 analyze. And so I've always enjoyed writing and -- because  
23 I knew my schedule would be more certain and I enjoy  
24 people, I decided to apply for an Administrative Law  
25 Judge's position.

1 MR. DAWSON: Were those hearings mostly here in  
2 Sacramento, or were they in the East Bay, where you are  
3 now?

4 MS. LIAS: I worked out of the San Francisco  
5 office, so that was in San Francisco. But I -- San  
6 Francisco office also included travel to Santa Rosa, to  
7 Lake County, to Eureka. So that was the jurisdiction that  
8 it covered, so I had to travel to those out stations to do  
9 hearings. And, yeah, they were very, you know, the  
10 hearings in Lake County were very different than the ones  
11 just in San Francisco, mostly because the occupations and  
12 the work that's in Eureka's very different from the working  
13 public in San Francisco. So -- but mostly San Francisco,  
14 but then also those areas that I mentioned.

15 MR. DAWSON: I see. So, it seems that most of your  
16 work and where you've lived has been in the Bay Area, the  
17 coastal areas.

18 MS. LIAS: Uh-huh.

19 MR. DAWSON: When we were discussing how many  
20 lawyers is enough, and I -- what I expected to you say was  
21 at least one.

22 MS. LIAS: I wanted to have respect for my fellow  
23 colleagues in the profession. And sometimes it's hard, but  
24 I know some good ones. I know some good attorneys, and I  
25 focus on those, those people, so.

1 MR. DAWSON: Well, I wanted to --

2 MS. LIAS: You know, being -- yeah.

3 MR. DAWSON: I'm sorry. I wanted to ask you about  
4 geographic diversity.

5 MS. LIAS: Okay.

6 MR. DAWSON: There has been -- it's been noticed  
7 that in addition to a lot of with JD's, there are a lot of  
8 folks representing coastal counties, Alameda, San  
9 Francisco, Los Angeles, San Diego. Could the Commission be  
10 successful if it only included Commissioners from the  
11 coastal counties?

12 MS. LIAS: I think it should include Commissioners  
13 from the other counties. Like I said, I've been fortunate  
14 enough to work in or travel to like 42 counties. So I know  
15 that Tulare County is very different from Alameda County.  
16 Tulare County is where I had a real big investigation. It  
17 was very different. The people that I interviewed were  
18 different. They were mostly Tulare County residents. I  
19 was down there for, I want to say two weeks total, back and  
20 forth. I did a case in the Modesto area. So Stanislaus  
21 County. I did a mediation in Fresno. But in -- let's see.  
22 So, I think that the Commission should be made of people  
23 from different, different counties. Of course I worked in  
24 Sacramento County for a number of years, but I -- yeah,  
25 most of my work has been centered here, but, again, I try



1 cases in Santa Cruz County, San Luis Obispo County, Sonoma  
2 County, Contra Costa, San Francisco, Alameda. I've done  
3 workplace investigations in those two counties I've  
4 mentioned. I've done a Contra Costa, and -- how far north  
5 -- Sacramento. So -- but, yeah, in answer to your  
6 question, I think it should be diverse in terms of where  
7 the Commissioner had lived and/or worked or grew up.

8 MR. DAWSON: Okay. Thank you. I have no further  
9 questions.

10 Mr. Chair.

11 CHAIR COE: Okay, counsel. Thank you.

12 Ms. Dickison, any follow-up questions?

13 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: I have no further  
14 questions, Mr. Chair.

15 CHAIR COE: Mr. Belnap, and follow-up questions?

16 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: No further questions.

17 CHAIR COE: I have no further questions, Mr.  
18 Dawson.

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

20 Ms. Lias, with the time remaining -- and, Madam  
21 Secretary, how much time is remaining?

22 MS. PELLMAN: Nine minutes, 30 seconds.

23 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

24 With the remaining nine minutes and 30 seconds, Ms.  
25 Lias, if you would like to make a closing statement to the

1 Panel.

2 MS. LIAS: I think we've covered most everything.  
3 I do appreciate your time, each of you. It's sort of  
4 difficult doing this by Zoom, and I know there were no  
5 other alternatives. It makes it a little more difficult,  
6 but I do appreciate your time. I think that -- I know that  
7 the first eight are random, which sort of works against me,  
8 because I think in life I've only won one raffle ever in  
9 life. So I don't know, I don't know how that works. Some  
10 people get lucky with the raffle and I don't. I won one.  
11 I think I was in the sixth grade. It was a tee-shirt. So,  
12 it's, the process is what it is, but I do appreciate the  
13 opportunity to speak with you all. To send in my  
14 application for consideration. I'm grateful that I made it  
15 this far.

16 I do believe that my skill set is compatible with  
17 what the Commission is looking for. I believe that my  
18 background, having grown up in East Oakland, and sort of  
19 moving forward from there, still with roots in the  
20 intercity. Going to UCLA, working in the various  
21 professions that I've worked in, you know, both as an  
22 office assistant all the way up to the Administrative Law  
23 Judge's level, shows my diversity and experience. I've met  
24 thousands of people in my work, and I've met a diverse  
25 group of people. I have no problems communicating with any

1 individual, no matter what the educational level, no matter  
2 what the color of the skin, no matter what the gender  
3 preference is. And I think that with all the diverse first  
4 experience and exposures, I'd make a good Commissioner.  
5 And I just want to say thank you again for your time, and I  
6 appreciate everything. Stay safe.

7 CHAIR COE: Thank you, Ms. Lias.

8 MS. LIAS: Thank you.

9 CHAIR COE: Appreciate you taking the time to speak  
10 with us today.

11 MS. LIAS: Thank you.

12 CHAIR COE: Our next interview is scheduled for  
13 1:15, so we will go into recess until 1:14 p.m.

14 (Off the record at 12:07 p.m.)

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

16 CHAIR COE: Okay, the time being 1:14 p.m., I'd  
17 like to call this meeting of the Applicant Review Panel  
18 back to order. At this time, I'd like to welcome Mr.  
19 Vincent Sheu for his interview this afternoon.

20 Mr. Sheu, thank you for being here. Can you hear  
21 us okay?

22 MR. SHEU: Yes, I can hear you. Can you hear me?

23 CHAIR COE: Yes. Very well, thank you.

24 I'd like to turn the time over to Mr. Chris Dawson  
25 to ask the five standard questions, please.

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

2 Mr. Sheu, I'm going to ask you five standard  
3 questions that the Panel was requested that each applicant  
4 respond to. Are you ready?

5 MR. SHEU: I am.

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

13 MR. SHEU: So, I divided this question in --  
14 because I thought about it for a while, into different  
15 skills that are required based on the different things that  
16 Commissioners are expected to do. So based on drawing  
17 district lines, I think that all Commissioners should be  
18 able to consider all evidence and make decisions  
19 impartially, while being empathetic to all viewpoints, but  
20 also be willing to change our mind when warranted.

21 We should also be willing to work with different  
22 work styles, but all be punctual and responsive, because I  
23 think there will be lots of times where we are not near  
24 each other, but there will be things that need to be done.  
25 And if we are responsive that will -- highly conducive to a

1 good working environment. Since we are expected to be  
2 Commissioners, we'd have to operate in a working  
3 environment, with little supervision or handholding.

4           With regards to holding public meetings, I think  
5 this requires an ability to empathize and deal with all  
6 communities. An ability to run a meeting effectively,  
7 which means setting agendas, curating effective  
8 discussions, making everybody feel heard by creating a  
9 welcoming environment where everyone feels comfortable  
10 speaking up, but also having the stamina and the time to be  
11 able to attend every single meeting that's required of us.

12           By the way, if I am speaking too quickly, or if you  
13 would like me to go deeper into any topic, feel free to  
14 just stop me and let me know.

15           With regards to research and analysis, I think this  
16 requires dealing with large data sets that may be confusing  
17 and/or contradictory. And in that, that means being  
18 comfortable with data, with statistics, with data science  
19 and analysis, but also knowing when each of the things that  
20 we're using, in terms of statistical tools, can be evolved  
21 and how the data can also be used to mislead us. I think  
22 this also requires figuring out the values systems what,  
23 quote, "fairness," unquote, and representation means in  
24 ways that are impartial and fair to all.

25           I think Commissioners are also required to hire

1 support staff. And so with that, having the personal  
2 networks and judgment to hire good staffers and  
3 administrators, being organized and on top of things for  
4 scheduling, notifying and keeping records of hearings, and  
5 being very comfortable interfacing with anybody and anyone  
6 who's going to be requesting info with regard to the  
7 committee's progress.

8           Finally, with preparing a legal defense, I think  
9 this requires being comfortable with regulations and laws.  
10 Being comfortable preserving a written record and running a  
11 documenting process with an eye towards legal defense.

12           Of these skills I think I possess most of them to  
13 some degree, but I think I'm particularly strong in both  
14 the legal side, having had legal training, and also in the  
15 research and analysis side, because I have a STEM  
16 background. I've also learned to work with many, many  
17 different work styles from the many things I've done. And  
18 I am at this point very, very punctual and very responsive  
19 and able to operate with little handholding.

20           In summary, I regard myself as a well-rounded,  
21 versatile candidate with unique exposure and experience in  
22 multiple fields relevant to the Commission. From my legal  
23 side I have analytical and legal skills to break down law  
24 and policy guidance, but also document and operate the  
25 Commission with an eye towards staving off future lawsuits.

1           From my STEM technology side, I have convert with  
2 math and statistics and large data sets, especially when  
3 those data sets are conflicting. And, finally, my having  
4 both has given me comfort to kind of, let's say, translate  
5 and cross-reference things between people of different  
6 skill sets, for example, taking legal concepts and  
7 explaining them to people without legal training, or taking  
8 mostly technology concepts and explaining those to people  
9 without technology training.

10           MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Question two. Work on the  
11 Commission requires members of different political  
12 backgrounds to work together. Since the 2010 Commission  
13 was selected and formed, the American political  
14 conversation has become increasingly polarized, whether in  
15 the press, on social media, and even in our own families.  
16 What characteristics do you possess and what  
17 characteristics should your fellow Commissioners possess  
18 that will protect against hyper-partisanship? What will  
19 you do to ensure that the work of the Commission is not  
20 seen as polarized or hyper-partisan and avoid perceptions  
21 of political bias and conflict?

22           MR. SHEU: I think all of the Commissioners should  
23 have the quality of being able to consider all evidence in  
24 making decisions impartially. What impartial means in this  
25 case is understanding where our own desires and needs and

1 where the public good begins. That also means that we  
2 should be able to break down arguments and not only  
3 understand what those arguments are, but the motivation  
4 behind the people making them, and also being conscious of  
5 any downstream effects of any decisions we make.

6 I think we all, especially today, need to be very,  
7 very conscious of misinformation, and know how to verify  
8 whenever we're being presented information that is designed  
9 to mislead or construe things for a particular purpose.  
10 Whether that means like following up on things, whether  
11 that means questioning the source of things, just  
12 essentially having the skills and recognition and ability  
13 to say, "Hey, I'm being told this. Is this something where  
14 I believe this at face value, or should I really follow-up  
15 and like Google this, or check it to see something that's  
16 known to be like released from somebody with a clear  
17 agenda."

18 In -- with regards to ensuring that Commission's  
19 work is not seen as polarizing or hyper-partisan, I think  
20 there's a very, very strong need, especially in today's  
21 global climate for transparency. Transparency means many  
22 things, but in this case it means that every time we make a  
23 decision, it's very important that we document why we're  
24 making it, what the data we considered when making it, and  
25 kind of the argument structure and value systems we



1 considered when coming to a decision.

2           With regards to how we're making a decision, that  
3 also means making decisions with thoughtfulness, with a  
4 sense of fairness and equity, and considering any corner  
5 cases and unexpected things that might happen beyond the  
6 direct effects of any decision. But most importantly I  
7 think that in order to make sure that there is  
8 transparency, that means that we have to be very, very  
9 clear with anybody who talks to us, with anybody who  
10 doesn't talk to us but kind of comes up in legal foundation  
11 later, like why we're doing the things we're doing.

12           The greatest problem I think the Commission could  
13 encounter --

14           MR. DAWSON: I'm sorry, Mr. Sheu.

15           MR. SHEU: -- is probably -- I'm sorry?

16           MR. DAWSON: Can you -- if you don't mind, I need  
17 to ask a question.

18           MR. SHEU: You can -- sorry about that.

19           MR. DAWSON: That's all right. Question three.

20 What is the greatest problem the Commission could  
21 encounter, and what actions would you take to avoid or  
22 respond to this problem?

23           MR. SHEU: This is a difficult one for me, because  
24 I could see so many problems the Commission could  
25 encounter. But I think the biggest one is probably that

1 there's going to be a lot of information out there from the  
2 Census, and from various other political bodies and  
3 agendas. And all of that stuff is going to be conflicted.  
4 Like some people are going to think fairness means one  
5 thing, other people are going to think fairness means  
6 something else. People are going to bring in arguments  
7 about what like equity is versus the quality of the other  
8 forms of fairness. And coming to terms with all that  
9 information and coming up with a single map -- well, I  
10 guess there's four maps, but single, like actual district  
11 maps, is going to be the hardest thing the Commission has  
12 to do.

13           For me, I think what this requires is first  
14 defining the problem, because it's really hard to analyze  
15 and think about your data and evidence if you don't even  
16 know what the problem is. And I don't just mean like, we  
17 have to figure out these maps, but also like, what is it  
18 we're solving for? What kind of -- what do we value of  
19 equity and equality? What is fair and impartial and what  
20 produces the best representation?

21           After we define the problem I think this requires  
22 gathering all the pertinent information. Having all the  
23 stakeholders with relevant opinions in the room, or at  
24 least getting their opinions down on paper, and then  
25 figuring out before we even like attempt to solve the

1 problem, what we as a Commission want.

2           So, like instead of just saying, okay, well, let's  
3 make this map. Is that fair? I think it's -- we need to  
4 step back and say, if we were making a fair map, what  
5 should we be looking for? Now, given that we're going for  
6 these circumstances, what does the map look like? And then  
7 once we know what we're solving for, finally coming to the,  
8 to the answer.

9           I'm also a big proponent of scientific technique  
10 called, "blind analysis," which is something one of my  
11 professor co-mentors came up with. Which is that when  
12 you're solving through a problem, I think it's common for  
13 people to say, "Let me solve and make a map, and then let's  
14 see if that was there for not." I think this is kind of a  
15 backwards way of doing this. I think it's more important  
16 to say, "Let's solve for the problem, but let's figure out  
17 every single possible way we could have gone wrong." Then  
18 once we've figured out the entire process, only then will  
19 we reveal what the answer was, and this -- and that should  
20 be the fairest answer. Because if you make the map first  
21 and then try to see what's wrong, at some point you'll say,  
22 "That looks fair," but you won't actually have possibly  
23 solved every single problem going into that.

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

9 MR. SHEU: So let me tell you about the time I  
10 worked on a policy lab in law school. And so this required  
11 working on a cross-functional team with experts in various  
12 fields on a common problem. So this was a team led by a  
13 former senator, Russ Feingold, and also partnered with a  
14 non-profit foundation, the Hewitt Foundation, on  
15 misinformation on social media networks. This was in the  
16 wake of the 2016 election when hyper-partisanship had kind  
17 of become an issue that everybody was starting to talk  
18 about.

19 So, on this team, it was basically me and a bunch  
20 of other students, along with some faculty guidance, and  
21 each of the students were put into teams based on their  
22 respective specialties. So, like my team was myself and  
23 then a computer scientist. And then another team, like  
24 another team had an economics person and a psychology  
25 person, and so on and so forth. And we were tasked with

1 researching to the extent of misinformation on social media  
2 networks, but also coming up with recommendations for what  
3 the companies and policymakers could do to fight  
4 misinformation.

5           So on any given day that meant that I was digesting  
6 or assessing the value of conflicting statistical data  
7 dumps from multiple sources. I was translating expert  
8 opinions into unbiased summaries, digestible by both  
9 technology minded and non-technology minded people, and  
10 interpreting multiple legal statutes to interpret and  
11 figure out how they affected the companies, and what they  
12 could and couldn't do in response to perceived attacks.

13           Conflict was rampant because, as might be imagined,  
14 from a team of many different legal backgrounds,  
15 specialties, every time they came up on a problem, like all  
16 the legal people in the room would have one way of  
17 approaching the situation. The scientists would come up  
18 with another way. The economics people would come up with  
19 another way, and the psychologists would come up with their  
20 own way.

21           And so what that meant was every single time they  
22 came to a decision, we took everybody's opinion. We worked  
23 through understanding different points of view, and why  
24 they had those points of view, so coming up with like their  
25 value system. Why is it, for example, that psychologists

1 believed this is the best way of doing things, and why is  
2 it that economics people valued these things instead? And  
3 then based on all of these things we came to a consensus on  
4 what the group valued the most, and then went with a  
5 solution that we liked based on that decision.

6 I think that last point is the sort of thing that I  
7 would like to bring to the Commission, is that kind of  
8 problem solving of, what happens when you have 14 people of  
9 vastly different viewpoints and they all value different  
10 things, how do you come to a single consensus? Coming up  
11 with a group consensus first, and then applying those  
12 values to a decision is kind of the (indiscernible)I would  
13 like to bring to the group experience.

14 MR. DAWSON: Are you ready to go to question five?

15 MR. SHEU: Yes.

16 MR. DAWSON: Okay. Question five. A considerable  
17 amount of the Commission's work will involve meeting with  
18 people from all over California who come from very  
19 different backgrounds and a wide variety of perspectives.  
20 If you are selected as a Commissioner, what skills and  
21 attributes will make you effective at interacting with  
22 people from different backgrounds and who have a variety of  
23 perspectives? What experiences have you had that will help  
24 you be effective at understanding and appreciating people  
25 in communities of different backgrounds and who have a

1 variety of perspectives?

2 MR. SHEU: My approach to talking to people of  
3 different backgrounds has always been listening, but beyond  
4 what most people would call, active listening, it's  
5 recognizing that there is as much said as unsaid, and  
6 trying to figure out how to draw what's being unsaid. And  
7 that means for me always creating an inclusive and open  
8 environment, where everyone feels like they're not just  
9 talking, but they're also being heard and respected. And  
10 because I feel like when people feel like they're being  
11 heard, they're more likely to speak up.

12 That sometimes means a more, more of a dialogue,  
13 rather than just listening as well, because just because  
14 somebody says something, that doesn't mean that's the final  
15 opinion they're trying to give, and drawing out and teasing  
16 out exactly what they're feeling is important as well.  
17 These are skills that I've worked on for a long time.

18 One example where I've had an experience doing this  
19 was when I was doing legal work at an attorney up in the  
20 U.S. Attorney's Office. So, one of the aspects of that job  
21 was working, interacting with people who were predisposed  
22 against us. Because, functionally, those were essentially  
23 prosecutors. And one thing that they had the interns do  
24 was talking to people who committed citations on the  
25 seniors, with the goal of essentially resolving those

1 amicably without having to go to court. So, when we bring  
2 these people in, they are already predisposed against us  
3 because, essentially, they've been charged with something.  
4 And they see us as kind of the Government, and in some  
5 cases, the enemy.

6           So it was my job to use these skills to essentially  
7 like figure out a way to work with them, to come up with a  
8 compromise, and then to step in front of a judge and say,  
9 "Here's the compromise we came to," so that the court's  
10 resources were not being used up.

11           My appreciation for California's demographics  
12 started at birth. So I was born here in the Bay Area, and  
13 I've lived here my entire life. I went to public schools  
14 in the Bay Area, mostly in Northern California, but I've  
15 also done lots of road trips and seen friends across the  
16 State. So, that includes not just like kind of cities, but  
17 also going to places like Ukiah, to Shasta, to Riverside  
18 and Merced. And, generally, wherever I go, like if I'm  
19 stopping for food somewhere, I've always been curious, like  
20 stopping and just talking to the people there. Like  
21 figuring out like who they are, what their lives are like,  
22 and like what motivates them. Because I think just out of  
23 a natural sense of curiosity, I just want to get to know  
24 everybody in California.

25           And so this is kind of an attitude and background



1 that I would like to bring to the Commission, is just  
2 understanding that like, yes, I have my own background and  
3 experience from being in the Bay Area, but so does  
4 everybody else. And knowing they exist and wanting to know  
5 more about them is going to be a very important trait for  
6 bringing perspective to the Commission.

7 MR. DAWSON: All right. Thank you.

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

11 CHAIR COE: Thank you, Mr. Dawson.

12 Mr. Sheu, good afternoon to you again. Thank you  
13 for being here and speaking with us today. Just on your  
14 application, you're a director for an organization called,  
15 Cubing USA. Can you tell us what this organization does  
16 and what your role specifically is?

17 MR. SHEU: Well, this is -- so I take part in a  
18 hobby for competitive Rubik's Cube speed solving. And so  
19 this is a non-profit that we started in an effort to use  
20 this as a way to improve educational outcomes in the United  
21 States. So, basically, like at very barest form, there's a  
22 bunch of us in the United States, we like solving Rubik's  
23 Cubes, and we like solving them really fast. And that was  
24 resulted in us planning competition, and going all over the  
25 U.S. and meeting different people. But what that also

1 meant is that we started noticing that there was a large  
2 amount of times where we'd open a competition and we'd get  
3 like a parent bringing in their kid being like, my kid  
4 loves this. And like based on this, they had started  
5 actually liking math and things like that. Well, what can  
6 I do to kind of bring to my school? And we realized that  
7 at that point there was no such body that was doing such a  
8 thing. There are equivalent bodies for like chess, for  
9 example, for Scrabble, but like nothing for Rubik's Cube.

10           So we incorporated a non-profit, and now we have  
11 several different initiatives. One of them is figuring how  
12 to bring lesson plans into schools for teachers to kind of  
13 use this as a tool to inspire their kids with regards to  
14 STEM education. Another one is planning competitions and  
15 connecting people from all across the U.S. And so as a  
16 director, and now legal counsel for the organization, I  
17 both incorporated it, but also advise on all of the  
18 decisions.

19           CHAIR COE: Okay. Thank you. Just out of  
20 curiosity, what's your personal best record for time in  
21 solving Rubik's Cube?

22           MR. SHEU: Around eight-and-a-half seconds.

23           CHAIR COE: Eight-and-a-half seconds? No kidding.

24           MR. SHEU: I've also held two world records in  
25 different systems from (indiscernible).

1 CHAIR COE: I'm not sure I've ever solved the  
2 Rubik's Cube personally.

3 MR. SHEU: It's not that difficult. I think you  
4 would be able to learn in about a week.

5 CHAIR COE: Okay. I want to move on to your  
6 education background really quick. It seems to me --

7 MR. SHEU: Okay.

8 CHAIR COE: -- to be rather diverse. In 2012, you  
9 received a BA in Statistics and Molecular and Cell Biology.  
10 And just so I'm clear, is that two separate degrees, one in  
11 Statistics and one in Molecular Cell Biology, or is that  
12 somehow a mix into one degree? How does that work?

13 MR. SHEU: So the school is odd, so it's a double  
14 major, and depending on where your majors are in the  
15 school, they may offer you two or one degree, but it's  
16 functionally two separate curricula.

17 CHAIR COE: Okay. So it's a -- is it -- was it one  
18 degree or two degrees you ended up with?

19 MR. SHEU: It was one degree.

20 CHAIR COE: It was one. Okay.

21 MR. SHEU: Yeah.

22 CHAIR COE: So after that you then went on to  
23 receive a Master's in Bioengineering in 2014.

24 MR. SHEU: Yeah.

25 CHAIR COE: Followed by receiving your law degree

1 and a Master's of Science Degree in Computer Science. Was  
2 that simultaneously in 2018?

3 MR. SHEU: Yes. That's a joint degree.

4 CHAIR COE: Okay. So what led from molecular  
5 biology to bioengineering to computer science to law?

6 MR. SHEU: So I've always been very curious, and  
7 I've never been one to say, this was like my life's work,  
8 and I just want to focus on this my entire life. But more  
9 specifically, I think I always liked data, but I also liked  
10 writing, and I think it was very rare for most people to  
11 have that combination. Because I think if meet most  
12 lawyers, they're going to run from math. And I think if  
13 you meet most computer scientists or mathematicians they're  
14 going to run from writing.

15 So, putting those interests together to a joint  
16 degree was kind of I think the only thing that I thought  
17 was really, really appropriate for my desires. But also,  
18 originally, I went into law school and was doing this joint  
19 degrees because I wanted to work on science policy.

20 And like my first dream was to become like head of the  
21 National Science Foundation, or head of the FDA or  
22 something, where like I could be a lawyer, but also use my  
23 technical knowledge to kind of push forward the bounds of  
24 what we were exploring in this country. And I think that's  
25 kind of on hold for now based on the current political

1 climate, but like I found other things that are very  
2 important to me, for example, like going into law made me  
3 realize the importance of like representation. And  
4 election became a hot issue in 2016, which is why I've  
5 started looking at things like the Redistricting  
6 Commission.

7 CHAIR COE: Do you plan on practicing law as a  
8 career?

9 MR. SHEU: I practiced for one year at a law firm,  
10 and now I have kind of stepped aside and I -- it's kind of  
11 unclear what I'm doing right now, because I have several  
12 different things going on. But right now, my main thing is  
13 helping a friend launch a startup in the healthcare space  
14 to figure out how to get people to prescreen for chronic  
15 conditions like diabetes and hypertension early on.

16 CHAIR COE: I see. Okay. Switching topics a  
17 little bit, I want to talk about your essay on impartiality  
18 that you wrote for us, and ask you a question about it. In  
19 that essay you talk about a time when a team at a community  
20 trivia night that you ran, selected a controversial team  
21 name, and the steps you took to quell the unrest that  
22 occurred afterwards. So, I'm wondering if you could give  
23 us, aside from that example, another example of a time you  
24 provided -- where you had to make a difficult, impartial  
25 decision that involved setting aside your preference or

1 your self-interest.

2 MR. SHEU: So, this is probably going to get into  
3 more political areas, and I hope that's okay with  
4 Commission. So, in law school I was also the co-president  
5 of the Asian Pacific Islander Law Student Association. So  
6 each -- there were several affinity groups. There was also  
7 like a Black Law Student Association. There -- and  
8 several other ones. And each of us was kind of tasked with  
9 stewarding our respective membership. All membership was  
10 open, so anybody could join anything, but like we were the  
11 ones who were like, did things like bringing in speakers  
12 for issues and things like that.

13 And so at one point the Federal Society brought in  
14 a speaker that was on the current litigation team for the  
15 Harvard University Affirmative Action on the admissions  
16 case. I don't know if the -- if you all are familiar with  
17 that one. Should I give a brief explanation?

18 CHAIR COE: That would probably be helpful, yeah.

19 MR. SHEU: Okay. So, essentially, a litigation  
20 team has accused Harvard University of considering race in  
21 admissions kind of to the extent that would not be  
22 permitted under previous court decisions. And so  
23 specifically they claimed that Asian Americans are being  
24 discriminated against based on different ways that they're  
25 being categorized. And so the Federal Society, which is a

1 group on campus that I guess most people would consider  
2 more conservative, brought in that team to talk about that  
3 case and their position on it. And so this immediately  
4 caused a lot of uproar because of hyper-partisanship.

5           So you had people from different affinity groups  
6 saying, like, "Of course, like, this is like not  
7 appropriate. Like this -- just the meeting is against  
8 diversity," and things like that. And the Asian American  
9 group was caught in the middle, because on one hand,  
10 they're considered diverse. On another hand, like they're  
11 essentially the subject of the actual case. So, whichever  
12 way we stepped was very, very important, and even within  
13 our group, there were several different viewpoints. Like  
14 there were people who, like we should be protesting this.  
15 We should like go in and yell every time the speakers tried  
16 to speak, so they couldn't speak. There were other people  
17 who thought we should boycott this, and there were also  
18 people who very much agreed with their position as well.

19           And so, like this isn't me. When I saw this happen  
20 -- this is (indiscernible) of something where like, I have  
21 my own opinions on this, but as the leader of this group,  
22 there is no way that I can be applying what I believe to a  
23 very, very hard situation, especially in an environment  
24 where hyper-partisanship and things were likely to be  
25 construed and taken out of context.

1           So, ending where I believed, I'd started sitting  
2 down with every single person that had spoken up, because  
3 like at this point they were like massive e-mail chains and  
4 massive Facebook threads, like figuring where they came  
5 from and why they felt like they needed to conduct the  
6 actions they felt like they needed to do. But then I also  
7 reached out to every single person who hadn't spoken up,  
8 because one thing I've noticed is that just because you're  
9 vocal, that doesn't mean you're the only person with an  
10 opinion.

11           And sitting down with every single person  
12 individually, making clear that whatever I heard was going  
13 to remain private between us, except in the aggregate,  
14 created an environment where people felt comfortable  
15 talking to me, because they viewed me as a leader in this  
16 space. And, ultimately, the decision that I made for the  
17 group, that people ultimately respected, was that we would  
18 attend the talk, but we would have a spirited discussion,  
19 and we would be very respectful of their time. We would  
20 let them make their point, but then we'd also be willing to  
21 challenge on their beliefs in respectful ways that like the  
22 moderators would be okay with.

23           CHAIR COE: Thank you. You mentioned in your  
24 essays and a little bit in question -- your response to  
25 question five today, having met or worked with diverse



1 groups of people, various backgrounds. And I'm wondering,  
2 from your experiences and your interactions with those  
3 people, what is it you've learned about the different  
4 diverse groups of people that you've met, about their  
5 preferences, their concerns, that you think would make you  
6 an effective representative for the diverse population of  
7 California on this Commission?

8 MR. SHEU: Uh-huh. Well, that's a good question.  
9 I think there's many different things that I've learned. I  
10 think the biggest one that I've learned though is that like  
11 things like race, socioeconomic status and stuff are not  
12 the only ways that people feel different from each other,  
13 and teasing out those differences can reveal a lot about  
14 what they value.

15 I think even like whether you had moved here,  
16 whether you grew up here, how you feel your voice should be  
17 represented doesn't change. You feel like you should have  
18 a voice, and you feel like what you say should matter. And  
19 especially now, many people feel like their voices aren't  
20 being heard, regardless of their background. I think  
21 that's true -- like whenever I, like when I visit like  
22 random places and I go onto farms, when I call people for  
23 like election polling, I've often heard that like, my vote  
24 doesn't matter because like it's all decided on -- I'm in  
25 California and I'm a Republican, and so like, who cares if

1 I vote?

2 I think that is very important to guard against,  
3 and I think redistricting is the most important way we can  
4 make sure that people feel like they're being represented.  
5 I don't know how we're going to do that yet, because, I  
6 mean, we don't have the data in front of us, but at least  
7 that's the one thing I really want to bring forward to the  
8 Commission.

9 CHAIR COE: So I have a similar question, but in  
10 lines of a diversity under geographic front. So, as you're  
11 probably aware, that the concerns and desires and the  
12 preferences of the people can differ based on the region  
13 and the state that they're in and where they live. So you  
14 mentioned having visited many different parts of the State  
15 earlier in your responses today, Riverside and Kern and  
16 various other places, and liking -- and how you enjoy  
17 liking to go out to speak to the people in those different  
18 areas. So a similar question. What is it you've learned  
19 from the people of the different areas of the State and the  
20 concerns and the preferences and the desires of the people  
21 in the different regions that you think would make you an  
22 effective representative for all the different regions and  
23 the people in those regions on this Commission?

24 MR. SHEU: I think -- so, for example, like about a  
25 month ago, right before the quarantine started, like I just

1 drove out north. And I reached a little gas station along  
2 the way. I stopped in there and talked to the people at  
3 the gas station, like the clerks and the people who were  
4 like stopping there. And just based on this trip alone,  
5 but it just kind of confirmed my earlier impression, every  
6 single person's desires are shaped by the world they grew  
7 up in and the world that they live in. And if you don't  
8 understand those environmental background circumstances,  
9 like you probably won't understand why people believe what  
10 they do.

11           So like even in California, like I think a lot of  
12 people like to say, "California is a blue state or  
13 whatever, or like we're always Democratic or whatever," but  
14 that's not true. Like that's true in very small areas  
15 where it's practically monocultural, but the number of  
16 areas I could say that's true is like maybe certain parts  
17 of San Francisco, and even in the Bay Area you have a lot  
18 of diversity.

19           And so in talking to people and figuring out their  
20 diversity, I think it's important not to just sit down and  
21 say, "Hey, what's important to you," but also ask them  
22 things like, "when you grew up, like what were the concerns  
23 of your family? Like how did your family make money," for  
24 example, "and were there any cases where that was  
25 threatened? How did that shape like what you believe?"

1 What were you taught in school? What did your teachers  
2 believe?" And more information we can get on people I  
3 think is always welcome, because it always informs more  
4 kind of the, where they're coming at you from. And if you  
5 know where they're coming at you from, you can begin to  
6 figure out like what they will value.

7 CHAIR COE: Thank you. That segues relatively  
8 nicely to my next question, and that's regarding  
9 communities of interest. One of the biggest tasks in front  
10 of the Commission is going to be identifying those  
11 communities of interest, you know, all across the State,  
12 east to west, north to south, and everywhere in between.  
13 And some communities are easier to identify. They're much  
14 more eager to come forward. They're engaged. They're more  
15 obvious in some ways. And other communities are less so,  
16 harder to identify, easier to be overlooked. Maybe don't  
17 engage for one reason or another. So how as a Commissioner  
18 would you go about trying to identify communities of  
19 interest throughout the State, and avoid kind of  
20 inadvertently overlooking some of those communities that  
21 are less obvious and harder to find?

22 MR. SHEU: The best way is to talk to every single  
23 person in the State, which is not realistic. But I think  
24 in sampling -- so there's -- let's say, like there's 30-  
25 something-million people in California. By taking a

1 significant sample of that and talking to them, I think you  
2 are at step one. And step one tells you like, of our  
3 sample, we have all these things, and that will probably  
4 get most of the big groups. But then asking them, hey,  
5 like what are things you've noticed about the people around  
6 you? And ask, essentially, teasing out details for what  
7 they believe their communities to be, begins to give you  
8 step two, which is like identifying like the communities  
9 that people self-identify with.

10 Step three I think is going through that and seeing  
11 like, hey, so we've talked to these thousands of people.  
12 Based on that we have this general map of California.  
13 Where does it look like we're short? Like, if we look at  
14 California in terms of the Census, what are people  
15 reporting that we haven't talked to yet? What are people  
16 even not like not likely to report because they're, for  
17 whatever reason, they're afraid as to report certain  
18 things.

19 I think the Census is a good starting point for like  
20 step one and step two, but like under-response, for  
21 whatever reason, whether it's because you're afraid that  
22 people might be deported or whatever, I think that's a  
23 very, very important thing to look at in terms of like  
24 where our data falls short and where we need to start  
25 getting into the community and talking to people.

1 CHAIR COE: So, you mentioned groups of people who  
2 may be concerned and not want to come forward to report  
3 their information.

4 MR. SHEU: Uh-huh.

5 CHAIR COE: And certainly that is probably true of  
6 some groups around the State for various reasons. But  
7 their perspective and their input is equally important as  
8 anybody else's. So how do you make them feel comfortable  
9 to come forward, share that perspective with the  
10 Commission, so that the Commission can make better informed  
11 decisions?

12 MR. SHEU: Uh-huh. So I think there's many  
13 different ways of doing this. I think I always go back to,  
14 if possible, sitting out -- down with them and making them  
15 feel like this is an environment where they can talk. And,  
16 honestly, I may not be the best person for this, because  
17 like generally people like to talk to people who and look  
18 and feel like them. And so if this is like an Asian  
19 American community, I can walk in and probably set that  
20 environment better. But I think this also requires a  
21 diverse Commission of people who all think in different  
22 ways, because they can, essentially like -- we can then  
23 choose the best Commissioner or Commissioners for the task  
24 of going out into California and talking to these people.

25 I think following up and -- so, this is something

1 that like I have kind of picked up from doing background  
2 checks or having background checks done on me. But one  
3 thing I've noticed is that when people do background  
4 checks, they will say, "Hi. Okay, so you know, Vincent.  
5 Who are all the other people who will say both good and bad  
6 things about Vincent?"

7           So, in this case for California, we're not saying  
8 who are all the people who are going to say good and bad  
9 things about California, but more like, for the people who  
10 you feel like are definitely more motivated to talk, but  
11 also, who are the people you feel like you, as a person of  
12 California, that we the Commission is talking to, who do  
13 you feel like is going to be more infamous? Like -- and  
14 because this means that like instead of just having 14  
15 people decide, hey, these are the underrepresented  
16 communities, or these are the people that we're going to be  
17 hard pressed to find, this also expands that knowledge  
18 based on every single person we talk to.

19           CHAIR COE: Thank you.

20           Madam Secretary, a quick time check, please.

21           MS. PELLMAN: Yes. We have three minutes  
22 remaining.

23           CHAIR COE: Thank you.

24           Mr. Sheu, I'm just going to give you one further  
25 question. If you were to be appointed to the Commission,

1 which aspects of that role do you think you would enjoy the  
2 most, and conversely, which aspects of that role do you  
3 think you might -- cause you to struggle a bit?

4 MR. SHEU: So, I have never been one to be -- like  
5 I don't enjoy a job because of certain aspects of it. I've  
6 always enjoyed a job because I believe in what the job is  
7 doing. So, with regard to the Commission, I regard this as  
8 the single most important thing with regards to voting  
9 rights and representation in America. And I can't do that  
10 for America, but at least I can do it for California.  
11 California's my home.

12 So, I care deeply about this mission, so pretty  
13 much whatever I am doing, because I can see that there is  
14 an effect that is noble and worthy and needed for  
15 California, I will enjoy the job.

16 CHAIR COE: And do you think there's any aspects of  
17 the role that you might struggle with a little bit?

18 MR. SHEU: I don't think so. Because even for the  
19 parts where like they are tedious, like because I know what  
20 we're doing this for, it doesn't really matter to me.

21 CHAIR COE: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Sheu. As of now  
22 I don't have any further questions, so I'm going to go  
23 ahead and turn the time over to Ms. Dickison for her  
24 questions.

25 MR. SHEU: Thank you for your time.



1 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you, Mr. Coe.

2 Good afternoon, Mr. Sheu. Welcome.

3 MR. SHEU: Good afternoon.

4 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: I wanted to touch on  
5 something that you mentioned in the first standard  
6 question. So, you talked about some of the things that  
7 need to happen, is maybe the Commission needs to determine  
8 the definition of fairness.

9 MR. SHEU: Uh-huh.

10 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: How could the Commission go  
11 about making a determination of the definition of fairness  
12 that would be fair to all?

13 MR. SHEU: That's a really, really tough question.  
14 And honestly, sitting down right now in front of you, I  
15 don't know if I know the complete answer to that. But I  
16 think this requires getting different definitions of what  
17 people consider fair, and then figuring out whether we as a  
18 Commission are okay with that definition. And if not, are  
19 there aspects of that definition that we like and dislike,  
20 and, if so, can we tease out like, based on these different  
21 aspects of fairness that we like, our own definition?

22 I don't really know if I have an example for you  
23 right now. We could go deeper on this, but as of now  
24 that's where I stand, because I -- I think if I walked in  
25 with a preconceived notion of fairness, that would -- that

1 might actually be detrimental to the Commission trying to  
2 come up with its own definition.

3 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you.

4 MR. SHEU: I remain open-minded.

5 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: What might be some of the  
6 sources you go to get various definitions of fairness?

7 MR. SHEU: Uh-huh. So, I think that given the  
8 Commission was created by statute, and like, essentially,  
9 legal authority, that the very first place we'd go to is to  
10 see whether there are any statutes, legal authority or like  
11 court cases that have defined this. Because, ultimately,  
12 if there is some sort of governing legal principle, we'd  
13 have to follow it. But then beyond that, I think it's also  
14 important to ask almost every person we talk to what they  
15 think fairness means, because different people with  
16 different backgrounds are going to have different  
17 perspectives on that. And so, like, essentially, it's like  
18 a hierarchy of needs. Like if there's a governing legal  
19 principle that has already given it to us, we use that. If  
20 we have any wiggle room there, then we look at like what  
21 all the different ways fairness can be interpreted means,  
22 and then picking the best one.

23 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you. You also talked  
24 about your travels and how you like to talk to people in  
25 the areas that you travel to. What have you learned about

1 the needs of communities in the various regions of the  
2 State through those conversations?

3 MR. SHEU: They all need different things. And so  
4 I think this comes out of like -- I don't know if you've  
5 seen like this, proposals to like divide California into  
6 six states or like 10 states or whatever they are, but  
7 every so often one of these pops up where like people north  
8 are like, well, like what people do in L.A. have no bearing  
9 on us, so why are we the same state?

10 I think these proposals arrived out of the fact  
11 that different communities have different needs. Like what  
12 San Francisco needs is very different from what Riverside  
13 needs, is very different from what, like what Shasta needs,  
14 is very different from what like people on the other like  
15 northern regions of the State, like very, very northern  
16 regions need. And I think, ultimately, all of us want  
17 representation, and also economic, like sustenance, which  
18 is like it's becoming increasingly hard right now. But I  
19 feel like people feel like representation is one way that  
20 they can have their mark on making sure that California,  
21 the State Government and the people who are elected  
22 represent what they want.

23 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Where might somebody submit  
24 a thing that influence what somebody's looking for when  
25 they're thinking about representation?

1           MR. SHEU: That's also a good question. I think  
2 when they go to the ballot box and they cast their vote,  
3 they want to see that they have some say in selecting who  
4 represents them. They want to see that like based on their  
5 ballot box, even if like somebody disagrees with them and  
6 like the opposite candidate wins, that at least they had a  
7 chance to have somebody be put into the state legislature  
8 that represents their community and what people like the  
9 most. I think things like gerrymandering are the complete  
10 antithesis of this, and I think gerrymandering's one of the  
11 worst things that's ever happened to the U.S., because it  
12 means that like, essentially, you can have whole  
13 communities that are essentially just stamped out. I'm  
14 hoping that the Redistricting Commission can essentially be  
15 the model for the opposite of that, in making sure that  
16 every community feels like they have a voice in the  
17 legislature.

18           PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you. In your  
19 diversity essay you talked about being the co-president of  
20 the diversity or affinity student group.

21           MR. SHEU: Uh-huh.

22           PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: What was the mission of  
23 that group?

24           MR. SHEU: So the mission of that group was several  
25 fold. The very first one was creating -- and so, law

1 school has traditionally been a bastion of certain people.  
2 And I think one thing that has prevented some, let's say  
3 more diverse candidates from attending law school, is the  
4 feeling that they don't belong.

5           And so one of the missions of the groups that we  
6 had created for affinity was making sure that people felt  
7 like when they came to law school to see, hey, is this  
8 place for me? That they thought, people they felt like  
9 they could look up to that were models for them and were  
10 creating a community where they felt welcome.

11           So with my specific group, it was the Asian  
12 Americans, but that didn't mean that I felt like I only  
13 represented Asian Americans. Because to me it was  
14 important that like all diverse candidates interacted with  
15 each other, but also interacted with people we've  
16 traditionally considered non-diverse. And so, that meant  
17 that like beyond just like talking about Asian American  
18 issues, it also meant we held events where everybody in the  
19 school could come and learn more about different aspects of  
20 our culture.

21           PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Think you might have  
22 stepped into my next question. Is that how you created the  
23 inclusive environment, through that?

24           MR. SHEU: Yes, although I would say that the  
25 inclusive environment that I was trying to create was more

1 of a personal thing. Like everybody who's taken the mantle  
2 of like these groups has had a different attitude. There's  
3 some people who've become very activist. There's some  
4 people who've said like, "Hey, let's just share our food  
5 with everybody." I felt my goal should have been to create  
6 the big-group environment.

7 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Okay. Thank you. Speaking  
8 of active activism, do you think your -- do you think  
9 there's, do you think there's a role for advocacy within  
10 the Commission?

11 MR. SHEU: I think without advocacy, like nobody  
12 knows what anybody's views are. And so whether that's  
13 three members of the Commission or members of the public  
14 who talked to the Commission to make their voices heard,  
15 advocacy is important. But I think it's not just blind --  
16 sorry. I cannot talk today -- blind advocacy. Like  
17 advocacy advances an opinion and a viewpoint. And I think  
18 viewpoints are important for the Commission to consider.  
19 But ultimately at some point, advocacy for the Commission  
20 must stop, and impartiality must take hold.

21 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you. I'm just  
22 looking at my notes. Some of my questions were answered  
23 already in your other answers, but let me look through my  
24 notes here.

25 MR. SHEU: I'm happy to go deeper on anything as

1 well.

2 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Okay. You have a degree in  
3 statistics. Based on the current situation, do you have  
4 any concerns with the data that could come in from the  
5 Census, and it'd either being undercounted, not  
6 representative or even coming late?

7 MR. SHEU: I think all of those are concerns of  
8 mine, and figuring out how to deal with that will be one of  
9 the Commission's biggest challenges. Undercounting I think  
10 comes from several different possibilities, and we'd layer  
11 COVID-19 on top of that. And so like I think whatever  
12 numbers we get, we're almost going to have to assume either  
13 just starting point numbers, and we may have to figure out  
14 how to do our own sampling to kind of make up those counts.  
15 I mentioned to Mr. Coe earlier that I think I have other  
16 concerns about people perhaps underreporting for other  
17 reasons as well. And I think that's another thing the  
18 Commission's going to have to be conscious of. Until we  
19 actually see the numbers, I don't know how much we can do  
20 at the moment, but at least walking in, these are my  
21 thoughts.

22 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you. One of the  
23 concerns that California has this time is they -- the  
24 thought is that California's most likely going to lose a  
25 congressional district -- I can't speak either. What can

1 the Commission do in its work to reassure communities as  
2 they're going through and having to redraw the lines should  
3 it lose a congressional district, that they're being heard  
4 and the Commission is doing the best it can?

5 MR. SHEU: That's a good question. I think with  
6 regards to losing a seat, that's unfortunate, but it's  
7 going to come down to how the numbers look. And I guess  
8 underreporting don't help those numbers. But, ultimately,  
9 if the Commission is able to draw up districts that can --  
10 are almost universally viewed as fair -- I think it will  
11 ever be universally be viewed as fair, but as close to  
12 universal as we can get, then people can at least feel  
13 like, hey, at least within my district my views are being  
14 heard, and I have a representative who's, even if I didn't  
15 vote for them, open to my concerns and is willing to kind  
16 of put forth my views in the house.

17 In the State legislature I think that's also true,  
18 too. So that's kind of like a -- like -- I think just on  
19 composition and kind of how a district looks alone, you can  
20 assuage a lot of fears for people feeling like they're  
21 voices are being lost. And, if not, then I think that's  
22 going to be something that the Commission has  
23 (indiscernible) from talking to people and coming up with  
24 like a different solution.

25 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: I have a question on how a



1 district may look. Would a district that's shaped oddly  
2 give you concern? If so, why or why not?

3 MR. SHEU: So, my knee-jerk reaction, having seen a  
4 lot of last examples of gerrymandering is, when a district  
5 looks really odd, something happened there and I really  
6 want to know why. I would be very curious for an odd-  
7 looking district, the reason that went into that district's  
8 composition. And so this is where like -- so, in one of  
9 the very first questions I mentioned that transparency was  
10 a very big deal for the Commission. So, it could be that  
11 the Commission draws a district that looks somewhat odd,  
12 but if we do that we better have a really good reason for  
13 it, and we better have a really good way of letting people  
14 know why their district looks the way it does. Whether  
15 that means like, hey, only through this kind of -- maybe  
16 it's because you have very clear geographical boundaries of  
17 a community that's shaped like this, and so that's why your  
18 district looks the way it does. Maybe it's because this is  
19 the only way that we figured out this definition of  
20 fairness works. And because of that, like, you know, the  
21 district looks the way it does. Maybe it's because  
22 arrangement of the roads requires this. But whatever it  
23 is, I think it's important to be very clear to people why  
24 an odd district looks the way it does.

25 So, I guess in summary, it's not automatically bad

1 for a district to look odd, but there should be a reason  
2 for it.

3 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you. The first  
4 eight, the first eight Commissioners are selected randomly,  
5 and then they are tasked with selecting the next six to  
6 round out the Commission. If you should be selected as one  
7 of the first eight, what would you be looking for in those  
8 other six individuals?

9 MR. SHEU: I think the very first thing I would  
10 look at is, of the eight what kind of representation do we  
11 have? What kind of background and diversities do we have?  
12 But also, most importantly, what kind of skill sets do we  
13 have? Based on that I think we can fairly reasonably come  
14 to a list of things we feel like we need in the other six.  
15 Whether that's like familiarity with just statistics or  
16 whether that's familiarity with legal backgrounds or  
17 whether that's geographic diversity. And then based on  
18 that we can make it the remaining pool and figure out which  
19 things we need, and then which candidates fit all those  
20 requirements.

21 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: What role do you believe  
22 you would play on the Commission?

23 MR. SHEU: I could see that question going in many  
24 different ways. Is there -- do you have any particular  
25 direction you'd like me to take it in?

1 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: No.

2 MR. SHEU: Okay. So, on skill sets I think that I  
3 will probably be more involved on the legal side and on the  
4 data side. But I would also like to be involved with a lot  
5 of the talking, because independent of my academic  
6 background, I consider my greatest strength being able to  
7 talk to just about anybody.

8 I suspect that in most groups I tend to be the one  
9 who moderates the discussion, so if there's nobody else in  
10 the Commission who'd like to do that, then I see myself  
11 taking that role. But also, I tend to be best when I'm in  
12 an environment where I see many different holes being  
13 filled, and whichever ones aren't filled I just step in,  
14 because I have a lot of different skill sets, so I feel  
15 like I'm pretty versatile in what I can do.

16 So, like in most organizations, I've usually never  
17 been point person on any given thing, but I end up being  
18 like the support for every single thing.

19 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you.

20 Mr. Coe, I have no further questions at this point.

21 CHAIR COE: Thank you, Ms. Dickison.

22 Mr. Belnap, the time is yours.

23 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right. Good afternoon,  
24 Mr. Sheu.

25 MR. SHEU: Good afternoon.

1           PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: I know you've already talked  
2 about the definition of fairness, and you said it's a  
3 process that the Commission needs to go through, and you'd  
4 like to participate in that process of coming to a  
5 definition. But even so, I want to hear your thoughts on  
6 what you would consider fairness. And I'm going to give  
7 you a particular area to think about.

8           Some have equated fairness with political  
9 competitiveness, where no one political party can safely  
10 assume that they'll win an election in a particular  
11 district. Are politically competitive districts fair  
12 districts?

13           MR. SHEU: Just give me a few seconds to compose my  
14 thoughts. So, politically competitive districts mean that  
15 no candidate ever takes a district for granted, which I  
16 think is one aspect of fairness that's very important. One  
17 thing I noticed with most elections is that -- or  
18 campaigners will spend a lot of time in, quote-unquote,  
19 "battleground districts" or states. And this means that  
20 like some of the other states that feel like, you know,  
21 equally important areas basically have their needs either -  
22 - not necessarily forgotten, but kind of like sidelined  
23 while candidates concentrate on areas that are more  
24 competitive. This could mean that people in those  
25 districts feel like their views are just kind of taken for

1 granted. And it also means that like if there's any change  
2 in those views, that those are not necessarily reflected  
3 right away.

4 So, kind of politically competitive districts I  
5 think is one aspect of fairness I think the Commission will  
6 have to consider very strongly. I think it is a very  
7 important aspect of fairness, but it's not the only one.

8 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right. Conversely, are  
9 non-competitive districts unfair districts?

10 MR. SHEU: I think it depends on -- so like if you  
11 have a population that's very homogenous somewhere, and the  
12 only reasonable way of drawing that district is essentially  
13 a district that where most people feel the same way. Then  
14 that district is not going to be very competitive, but it's  
15 still going to be very important and very fair.

16 So, for example, like I think if you drew a  
17 district of just San Francisco, San Francisco is fairly  
18 diverse, but I think on the overall political spectrum you  
19 would say that most people there probably feel relatively  
20 similarly. And so even though San Francisco probably  
21 wouldn't be a very competitive district, it would still be  
22 relatively fair for the people in there. Of course, if the  
23 data does not reflect that it's actually a fair district,  
24 then we would revisit that, but I think that's just an  
25 example I'm pulling out of my head.

1           PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay. Thank you. So we've  
2 already discussed after graduating from Stanford with a JD  
3 and Master's Degree, you went to work for a law firm. I  
4 guess it's Fenwick and West. What did you work on when you  
5 were working for that law firm -- firm?

6           MR. SHEU: We -- the firm is concentrated on kind  
7 of a lot of startups and technology and life sciences  
8 companies. So we operated primarily as like essentially  
9 the any company who's starting up's general counsel. So  
10 whatever they needed, whether that was like employment,  
11 whether that was incorporation or whether that was issuing  
12 stock, all of that was something that Fenwick did.

13           On the side we also had a thriving pro bono  
14 practice. So, for example, like I did several projects  
15 where I was helping non-profits launch initiatives or  
16 figure out whether they were doing was legal, or hire  
17 people that perhaps were more difficult to hire on the  
18 standard spectrum.

19           PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay. Why did you move on  
20 from that position?

21           MR. SHEU: So one thing that I stated earlier to, I  
22 think Mr. Coe, was that I looked for positions where I can  
23 see the greater good. And based on that -- like I can be  
24 motivated at almost anything, as long as I see a connection  
25 between what I'm doing and the greater good.

1           And I had learned a lot from a year there, but also, I  
2 wasn't feeling like what I was doing really mattered like  
3 on the grand scale. Whether that was politics, whether  
4 that was like representation, whether that was like  
5 fighting for people who cannot fight for themselves. And  
6 so I moved on primarily because I was not necessarily  
7 seeing everything that I wanted to see in terms of fighting  
8 for the greater good.

9           PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: And I think you described  
10 what you're currently -- you currently work for Stanford, I  
11 believe, at least that's where it was when you submitted  
12 your application. What are doing for Stanford, if you're  
13 still working for them?

14           MR. SHEU: So, I actually do several different  
15 things now. Stanford was just one of the many things I do.  
16 At Stanford I currently help teach courses, although I  
17 think my quarter just ended, so I may not actually be  
18 working for Stanford at the moment anymore. But I helped  
19 to develop technology courses for distribution to non-  
20 Stanford students, so that anybody who wanted to learn  
21 computer science, for example, could just come to us and we  
22 would be willing to put them into a section where they  
23 could take the course from a Stanford professor, but also  
24 have the individualized instruction from people like me.

25           PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: So, did I hear you say that

1 you were also doing some other work, besides the work for  
2 Stanford?

3 MR. SHEU: Yes. I am also -- so I continue to do  
4 legal work for the non-profit that Mr. Coe mentioned. I'm  
5 helping another friend launch a non-profit around bringing  
6 the arts and dance into elementary school. And then I'm  
7 also helping a friend launch a startup in the healthcare  
8 space to get people prescreened for chronic diseases, so  
9 that they don't have to worry about that disease later.

10 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay. Thank you. So,  
11 harkening back to some of your work as a lawyer, either for  
12 the firm that we mentioned, or you had a number of  
13 internships earlier. Can you think of a time where you had  
14 to set aside your personal views to achieve a broader  
15 objective, and can you share that instance with us?

16 MR. SHEU: So, I think -- let me take a drink of  
17 water. So, to me, legal representation itself is basically  
18 the art of setting aside your own personal views for that  
19 of another. Because like no matter what you walk in with,  
20 you cannot let your views overwhelm those of your client.  
21 Like your client's views are supreme. And not only that's  
22 what I do, but it's also kind of what legally we are,  
23 lawyers are required to do.

24 So, every single time I've ever represented  
25 somebody, it was with their views in mind. So, for



1 example, when I was at the U.S. Attorney's Office, like no  
2 matter what I thought about the people that were on the  
3 other side, or the people that we represented, like the  
4 people we represented were the United States, because it's  
5 the U.S. Prosecutor's Office.

6           So, whether or not I believed that somebody  
7 deserved something, whether or not I believed that somebody  
8 deserved representation or not, all of that had to be set  
9 aside every single time for what the needs of the client,  
10 in this case, the People, wanted.

11           PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right. Thank you. This  
12 is just more of a curiosity question for me. In your  
13 academics and also your work history, and you've had a lot  
14 of twists and turns and you've covered a number of  
15 subjects, you know, a remarkable number of degrees and --  
16 but where do you think your career is headed? Where --  
17 what path are you visualizing for yourself?

18           MR. SHEU: That's a very good question, and I ask  
19 myself that every single day. I am looking for making the  
20 broadest impact on people. I am not sure whether that  
21 means starting a company that does good. I am not sure if  
22 that means running for office. I am not sure if that means  
23 joining an organization or group that advocates for  
24 something I believe very strongly in.

25           I do know that the Commission is one thing I can do

1 that I consider very important. Like I spent, I don't  
2 know, like maybe 100 hours on that application because it  
3 was so difficult to find the right things to write. So  
4 this is probably step one of me discovering how exactly I  
5 can make a positive impact on California and the world, and  
6 I really hope to be able to be a part of it.

7 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay. So my -- this is my  
8 last question. I presume that a person with your abilities  
9 and background could focus on making a lot of money. Why  
10 are you looking to make the greatest impact instead of  
11 making a lot of money?

12 MR. SHEU: Money doesn't go with you when you die.

13 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: What's that?

14 MR. SHEU: Money doesn't follow you when you die  
15 --

16 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay.

17 MR. SHEU: -- impact does.

18 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right. Thank you.

19 Mr. Chair, no further questions.

20 CHAIR COE: Thank you, Mr. Belnap.

21 Mr. Dawson.

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

23 Mr. Sheu, I wasn't clear from your answer or your  
24 essay, did you allow the trivia team to keep its name?

25 MR. SHEU: So, every single week they come up with

1 different names. So like, essentially, the same group of  
2 people will come up with a different name every single  
3 week, and we'll say that they chose not to keep that name,  
4 but they also chose future names that, while pushing the  
5 edge, did not necessarily cross the edge.

6 MR. DAWSON: Did you change the policies of the  
7 trivia group?

8 MR. SHEU: I did not change the policy of the  
9 trivia group. I allowed the community to do that for me.

10 MR. DAWSON: Okay.

11 MR. SHEU: So I guess I was like the spokesperson  
12 for all of the views that had come across, and I think  
13 people made decisions accordingly.

14 MR. DAWSON: Okay. So you saw yourself as the  
15 collector of the community views?

16 MR. SHEU: Correct.

17 MR. DAWSON: Okay. In your diversity essay, you  
18 wrote -- and I think you discussed this with Ms. Dickison.  
19 You wrote, "I made it my mission to reach out not only to  
20 other traditional diversity groups, but also other  
21 stakeholders who tended to be overlooked in diversity  
22 discussions." When you say, "traditional diversity  
23 groups," are you talking about groups that identify  
24 themselves by their ethnic or cultural background?

25 MR. SHEU: Yes, but also people who would just call

1 themselves diverse.

2 MR. DAWSON: And who are those?

3 MR. SHEU: So, for example, there's also a  
4 socioeconomic diversity, that's a big category. But some  
5 of the views I felt like were overlooked were people who  
6 just wouldn't speak up. So, for example, mental health  
7 became a very big issue on campus, but it was something the  
8 school was very unwilling to discuss. But I felt like  
9 there was a diversity of mental health, and I didn't see  
10 people who perhaps were struggling by speaking up, doubly  
11 so because of mental health issues. So that's one group in  
12 particular that I made a very good point of reaching out  
13 to.

14 MR. DAWSON: I see. This was in -- this was during  
15 law school?

16 MR. SHEU: Correct.

17 MR. DAWSON: Okay. Do you see -- I know that you  
18 were an undergrad at Cal. I guess there's diversity right  
19 there. You have a degree from Cal and degree from  
20 Stanford.

21 MR. SHEU: I call it (indiscernible) begins.

22 MR. DAWSON: That was the correct answer. There's  
23 an issue in the UC's that you may or may not be familiar  
24 with. That rural high school students tend to be  
25 underrepresented. So, do you consider the urban/rural

1 divide to be a part of that diversity discussion?

2 MR. SHEU: I think it's one of the biggest ones in  
3 California. It's often overlooked because it's highly  
4 correlated I think based on the data that I've seen with -  
5 - on political leaning. But I think, ultimately, it's not  
6 because people have different political leanings because of  
7 the circumstances that they grew up with that produced  
8 these views, and a big part of that is where they grew up  
9 and whether urban or rural.

10 MR. DAWSON: Assuming that you are selected for the  
11 Commission, and your -- like in 2010, the Commission did a  
12 number of public meetings up and down the State.

13 MR. SHEU: Uh-huh.

14 MR. DAWSON: If you're a olive grower from Tehama  
15 County, could you feel like a person from Santa Clara  
16 County, who works at a fancy university, could understand  
17 their concerns?

18 MR. SHEU: I think I would probably walk in being  
19 very predisposed against them, but first -- so now I'm  
20 talking on me personally. I feel like I have the skills,  
21 or at least the ability to sit down and listen long enough,  
22 and talk to people long enough, and speak their language  
23 long enough for them to begin to understand that I actually  
24 do care about what they think.

25 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. You talked a little bit

1 about --

2 MR. SHEU: Like when I said -- I'm sorry, Mr.  
3 Dawson. When I said I was predisposed against them, I was  
4 speaking from the perspective of the olive grower, not me  
5 personally.

6 MR. DAWSON: Yes right. You talked a little bit  
7 about the undercount. Obviously, the undercount is not  
8 spread evenly across California or across the country.  
9 What groups do you think are most likely to be  
10 undercounted?

11 MR. SHEU: The biggest one I can think of off the  
12 top of my head is any family that has any member of it that  
13 might be undocumented. Because especially with the current  
14 U.S. administration stepping up enforcement efforts for  
15 immigration, I think people may believe that when they  
16 report themselves, they are essentially saying, hey, look,  
17 I'm here. Come get me. It's going to lead to very high  
18 amounts of undercounting, especially among, for example,  
19 Hispanic populations, but also probably the more you get  
20 south and the more communities you get with like, for  
21 example, migrant workers, the more likely that's how we're  
22 going to have an undercount.

23 MR. DAWSON: I see. So, you're also saying that  
24 not only that group --

25 MR. SHEU: Yeah.

1 MR. DAWSON: -- but also where they're concentrated  
2 in the State?

3 MR. SHEU: Correct. I don't know if that's true.  
4 I would definitely have to see the data, but I -- that's  
5 like my knee-jerk reaction.

6 MR. DAWSON: Right. Thank you. How did you get  
7 involved in Senator Feingold's group?

8 MR. SHEU: He's been a lecturer in residence every  
9 so often at the law school, and he was doing something I  
10 was very interested in because misinformation had basically  
11 become the hot button issue. And as somebody who gets a  
12 lot of news every single day from all sorts of sources,  
13 whether that's social media networks or news sources,  
14 knowing that the data I was getting was true and accurate  
15 was very important to me. So, I asked, and he was happy to  
16 have me.

17 MR. DAWSON: All right. Thank you. I think that's  
18 all of my follow-up questions.

19 Mr. Chair, I have no more questions.

20 CHAIR COE: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Dawson.

21 Any members of the Panel have follow-up questions?  
22 We'll start with Ms. Dickison. Do you have any follow-up  
23 questions?

24 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: I do not have any further  
25 questions.

1 CHAIR COE: Mr. Belnap?

2 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: No further follow-up  
3 questions.

4 CHAIR COE: I don't have any follow-up questions at  
5 this time, counsel.

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

7 Madam Secretary, what is our time remaining in the  
8 90?

9 MS. PELLMAN: Yes. Twenty-four minutes, 20  
10 seconds.

11 MR. DAWSON: All right. Thank you.

12 Mr. Sheu, at this time I would like to offer you  
13 the opportunity to make a closing statement to the Panel  
14 with the time remaining.

15 MR. SHEU: Well, I don't have a closing statement  
16 prepared, but I think I've mentioned in various bits and  
17 pieces several times that I think this is the most  
18 important issue with regards to representation and voting  
19 in this country. And especially for California, my home, I  
20 want to be able to be one of the 14 people who makes sure  
21 that every single person's views are represented fairly.

22 I don't really see another way I can make a bigger  
23 impact on the world right now. I'm very hopeful to be a  
24 part of the Commission.

25 CHAIR COE: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Sheu. We



1 appreciate you time today.

2 Our next interview is scheduled to start at 3:00  
3 p.m., so we will be in recess until 2:59 p.m.

4 (Off the record at 2:31 p.m.)

5 (Back on the record at 2:59 p.m.)

6 CHAIR COE: Okay. The time being 2:59 p.m., I'd  
7 like to call this meeting of the Applicant Review Panel  
8 back to order. At this time I'd like to welcome Mr. Steve  
9 Hsieh. Hsieh.

10 MR. HSIEH: Hsieh. Correct.

11 CHAIR COE: All right. Mr. Steve Hsieh. Thank  
12 you, Mr. Hsieh, for being with us this afternoon.  
13 Appreciate you time.

14 MR. HSIEH: Thank you, Mr. Coe.

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

17 MR. HSIEH: Okay.

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

19 Mr. Hsieh, I am going to ask you five standard  
20 questions that the Panel has requested each applicant  
21 respond to. Are you ready?

22 MR. HSIEH: Yes.

23 MR. DAWSON: First question. What skills and  
24 attributes should all Commissioners possess? What skills  
25 or competencies should the Commission possess collectively?

1 Of the skills, attributes and competencies that each  
2 Commissioner should possess, which do you possess? In  
3 summary, how will you contribute to the success of the  
4 Commission?

5 MR. HSIEH: I believe the Commission collectively  
6 should possess the skill of analytical skills, to analyze  
7 the data collected through the Census 2020. And also need  
8 to be, have the coordination skills to coordinate between  
9 the input of the consultants and staff, as well as  
10 collectively, we have to have team player skills to work  
11 well with each other, and everybody with open mind, open-  
12 minded attitude and be impartial to the data that's  
13 collected. And also, have a process, open, transparent  
14 process to collect input from the public.

15 And of the skills -- should I go on to b?

16 MR. DAWSON: Yes, please.

17 MR. HSIEH: Okay. Sure. Of the skills my --  
18 personally possess, I believe I have pretty strong  
19 analytical skills because of my professional background and  
20 a software engineer. I collect large amount of data, and  
21 then through a software program, I run software to --  
22 program to analyze the data and then present them in a way  
23 that's meaningful to our customers. So I have pretty  
24 strong analytical skills.

25 And also I believe we have to have a human skill,

1 people skills. And I myself I have been working in  
2 committee environments for 20 years, mostly in non-profit  
3 organization boards. And I have pretty good communication  
4 skills, and people skills. I'm always a team player. And  
5 also I'm always impartial. I'm -- I look at facts and not  
6 bias. And that's -- so, I can contribute to the success of  
7 the Commission. I understand that everybody -- not  
8 everybody has all the skills that's required, but then I  
9 personally will contribute my analytical skills and my  
10 open-mindedness and my open attitude to work in a team  
11 environment.

12 MR. DAWSON: Question two. Work on the Commission  
13 requires members of different political backgrounds to work  
14 together. Since the 2010 Commission was selected and  
15 formed, the American political conversation has become  
16 increasingly polarized, whether in the press, on social  
17 media, and even in our own families. What characteristics  
18 do you possess and what characteristics should your fellow  
19 Commissioners possess that will protect against hyper-  
20 partisanship? What will you do to ensure that the work of  
21 the Commission is not seen as polarized or hyper-partisan  
22 and avoid perceptions of political bias and conflict?

23 MR. HSIEH: I believe that this Redistricting  
24 Commission is for the public of California, and it doesn't  
25 belong to any particular party. So I myself, I registered

1 as a Republican. I like to consider myself as a moderate  
2 Republican, and I'm also a, consider myself as a  
3 Libertarian, which is -- I don't really look at the  
4 doctrines, if you will, of each party, which I look at the  
5 collective benefit of the maps.

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

9 MR. HSIEH: I think the process itself is a big  
10 task and -- but I think that, from my understanding, that  
11 after the district map has been drawn, there's some  
12 lawsuits that follows. And I think the biggest problem is  
13 to, how to -- within the lawsuit and the eye of the court.  
14 And so I would think that we want to have in the whole  
15 process and document the entire process, and we want to  
16 have a really opened and unbiased process to take in the  
17 public comments. And the whole process needs to be  
18 visible.

19 And then I know that there's -- even in the U.S.  
20 Constitution and the California Constitution we have some  
21 statutory requirements. And that we need to do our due  
22 diligence to follow those requirements, so that later when  
23 we get challenge in the court, we can prove -- we have  
24 proof that we followed all the statutory requirements.

25 MR. DAWSON: Question four. If you are selected,

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

9 MR. HSIEH: On one -- I would like to have this  
10 example that I -- one of the committees that I sit on, I  
11 was the past president of that committee. And we were  
12 given the task of hosting a performance that's a group of  
13 performers from Taiwan, that we need to have a theoretical,  
14 host a theoretical performance from the group. And then  
15 they -- the performance, they requires a lot of equipments.

16 So we kind of, we talked to a theater equipment  
17 consulting company, so they made a suggestion that we need  
18 a lot of equipments. And so we end up -- and the cost is  
19 \$10,000 to rent all the equipments. So that for our  
20 committee is a pretty big number. We never had to expend  
21 the much money on a performance. But then since we all  
22 have a vision to do -- to be -- to make a successful event,  
23 so that we decided we try a different -- of course we have  
24 different opinions from the board members, but then our  
25 final goal is to have a successful performance.

1           So then we decided to try different ways to raise  
2 money, and then eventually -- and we actually, we took the  
3 advice from the consultant, we spent \$10,000 on the  
4 lighting and installing equipment, and then eventually we  
5 had a very successful performance. And we ended up making  
6 a profit, all of it as well. So it was pretty successful  
7 all around.

8           What lessons should I take from this group  
9 experience, I will think that, first of all, we each have  
10 to -- we have to have a end goal, which is a goal that we  
11 need to establish. And everybody, even though we have the  
12 different opinions, but then we all toward, work toward our  
13 common goal to establish -- to try to establish this common  
14 goal.

15           And then another, another important lesson that I  
16 took from it, is that I -- is the importance of listening  
17 to the experts. Since I am no expert to theoretical  
18 performance, and so I listen to the expert's suggestions  
19 and I got the right equipment. And so we have a really  
20 good performance. And then there's some other  
21 (indiscernible) performance. They didn't use really top-  
22 notch equipment, so they didn't have the same effect of our  
23 performance. So, the lesson that I took away from it is  
24 that I don't know everything set -- actually, I would  
25 assume that I know very little about this field, and then I

1 listened to the expert's opinion.

2 MR. DAWSON: Question five. A considerable amount  
3 of the Commission's work will involve meeting with people  
4 from all over California who come from very different  
5 backgrounds and a wide variety of perspectives. If you are  
6 selected as a Commissioner, what skills and attributes will  
7 make you effective at interacting with people from  
8 different backgrounds and who have a variety of  
9 perspectives? What experiences have you had that will help  
10 you be effective at understanding and appreciating people  
11 and communities of different backgrounds and who have a  
12 variety of perspectives?

13 MR. HSIEH: I believe that we want to treat each  
14 other with respect and with open-mindedness. And I always,  
15 the one criteria that I always follow is that I won't -- I  
16 always treat others the way that I expect others to treat  
17 myself. And it doesn't matter what the culture or heritage  
18 or what other difference that we may have, but then we  
19 always keep an open mind and be courteous and be  
20 respectful, and then treat everybody with respect.

21 And as far as the experience, and I do have a lot  
22 of experience in different -- in dealing with different  
23 backgrounds. Since I -- since 2019, I was, I've been on  
24 the board of Citizens Review Board on Police Practices.  
25 This is a citizens oversight commission on the San Diego

1 P.D. And what we do is that we -- when citizens make a  
2 complaint to the Offices of SDPD, and the internal affairs  
3 will first investigate the complaint. And then this, our  
4 committee review the IA's, internal affair's report, and  
5 then we come out with our own report, whether to agree or  
6 disagree. And our committee consists of 23 people, 23 San  
7 Diego -- San Diegans, consist of all kind of different  
8 backgrounds, and we all work together to achieve a common  
9 goal, which is to review this complaint, whether it's -- so  
10 make sure there's no bias against the police or there's no  
11 bias against the citizen.

12 So I myself, personally I have a lot of experience  
13 dealing with this type of issues. And, again, I always  
14 keep an open mind. I look at the fact. I don't like any  
15 other bias to influence myself, and I treat everybody with  
16 respect.

17 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. We'll now go to Panel  
18 questions. Each of the Panel Members will have 20 minutes  
19 to pose his or her questions. And we'll start with the  
20 Chair, Mr. Coe.

21 CHAIR COE: Thank you, Mr. Dawson.

22 Good afternoon again to you, Ms. Hsieh. Thank you  
23 for taking the time to speak with us today.

24 MR. HSIEH: Yeah. Thank you, Mr. Coe.

25 CHAIR COE: So, as you were just talking about,



1 you, I think -- believe since 2008, have been a board  
2 member on the San Diego Citizens Review Board on Police  
3 Practices. Is this a volunteer position?

4 MR. HSIEH: Yes.

5 CHAIR COE: It is.

6 MR. HSIEH: It is volunteer position, and then it  
7 has to be nominated by the Mayor, and then passed by the  
8 City Council.

9 CHAIR COE: I see. And how did you come to be  
10 involved in this board? Were -- did you seek it out  
11 yourself, or did somebody nominate you or ask you to be a  
12 part of it?

13 MR. HSIEH: Yeah. I just, I seek it out on myself  
14 because I see there's a lot of -- in a lot of large cities,  
15 there's tension between police and its citizens. And so I  
16 knew of this, the existence of this board, and I think I  
17 can make a difference, so I applied. And I went through  
18 the -- everybody has went through, has to go through the  
19 interview process, and then selection process. Yes.

20 CHAIR COE: So, on your essay on impartiality you  
21 sent us as part of your application, you give an example of  
22 a particular case you were involved with as a member of  
23 this Citizens Review Board on Police Practices. And I'm  
24 wondering if you could provide us with another example of a  
25 time when you had to make a difficult, impartial decision

1 that involved setting aside your self-interest, maybe one  
2 you're able to provide a little bit more detail. I think  
3 there were some restrictions on the example you were  
4 speaking of in your essay. So, maybe another one that  
5 provides more detail.

6 MR. HSIEH: Right. I could, because everything is,  
7 should be, is confidential, so I can go with a very general  
8 response. Recently -- well, for example, if a person was -  
9 - is detained by the police, like say, is detained by the  
10 police on the side of street for questioning, and then  
11 during the detention if he pulls out his cell phone and he  
12 was asking if you want to -- if he can use his cell phone  
13 to record the detention, the encounter. And then, should  
14 he be allowed or should he not be allowed?

15 The SDPD procedure states that if, recording is  
16 allowed if, first of all, it does not interfere with police  
17 investigation. And, second, the person cannot be in  
18 custody. Of course, detention's different than custody.  
19 So, this is the procedures that we have -- that we're  
20 given. But then this procedure is basically addressing a  
21 third-party bystander. If somebody is across the street  
22 seeing someone was detained by the police and he pulled out  
23 his cell phone and started recording, that's perfectly  
24 fine. But it doesn't really apply to the scenario in  
25 question.

1           And so our job is to work through all this. And  
2 then, if this happen, and we have to work through the  
3 differences, and then sort through the laws and reach a  
4 conclusion. So that's basically, that's the nature of the  
5 thing that we do.

6           CHAIR COE: Do have a, maybe another example that  
7 doesn't involve the Citizens Review Board, about where you  
8 had to make an impartial decision that maybe you're, you'd  
9 be a little bit more free to speak about?

10          MR. HSIEH: I can't think of anything right now.  
11 Sorry.

12          CHAIR COE: Okay. I wanted to move on to some of  
13 the analytical skills you've discussed in our essay. You  
14 talk about in that essay your daily duties as a software  
15 engineer, and you talked about that earlier, how you  
16 created the software program to analyze data. And you  
17 mentioned in your essay that when designing and building  
18 applications you communicate with users to further -- find  
19 out further information to find out what needs they have  
20 when you're designing the product. So how do you normally  
21 go about gathering input on user needs?

22          MR. HSIEH: Yes. We adapted a process called,  
23 "Agile." So basically we -- so every morning we have a  
24 short meeting, with developers, and the product requirement  
25 people. So we had a meeting first, and then we find out

1 what their requirement is, and then we start developing.  
2 And after a day of development the next morning we have the  
3 same meeting again. And then we make sure that what we did  
4 is definitely what the customers needs. And then in  
5 addition to this, we were, have some demos. When we  
6 reached to a milestone we will show a demos, demonstrate to  
7 the customer or the stakeholders that -- what we have, and  
8 to make sure that this is indeed what's needed, and we're  
9 not spending our time, wasting our time on something that's  
10 not needed by the customer.

11 CHAIR COE: Okay. Thank you. So as you're  
12 probably aware, much of the work of this Commission is  
13 going to be informed by input from the people of  
14 California. Do you think that your experience gathering  
15 input in your role as a software engineer would benefit the  
16 work of the Commission in gathering input from stakeholders  
17 across the State, and if so, why?

18 MR. HSIEH: Yes, I do. Because in my job I have to  
19 think about what questions to ask to the customer per the  
20 requirements. Given the data, the data could be  
21 interpreted in different ways, but then I need to know  
22 what, exactly what's useful for the customer. So, for the  
23 data given, I have already given some thought to it. And  
24 then I really enjoy talking directly to our customers,  
25 because I talking to them direct communication, I can find

1 out. Sometimes verbally is sometimes something that's not  
2 very clear, but then when you talk to someone directly and  
3 ask questions from different angles, you will get a much  
4 clearer picture of exactly what the customer's requirement  
5 is. And so I do have a lot of experience talking to the  
6 customers, and I think I have -- I can contribute to  
7 finding out the customer's needs. And I think that's, that  
8 can be applied to the Commission.

9 CHAIR COE: Okay. Thank you. So in your essays,  
10 you discuss having met or worked with diverse groups of  
11 people. I think you mentioned that also, your work on the  
12 Citizens Review Board, being made up of a diverse group of  
13 people. And from your interactions with the people that  
14 you've met, what have you learned about the needs and  
15 desires and the preferences of diverse groups of people  
16 that would make you an effective representation for the  
17 diverse population of California on this Commission?

18 MR. HSIEH: Yes. I think that at the basic levels  
19 there's a -- well, I do think that -- I'm thinking of a way  
20 to phrase it. I believe that the -- there's a different  
21 culture/heritage people. They sometimes they are -- that  
22 they feel that they were being prejudiced against. And  
23 this is something that I noticed very often. And -- but I  
24 do believe that part of the, part of this coming from our  
25 system, being -- if a group of people that are

1 underrepresented, then it's pretty obvious that they are  
2 outwardly -- it's a disadvantage to them. So, I always, so  
3 I always try to encourage. That's why I'm the current  
4 president of San Diego Asian Americans for Equality. One  
5 of the mission is to encourage Asians' participation in  
6 public affairs. Hopefully it will lead to better  
7 representation in the legislature bench.

8           So, this is something that felt and then something  
9 that I believe in. And through the Commission, I believe -  
10 - it's also in line with the Commission's, one of the  
11 purpose is to get better representation for all different  
12 groups of people.

13           CHAIR COE: Thank you. A similar question, but in  
14 the lines of geography in terms of different regions of the  
15 State. And people's preferences or concerns can be  
16 different depending on where they're at in the State,  
17 locally. I know that you're currently in San Diego County.  
18 Can you talk about, a little bit about your experiences  
19 with people in different regions or from different regions  
20 of the State. What you maybe have learned about the  
21 concerns and preferences of people in different parts of  
22 the State that would make you an effective representative  
23 for them on this Commission?

24           MR. HSIEH: Yes. I believe in the northern, far  
25 north, and people they probably -- including the Bay Area,

1 there are a lot of technical concentrate people over there.  
2 So their needs are probably far Legislative point of view  
3 are different than the people from the Sierra area and  
4 mountain area. So, our board is -- so the board needs to  
5 be able to distinguish their differences, between heavy,  
6 technically heavy and agricultural heavy, or some other  
7 areas that are, they're trying to increase their tourism.  
8 Those are all different needs by the local people. So we  
9 need to probably identify them and then listen to their  
10 needs when the districts are being redrawn.

11 CHAIR COE: Thank you. So one of the biggest tasks  
12 in front of the Commission is to identify communities of  
13 interest throughout the State. And some of these  
14 communities are easier to identify than others. They're  
15 more engaged, they're more active. They're easier to find.  
16 And some of these communities less engaged, and they're  
17 harder to find for one reason or another. But since  
18 perspective of as many communities as possible is vitally  
19 important to the work of the Commission, how would you as a  
20 Commissioner go about finding communities of interest  
21 throughout the State, particularly trying to avoid maybe  
22 inadvertently overlooking some of those harder to find  
23 communities?

24 MR. HSIEH: Yes. I believe that I usually pretty -  
25 - I put a lot of emphasize in my personal networking. And

1 when I, every time I see a new group that I don't recognize  
2 and I don't know, I would get in touch with them and try to  
3 establish the connection with them. But then for the  
4 unknown ones, I would think that a public forum would be  
5 pretty good. And then we have right now we have pretty  
6 sophisticated social network. I think that we could  
7 utilize that to reach out to different groups of people,  
8 especially the hard to find, the people.

9 CHAIR COE: So, once you find the communities, some  
10 of them may be less comfortable coming forward and sharing  
11 their perspective. They may not like to engage Government  
12 entities, and there could be a number of reasons for that.  
13 How would you try to make some of these communities that  
14 are a little bit more concerned about coming forward, how  
15 would you make them feel comfortable coming forward to  
16 share their perspectives to better inform the Commission?

17 MR. HSIEH: Yes. I'm facing the same issue trying  
18 to advocate the Census 2020 in our local area. And some  
19 people they, they're afraid that they -- to give out their  
20 name and addresses. And my way is to find out the local  
21 association and find the leader of the local community and  
22 -- because of the local groups, they have, probably they  
23 have more faith to their community leaders than the  
24 Government, Government officials. So I usually communicate  
25 with them, and then make sure that this is, this



1 information is not going to be used against -- it's not  
2 going to be shared with other Government benches or  
3 organizations. And through that way.

4 CHAIR COE: Okay. Thank you.

5 MS. PELLMAN: We have five minutes remaining.

6 CHAIR COE: Thank you, Madam Secretary.

7 Mr. Hsieh, if you -- to be appointed to the  
8 Commission, which aspect of that role do you think that you  
9 would enjoy the most, and conversely, which aspect of that  
10 role do you think might cause you to struggle a little bit?

11 MR. HSIEH: The most -- I would contribute most of  
12 my, would be the analytical skills. And I enjoy  
13 communicating with people. Those are the two that I think  
14 that I would contribute most.

15 And as far as the difficulty, I'm not really  
16 familiar with all the statutory requirements and the  
17 procedures. And so I think I will have to, have to have a  
18 learning period on those. And I will think that as far as  
19 communicating to the public, I think if we have a, set up a  
20 good channel, then I think -- so we could expose to as  
21 much, as many people as possible, then I think I would be  
22 able to communicate with them with no problem and  
23 understand their needs and consolidate their needs, and  
24 coordinate, coordinate with the stakeholders and come up  
25 with a solution.

1 CHAIR COE: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Hsieh. At this  
2 time I have no further questions. So I'm going to turn the  
3 time over to Ms. Dickison.

4 MR. HSIEH: Thank you, Mr. Coe.

5 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you, Mr. Coe.

6 Good afternoon, Mr. Hsieh.

7 MR. HSIEH: Good afternoon, Ms. Dickinson  
8 (phonetic).

9 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Dickison. Yes.

10 MR. HSIEH: Sorry.

11 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: So, on impartiality, I know  
12 we're trying to get an example of something where you can  
13 give a, some specific information. What I noted in your  
14 impartiality essay are the criteria that you find helpful.  
15 Could you -- do you remember what those were, or do you  
16 have your essay in front of you?

17 MR. HSIEH: Sorry, I don't have --

18 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: I can read them off to you.

19 MR. HSIEH: Thank you. Please.

20 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Maintain diversity,  
21 identify the root cause, understand each side, avoid being  
22 antagonistic, avoid using -- assigning blame, trying --  
23 don't try to fix the past, step back and look at the big  
24 picture, remove myself from the equation.

25 So what I would like you to do is if you can think

1 of a specific example where you applied some of that  
2 criteria, if you could share that with us.

3 MR. HSIEH: I have to -- I'm on the board of  
4 Citizens Review Board of Police Practices. And on that  
5 board we do have to be impartial, and we have to remove  
6 ourselves, and we look at the facts of -- that's given to  
7 us. And -- but, unfortunately, I can't give any specific  
8 example of a particular cases on that.

9 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Can you talk about maybe  
10 what view you may have, your own personal view that you  
11 have to step away from in that instead?

12 MR. HSIEH: I'm sorry? The personal view that I  
13 have to --

14 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Can you share -- sorry.  
15 Can you share with us what it is, what your view is that  
16 you have to step away from when you're reviewing those  
17 cases?

18 MR. HSIEH: I have to step away from stereotyping.  
19 I try to -- that's something that, that's probably, it's  
20 pretty common to most people, but then I find that pretty  
21 impeding on doing my work. So I have to block off all the  
22 stereotyping there, and then in order to be impartial.

23 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Okay. Thank you. Thank  
24 you. You talked a little bit about the different areas of  
25 the State, and you kind of talked about San Francisco, as

1 far as the coastal communities and comparing those to the  
2 ag, the agricultural communities more inland. What do  
3 think could be some of the needs of the really far north  
4 and how those might affect what they're looking for in  
5 representation?

6 MR. HSIEH: I would think that far north from my  
7 personal experience is pretty, popularity is sparse than  
8 the Bay Area. And there's a -- they have a lot of, there's  
9 a lot of agriculture and there's a lot of needs for -- a  
10 lot of tourism opportunities. And so, I think their  
11 particular needs is probably different than the Bay Area,  
12 where they -- it's technology heavy area. So I would think  
13 that they would need some Government, more Government  
14 development on the infrastructure over there in the far  
15 north area, and then more help on the exporting or  
16 encouragement on their agriculture crops, things of that  
17 nature.

18 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you. So, you also  
19 talked about as president of the San Diego Asian Americans  
20 for Equality, that you partnered with Solutions for Change  
21 --

22 MR. HSIEH: Correct.

23 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: -- to create the Tutoring  
24 for Change program. What motivated you to do that?

25 MR. HSIEH: We were, at first we were organizing

1 some donations for the Solutions for Change. Solutions for  
2 Change is one of the largest charity organizations in San  
3 Diego. So, we've been, at first we've been donating to  
4 them. But then I found -- we found out that their main  
5 purpose is to get homeless people off the street, and not  
6 just giving handouts to them. And they provide temporary  
7 housings for homeless people, and then they provide them  
8 skills so they can go look for a job. Once they have a  
9 job, they can sustain themselves, then they'll have a  
10 graduation ceremony, so that means they're off the street.  
11 They can live on their own.

12           So we find that this, this is more -- not fixing -  
13 - this is more fixing to the root cause of homeless  
14 problem, rather than just giving handouts. And we also  
15 noticed that while in the temporary housing there's a lot  
16 of kids there, that they need, that need to learn stuff.  
17 That they don't have the proper means to help them learn,  
18 like math or English and reading and stuff.

19           So, we -- so since we in our membership we have, a  
20 lot of our members they have kids in high school. So we  
21 just, we think that it's a good opportunity to match the  
22 two, and so we organize the high school kid to go there  
23 once a week to give them face-to-face tutoring. That's how  
24 this program has come about.

25           PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Okay. So do you have a

1 role in that program other than that?

2 MR. HSIEH: I just -- my role is to recognize the  
3 needs of the connections, and made the connections of the  
4 two organizations. And then we have a subcommittee that's  
5 running that operation. Since I'm the chair, I'm the  
6 member of that subcommittee, but I rely on the chair of  
7 that subcommittee to do the actual logistic stuff.

8 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Just thinking about  
9 combining those or using the resources of both those  
10 organizations to create that program, what did you learn  
11 from that endeavor that you could take to the Commission  
12 and help it in its early days form as a team?

13 MR. HSIEH: I believe that first of all, we have to  
14 recognize the needs, and then we have to recognize that  
15 there's a resource, resources available, so that we can  
16 make sure that the two of them will match. And then I do  
17 believe that communications is very important. Because at  
18 first we were just donating stuff to the organization, but  
19 then we didn't know about their actual -- the other needs.  
20 So through the thorough communications and open-mindedness  
21 that we make this program successful. So I think those two  
22 are very important, thorough communication.

23 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you. With your  
24 background in analytical skills, have you worked with  
25 census data in the past?

1 MR. HSIEH: I'm sorry?

2 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Have you worked with census  
3 data in the past?

4 MR. HSIEH: No. But I'm recently, I work with --  
5 well, I have a good friend who's a GIS professor. He came  
6 out with using GIS operation dashboard to analyze the San  
7 Diego County COVID-19 cases. So it's daily -- he refresh  
8 that dashboard with daily update from the data from the San  
9 Diego County. So I know what that dashboard can do. I'm  
10 not fluent enough to develop a dashboard like that, but  
11 then I'm -- I must say, I can say I'm a fluent user of that  
12 type of software.

13 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you. So, given the  
14 COVID-19, one of the, one of the concerns is the that the  
15 census data will come later than had been anticipated.  
16 What steps do you think the Commission can do to go ahead  
17 and get their work started, or to mitigate the late timing  
18 of the possible -- the possible late timing in the Census  
19 data coming to them?

20 MR. HSIEH: Yeah. I will think that since the  
21 large gathering, or any gathering is impossible right now,  
22 the Commission could utilize the on-line capacities, like  
23 stream -- like public forum, on-line public forum or things  
24 like that at the early stage, to at least make aware -- to  
25 at least start the process of getting the public comments

1 and opinions in, and start -- or even start analyze some of  
2 the, some of the needs and comments.

3 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Should you be selected as  
4 Commissioner, how would you balance your current  
5 professional and volunteer activities with the time  
6 commitment the Commission will need?

7 MR. HSIEH: Yes. Currently, I'm probably at the  
8 stage of semi-retirement, and I'm building up my own  
9 business as a property management business. And so I think  
10 my time is pretty flexible. It doesn't require -- it's not  
11 9:00 to 5:00 situation for me, so I think my time is very  
12 flexible that I could accommodate the needs of the  
13 Commission, most of the needs of the Commission.

14 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you. Just looking at  
15 my notes real quick.

16 MR. HSIEH: Sure.

17 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: The first eight  
18 Commissioners are selected randomly through a lottery. And  
19 then they are tasked with selecting the next six. If you  
20 were one of the first eight Commissioners, what would you  
21 be looking for in those other six individuals?

22 MR. HSIEH: I want to make sure that they're  
23 bipartisan. And I want to make sure that they have open-  
24 mindedness. And if I can, I'd like to make sure that they  
25 work well in a team environment. Those are the three



1 things that I think that's most important.

2 MS. PELLMAN: We have six minutes, 25 seconds.

3 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you.

4 What would you ultimately like to see the  
5 Commission accomplish?

6 MR. HSIEH: I would think that I would like to see  
7 the Commission -- the most important is to get the, get a  
8 public feedback thoroughly in a open and transparent  
9 process. And then analyze the data that's collected though  
10 Census 2020. And then I think there's some statutory  
11 requirements, for example, one person, one vote, and  
12 there's geography integrity, geography consistency, things  
13 like that, I'd like to see all those being followed and  
14 come up with a impartial redraw of the map -- maps.

15 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you very much.

16 Mr. Coe, I have no additional questions right now.

17 CHAIR COE: Thank you, Ms. Dickison. We'll turn  
18 the time over to Mr. Belnap.

19 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Good afternoon, Mr. Hsieh.

20 MR. HSIEH: Good afternoon.

21 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: You touched on it briefly,  
22 but I'd like you to go in a little more detail about your  
23 work on the 2020 Census Complete Project. I'd like to hear  
24 what you're doing for that project, why you decided to be a  
25 part of it, and what you've learned from this effort.

1           MR. HSIEH: Yes. At first I was approached by the,  
2 by the bureau's representative. And I think he knows that  
3 I have -- I know many people locally. So he was asking my  
4 help to get the words out. And then, so -- and then I've  
5 been going to their public forums, meetings several times,  
6 in order to gather information. And then I go through my  
7 personal channel and the channels of the boards that I sit  
8 in, and then I make e-mail, e-mail broadcasts to all the  
9 board members with material that was supplied to me by the  
10 Census 2020 bureau representative.

11           And then I even participated in some of the, what  
12 they called, "address canvassing," which is to verify the  
13 address -- we were given a map with all the address on it.  
14 We have to make sure that information that's describing  
15 those addresses are accurate. So I participated on that as  
16 well.

17           And the lesson that I take away from this process  
18 is that even though -- to me, this message has been  
19 saturated throughout my community, but when I start talking  
20 to people, there's still a large number of people they  
21 don't know what this process is going on, or they don't  
22 know what this process -- the purpose of this process. So  
23 I think the -- as far as reaching out is concerned, there's  
24 still a lot of work to do. Because we -- in order to get  
25 accurate count, we have to make -- the more people to know

1 about it possible, as possible.

2 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: And why did you agree to put  
3 your time and energy into this effort?

4 MR. HSIEH: I believe it's important. As I was  
5 saying, I believe a lot of injustice might not come, might  
6 not come from bad wills. Might not come from ill-minded  
7 intention, but then it's come from underrepresentation. So  
8 I believe the representation is, very proper representation  
9 is very important. And so, I like to put in my personal  
10 time to promote this. And it's also the reason why I  
11 joined San Diego Asian Americans for Equality. One of the  
12 missions is to raise -- to encourage public involvement  
13 among Asian communities.

14 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right. Thank you. I  
15 want to follow-up on question two. I don't want to read  
16 the question. The part I feel like you didn't address, or  
17 maybe I didn't hear it fully, was how can the Commission  
18 avoid appearing to be biased or partisan. What are your  
19 thoughts on how the Commission can avoid appearing to be  
20 biased or partisan?

21 MR. HSIEH: This is, yeah, this is, this is  
22 particularly I think difficult. Personally, I think I'm a,  
23 I'm a Libertarian by nature, but I respect everybody's  
24 choice. And I personally, I'm not look at the doctrines of  
25 any party really heavily. But that's just myself. And I

1 try to do that through all my -- when I'm sitting on all  
2 the boards, I try to -- that's just, that's the principle  
3 that I adhere to. But I'm really -- I'm not sure what that  
4 the other peoples, what I can do to make other peoples  
5 adhere to this principles.

6 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay. Thank you.

7 My other questions I've -- they've been asked or  
8 otherwise answered, so I don't have any further questions  
9 at this time, Mr. Chair.

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

11 Mr. Dawson, we'll turn the time over to you.

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

13 Mr. Hsieh, good afternoon once again.

14 MR. HSIEH: Good afternoon, Mr. Dawson.

15 MR. DAWSON: In your essay number four about  
16 analytical skills, you talked about when you were working  
17 at Qualcomm. When was that?

18 MR. HSIEH: It was since '96 to 2007.

19 MR. DAWSON: Okay. And you did a project where you  
20 were gathering data of fleets of heavy equipment, such as  
21 bulldozers and high-rise cranes, and you were using data  
22 transmit via satellite. So this was GPS data?

23 MR. HSIEH: Yes.

24 MR. DAWSON: And you were putting it into a large  
25 database?

1           MR. HSIEH: Yes. We putting it in a large  
2 database, and then we -- the benefit of this, of this  
3 application is that our customer is heavy equipment  
4 renters, like John Deere, and they rent bulldozers or  
5 cranes. That they -- so if we put our device on that, then  
6 periodically it's going to data back to our hub. And my  
7 program would analyze that data and make sure that they're  
8 not moving out from their geological location, which is a  
9 geofencing concept. So it has their GPS data in there.  
10 Because if -- by their rent -- lease agreement, bulldozers  
11 sometimes they can only use for eight hours a day, or the  
12 crane can only be operating in one location. They cannot -  
13 - they don't want them to move to other locations to be  
14 taken advantage of.

15           So, my -- the program that I parse out is to  
16 identify the operation hours. If they turn on the ignition  
17 from this hour to this hour. And if they -- and I have to  
18 calculate the time that it's being operated. If it's past  
19 their lease agreement, then we raise a flag telling the  
20 owner that they're being misused. Or the geofencing's the  
21 same, the same deal. If they move it out of the pre-agreed  
22 location, then it's a -- and it's not supposed to do that,  
23 and our program can detect that.

24           MR. DAWSON: Was this information then presented to  
25 the end user in a map form or some other kind of --

1 MR. HSIEH: Yes.

2 MR. DAWSON: -- geospatial?

3 MR. HSIEH: Yes. It's presented in a web page and  
4 in a -- for this particular information, it's presenting it  
5 in a chart kind of form. It's a chart of 24 hours, and the  
6 hours that they're on would be represented with a different  
7 color, so that the owner when they look at, they know what  
8 they're -- immediately know when they're on or when they're  
9 off. And, incidentally, I participate in a USCD user  
10 interface design certificates. And I got a certificate of  
11 user design on that.

12 MR. DAWSON: I wanted to ask you, have you always  
13 lived in California? Are you a native?

14 MR. HSIEH: No. I'm, I was born in Taiwan, and I  
15 moved to San Diego in '86. And I've been living in San  
16 Diego ever since, except for from '91 to '96, that I live  
17 in Dallas, to finish my -- to work and finish my graduate  
18 study in Dallas, Texas. Other than that, I've been living  
19 in San Diego.

20 MR. DAWSON: So your entire time when you have  
21 lived in California you've lived in San Diego County?

22 MR. HSIEH: Correct.

23 MR. DAWSON: And more of the urban areas or more in  
24 the rural, suburban?

25 MR. HSIEH: Rural suburban area. A little north of

1 Downtown San Diego.

2 MR. DAWSON: I see. Do you think it's important  
3 for the Commission to have the perspective of a San Diegan  
4 on it?

5 MR. HSIEH: Yes, I do believe so. Because in San  
6 Diego is, we have a lot of issues. Being so close to the  
7 border, we have a lot of maybe crimes that are of different  
8 characteristic than, a little different than other inland  
9 cities. And just because San Diego is the sixth largest  
10 city, so it has -- it's pretty important for it to be  
11 properly represented. And it also has a pretty serious  
12 homeless, homeless issues.

13 And I'm not sure exact, directly what its relations  
14 to the Redistricting Commission, but then -- but it's one  
15 of the social problems that we have down here. I would  
16 like to see if there's anything that can be done by the  
17 Commission.

18 MR. DAWSON: If you were selected to the  
19 Commission, then there would obviously be one person from  
20 San Diego on it. You talked about having to balance out  
21 the Commission membership. What would be the counterweight  
22 to a San Diegan in your situation?

23 MR. HSIEH: I'm sorry, counterweight?

24 MR. DAWSON: Well, I mean if you have -- if you  
25 were selected, you would be, you would be the one person

1 from San Diego. What other regions of the State should  
2 also be represented?

3 MR. HSIEH: I believe Los Angeles, too, and then in  
4 the Central, Bakersfield and Fresno area. And then, of  
5 course, the Bay Area, and then the far north is, has to be  
6 represented. And then the Sierra mountain area as well.  
7 They have pretty unique needs over there. And the inland,  
8 the desert area as well.

9 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. I'm always interested in  
10 the perspective of applicant's who were not born here, who  
11 have chosen to come to California. Do you think that it is  
12 important for the Commission to have the perspective of an  
13 immigrant?

14 MR. HSIEH: Yes. It is very important, and I came  
15 to America when I was 20 years old. And I've lived here  
16 over 30 years, longer than I lived in my native country.  
17 And then my perspective, I must say that I -- before coming  
18 here, I -- since I come from a totally different culture  
19 and different background, and then I look at things with a  
20 little different, different perspective. Things like maybe  
21 they were taken for granted, for me they are not. So, I  
22 think it's very important to get the, the people with  
23 background of the first-generation immigration here on the  
24 board.

25 MR. DAWSON: You talked about in your response to



1 standard question four, about the important of listening to  
2 experts. You gave the experience -- you gave the example  
3 of the Taiwanese performance group. Can you give an  
4 example from your professional life where you had to rely  
5 on experts?

6 MR. HSIEH: Yes. Professionally, we -- since being  
7 a software development profession, we constantly have to,  
8 have to renew our skills. And the way to do that is to, we  
9 hire consultants into our group. And the consultants  
10 they're specialized in the technology that we want to  
11 advance into. So they come into our group. They show us  
12 kind of how, show us the know-hows. And more importantly  
13 we work together with the consultants along the process, so  
14 that whenever we have a question we can have someone to go  
15 to, to get the expert opinions. And so that this way it  
16 will cut down on a lot of unnecessary waste of energy, and  
17 then so that we can reach our goal a lot faster.

18 And so we -- so I value the expert's opinion very  
19 heavily. And then -- but then I'm putting my own judgment  
20 as well. So I try to utilize their expertise, but then  
21 it's a like check-and-verify process.

22 MR. DAWSON: And in this example, were you the one  
23 who hired these experts?

24 MR. HSIEH: No. It's usually the experts will be  
25 hired by the management, but then I, sometimes I

1 participate in the interview process. I ask him some  
2 questions of my own as well.

3 MR. DAWSON: Do think that this is a particular  
4 skill or talent that you could bring to the Commission?

5 MR. HSIEH: Yes. During my profession I have to  
6 interview, I have to do my own interviews, too. And -- but  
7 sometimes I don't have the final say of who to hire, but  
8 then I have to write a review on my interview. So this is  
9 a skill that I can bring to the Commission.

10 MR. DAWSON: Okay. Thank you. I just have one  
11 last question. You said you'd spent your life as a  
12 Californian in San Diego. Are there parts of California  
13 you've never been, where this would be a great opportunity  
14 to learn something about a particular area that you haven't  
15 been to yet?

16 MR. HSIEH: Yes. I will think the far north  
17 region. As far as I go is Santa Rosa, but I know that  
18 there's a lot, a lot more, a lot more lands before -- after  
19 that, until Oregon. And that region is, I must say that  
20 I'm not really familiar with. I'd like to know more of  
21 their needs as well.

22 MR. DAWSON: All right. Thank you.

23 MR. HSIEH: Sure.

24 MR. DAWSON: Those were all the questions that I  
25 had, Mr. Chair.

1 CHAIR COE: Thank you, Mr. Dawson.

2 I'll check with the other Members of the Panel, see  
3 if there's any follow-up questions.

4 Ms. Dickison, any follow-up questions?

5 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: I do not have any follow-up  
6 questions.

7 CHAIR COE: Mr. Belnap?

8 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: None here.

9 CHAIR COE: Okay. Mr. Dawson, I have no follow-up  
10 questions.

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

12 Mr. Hsieh, with the time remaining -- and, Madam  
13 Secretary, how much time is remaining?

14 MS. PELLMAN: Twenty-eight minutes.

15 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

16 Mr. Hsieh, with the time that's remaining in the  
17 period, I'd like to offer you the opportunity to make some  
18 closing remarks to the Panel, if you wish.

19 MR. HSIEH: Sure. Thank you very much. I would  
20 like to offer the fact that not only, I not only -- even  
21 though I'm from -- I'm Asian, but then my involvement is  
22 not limited to Asian or API communities. One example is  
23 that one of my friend is a minister of a local church. And  
24 the church has drives, things like socks drive or other  
25 food drive for the local students that are homeless

1 students that are in local schools. So I participate in  
2 those, in the socks drive and then I also donated  
3 prescription glasses lens, and then some glasses for kids  
4 to the -- through this channel to the local schools for  
5 homeless students. And so, I, so my involvement is not  
6 limited to the Asian community. I try to, if I can, I try  
7 to do my best for all these, all the group, local groups,  
8 when I can.

9           And another thing is that even though I have 20  
10 years of involvement in, on various committees and non-  
11 profit committees, I also, I'm always trying to improve  
12 myself. For example, University of San Diego has their  
13 School of Leadership. They have a program that is how to  
14 be a better board member program. That's -- so I  
15 participate in that program last year, and I got a -- I  
16 completed that program and I got a certificate. And I feel  
17 that I really benefit from that program, and learn a lot  
18 more systematically about non-profit organizations and how  
19 to run it, and how to be a better board members. So I'd  
20 just to emphasize that I continue learning to enrich  
21 myself.

22           MR. DAWSON: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Hsieh. Thank  
23 you for taking the time to speak with us today. We  
24 appreciate it.

25           Our next interview is scheduled for 9:00 a.m.

1 tomorrow morning, so we will go into recess until 8:59 a.m.

2 (Recess at 4:04 p.m.)

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

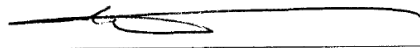
25

**REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE**

I do hereby certify that the testimony in the foregoing hearing was taken at the time and place therein stated; that the testimony of said witnesses were reported by me, a certified electronic court reporter and a disinterested person, and was under my supervision thereafter transcribed into typewriting.

And I further certify that I am not of counsel or attorney for either or any of the parties to said hearing nor in any way interested in the outcome of the cause named in said caption.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 1st day of May, 2020.



---

PETER PETTY  
CER\*\*D-493  
Notary Public

**CERTIFICATE OF TRANSCRIBER**

I do hereby certify that the testimony in the foregoing hearing was taken at the time and place therein stated; that the testimony of said witnesses were transcribed by me, a certified transcriber and a disinterested person, and was under my supervision thereafter transcribed into typewriting.

And I further certify that I am not of counsel or attorney for either or any of the parties to said hearing nor in any way interested in the outcome of the cause named in said caption.

I certify that the foregoing is a correct transcript, to the best of my ability, from the electronic sound recording of the proceedings in the above-entitled matter.

May 1, 2020

---

MARTHA L. NELSON, CERT\*\*367