

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

In the Matter of:

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

621 Capitol Mall, 10th Floor
Sacramento, California 95814
And Remote via Zoom

TUESDAY, APRIL 14, 2020

9:00 A.M.

Reported by:
Peter Petty

APPEARANCES

Members Present

Angela Dickison, Chair

Ben Belnap, Panel Member

Ryan Coe, Panel Member

Staff Present

Christopher Dawson, Counsel

Shauna Pellman, Auditor Specialist II

Applicants

Bapu Vaitla

Stacy Flanigan

Fred Kosmo

Wesley Hussey

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PROCEEDINGS

9 a.m.

CHAIR DICKISON: Good morning. I'm calling the Applicant Review Panel meeting back to order.

For those in the room and online, please silence your cell phones. For those in the room, if you need to take a call, please, take it in the hallway. The restrooms are just outside in the hallway. And for those in the room, in case of emergency, follow any instructions of the State Auditor's staff.

I'd like to welcome Dr. Vaitla; is that correct? --

DR. VAITLA: That's correct, yeah.

CHAIR DICKISON: -- okay, for his interview today.

We're going to jump right into the five standard questions, so I'm going to turn it over to Mr. Chris Dawson.

MR. DAWSON: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Dr. Vaitla, I'm going to ask you five standard questions that the Applicant Review Panel has requested all applicants address. Are you

1 ready, sir?

2 DR. VAITLA: Yes.

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

11 DR. VAITLA: First of all, thank you so
12 much for the opportunity of being here. I think
13 there's a long list of attributes that would be
14 useful in the Commission.

15 If I were to prioritize a few, I think
16 that each Commissioner should be impartial. They
17 should possess a detailed knowledge of the law
18 around redistricting. And they should be committed
19 to ensuring that a wide range of public voices are
20 heard throughout the process.

21 In my view, impartiality is about placing
22 the common good, in this place, drawing maps that
23 advance the rights of Californians, above one's
24 personal views. And I think this requires not a
25 discarding of one's views but more a deep self-

1 awareness on the part of every member and
2 willingness to continually interrogate one's own
3 opinions and reactions to others' opinions and to
4 listen deeply to what it is they're saying.

5 I think, also, as a side note to
6 impartiality, I think it goes hand-in-hand with
7 collegiality, which, you know, this process of
8 redistricting will be complex, it will be
9 politicized and, inevitably, there will be
10 disagreements. But if we believe that our
11 colleagues are impartial and fair minded, we can
12 build the kind of trust and, maybe, even comradery
13 that will help us keep going to reach compromise
14 or, at least, a respectful productive disagreement.

15 When I speak of knowledge of the law, I
16 think, you know, not all Commissioners will have a
17 legal background. But I think, at a minimum, each
18 Commissioner should have a detailed knowledge of
19 the Constitutional Law and the statutory law and
20 the case law around redistricting, particularly in
21 California but, also, at the federal level. And I
22 say this because I think the words of established
23 law reflects, however imperfectly, society's
24 guidance, the guidance of our society for our work
25 as Commissioners.

1 And as far as case law, judicial opinions,
2 I think, provide a great look at the deep and
3 difficult debates that we are undergoing about how
4 to draw districts, how to make tradeoffs, for
5 example, between how to carry out the spirit of the
6 Voting Rights Act while ensuring geographic
7 integrity? And knowledge in these debates will
8 help us, as a Commission, advance our own
9 discussions.

10 And, finally, I think every Commissioner
11 should be dedicated to amplify the voice of the
12 public and, especially, the typically unheard
13 voices of the public. And this is partially for
14 the public's sake in the sense that they deserve,
15 they have a right, to have their voices heard. And
16 the redistricting process is a tremendous
17 opportunity to get people excited about civic
18 engagement. So I think there's benefits to the
19 public.

20 But, also, I think it's to help us, as
21 Commission members. The reality is that
22 redistricting involves lots of subjective
23 judgments. The California Constitution specifies
24 and prioritizes criteria for drawing districts but
25 it doesn't tell us how exactly to make tradeoffs

1 between this criteria. So I think our job as
2 Commissioner members is, partially, to understand
3 how the California people would like to have those
4 tradeoffs made and carry out the wishes as best as
5 possible.

6 And I look forward to discussing with each
7 member of the previous Commission how their own
8 process of outreach went and how we might learn
9 from their experience.

10 To sort of -- I can sort of fill in a
11 little bit on collectively. So those are kind of
12 the skills that I think every Commissioner needs to
13 have.

14 And collectively, I think we need to have
15 a wide range of skills.

16 Legal acumen to understand the reasoning
17 behind past and current legislative and judicial
18 thinking. Community outreach skills.

19 A wide experience with engaging diverse
20 communities.

21 Geographic and data science skills,
22 including awareness of the vast space of possible
23 maps and how to constrain that to a manageable size
24 and how to efficiently work with datasets.

25 Facilitation skills to help the Commission

1 run smoothly and help people in public forums feel
2 heard. Mathematical skills to understand the
3 extent to which quantitative concept and methods
4 can help us make the tradeoffs between criteria.
5 And other skills, administrative skills, as well.

6 I don't think every member will have all
7 of those but I think collectively we should have
8 those.

9 As for me, myself, I do have experience in
10 many of those areas and am comfortable in many of
11 those areas. But I think that my most valuable
12 contributions would come in two areas in part, one
13 in data analysis. I have extensive experience
14 analyzing geographic population and census datasets
15 and other datasets that we'll be using as a
16 Commission. I have GIS and statistical skills. I
17 recently generated maps of my own during a recent
18 redistricting exercise in my home town of Davis.
19 The city recently moved from an at-large system to
20 a district-based system and so I was involved in
21 that process of mapmaking and analysis and the
22 relevant datasets.

23 And the second major contribution is, I
24 think, a little bit more intangible, but I think I
25 help create a kind of climate of ease in a work

1 environment. You know, I think it's really
2 important to help each other, support each other in
3 being ourselves and bringing our best self forward.

4 And I think the success of this Commission
5 really hinges on creating such a climate of
6 cooperation within the Commission and in relation
7 to the public. We'll have disagreements. Again,
8 some of them will be vociferous disagreements
9 because we're really talking about some deeply held
10 beliefs. But if we can get to a place in
11 supporting one another to speak and trust and get
12 everyone's voice as valued, then I'm confident the
13 Commission will be successful. I'm committed to
14 self-awareness in that respect. I think it can
15 help create a culture of cooperation.

16 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

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

24 What characteristics do you possess and
25 what characteristics should your fellow

1 Commissioners possess that will protect against
2 hyper-partisanship? What will you do to ensure
3 that the work of the Commission is not seen as
4 polarized or hyper-partisan and avoid perceptions
5 of political bias and conflict?

6 DR. VAITLA: Yes. We live in tense times,
7 even more so than ten years ago when the first
8 Commission was convened. And, like many people, I,
9 myself, am passionate about my political beliefs.
10 But I also think that some things are more
11 important than winning elections or getting
12 legislation passed. And the fairness of our
13 democratic system is one of those things and that's
14 why I'm here today applying for this position.

15 But I think, also, on an even deeper
16 level, I think that treating each other with
17 respect and kindness in every moment of life is the
18 pathway to a better world. Democracy relies on
19 informed and engaged citizens but it also relies on
20 respecting your neighbor, loving your neighbor, as
21 the precept goes, even if you profoundly disagree
22 with your neighbor.

23 And as for me, personally, to sort of
24 respond to the second part of that question, you
25 know, part of the core of who I am, I a personal

1 meditative practice and that's at the core of who I
2 am or at least who I'd like to be. And the central
3 hope of that practice is to be mindful of how one's
4 own views and thoughts and feelings arise, and
5 awful to mindful of how one's actions and speech
6 affect others. So I think through that intention,
7 which I think all of the Commission members will
8 share, we can help create this spirit of openness
9 and listening and trust on the Commission. And if
10 enough on the Commission do the same, we can guard
11 against hyper-partisanship.

12 As for external perceptions of the
13 Commission, I think we need to communicate clearly
14 to the public the entirety of our process and
15 especially the stages of our process that involve
16 listening to the wide diversity of California's
17 communities. We need to be constantly checking to
18 see if the many groups and viewpoints of California
19 are being heard and, if they aren't, take quick
20 action to do better. We're not going to get
21 everybody onboard to like the final maps, but maybe
22 not even everybody on the Commission, but I do
23 think we can conduct ourselves with the sort of
24 dignity and humility that prevents our actions from
25 being seen as politically biased.

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

5 DR. VAITLA: Yeah, I think given the
6 impacts of COVID-19 on the census, you know, one
7 clear thing that jumps out is undercounting of
8 certain groups, the unhoused children, immigrants,
9 the undocumented, and that could be a serious
10 problem. So I think we'll need to think a little
11 bit outside the box and how to deal with this,
12 perhaps with alternative datasets, perhaps with
13 digital datasets.

14 I have some experience, actually, in this
15 field of filling in data gaps. I've worked for
16 several years with an organization called Data2X,
17 which is an organization that's dedicated to
18 gathering data about the lives of women and girls
19 around the world. We have this huge informational
20 gender gap in the world. We understand much more
21 about the economic lives, the health status, the
22 educational status, the access to markets,
23 government services for men and boys than we do
24 about women and girls.

25 And Data2X was dedicated to finding new

1 ways of filling these data gaps. And we found we
2 funded a wide variety of research projects that
3 used datasets as diverse, anonymized, and privacy-
4 protected cell phone datasets, internet access,
5 energy usage, satellite datasets to learn about
6 those aspects of women and girls.

7 And one of the most successful
8 applications of this was in population numbers. We
9 did validation surveys to make sure that these kind
10 of novel methods corresponded to more formal
11 censuses and we found there are a lot of
12 possibilities when census information is too
13 expensive or impossible to collect, to use other
14 digital tools.

15 But, you know, so that's sort of a
16 technical problem and I think it's solvable. I'm
17 confident that we can solve it, even though it's a
18 serious problem.

19 The other thing that I'd like to bring up
20 -- I know you asked for one problem but it just
21 sort of, also, really has been on my mind a lot
22 lately, and it's less technical but just as
23 important, perhaps even more important -- it's one
24 particular aspect of community outreach which is a
25 large part of our job as Commission members. It's

1 that aspect of community outreach that has to do
2 with trying to figure out who's not being heard
3 when you don't have a complete list of voices, when
4 you don't have a complete list of communities of
5 interest? You know, it's one thing to put the work
6 into know -- to make sure that all known voices are
7 heard. We can make a list of locations and forums
8 and organizations and groups that we need to engage
9 and do the work of engaging them.

10 But how do you ensure that you're not
11 forgetting people who, for one reason or another,
12 are politically silenced, either because they're
13 socially marginalized or disenchanting with the
14 political system or simply uncomfortable speaking
15 in public, although they may have views?

16 So, you know, I look forward to hearing
17 what past and future commissions have to say about
18 this. I think we can come up with some great
19 ideas.

20 My own idea, which I've used before in my
21 own work, is to kind of deploy a network search
22 process where you start with a comprehensive list,
23 as possible, of community organizations that work
24 on behalf of various communities of interest and
25 then start to map out their networks and reach out

1 to their contact organizations and so on, sort of
2 do a deeper and deeper network layer search. And
3 given enough time and resources, which we'll have
4 to manage efficiently, I think we might reach a
5 point where the network starts to coalesce and many
6 different actors are giving us context that we've
7 already contacted. And at that point, we can assume
8 that we've done a good job doing a comprehensive
9 search.

10 Again, willing to make some decisions
11 about how to streamline this effort and allocate
12 the resources, but it's been done before. And I
13 think there are models we can draw upon,
14 particularly with public help.

15 MR. DAWSON: Question four: If you are
16 selected you will be one of 14 members of the
17 Commission which is charged with working together
18 to create maps of the new districts.

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

1 DR. VAITLA: Thank you. I've spent much
2 of my career working on issues of public health,
3 and especially as it relates to the well-being of
4 children. And during this career, I've often
5 worked in cross-disciplinary groups of medical
6 professionals, economists, sociologists,
7 statisticians, ecologists, to design policies for
8 child health. And I've also often worked in
9 academic teams on group research projects and group
10 writing projects. And I'd be happy to expand on
11 any of these, if you wish, as I think they're
12 relevant to Commission work.

13 But I'd like to answer this question a bit
14 differently and kind of, maybe, perhaps in an
15 unconventional way but it's the thing that feels
16 most alive and salient to me. It's an experience I
17 just had.

18 So I recently spent time in a Buddhist
19 monastery in Central California, a Buddhist
20 monastery called Tassajara, which is located in
21 Monterey County in the Los Padres National Forest.
22 And I do this periodically to kind of give myself
23 time to reflect, especially during times of life
24 when I'm contemplating major decisions. And now is
25 one of those times when I'm transitioning from

1 international public health and academia to public
2 service here in California.

3 So I was at this monastery and the COVID-
4 19 situation hit. And, collectively, the community
5 was immediately confronted with a deluge of hard
6 questions about how to protect people's physical
7 health, especially given that there were a few high
8 risk and immuno-compromised people there, and how
9 to protect people's mental health, as the monastery
10 was quite isolated and people had to wrestle with
11 this question of how best to take care of
12 themselves and their families on the outside, some
13 of them whom were quite far away? And, also, how
14 we might contribute in some meaningful ways to the
15 important work being done by healthcare workers and
16 others outside of the monastery?

17 So, suddenly, you know, the monastery went
18 from this place where people were in engaged in
19 intensely meditative practice to a cooperative
20 project. How do we develop these health protocols
21 to protect ourselves? And how do we support each
22 other in a time of fear and anxiety?

23 My role in the monastery, again, was as a
24 visitor and a novice practitioner but, you know, I
25 had been meditating for many years but was much

1 less experienced than everyone there, but things
2 changed in the last couple weeks.

3 And because of my public health
4 background, when the COVID-19 situation hit, I
5 presently took on the role of organizing the
6 development of safety protocols, and convening task
7 forces to handle different aspects of our physical
8 and mental health and working to create sanitary
9 supply chains with a group of people who had very
10 different skills. Some were actually trained in
11 public health. Some were medical doctors. Some
12 had logistics backgrounds. Some had administrative
13 background. And together, we worked in this group
14 to create an environment that was supportive of
15 physical health and mental health, and particularly
16 the latter aspect, I think, creating a climate in
17 which people could openly express their worries in
18 this time of uncertainty and seek the support of
19 others as they worked through their fears.

20 The anxiety was really starting to create
21 conflict and tensions within the community. And
22 many people later expressed their appreciation for
23 how my engagement and our cooperative work together
24 really helped hold the community together. And I
25 think I became a valued person to lean on for many

1 folks there. And I think we did well in designing
2 cooperative protocols to support people in hard
3 times and I'm proud of that.

4 And, you know, just to speak, finally, to
5 a larger point about cooperation, that's my main
6 academic and professional interest, is human
7 cooperation, the conditions under which people's
8 cooperative instincts come forward.

9 And the main lesson I would take from the
10 experience I just related is that, you know, even
11 in the worst of times, cooperation is never far
12 away. It just requires this constant reminder to
13 one's self of the precept to keep on respecting
14 one's neighbor or one's colleague and especially
15 when you profoundly disagree. And that stamina,
16 that kind of persistence of self-respect and
17 respect of others goes a long way to solving even
18 the toughest problems, I think.

19 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

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

25 If you were selected as a Commissioner,

1 what skills and attributes will make you effective
2 at interacting with people from different
3 backgrounds and who have a variety of perspectives?
4 What experiences have you had that will help you be
5 effective at understanding and appreciating people
6 and communities of different backgrounds and who
7 have a variety of perspectives?

8 DR. VAITLA: Thank you. As I mentioned in
9 some other replies, I really prioritize listening.
10 I do my best to listen and try to listen with my
11 whole self and to sort of be quiet internally when
12 others are talking. And I do my best to help
13 people feel comfortable and feel heard.

14 And I think that's one of the most
15 important things we can do as a Commission as a
16 whole. And that entails not just setting up forums
17 for people to come to us and to give their
18 viewpoints, but also to go to them, to community
19 colleges and colleges and universities, church
20 groups, labor groups, youth groups, community
21 centers, advocacy groups, as extensive a list as we
22 can compile and find ways of communicating that are
23 in the comfort zone of the people we want to
24 engage.

25 We need as many people to weigh in on what

1 our democracy should look like. We need people to
2 feel informed, to feel valued, to feel confident in
3 speaking, especially if they're not typically
4 comfortable speaking in public forums. And I think
5 those sentiments that drives listening will help me
6 be effective with interacting with all kinds of
7 Californians.

8 As for experiences, I've lived and worked
9 in a lot of different worlds. I grew up in three
10 very different communities. I was born in a very
11 rural, conservative part of India where my family
12 was lower cast but sort of middle class, sort of
13 did well enough to get by. And then when I was
14 five, we moved into a neighborhood on the north
15 side of Chicago that was predominantly African
16 American families, as well as Latino, East and
17 South Asian and Eastern European immigrants where
18 most of the families, including mine, were of the
19 working poor.

20 And then we moved to an extremely rich
21 school district in San Fernando Valley, in the San
22 Fernando Valley in Southern California, even though
23 we, ourselves, were still sort of the working poor,
24 I would say. And truth be told, you know, my
25 families lack of wealth and the color of our skin

1 led to a lot of year of feeling, I think, excluded,
2 and marginalized and even demeaned.

3 And in the recent years, I've lived in the
4 Bay Area and the Bay Area and the Sacramento region
5 and travel all over the state for academic and
6 personal reasons. So I think there's quite a bit
7 of exposure, I think, to diversity of class and
8 race and ethnicity and gender and political
9 preference too.

10 And in addition to California, I've lived
11 for extended periods in Ethiopia and Brazil, back
12 in India, and the U.K., and for shorter periods in
13 many other countries. I've lived in rural areas,
14 known farmers, working on maternal and child health
15 and agricultural projects. And I've lived in some
16 of the great mega cities of the world where ultra-
17 rich and extremely poor are living side by side.
18 I've worked in agricultural and public health and
19 economic development and emergency relief and food
20 security, nutrition, environmental projects, so
21 there's a great, I think, diversity of livelihoods
22 and perspectives that I've been fortunate to run
23 across.

24 And one of the reasons I'm proud to be a
25 Californian is that I think we reflect the world in

1 our own diversity of race and ethnicity and history
2 and livelihood. And I appreciate this deeply and
3 that appreciation, I think, goes a long way in
4 understanding people of varied backgrounds.

5 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

6 We will now go to Panel questions. Each
7 of the Panel members will have 20 minutes to ask
8 his or her questions.

9 We'll start with the Chair.

10 Ms. Dickison?

11 CHAIR DICKISON: Good morning, Mister --
12 or Dr. Vaitla.

13 So you were just talking about
14 transitioning from academia to public service; is
15 that correct?

16 DR. VAITLA: Yes, it is.

17 CHAIR DICKISON: Okay. So part of my
18 question was that I noticed in your employment that
19 at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health
20 and Feinstein International Center, both of those
21 are expected to end in May?

22 DR. VAITLA: Yes. They're sort of ongoing
23 appointments that could renew or end as I choose.
24 And I anticipate, if I were to become a Commission
25 member, I would take a complete leave of absence

1 from both those academic committees.

2 CHAIR DICKISON: All right. And so after
3 those end are you employed at that point or no?

4 DR. VAITLA: Yeah. So I have a sort of
5 ongoing consultancy network. So as needed, I sort
6 of plug into networking if interesting projects
7 come up.

8 But, again, this is, I think, a time of
9 life where I'd like to take some time just to
10 really explore what the different areas of public
11 service are in California. I've been spending a
12 lot of time already volunteering. And I'm on a
13 City Commission for Social Services here in Davis.
14 I've been trying my best to engage with local
15 service agencies, local food banks, et cetera.

16 So I really, you know, I've been lucky
17 enough to have financial security enough to take
18 some time to really understand what it means to be
19 a public servant in California, what the different
20 ways of being of service are.

21 So, yeah, I think if I were to become
22 a -- I'm sure that -- I'm confident that if I were
23 to become a Commission member, I would put
24 everything else aside and really dedicate myself to
25 the work of the Commission first and foremost.

1 CHAIR DICKISON: Okay. Thank you. Okay.

2 In your impartiality essay, you discussed,
3 you know, being trained as a political economist.
4 Can you explain what that is?

5 DR. VAITLA: Sure. Yeah. Yeah. It
6 generally refers to the politics of how economic
7 policy is being made. In my case, it was
8 understanding the political processes that led to
9 policy around child well-being, and particularly
10 the health and nutrition. And again, narrower in
11 my case, it was really about studying the processes
12 of democratic representation, so how the families
13 of children who were at risk of malnutrition were
14 and weren't represented in democratic processes in
15 different countries, including the United States,
16 and groups like the rural poor, like women. What
17 are the barriers to engagement in politics as a
18 voter and between elections?

19 And I found, you know, the catalyst for
20 going down that path was finding that when it comes
21 to child well-being, and I think when it comes to a
22 lot of social issues, even very serious ones, we
23 have technical solutions. We kind of know what
24 works. And it is a good investment in a lot of
25 cases, certainly when you're thinking about the

1 lives of children.

2 But what's more difficult is to ensure
3 that those who are most vulnerable have a voice in
4 the policy process that leads to their elected
5 representatives choosing to investment the
6 available resources in those good ideas.

7 CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you.

8 So in the work that you've done in that
9 area, what have you learned about the differences
10 between -- you said, you talked about the rural
11 poor.

12 What have you learned about the
13 differences in the needs of communities in the
14 rural areas versus those, say, on the coast that
15 would be beneficial to the work of the Commission?

16 DR. VAITLA: Yeah. And, you know, this is
17 a question that comes up with --

18 (Background conversation.)

19 DR. VAITLA: This is a question --

20 (Background conversation.)

21 DR. VAITLA: Sorry. I'm just getting an
22 echo, so I was just waiting for that for that.

23 CHAIR DICKISON: Oh.

24 DR. VAITLA: Is that good now? Should I
25 wait, Christian, on the echo or should I go ahead

1 and talk?

2 CHAIR DICKISON: Go ahead and talk, I
3 think.

4 PANEL MEMBER COE: Ms. Dickison, it sounds
5 like they lost connectivity in the room.

6 CHAIR DICKISON: Oh, okay.

7 PANEL MEMBER COE: We've lost Mr.
8 Belnap --

9 DR. VAITLA: I'll wait.

10 PANEL MEMBER COE: -- and Mr. Dawson.

11 CHAIR DICKISON: Okay. Secretary?

12 MS. PELLMAN: Yes. I have stopped the
13 clock.

14 CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you.

15 (Off mike colloquy.)

16 MS. PELLMAN: Dr. Vaitla --

17 DR. VAITLA: Okay.

18 MS. PELLMAN: -- it looks like we lost
19 connection with our office but they'll get it back
20 online in a minute.

21 DR. VAITLA: No problem. No problem.

22 (Off the record at 9:26 a.m.)

23 (On the record at 9:28 a.m.)

24 CHAIR DICKISON: So we're back on record.
25 Secretary, you can restart the clock.

1 MS. PELLMAN: Okay. Thank you.

2 CHAIR DICKISON: Okay.

3 And Dr. Vaitla, if you'd like to go ahead
4 and continue?

5 DR. VAITLA: Sure. Sure. Yeah. Yeah.

6 I was just thinking about how one of the
7 most important themes in thinking about
8 representation of the rural poor is how, because of
9 the structure of rural areas, collective action is
10 very difficult. And so when we're talking about
11 organizing as a community of interest, simply
12 because of geographical dispersal, sometimes the
13 lack of communication networks, that information
14 and technology, information, and communication
15 networks, it's very difficult for rural people to
16 organize to have an effective political voice.

17 And then there are sort of other problems
18 that, on the urban side, are more manifest than in
19 rural areas where in terms of close-knit family kin
20 networks, that's easy to maintain in rural areas.
21 But often migrants to urban areas find -- migrants
22 and residents of urban areas find that social
23 support is difficult. They might have information
24 about to access, say, health services and
25 government services. But the kind of confidence,

1 the kind of connections, the kind of belief that
2 they'll be supported when seeking those kind of
3 services is often more difficult. Urban life can
4 be isolating, in a nutshell.

5 And I think these kind of issues play out
6 when we're thinking about California's own
7 diversity and how the Commission might change their
8 approach to setting up forums for people to be
9 heard. I think California is a place with a lot of
10 different cultures, not just one culture.

11 And I think, as a Commission, we have to
12 understand both the sort of physical constraints of
13 access, people's livelihood and the time that
14 permits them to attend forums, what days, what
15 hours of the day, what sort of professions. You
16 know, farming communities, for example, there's
17 certain times of the year, times of the week when
18 attending a forum is very difficult. And urban
19 communities might have other challenges there about
20 how do you actually locate all of the residents of
21 urban communities, especially knowing that urban
22 areas can be fluid in sort of who lives where and
23 the amount of movement within urban areas.

24 So I think there's a lot of diversity of
25 political representation in the way that people

1 make their voices heard that has to do with urban
2 versus rural, that has to do with the kind of
3 livelihood.

4 CHAIR DICKISON: What are some of the
5 things you think would influence a community's
6 preferences when they're looking for
7 representation?

8 DR. VAITLA: Yeah, that's a great question
9 and, really, the question sort of begins with how
10 we define and find communities of interest, you
11 know?

12 But I'll answer your question along one
13 line. And if you'd like to me to expand, I'd be
14 happy to. But, you know, it's a tough question, in
15 part because, I think, often a history of past
16 discrimination leads a group to justifiably kind of
17 really around an identity and demand that who they
18 are is respected. And the natural outgrowth of
19 that is a preference for leaders who look like
20 them, who come from the same identity group. And
21 this is especially the case when we're talking
22 about race and ethnicity.

23 And part of the reason I think this is
24 kind of such an interesting and tough question is
25 that I see that in my own life. You know, I early

1 on had experiences with racism. And that led me to
2 take kind of this deep cultural pride in my race
3 and class. And doing that was sort of a refuge,
4 you know? It was sort of an arrival at self-
5 regard. It was a kind of understandable attempt to
6 turn hate and discrimination into self-respect.

7 So, you know, I think that communities of
8 interest kind of naturally, at least in a certain
9 stage of discrimination and getting over
10 discrimination, gravitates to leaders who come from
11 the same identity group. But I also think that
12 preferences change over time insofar as democratic
13 institutions ensure that discrimination, for
14 example by vote dilution, doesn't occur. And
15 identity groups start to prefer representation that
16 more aligns with values than identity, I think.

17 So I think the Commission plays this kind
18 of important role into propelling California into a
19 future that's, perhaps, distant but a future when
20 communities of interest are very, maybe, hard to
21 distinguish because voters consider, for one,
22 because voters consider that identity is fluid, and
23 perhaps consider their most important identity to
24 be as Californians and so that California becomes,
25 really, the true community of interest.

1 CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you.

2 In your diversity essay, you talk about
3 some research that you did that focused on
4 political representation of the rural poor. And we
5 talked about that a little bit. In your current
6 role on the Social Services Commission, you
7 actively solicit the views of a diverse array of
8 demographic and socioeconomic groups.

9 What have you learned from that role that
10 will assist you in reaching out and communicating
11 or in public outreach to those groups for the
12 Commission?

13 DR. VAITLA: Yeah, I think the most
14 important lesson is that people communicate in a
15 lot of different ways and, you know, there's,
16 obviously, the fact of language. But there's also
17 the comfort level of speaking in public. There's
18 also, especially when speaking in public, it's
19 difficult to control one's emotion and tone. And,
20 you know, the moment captures people. And that the
21 same message is transmitted in a lot of different
22 ways, in a lot of different tones and vocabularies
23 by different people.

24 And I think the lesson here for the
25 Commission is, number one, to try to listen to the

1 content of what someone is saying. And, perhaps,
2 this requires a facility with style, a fluidity
3 with understanding, I think, communication styles.
4 But having had that sort of familiarity with
5 communication styles, you kind of get to the heart
6 of the matter. And instead of perceiving someone
7 based on the words they chose or the tone they
8 took, what's the content of the message? And by
9 content, I mean, you know, the actual literal
10 message they're trying to transmit, but also the
11 emotional content is what's sort of driving and
12 motivating this request?

13 And I think, for me, being on the Social
14 Services Commission and hearing citizens talk, and
15 particularly, you know, in Davis, as in all of
16 California, Yolo County and all of California, the
17 crisis of the unhoused is becoming a public health
18 emergency, in some ways a public emergency. It's
19 how do we assure that people have a safe, healthy
20 place to sleep, to live? And people are passionate
21 about this issue, passionate on all sides -- on
22 both sides, really.

23 Recently we had a controversial city
24 council item come up about creating a day respite
25 center for the unhoused, a place where people could

1 go to be safe during the day, seek out health and
2 other services, other social services. And, you
3 know, understandably, some citizens in the
4 neighborhood where the respite center was to be
5 located were upset and passionate and expressed
6 their voices, and others were very much in support
7 and sort of challenging the city and its residents
8 to be compassionate.

9 And I think there was truth everywhere,
10 you know? I think that despite some people yelling
11 and some people whispering into the microphone,
12 each person had something there that came out of
13 real anxieties, real values, real beliefs.

14 So I'm really grateful to have had this
15 experience of being a commissioner. It's been
16 wonderful so far. And I also appreciate that I
17 think there's something I've learned about the
18 culture of impartiality. You know, I've really been
19 struck by the generosity of my colleagues in
20 authentically considering viewpoints that conflict
21 with their own opinions. So I'm proud to be part
22 of this kind of culture of deep listening. And I
23 hope we can create a similar environment of
24 collegiality and fairness in the Commission.

25 CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you.

1 In your activities, you talked about being
2 in contact with various civic engagement and voting
3 write groups.

4 In what capacity are you involved with
5 them?

6 DR. VAITLA: Yeah. It was really just as
7 a social scientist, sort of advisor in a way. But
8 in the last year the primary capacity has been to
9 support the Vote at 17 campaign that's sort of
10 being debated in the California legislature right
11 now to lower the voting age to 17. And I've just
12 been -- you know, I've met with a lot of youth
13 groups. I've met with a lot of advocacy groups for
14 youth. And, really, my role has been to summarize
15 the scientific literature, essentially, on what are
16 the studies out there about the outcomes for youth
17 and for society, for policy outcomes generally, in
18 places that have lowered the voting age to 17 and
19 16?

20 So that's what I did. I sort of answered
21 questions and gave presentations at the capitol, as
22 well, including some legislature -- or the staff
23 legislature, and tried to be as objective a social
24 scientist as possible. And part of that, also, is
25 being very careful about the advocacy side and

1 saying, you know, my role is the scientist, so I'm
2 going to try to present, also, what may be adverse
3 outcomes, as well, and give you the evidence and
4 give you our best guess about how to compare the
5 magnitudes of different positive and negative
6 policy outcomes. So, as a scientific advisor, I
7 would say this is what my role has been.

8 CHAIR DICKISON: Okay. You mentioned
9 advocacy. Do you think there's a role for advocacy
10 within the Commission?

11 DR. VAITLA: Yeah. Yeah. This is a very
12 interesting question. You know, my belief is we're
13 -- the Commission is largely here to interpret the
14 law, the Constitutional Law, the statutory law, the
15 case law. There's lots of ambiguity in the process
16 of redistricting. But I think fairness means to
17 start with the law, identify the ambiguities, and
18 then solicit the opinions of community members and
19 experts in resolving those ambiguities. So I think
20 largely we're here to adjudicate.

21 But I will say that, for one thing, we are
22 there to listen to other people's viewpoints,
23 people who are advocating for their communities of
24 interest. So in that way, we're sort of listeners,
25 we're recipients of advocacy. And I think our job

1 is to be good listeners and understand that what
2 people are advocating for comes from personal
3 experience, deeply felt held values and beliefs.

4 As for advocacy of the Commission itself,
5 I think to the extent that we do advocate, I think,
6 again, it's about advocating for creating forums so
7 that all voices, even quiet voices, can be heard.
8 And again, this goes into this question about how
9 do you go and identify not just those who aren't
10 typically heard but those who you don't know are
11 being heard at all, you don't even have them on
12 your list of people we should listen to because
13 they just don't show up on the radar? So -- and
14 that's about this network search, I think, that I
15 talked about earlier.

16 CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you.

17 MS. PELLMAN: We have three minutes, forty
18 seconds remaining.

19 CHAIR DICKISON: Oh, okay. Thank you.

20 So the first eight Commissioners of the
21 Commission are selected randomly and then they
22 select the next six.

23 If you were chosen as one of the first
24 eight, what would you look for in those six other
25 individuals?

1 DR. VAITLA: Yeah, I think, for one, I
2 would start with the qualities I mentioned earlier
3 about essential qualities of each Commission member
4 and, you know, that's impartiality. That's, I
5 think, a familiarity with the law around
6 redistricting. And I think that's a deep
7 commitment to making sure that the voices, the
8 diverse voices, of Californians is heard -- are
9 heard.

10 Beyond that, I think it depends a great
11 deal on the eight that are initially selected. I'd
12 look for balance. I'd look to see what's missing
13 from the list of collective Commission qualities
14 that I listed earlier, as well, legal acumen,
15 statistical data management skills, mathematical
16 skills, facilitation skills, experience with
17 community organizing and advocacy. If we're
18 missing some of those or if we have those in short
19 supply, I'd love to fill them.

20 And I'd also look for diversity in terms
21 of geography, race, ethnicity, gender, age,
22 professional background, educational background.

23 And I think, also, I'd like to talk to the
24 previous Commission, if possible, about their
25 process and what they might have done differently

1 and worked really well for them.

2 And also, you know, really in detail, I
3 think the obvious thing, also, is just to review
4 all the materials, the video interviews, the
5 transcripts that you guys, this Auditor Panel, has
6 compiled for us.

7 And also, I actually don't know if this
8 last part of the answer is possible, probably not,
9 but I would also love to -- you know, you're going
10 through a similar process right now. You're doing
11 exactly, not exactly, but
12 somewhat -- a process in the same character as what
13 the Commissioners who are selected will have to go
14 through. And then it would be interested to hear
15 about what your process was like and what sort of
16 pitfalls and things that worked were.

17 CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you.

18 I don't have any further questions right
19 now, so I'm going to turn the meeting over to Mr.
20 Belnap for his questions.

21 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay.

22 (Audio issues.)

23 CHAIR DICKISON: Mr. Belnap?

24 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Ms. Dickison --
25 Madam Chair, can you hear me?

1 CHAIR DICKISON: Okay. I can hear you
2 now. Thank you.

3 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay.

4 CHAIR DICKISON: Okay. Turning it over to
5 Mr. Belnap.

6 DR. VAITLA: Thank you.

7 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right. Good
8 morning, Mr. Vaitla.

9 DR. VAITLA: Good morning, Mr. Belnap.

10 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: What is a political
11 economist and how does a political economist have
12 to exercise impartiality?

13 DR. VAITLA: Yeah, it's, actually, a
14 difficult academic discipline to define. I think
15 traditionally, actually, you know, if we're going
16 very traditionally, several centuries before, just
17 the profession of economics used to be called
18 political economy. And that's partially in
19 recognition that all policy formulation has some
20 political element to it. And this is really going
21 back, even before democratic representation. And
22 sort of as the social science developed, they
23 became different disciplines, political science,
24 and economics.

25 But what we're seeing in recent years is a

1 return to the recognition that, particularly in
2 democratic systems, all policy outcomes are a
3 function, in large part, of the structure of
4 democratic representation, of the architecture of
5 democracy and how people, you know, whether their
6 votes count at all, the extent to which the value
7 of different people's votes and different
8 communities' votes are the same? Which is I think
9 the vote dilution conversation that is being had in
10 case law around redistricting. And between
11 elections, whether there are mechanisms for
12 accountability of elected officials and some
13 ability to participate in the policy formulation
14 process?

15 So I think political economy these days,
16 and the definition is changing, but is defined as
17 how does the architecture of representation and the
18 consequent distribution of power within a society
19 affect economic policy and, also, different kinds
20 of -- other different kinds of policy?

21 Could you repeat the second part of your
22 question, Mr. Belnap? I sort of was --

23 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: How does a political
24 economist have to exercise impartiality?

25 DR. VAITLA: American Honda, impartiality,

1 yeah. Well, I think we're embedded in this culture
2 of science which the stricture of the injunction is
3 to maintain scientific objectivity and not let your
4 preexisting viewpoints and biases influence how you
5 collect data, how you analyze data, how you present
6 the results of analysis, what sorts of conclusions,
7 implications for a policy, for science that you
8 draw from your analysis?

9 That's an aspiration. I mean, I think in
10 science, scientists are human and they're subject
11 to the same sorts of human temptations for career
12 advancement and financial security and prestige
13 that people in every profession are. So I think
14 impartiality becomes the North Star that you sort
15 of move towards but never reach.

16 But I do respect that that aspiration
17 exists in science. And somehow, it's also policed
18 within science. You know, I think if there's
19 evidence of bias, there's a great deal of criticism
20 of that bias. And I think there is kind of this
21 auto-corrective process by which bias is exposed
22 and sanctioned and corrected. It's something you
23 have to stay vigilant over but I think it's there.

24 I think what's maybe, also, a little bit
25 missing, you know, if I can answer sort of one part

1 of your question a little bit indirectly, is we're
2 not particularly encouraged within science to be
3 self-aware of why are we feeling the pressure to
4 sugarcoat or slightly misrepresent our conclusions,
5 you know? And I think if more people were self-
6 aware and just open to their colleagues about it, I
7 think we can do something about changing the
8 culture of sort of anxiety about career that fuels
9 some of the bias.

10 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right. There's
11 a part of your application I want to talk about.

12 DR. VAITLA: Yeah.

13 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: It touches on some
14 of the things you just said. You said that you've
15 had to acknowledge when the empirical data did not
16 support your ideas to the detriment of your career
17 prospects.

18 DR. VAITLA: Yeah.

19 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Can you tell us what
20 you meant by that and provide an example?

21 DR. VAITLA: Sure. Absolutely. Yeah.

22 Well, my dissertation is a great example, actually,
23 you know, something that I worked on for years and
24 would have liked -- so I had a certain set of
25 hypotheses about how child malnutrition,

1 particularly chronic, long-term malnutrition is
2 reduced and the political forces that needs that.
3 And I was examining two ways of thinking. And
4 they're sort of, roughly, mapped on conservative
5 and progressive ways of thinking but, you know, not
6 perfectly.

7 But one way was about macroeconomic
8 stability, which a lot of people would associate
9 with sort of a conservative priority, and how that
10 influenced the ability of countries to invest in
11 their children and the health of the children. And
12 the other hypothesis was about redistributed
13 taxation and the creation of social safety nets,
14 which we might associate with progressive policy.
15 Neither of these hypotheses were well supported by
16 the extensive datasets from hundreds, you know, 150
17 countries that I looked at and that's a very
18 disappointing conclusion statistically because,
19 ideally, in your dissertation, you would want to
20 public papers that put your name out there in the
21 academic world and say, "Oh, we discovered
22 something new."

23 But, instead, I had to, you know, the
24 evidence doesn't support either one of these
25 conclusions. What the evidence seems to support is

1 that somehow a mixture of these policies sequenced
2 correctly in a certain economic context, economic
3 stage of development, is what reduces child
4 malnutrition.

5 And then an even more kind of ambiguous
6 conclusion, that later federal later work but
7 really was useful in my dissertation, which is that
8 it appears that if we're going to generalize at
9 all, it would be human cooperation action somehow.
10 You know, somehow, that within communities,
11 doctors, agriculturalists, social workers are
12 agreeing to work together to protect the health of
13 children. But, again, that was something that was
14 -- I didn't directly research at that time and so I
15 couldn't advance in my own work.

16 And that, you know, the inability to
17 publish something that would have been a striking
18 conclusion, probably hurt my job prospects in the
19 long run but that's what the data said.

20

21 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right. Thank
22 you.

23 So your application indicates that you
24 were a visiting scientist at the Harvard School of
25 Public Health. But you currently live in Davis and

1 I assumed you lived in Davis while you were a
2 visiting scientist.

3 How did that -- how could you be a
4 visiting scientist at Harvard and also live in
5 Davis, California?

6 DR. VAITLA: Yeah. I still am a visiting
7 scientists, actually, at Harvard. And so, yeah,
8 it's just an academic title that basically says
9 that you're sort of part of a research group but
10 that you can work remotely.

11 So the main project that I'm still
12 involved with at the Harvard School of Public
13 Health is a project in Madagascar. So, you know, I
14 don't -- I no longer do fieldwork there but I do
15 assist in analysis. And there's other projects
16 that come up from time to time which I have sort of
17 the liberty to participate in or reject. But it's,
18 really, I've lived in Davis for a few years now and
19 for about two-and-a-half years after returning from
20 Cambridge, in addition to sort of previous -- you
21 know, Davis has been a home for a long time, so
22 I've been back and forth.

23 But, yeah, I'm a visiting scholar,
24 affiliated with the institution but not living
25 there.

1 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay. Thank you.
2 You already mentioned Data2X and what it
3 is.

4 DR. VAITLA: Yeah.

5 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: In the application,
6 you indicate that this program is under a
7 foundation called the United Nations Foundation.
8 What is that foundation?

9 DR. VAITLA: Yeah. The United Nations
10 Foundation is actually not a U.N. agency. It's a
11 nonprofit that was created some years back to
12 support the priorities of the United Nations. And,
13 as such, there's a lot of coordination that happens
14 for things like gender equality where we feel like,
15 okay, well, we have great links with the scientific
16 community, so how can we help connect scholars to
17 filling in the data gaps about women's lives?

18 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right. Thank
19 you.

20 I have a few other questions about your
21 application but I want to transition over, before
22 we run out of time, to some follow-up questions.

23 You indicate that you want to transition
24 from academic to public service. Why?

25 DR. VAITLA: Yeah. And, you know, this is

1 maybe a bit misleading to make it such a stark
2 transition because I feel like I've been involved
3 in public service, particularly internationally,
4 throughout my career. So it's kind of been this
5 dance between scientific work, academic work, and
6 doing international public health projects.

7 But, yeah, I have a very, I think,
8 straightforward answer to that, is when I was
9 abroad and seeing examples of success, when I saw
10 that child malnutrition was successfully being
11 reduced, the consistent factor that I saw playing
12 into that was people cooperating in this, people --
13 a culture of cooperation that had been created over
14 time where people built relationships with trust.

15 And as I sort of alluded to before, you
16 know, you can have resources and the right
17 technical ideas but if you don't have trust, things
18 fall apart, they don't work. Even if you don't
19 know the technical answers, even if you don't have
20 the resources presently but you have trust, you
21 have a cooperative culture, what I saw is that
22 people were solving problems and child health and
23 nutrition was improving.

24 So, for me, I looked at that and I said,
25 "Well, where is social change happening? What does

1 it take?" And it felt like there was commitment to
2 community, there was commitment to place. There
3 was commitment to process and a set of ideas. And
4 when I thought about that I thought, well, what
5 this means is an open-ended commitment, you know?
6 And where in the world do I feel that I can make
7 that commitment? And the only place that has ever
8 really felt like home to me is California.

9 And, you know, being -- growing up in
10 California, going to school here for many years, I
11 was afraid -- aware of the many issues that
12 California is facing around child well-being, but
13 also around the politics of representation, as
14 well, which, again in my research, I found were
15 closely connected.

16 So I began thinking about, okay, let's get
17 back to California, let's commit to the state of a
18 life, for a lifetime, actually, and let's get
19 involved with these issues of political
20 representation and see how we can be useful.

21 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: So as you consider,
22 and I understand you're saying that you're
23 examining where you could best serve in public
24 life, does that include elected or appointed
25 government positions?

1 DR. VAITLA: You know, for the -- I would
2 say at this moment, you know, and for the
3 foreseeable future, no. I think we have a lot of
4 resources in California. I think it would be great
5 if I could participate in opening up space for a
6 lot of people who may not ever think about running
7 for public office to run for public office, you
8 know, whatever that might look like.

9 But, I myself, feel like my role is,
10 perhaps, different, you know? I think with my
11 scientific background, with some of my community
12 organizing work in the past, I think I'm most
13 interested in how we can improve the architecture
14 of democratic representation in such a way where
15 people's vote and their voice is optimized and,
16 where possible, whenever possible, equalized so
17 everyone actually has interest in the process, is
18 informed about the process, and has the means to
19 participate.

20 So it's, I think, you know, it's really --
21 elected office is not what feels like fits for me.

22 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay. Thank you.

23 How closely have you been following this
24 selection process?

25 DR. VAITLA: Very. Well, very closely.

1 Well, so I would say, before and -- before I left
2 for the monastery and then after I returned I was
3 following closely. But sort of access to
4 information at the monastery was a little bit
5 complicated.

6 But particularly the last week, you know,
7 I've tried to really dig into some of the other
8 interviews, some of the questions that are being
9 asked, and how people are responding. And I think
10 I'm very excited, actually, about your candidate
11 pool because I think you've got just wonderful
12 people.

13 And so I've been trying to follow it quite
14 closely, particularly in the last two weeks,
15 actually.

16 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right. Thank
17 you.

18 So another question, it's more curiosity
19 but, also, just trying to get insight into --

20 DR. VAITLA: Yeah.

21 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: -- into who you are,
22 on your right shoulder, there's a picture behind
23 you. Can you tell me about it?

24 DR. VAITLA: Yeah. That's my
25 goddaughter's drawing. So she lives in Amsterdam

1 and she sends me drawings now and then. And that's
2 a picture of her standing in what looks like a
3 Moroccan doorway.

4 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay.

5 DR. VAITLA: Yeah. Yeah. So, yeah, I
6 don't have children myself but I have four
7 godchildren and two nephews and a slew of other
8 kids, friends' kids that, I think help restore
9 perspective about what matters in life.

10 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right. Thank
11 you.

12 So I'd like you to describe your
13 experience with geospatial and statistical analysis
14 and your familiarity with the redistricting
15 criteria and methods.

16 DR. VAITLA: Yeah. Sure. So recently, as
17 I mentioned, the City of Davis had a transition,
18 had this redistricting -- districting process,
19 actually, because there weren't existing districts.
20 We moved from at-large to district-based elections.
21 And I was working with Social Services Commission,
22 so I sort of was around city council meetings and
23 was aware of what's going on.

24 And I love maps, I love statistics, I love
25 modeling, so I dove in. You know, so I downloaded

1 the P.L. 94 and the other census datasets. I
2 downloaded the CVAP tables. And to fill in some
3 gaps, because that information was, you know, from
4 the 2010 census, tried to fill in some gaps with
5 the American Community Survey and the tables there.
6 I looked a little bit, also, at voter registration
7 and voting datasets, as well, like the turnout.
8 And, yeah, downloaded the geographical files at the
9 highest resolution I could, at the bloc level, and
10 tried to write and wrote algorithms that attempted
11 to negotiate tradeoffs between the criteria I
12 mentioned in the California Constitution.

13 And it was very exciting and very fun and
14 a big part of the reason why, you know, I mean, at
15 that point I had sort of already expressed my
16 interest but really increased my motivation to be a
17 part of the California redistricting process. I
18 really think there's something about redistricting
19 that feels, just philosophically and emotionally,
20 very powerful to me.

21 You know, I think we think about it as
22 just drawing lines but the questions that come up
23 have to do with the fundamental nature of what kind
24 of democracy we want to be. You know, how do we
25 tradeoff the guidance of the Voting Rights Act with

1 trying to have population numbers across districts
2 as equal, as practicable? You know, how do we
3 trade off things like compactness, which there's
4 several measures of compactness, with looking at
5 communities of interest. You know, if we can
6 better represent communities of interest in a
7 strange looking district, should that be
8 prioritized?

9 You know, those questions really get to
10 rights and how we want to think about what
11 democracy in 2020 looks like. And I found it just
12 really, really fascinating.

13 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay. Thank you.

14 Madam Secretary, time check?

15 MS. PELLMAN: Three minutes, thirty-five
16 seconds.

17 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay, so in the
18 three minutes that we have, if you were not
19 randomly selected to be part of the first eight,
20 what would you say to those eight if you were
21 asking to be part of the six that were selected by
22 them?

23 DR. VAITLA: I would say that I'm willing
24 to work hard on being the data analytical person if
25 that's what you need.

1 I'm willing to work hard on being the
2 person who studies case law and summarizes,
3 perhaps, some of the lengthier decisions for
4 people.

5 I'm willing to work hard on doing outreach
6 communities if that's what's required.

7 I'm willing to work hard on being a good
8 facilitator so that, internally and at those
9 community forums, things go as smoothly as
10 possible.

11 I'm willing to work hard on administrative
12 support if we have staff and they need some help
13 managing that.

14 I'm willing to work hard on the
15 statistical modeling side, the data management
16 side, data cleaning side.

17 So I would say that whatever is needed,
18 I'll deploy my skills. And if those skills need to
19 be developed even further, I'll do what it takes to
20 develop those skills. And I think I'd say that
21 I'll do my best.

22 And perhaps this a way to summarize all of
23 what I just said is I'll do my best to make your
24 life easier, both in practical ways to support you
25 when you need help with the work, and in more

1 intangible ways to try to create a culture of
2 kindness and self-awareness and respect within the
3 Commission.

4 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right. Thank
5 you.

6 Madam Secretary, no further questions.

7 CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you, Mr. Belnap.
8 Mr. Coe, your time starts.

9 PANEL MEMBER COE: Thank you, Madam Chair.
10 Good morning, Dr. Vaitla. Thank you for
11 taking the time to speak with us today.

12 DR. VAITLA: Good morning, Mr. Coe.

13 PANEL MEMBER COE: So in your application
14 and a little bit this morning, you talked about
15 your childhood, coming to the United States from
16 rural India when you were four or five years old.
17 And you lived in Chicago before moving to Southern
18 California when you were in the sixth grade.

19 When your family moved away from Chicago,
20 why was California the chosen destination?

21 DR. VAITLA: Mr. Coe, that gets into some
22 very personal things, but I will answer the
23 question as straightforwardly as I can. No, no,
24 it's okay, it's really okay. It's actually a part
25 of who I am, so -- but I will say, you know, it's

1 okay. I just say that kind of as a preface but,
2 actually, it's an important part of who I am, I
3 think.

4 You know, there was a very fierce custody
5 battle between my mother and my father, to the
6 point where my mother was sort of stuck in India
7 for a while. She went back to visit some family
8 members who were ailing and she couldn't get back
9 to the country. And it was -- and when she finally
10 got back, it was just a struggle.

11 And the move to California was an attempt
12 by my dad, really, to kind of escape the situation,
13 you know? My mom had, at that point in her life,
14 had spent most of her life in a very rural area of
15 India. And she was just sort of getting her legs
16 as an independent woman and person. And he sort of
17 knew that, maybe, this was the best way to kind of
18 end the custody battle, you know, just move out to
19 a place far, far away.

20 And it's funny how life works. You know,
21 one just quick, real funny thing about that, that I
22 hope you guys think is funny but sort of is a
23 little bit sad, as well, but, you know, I don't
24 know if any of you are from the Midwest ever but
25 there's a place called Wisconsin Dells just across

1 the border from Chicago where every child in
2 Chicago wants to go for the summer. It's a water
3 park. And my dad, that weekend that we moved to
4 California said, "We're all going to Wisconsin
5 Dells, let's pile in the car." And, instead, he
6 drove to SeaWorld in San Diego.

7 And we showed up and he said, "Hey, guys,
8 we're at Wisconsin Dells," and there were, you
9 know, whales jumping around and everything.

10 And we -- you know, I remember my brother
11 and I saying, "Wow, Wisconsin's a really, really
12 cool place to be."

13 So that was my introduction to California.
14 But, you know, we ended up actually loving Southern
15 California. And I say life is kind of strange
16 because California has become a really deep part of
17 who I am. And it sort of arrived -- you know, I
18 came to California in this kind of sort of sad,
19 difficult way, but there was a happy ending to that
20 story.

21 My dad passed away a couple of years ago
22 but we got to having a good relationship by the end
23 of his life. And I have a great relationship with
24 my mother too. So a sad beginning to the story but
25 a happy ending.

1 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Thank you for
2 sharing that perspective. I have a kind of
3 continuation of that question, although I don't
4 think it will delve into, hopefully not, anything
5 of a personal nature.

6 So I know you were very young when you
7 left India but do you think that having kind of a
8 perspective of an immigrant could be beneficial to
9 this Commission? Even though you were young, I
10 assume you still had at least some part of an
11 immigrant experience in this country, and how do
12 you think that would benefit the Commission?

13 DR. VAITLA: Yeah, I did. Yeah, and it
14 was -- integration was tough. I remember,
15 actually, you know, before we moved to Chicago, we
16 were, for about eight months, in New York. And I
17 do have -- one of my earliest memories, I think my
18 earliest memory, actually, of being in the states
19 was the first day of school and my dad taking me to
20 school and standing kind of in this dark hallway,
21 P.S. 24, it was, Public School 24, and I was just
22 balling and crying, saying, "Dad, I don't speak
23 English. I can't do this. I can't do this." I
24 was saying this in English, ironically, you know?
25 But I was just so afraid. But we did it, you know?

1 I mean, you know, we moved to this really
2 multiethnic neighborhood in Chicago which, I think,
3 taught me a lot about the sort of opportunities
4 that America does provide. You know, it was just
5 amazing to live in a neighborhood where you go on
6 the same block from, you know, I had a Lebanese
7 friend and an African American friend, and I had an
8 eastern -- you know, I think a Polish family lived
9 right next door. And it was tight. There was few
10 places in the world that had that.

11 At the same time it was hard. And it was
12 particularly hard when we moved to California to a
13 very homogenous neighborhood and we tried to,
14 again, deal with that feeling of feeling maybe
15 excluded or different or poor, really.

16 So there's a lot on the opportunity that's
17 open to you that, I think, has been evident through
18 my whole life is that, you know, people do come
19 because there's something about what we've created
20 in this American experiment that's really novel
21 historically. And on the other side, that that
22 novel historical experiment comes with a lot of
23 discrimination and exclusion, and that's what we're
24 wrestling with in America and California.

25 So I think, yeah, that experience

1 sensitizes me, I think, to what newer immigrants
2 are going through every day.

3 PANEL MEMBER COE: Thank you.

4 I want to move on to something you put in
5 the activity section of your application. And in
6 there you state that you volunteered as a canvasser
7 for three U.S. Senate campaigns but all three were
8 for candidates for senate from other states, not
9 California --

10 DR. VAITLA: Yeah.

11 PANEL MEMBER COE: -- one from
12 Massachusetts, one for Alabaman, and one for
13 Nevada.

14 So I'm curious how you came to be involved
15 for senatorial campaigns in other states?

16 DR. VAITLA: Sure. Yeah. The
17 Massachusetts one, I was living in Cambridge at the
18 time. I was still a California voter but it was
19 sort of like I was kind of going back and forth
20 between Davis and Cambridge or California and
21 Cambridge. But that was, if you'll remember, that
22 was 2009, when the Affordable Care Act was sort of
23 being debated. And there was a super majority.
24 There was a Democratic super majority at the time,
25 60 senators ready to vote the legislation through.

1 I had just had an experience there in
2 Cambridge where I had insurance but I had torn my
3 anterior cruciate ligament playing basketball. And
4 even though I had insurance, my co-pay was huge.
5 And I went to Mass Health, which is the insurance
6 program there that was sort of Romneycare is what
7 they used to call it and the precursor to the ACA,
8 and they retrospectively covered me for -- you
9 know, they retrospectively enrolled me and paid my
10 costs. And that saved me from close to bankruptcy
11 at the time. And that meant a lot to me, so
12 healthcare reform meant a lot to me.

13 And so what had happened is Ted Kennedy
14 died and then there was an election, Martha
15 Coakley, and Scott Brown, where Scott Brown
16 actually ended up winning. But to me, it was
17 really important to knock on doors and say, "Hey,
18 we need to pass this legislation and get it
19 through."

20 The other campaigns, yeah, so I was living
21 in California during both those campaigns. The
22 Jacky Rosen campaign was simply because it was a
23 competitive campaign that needed canvassers a
24 couple hours away from Davis, two-and-a-half hours
25 away from Davis, in Reno. So I had some friends

1 who were involved in the Jacky Rosen campaign and I
2 went to help them.

3 The Alabama campaign was also a personal
4 connection. It turned out that Doug Jones was
5 running against Roy Moore in that campaign for
6 special election. And Doug Jones' daughter was a
7 friend of a friend, actually, and we sort of got to
8 talking and she said, "We needed support, we need
9 people to knock and doors and to help out in
10 Alabama."

11 And I had just, actually, a few months
12 before moved kind of permanently back to California
13 at that point. But it seemed like a thing
14 worthwhile doing. Doug Jones, again, is this, you
15 know, more so than in the other campaigns, I really
16 felt like it was about, not the party but the
17 person, where Doug Jones had spent a career as a
18 litigator in a lot of civil rights cases, including
19 prosecuting the defendants of the church bombing,
20 the famous church bombing in Alabama in 1964 where
21 four small African American girls died, so he was
22 responsible for prosecuting that case. And I
23 believed in him, I believed in his family, and so I
24 went out there.

25 PANEL MEMBER COE: Great. Thank you.

1 I want to talk a little bit about your --
2 the Commission you serve on, the City of Davis
3 Social Services Commission. I wonder if you could
4 give us a little background on what this commission
5 does and what, specifically, your role is?

6 DR. VAITLA: Sure. Yeah. The commission
7 has a very broad remit, so it, essentially,
8 provides advisory input to the City Council on
9 issues ranging from the unhoused, access to health
10 services, childcare, elderly care, access to the
11 various CalFresh and Medication-Cal and all the
12 sort of social safety net programs, transportation
13 issues, especially involving people who have
14 mobility difficulties. It has a wide remit,
15 however -- affordable housing, home ownership, et
16 cetera.

17 However, in recent -- in the past year,
18 you know, the focus has really been on the
19 unhoused, unaffordable housing to a lesser extent
20 but really that we are seeing vastly increased
21 numbers of unhoused individuals in Yolo County and
22 in Davis. And so the commission has really focused
23 on, well, what are the best practices out there for
24 unhoused policy for a city with the resources, the
25 size, the demographics of Davis? And a lot of this

1 involved coordination with the county because, you
2 know, homelessness is an issue that isn't --
3 doesn't respect jurisdictions. So, certainly,
4 there's been a lot of conversation with the county
5 as well.

6 My role in the Commission, you know, I'm a
7 commissioner of equal standing with all the other
8 commissioners, but in terms of what I've sort of --
9 the kind of niche I've occupied, it's sort of
10 unsurprising, but it's really on the data analysis
11 side and just searching for what are the best
12 practice policies and what evidence do we have that
13 they work, and what's their cost effectiveness, and
14 kind of transmitting that information to the
15 commission and seeking -- pulling together advisory
16 input for the City Council, but also seeking
17 external grants to supplement city budgets and
18 implementing novel programs, which I hope we'll be
19 able to do this year.

20 PANEL MEMBER COE: Does that commission
21 hold public meetings at all?

22 DR. VAITLA: Yeah. All of the meetings
23 are public. It's under the Brown Act, so every
24 meeting has to be posted, and then public meetings
25 for every single time we get together.

1 PANEL MEMBER COE: Okay. And as part of
2 that, you guys receive testimony of input from
3 stakeholder or members of the public, residents of
4 Davis?

5 DR. VAITLA: We do. But I will say that
6 for the Social Services Commission issues that we
7 deal with, it's more often at City Council meetings
8 where the input comes. So we'll have some people
9 show up to the Social Services Commission meeting.
10 But, really, people are engaging with us and making
11 their voices heard at the City Council meetings
12 more so.

13 PANEL MEMBER COE: Okay. Thank you.

14 So I wanted to go back to something you
15 talked about earlier. You were talking about one
16 of the challenges in front of the Commission in
17 terms of communities of interest, identifying those
18 that are normally politically silent, those that
19 are -- they're not -- they're the harder-to-find
20 communities. And you mentioned some networking
21 potential solutions to try and find those.

22 My question is, once found, some of those
23 communities are politically silent by choice for
24 one reason or another. They're uncomfortable
25 engaging in the political process or engage in

1 government in some way. But in the work of this
2 Commission, their perspective is still vitally
3 important to the work in order for the Commission
4 to be best informed to do the best job for the
5 citizens.

6 So for those particular communities that
7 are maybe a little bit more concerned or less
8 likely to want to voluntarily engage, how do you
9 make them feel comfortable enough to come forward
10 and share their perspectives to better inform the
11 Commission to do its job?

12 DR. VAITLA: Yeah. A great question and
13 one that I have an answer for but, to be frank, I
14 think it's, I think, one of the great open
15 questions of democracy, is how do you, between
16 elections, prevent it from being overly influenced
17 by those who are comfortable expressing their
18 voice? And I see this at the City Council
19 meetings, actually, on the Social Services
20 Commission meetings.

21 I think that my experience facilitating
22 groups, particularly abroad, you know, so I've been
23 in communities where the gender or the cast norm is
24 that women are silent or lower casts are silent and
25 they shouldn't speak; right? And so I think I have

1 some experience with how do you win the trust of
2 communities? Because that feels like, really,
3 what's lacking, you know? I think people don't
4 want to share their views because they don't trust
5 the people who are saying they're listening. And
6 often, that takes time, that takes careful
7 relationship building with community leaders. It
8 takes a lot of asking questions instead of
9 demanding answers, in a way, you know?

10 And given the time frame over which we
11 have to draw maps, I think with some communities,
12 we'll, perhaps, have the time. I think we should
13 probably prioritize this exercise of listing, who
14 are the voices that need to be heard at the very
15 beginning. But I think for some communities, we
16 will have time to explore those networks and
17 develop relationships of trust with the
18 communities.

19 For others, we may not. And I think there
20 it's can we provide modalities, like written
21 statements? Can we go to schools and to community
22 colleges and church groups and say, "Okay, you
23 know, you don't need to respond now, but we're
24 going to be available in all these different ways
25 when and if you should desire to put your input

1 in."

2 And I think just humility, like checking
3 back in and saying, okay, I haven't won your trust
4 yet. Maybe I need to try something else or maybe I
5 need to prove myself more and to prove my
6 intentions to a greater extent?

7 And then, ultimately, you know, you have
8 to believe that whatever actions of lack of actions
9 that people take or don't take, you have to trust
10 that they're doing it in their own vest interest
11 and do the best you can to show them they're valued
12 but then accept if someone is just simply
13 uncomfortable with speaking.

14 PANEL MEMBER COE: Thank you.

15 MS. PELLMAN: We have four minutes, twenty
16 seconds remaining.

17 PANEL MEMBER COE: Thank you, Madam
18 Secretary.

19 Most of my questions, I think all of us
20 experience this when we go last, we have most of
21 our questions or a lot of our questions addressed
22 already, so I'll just leave you with this one, Dr.
23 Vaitla.

24 If you were to be appointed as a
25 Commissioner, which aspects of that role do you

1 think that you will enjoy the most and, conversely,
2 which aspects of that role do you think you might,
3 perhaps, struggle with a little bit?

4 DR. VAITLA: Yeah. Well, I think just the
5 general prospect of working together with 13 other
6 -- 13 people who are open-minded and intelligent on
7 such an interesting tasks is -- and important task
8 as improving the architecture of democracy is very,
9 very exciting.

10 Specifically, I would say, to that end, to
11 think about -- you know, I love the data analysis
12 part and the mapmaking part, I know that, I know.
13 I love the mathematical part. I think it's just
14 such a fascinating question about how you reduce
15 the space of maps and make this exercise somewhat
16 constrained so you can actually get to a viable set
17 of maps to consider.

18 But I think I'm really excited about, you
19 know, again, because redistricting is so
20 philosophically and kind of emotionally resonant,
21 it feels like, to me, it's a way to catalyze public
22 interest and civic engagement in improving our
23 democracy. Can we be creative with that? Can we
24 make it fun? And maps are fun and visual, so
25 perhaps there is, I think there is, a way to do

1 that.

2 And so I think what I would, perhaps, like
3 the most is thinking of creative ways in which to
4 catalyze what I see as people's kind of latent
5 civic impulse to be involved, to be engaged.

6 Dislike? You know, this is going to be
7 hard. It's going to be hard and it's going to be
8 complex and politicized. And there are going to be
9 some moments where things feel bleak. You know,
10 perhaps we won't be able to get it to an acceptable
11 map or an acceptable tradeoff between various
12 criteria, and perhaps there will be forums, there
13 will be forums where the Commission will absorb
14 some serious criticism, sometimes deserved
15 criticism, and those days are going to be hard.
16 It's hard to say that I'm going to like those days,
17 probably not, but that's part of the territory.

18 You know, being dispirited at times is
19 part of doing something. Anything that's
20 worthwhile, I think, requires being dispirited at
21 times and kind of working through that, being
22 patient with oneself, resting when needed, and
23 pushing through when needed.

24 You know, I trust that we'll assemble some
25 remarkable folks for this Commission, remarkable

1 not just for their technical abilities and
2 background but also for their human qualities. And
3 I think we'll pull through together and I think
4 we'll make California proud of us.

5 PANEL MEMBER COE: Okay. Thank you very
6 much, Dr. Vaitla.

7 Madam Chair, no further questions at this
8 time.

9 CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you, Mr. Coe.

10 I will turn the time over to Mr. Dawson
11 for any follow-up questions.

12 MR. DAWSON: Thank you, Madam Chair.

13 Madam Secretary, what is the time
14 remaining in the 90?

15 MS. PELLMAN: Twelve minutes remaining.

16 MR. DAWSON: I'm sorry?

17 MS. PELLMAN: Twelve minutes remaining.

18 MR. DAWSON: All right. Thank you.

19 Dr. Vaitla, I just wanted to follow-up on
20 a couple of your responses.

21 In your activities section, you said that,
22 "In the Summer of 2019, I assisted the staff of
23 California Assembly Member Evan Low in the effort
24 to pass ACA 8."

25 When you say, "assisted," what does this

1 mean? Were you paid or was that volunteer?

2 DR. VAITLA: No, it was volunteer. And it
3 was as a social scientific advisor. It was,
4 really, offering to review the literature on other
5 country. And there's a couple of municipalities in
6 the states that have done this as well. But I'd
7 review the literature about the effect of lowering
8 the voting age on aspects, like does it decrease or
9 depress overall turnout? Does it lead to policy
10 outcomes that are subsequent optimal? Does it
11 result in young people simply voting the way that
12 their teachers or parents vote, so it's kind of
13 doing the vote?

14 So I reviewed the statistical evidence and
15 tried to present both sides. So I did so just by
16 sending that information to the various advocacy
17 organizations and to Assembly Member Low's office.
18 And then they invited me, there was an Advocacy Day
19 on the Capitol, and then I gave a presentation with
20 that statistical evidence to members of the staff
21 of different congressional -- different Assembly
22 Members.

23 MR. DAWSON: And do you still keep in
24 touch with Assembly Member Low and his staff?

25 DR. VAITLA: No. I haven't been in touch

1 since September. So I said to them, "You know, as
2 I'm actually not exactly sure where the bill is in
3 legislature at this moment but," I said, "if
4 there's any further social scientific support I can
5 give them, I'd be happy to do that."

6 MR. DAWSON: Okay. Thank you.

7 I was -- I wanted to follow up on one of
8 our responses to standard question three which you
9 identified the COVID-19 situation as being a
10 potential problem, especially with relation to the
11 census.

12 So two possible problems maybe you could
13 discuss. One is the undercount issue which might
14 exacerbate the undercount of folks who are
15 traditionally undercounted, such as immigrants, the
16 homeless, children, but it could also be late
17 because of the delay in fieldwork.

18 You had talked about work, I think it was
19 called Data2X, where you filled in the gaps. Can
20 you talk about that a little bit and how that might
21 be relevant to this work?

22 DR. VAITLA: Sure. Yeah. So my role at
23 Data2X was kind of overseeing the whole portfolio
24 of projects. So it wasn't me actually doing the
25 analytical work but it was me sort of doing

1 technical backstopping and support. But we did
2 have teams.

3 One of them was called WorldPop, actually,
4 it's a group that obtained some degree of renowned
5 now in academic and policy circles, for using
6 satellite data and some satellite images, just to
7 look at things like luminescence of cities and
8 towns, combined with information that's anonymized
9 anonymized and aggregated and privacy protected
10 from cell phone records, so look at the amount of
11 cell phone traffic and where exactly those signals
12 are being sent to estimate population numbers.

13 And these methodologies are kind of
14 ground-truthed and validated by formal censuses and
15 surveys that show that, okay, if we collect
16 information with the census, we get this number.
17 If we infer it using satellite and mobile phone
18 data, internet use data, electricity use data, we
19 get this number. And it appears that these kind of
20 new digital datasets do a pretty good job of
21 estimating population numbers. And, also, they do
22 a really good job of estimating those population
23 numbers on very fine-grained spatial scales and
24 over time as they fluctuate.

25 So this is something that, you know, this

1 methodology was originally applied to the context
2 of like after humanitarian disasters or labor
3 migration, where things are very fluid, the
4 population numbers are always changing.

5 So in a situation in California where we
6 might have somewhat of a more -- somewhat of a
7 dynamic situation but largely static, I think it
8 could be something that, even before the census is
9 completed, if we know that we need numbers from
10 some areas that we don't have yet, I think we could
11 contact some academic professionals, I think we
12 could try to work with some data holders, either
13 private sector or public sector data holders, and
14 say, "Okay, what are the anonymity-preserving,
15 privacy-protecting protocols that we would need to
16 follow in order to have access to some of these
17 novel digital datasets?"

18 Again, as I said before, I'm confident
19 that, as far as population numbers on a very
20 spatially dis-aggregated resolution, I think we can
21 have those in a timely fashion this year.

22 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. I just have one
23 further and it was sort of a curiosity question. I
24 have a connection to Chicago, so I'm just curious,
25 what neighborhood did you grow up in?

1 DR. VAITLA: It was Rogers Park. It was
2 actually right next to Rogers Park on the north
3 side.

4 MR. DAWSON: Okay. So that makes you a
5 Cubs fan, not a Sox fan?

6 DR. VAITLA: It does make me a
7 longsuffering and kind of still a little bit dazed
8 Cubs fan, yeah.

9 MR. DAWSON: Understood. Thank you.

10 Madam Chair, I have no further questions.
11 If there are any follow-ups from the Panel members?

12 CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you, Mr. Dawson. I
13 have no follow-up questions.

14 Mr. Belnap?

15 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: No follow-up
16 questions here.

17 CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you.

18 Mr. Coe?

19 PANEL MEMBER COE: No follow-up questions.

20 CHAIR DICKISON: No further follow-up
21 questions.

22 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

23 Madam Secretary, how much time is
24 remaining?

25 MS. PELLMAN: We have six minutes,

1 eighteen seconds.

2 MR. DAWSON: All right. Thank you.

3 Well, Dr. Vaitla, with the time remaining,
4 I'd like to offer you the opportunity to make some
5 closing remarks to the Panel, if you wish?

6 DR. VAITLA: Thank you, Mr. Dawson, and
7 thank you, Panel members.

8 First I just want to thank you so much for
9 this opportunity. Whether or not I'm selected for
10 the Commission, I'd love to support the Commission
11 as it goes forward in whatever way I can. I can't
12 think of more interesting, exciting, and important
13 exercises than redistricting and updating our
14 architectural representation.

15 You know, and I'm applying for this
16 position because I think our democracy, American
17 democracy, Californian democracy is at a critical
18 point in its history. The architecture of our
19 representative government needs to be constantly
20 updated but there are times when that need is even
21 more urgent, and now is one of those times. I
22 think a great deal of our citizenry is questioning
23 the fairness and impartiality of our institutions.
24 And I think thoughtful redistricting has an
25 important part to play in restoring faith and

1 improving our system.

2 California has taken the lead in creating
3 a forum in which good-faith conversation between
4 citizens can take place. And I want to see our
5 model succeed. I want it to show other states,
6 also, that an independent citizens commission can
7 do an equitable, fair, great job of drawing maps.

8 Again, if I'm not selected for the
9 Commission, I intend to stay engaged and support
10 the Commission in any way that I can.

11 And, you know, I want to thank you for
12 your work. I know you've sat through, literally,
13 hundreds of hours with the same questions. And I
14 want to thank you for, you know, all of the time
15 you've put in, especially in these difficult
16 circumstances.

17 And I'll close by saying, you know, as
18 idealistic as this sentiment may be, I haven't lost
19 hope in our progress towards a more perfect union,
20 a more perfect democracy. And I thank you for
21 giving me a chance to add my voice to that movement
22 forward.

23 CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you, Dr. Vaitla.
24 Appreciate you meeting with us today.

25 Our next meeting -- our next interview

1 starts at 10:45, so we are going to recess this
2 meeting now until 10:44.

3 (Thereupon the Panel recessed at 10:28 a.m.)

4 (Whereupon the Panel reconvened at 10:44 a.m.)

5 CHAIR DICKISON: Calling the Applicant
6 Review Panel back to order, the time being 10:44.

7 I'd like to welcome Ms. Stacy Flanigan for
8 her interview today.

9 Welcome, Ms. Flanigan.

10 MS. FLANIGAN: Thank you. I'm glad to be
11 here.

12 CHAIR DICKISON: We're going to turn the
13 meeting right over to Mr. Dawson to read you the
14 five standard questions.

15 MR. DAWSON: Thank you, Madam Chair.

16 Ms. Flanigan, I'm going to read you five
17 standard questions that the Review Panel has
18 requested each applicant respond to. Are you
19 ready?

20 MS. FLANIGAN: Yes.

21 MR. DAWSON: First question: What skills
22 and attributes should all Commissioners possess?
23 What skills or competencies should the Commission
24 possess collectively? Of the skills, attributes,
25 and competencies that each Commissioner should

1 possess, which do you possess? In summary, how
2 will you contribute to the success of the
3 Commission?

4 MS. FLANIGAN: Thank you. And thank you
5 for all the support staff and viewers because
6 transparency is a big, important part of this
7 process, so thank you.

8 Commissioner skills and attributes, as
9 through the process guidelines for Commissioners, I
10 believe strongly that every Commissioner should
11 possess impartiality, appreciation for diversity,
12 and analytical skills.

13 I hope that every Commissioner will also
14 possess a curiosity and appreciation for others'
15 perspectives, great listening skills, and excellent
16 note-taking skills, the ability to take in and
17 digest data and perspectives because those numbers
18 are made up of more than just data, those numbers
19 are made up of people.

20 And the Commission, I hope, will be able
21 to communicate concisely and effectively with the
22 public and demonstrate their commitment and
23 responsibility to the people of California through
24 the process that was outlined.

25 I hope that the Commissioner as a whole is

1 flexible. If we've seen anything, our ability to
2 respond and be flexible and collaborative to get
3 things done is critical. I hope we'll be
4 responsive to the needs of the communities and, as
5 mentioned, be able to communicate that so that the
6 Commission demonstrates the competencies and how
7 they articulate the reasoning behind the decisions
8 reached. I think that that really helps create a
9 belief in the system that people participate in.

10 Myself, I've demonstrated these attributes
11 throughout my life. And I continue to work on them
12 and hone them. I believe I have all of them. I
13 demonstrate the aforementioned skills, as mentioned
14 in my application. I currently hold the role as an
15 elected official in -- a nonpartisan elected
16 official in America's tenth most diverse city. I
17 am a trainer for the Department of Justice. And I
18 travel the United States and work on helping
19 command staff, work and understand the needs of the
20 law enforcement of the community, and for the law
21 enforcement front-line officers to really know and
22 understand the needs and the voice of their
23 community.

24 I've also honed these skills as a
25 volunteer and worked with Junior League of Long

1 Beach and our low-income populations. I was once a
2 low-income latchkey kid, so I really understand the
3 needs of those communities a little bit differently
4 than someone how hasn't actually walked in those
5 shoes.

6 I'm a member of Rotary and we do a lot of
7 outreach and investment in communities of all
8 different types. Not necessarily always low-income
9 but diversity of other types, including but not
10 limited to demographics and workforce style and
11 rural communities versus dense.

12 And then the YMCA. The YMCA was there for
13 me when I was a latchkey kid and really taught me a
14 lot about who I was. It was my first career. I
15 worked there for six years and I really worked to
16 listen and hear the kids in the program when I had
17 the opportunity to be a leader in the program many,
18 many years after I was a participant.

19 So I get along with others, I work well on
20 teams, and I thrive on working on challenges. And
21 I would take that with me in this experience.

22 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

23 Question two: Work on the Commission
24 requires members of different political backgrounds
25 to work together. Since the 2010 Commission was

1 selected and formed, the American political
2 conversation has become increasingly polarized,
3 whether in the press, on social media, and even in
4 our own families.

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

12 MS. FLANIGAN: This is so important. I
13 actually come from a very diverse family that is
14 not all from the same political party. And we have
15 very respectful and engaged family discussions
16 around the dinner table for holidays and Sunday
17 dinners and the such.

18 I think that what really helps people is
19 respect for the other's position, attentiveness and
20 patient listening skills. It goes back to one of
21 those key factors that's important, impartiality.

22 And I think that the thing that we have
23 really lost and I hope that many on this Commission
24 will have is the ability to identify and grow
25 common ground, so find that nugget of where we all

1 stand together and then really, from there,
2 hopefully, bring in the data and the perspectives
3 that can help the decision-making process grow that
4 common ground to a place where we can be on the
5 same page.

6 What can I do to ensure the work of the
7 Commission isn't seen as polarized? I will be
8 impartial, I will communicate impartially, and I
9 will lead by example. I do that in my daily life.
10 I do that in all aspects of my life.

11 I mentioned, I'm a nonpartisan elected
12 official. And when I knocked on doors for
13 reelection, many people didn't know what political
14 party I was from because I feel that my job really
15 is to represent the opinions that they bring to me
16 on the issues that are at hand. And I think the
17 same is true of a Commissioner. It's our
18 responsibility to take a step back and do what is
19 right without regard for politics.

20 And then be professional in how I
21 articulate both consensus and disagreement with my
22 colleagues and/or others in a respectful and
23 inquisitive way that is on the level of someone who
24 is bringing forward the information so that they
25 feel heard, that they have their voice, that they

1 hear me being fair, and that I'm transparent about
2 the questions that I have about the comments and/or
3 perspectives that are brought forward. And I think
4 that brings transparency to the process.

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

9 MS. FLANIGAN: I would say that the
10 greatest potential risk is undue influence. We, as
11 a Commission, would be responsible for ensuring
12 that the lines are drawn in a way that is
13 representative and fair. And we would not want any
14 group that should not be represented or should be -
15 - should not be over-represented monopolizing the
16 conversation.

17 And all too often in local forums, we see
18 that it takes great patience for elected officials
19 to draw out from people the comments and questions
20 and concerns that they have because the
21 conversation can sometimes be monopolized by
22 outsiders who come in to spread their opinion.
23 Now, some of those opinions are research based and
24 important. Every opinion is important. But I
25 think in a decision like this the most important

1 information comes from the people who live here and
2 the people who are going to be living with the
3 lines that are drawn and will be electing their
4 officials from those boundaries.

5 And so I would say that, really, that
6 listening and participation in the process by
7 people who need to be counted is the most important
8 thing that we can do.

9 MR. DAWSON: Okay.

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

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

21 MS. FLANIGAN: So all of my roles have
22 really been very collaborative in nature. I would
23 say that that is one of my strengths. When you
24 take the different personality profiles, I come
25 back the yellow, which is someone who's really

1 collaborative and someone who respects others'
2 perspectives and opinions and brings those to the
3 table. But that's not to say that some of those
4 roles have not been challenging and with conflict
5 along the way.

6 I'm going to take a step back almost a
7 decade to when I worked in Community and Senior
8 Services, actually, when I started working there.
9 I worked there for several, several years. I was
10 fortunate to have a role in the Department of
11 Community and Senior Services. And during my
12 tenure, I worked on several projects that really
13 honed my collaboration skills. I was really thrown
14 in the fire, you might say.

15 One of my roles that I think was the
16 longest and greatest learning experience was when I
17 was asked to really review, recommend and,
18 eventually, implement an overhaul of the way we
19 provided technology services and utilize technology
20 to serve our constituents, seniors, the agencies
21 that helped us serve seniors. I mean, it was an
22 all-encompassing project. And my role was to
23 submit the recommendations.

24 So I chose to bring together individuals
25 who currently served in I.T., internal customers

1 within the department, meaning non-I.T. coworkers,
2 sometimes social workers, sometimes workforce
3 investment staff members, sometimes mediators, and
4 they all have very different perspectives, but also
5 H.R. managers and contracts administrators and
6 pulling them together, along with external
7 customers, some of our commissioners, other county
8 departments that we worked hand in hand with,
9 whether it was Public Social Services or Internal
10 Services Department, and how our I.T. Department
11 interfaced with those, other county departments.

12 And then members of the public, the people
13 we actually served. I went on ride-alongs out into
14 the community, into our congregate meal programs
15 and sat with seniors. I was in vehicle with our
16 Adult Protective Services who goes out into the
17 community on accusations of abuse and really tried
18 to pull together an all-encompassing analysis of
19 all the places that I.T. was either providing or
20 not yet providing a solution.

21 Then, once I verified those issues, I
22 worked through prioritizing the areas and then
23 putting together a schedule with some real clear
24 deadlines because meeting deadlines with
25 conflicting priorities is really important,

1 especially in a large organization where lots of
2 agencies are depending on you.

3 So we pulled that all back together and
4 then I put together a schedule that kind of had a
5 rolling basis of the areas we would tackle, kind of
6 in a way that was like a waterfall and what that
7 would look like. There wasn't always agreement on
8 what the issues were and where the issue was
9 rooted, whether it was a technology issue, a human
10 resources issue, was it a contracts issue? Who
11 should and could, with the resources available,
12 narrow that gap to be able to provide better
13 service and access to the community?

14 We did have conflict, yes. And with so
15 many different people of different perspectives --
16 and I will also add to the conversation that these
17 are individuals who are just immensely committed,
18 individuals who are, each and every day, in the
19 homes of seniors that are abused. I mean, they are
20 just driven by their heart and their hard work.
21 And they've been invested in the system for a long
22 time. Many of them have worked for the
23 organization for 10, 15, 20, 25 years. We have
24 people who don't retire until they've reached 40
25 years of service because they just love what they

1 do every single day. And so that made for
2 interesting conversations because they're so
3 committed to their perspective.

4 And so what I think that I was most proud
5 of is how respectful our conflict was and how, at
6 each meeting, we started and worked through why we
7 appreciated other people in the group and how we
8 heard their point of view and what that meant to
9 the process, and how that really started the
10 resolution process and allowed us to arrive at
11 either consensus and, when we couldn't reach
12 consensus, alternatives.

13 We may not have ended where we started
14 with either the problem and/or the solution but we
15 did come to a solution. And I think that that was
16 really because we maintained that respect. We
17 worked really hard on the ground rules of how we
18 communicated with one another, how we parking-
19 lotted issues that became very contentious, and how
20 we would bring back additional information from
21 another person's perspective and then utilize that
22 to help us move through the issue.

23 Lessons learned. I immersed myself in the
24 project, what does that mean, while still balancing
25 responsibilities of my job duties? It was really

1 important to not only hear well and listen well but
2 take excellent notes. Because we would send
3 something up to the executive office and then we
4 wouldn't visit that against for six or eight weeks.
5 We'd be on to the next project. And so when we'd
6 be asked to answer additional questions or consider
7 alternatives, those notes that I take -- I still
8 use the same note-taking system on my computer that
9 I used by hand in my notebook -- to make sure that
10 I can find the information that arrived us at the
11 conclusion that we submitted so that we could
12 continue through that process without losing
13 ground.

14 And then I would say that the other thing
15 that I really thrive on is conflict doesn't bother
16 me. At this time, I was in a very tough situation.
17 Coming back from coffee one day, I actually was
18 mugged outside of my workplace. And I decided to
19 become a deputy sheriff and learn a little bit more
20 about myself and my ability to protect myself to
21 not be in a situation like that.

22 But as I went through the academy, while
23 also being a manager on this project, I recognized
24 that conflict and my ability to hear someone's
25 voice through either anger -- as I was training

1 through the domestic violence sequence, I was also
2 experiencing and understanding how people
3 communicate differently. And so I think that I
4 learned a lot about how people are invested in
5 their solutions and how I handle conflict. And I
6 really can de-escalate a situation that I don't
7 think I realized was a skill until I was put in a
8 situation where command staff were screaming at us
9 and trying to get us to react.

10 And so I was able to kind of have those
11 dual things going on in my life that really helped
12 me learn about my ability to hear people, de-
13 escalate, adapt my style. I think it's important
14 to recognize that we should treat people the way
15 they want to be treated, not the way we want to be
16 treated, and adapt to the situation at hand to
17 engage and support individuals and their needs.
18 Because whether it's a social worker who really
19 needs the technology to provide more swift
20 responses and resources or a technology officer who
21 is really committed to their mission and vision and
22 goal, we're all in it for the same thing.

23 And at Community and Senior Services,
24 Community and Senior Services saves lives through
25 every program, whether it's getting people jobs,

1 mediating major issue, or whatever it was. And so
2 connecting people back to that mission and de-
3 escalating and reminding people of how appreciative
4 we were for those perspective, those are all things
5 that I would bring to the table.

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

11 If you were selected as a Commissioner,
12 what skills and attributes will make you effective
13 at interacting with people from different
14 backgrounds and who have a variety of perspectives?
15 What experiences have you had that will help you be
16 effective at understanding and appreciating people
17 and communities of different backgrounds and who
18 have a variety of perspectives?

19 MS. FLANIGAN: Thank you. Great question.
20 I believe being a Commissioner is about the people
21 we are commissioned to serve. And I'm fortunate to
22 love people. And I think that that's an important
23 part of this process. We will be receiving hours
24 and hours of testimony and engagement with the
25 community. And I am just naturally curious about

1 others' lives and their perspectives.

2 As I mentioned, I'm a yellow, and not a
3 day goes by where I'm not listening to and talking
4 with neighbors about their ideas and their
5 solutions and how we can continue to improve the
6 communities that love.

7 I'm thankful for my life experiences.
8 They've helped me grow my perspectives as I've
9 aged. And I think that that has helped me
10 recognize that every perspective has value. I may
11 not even agree with the perspectives I had five,
12 six years ago, and I think that that's important
13 because I can still find value in them and
14 understanding where they came from in the same way
15 that I can find value in every single person's
16 perspective and really hear them from their point
17 of view.

18 I'd say hearing someone's voice is so
19 important, and my ability to identify with and
20 communicate with and hear people of different
21 perspectives, a lot of perspectives in my life.

22 I was raised by a single mom. I attended
23 one of the country's most diverse public school
24 systems. I eventually was asked by my peers to
25 serve as their student representative and that was

1 a very eye-opening process of a school district of
2 99,000 individuals to really get out into those
3 communities on a regular basis while still being a
4 student really hit me at the gravity of
5 responsibility that that is.

6 When I was in college, I was fortunate. I
7 traveled Europe and studied abroad. And I worked
8 in international internship with people from
9 diverse backgrounds. And being able to work on
10 solutions together to find common ground, even when
11 language was a major barrier.

12 Then after college, I took a job where
13 there were probably less than six English speakers
14 in the entire company. And my Spanish skills were
15 great but not as great as they probably could have
16 been.

17 I recently went back to the factory that I
18 worked in. And I realized that if you don't use
19 those skills, you lose them pretty quickly, so I
20 may need to brush up on some of my language skills.

21 But I spent six years working in different
22 roles, whether it was for factories in Santa Ana,
23 or six years working for the YMCA, serving
24 residents of L.A. and Orange County. Many people
25 think of certain communities has having certain

1 affluence. But near many communities of affluence,
2 there are also great communities of need. And as a
3 YMCA Teen and Childcare Director, I -- and now as a
4 board member, I not only got to see and understand
5 and appreciate the different backgrounds of the
6 families in our programs, but when I was an
7 employee, I often had to teach young individuals
8 and teenagers how to appreciate one another's
9 perspectives. And I think that that really helps
10 someone be effective at understanding and
11 appreciating people and communities of different
12 backgrounds.

13 My family has also lived in Southern
14 California for many generations. And we're
15 fortunate to really have deep roots in communities
16 that have transitioned greatly.

17 Long Beach is a community that has the
18 second largest Cambodian population outside of
19 Cambodia. As an elected official in Long Beach, we
20 work really hard on not just language access but
21 direct access. Someone needs to be able to feel
22 comfortable approaching their representatives and
23 city hall. And I feel that it is important to get
24 out into those communities regularly, and I do and
25 we do.

1 There's no better way than to be alongside
2 someone doing a street cleanup when you can talk to
3 them about all the things that are important to
4 them, whether it be their faith or their family,
5 the job that they hold, the industry that they work
6 for, the passion that they have for finishing their
7 education, even if it is later in life.

8 So those are some of the things that I
9 think will help me interact with people from
10 different backgrounds and different perspectives.

11 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

12 We will now go to Panel questions. Each
13 Panel member will have 20 minutes to ask his or her
14 questions. We'll start with the Chair.

15 Ms. Dickison?

16 CHAIR DICKISON: Good morning, Ms.
17 Flanigan.

18 MS. FLANIGAN: Good morning.

19 CHAIR DICKISON: Just looking in your
20 employment, so you've been employed with the County
21 of L.A. for a number of years; right?

22 MS. FLANIGAN: Fifteen. Yes.

23 CHAIR DICKISON: And are you currently the
24 division -- the Fire Division Chief?

25 MS. FLANIGAN: I am.

1 CHAIR DICKISON: Okay. So are you a
2 firefighter as well?

3 MS. FLANIGAN: I am not. I'm a Grants and
4 Cooperative Agreements Division Chief.

5 CHAIR DICKISON: Okay. Thank you.

6 And then you serve as the Long Beach City
7 Councilwoman?

8 MS. FLANIGAN: I am one of nine, yes.

9 CHAIR DICKISON: And a Reserve Deputy for
10 L.A. County.

11 How often do you work in that capacity?

12 MS. FLANIGAN: As a Reserve Deputy, I'm
13 currently on leave. I had a maternity leave
14 recently and am nursing a child. My current role
15 with the reserves is as a firearms support staff
16 where I hope individuals qualify to carry a firearm
17 on duty. And while you are either pregnant or
18 nursing, you cannot be exposed to lead.

19 And so I've been on leave for quite some
20 time now. And with the current status of COVID-19,
21 it has been interesting because my demands with the
22 L.A. County Fire Department have really given me
23 the opportunity to continue to maintain and work
24 with the Sheriff's Department pretty closely, so
25 that relationship has been great. But the

1 Sheriff's Department has allowed me an indefinite
2 leave at this time, and so I may not go back for a
3 year or two in uniform.

4 CHAIR DICKISON: Okay. Thank you.

5 And then you also talked about that you're
6 a trainer. Is that for the Center for Public
7 Safety and Justice?

8 MS. FLANIGAN: Yes, at the University of
9 Illinois.

10 CHAIR DICKISON: Oh. Okay.

11 MS. FLANIGAN: There's a few of those in
12 the country, so I just wanted to specify.

13 CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you.

14 So on your first essay, you talked about
15 working to create an independent redistricting
16 commission for Long Beach.

17 MS. FLANIGAN: Yes.

18 CHAIR DICKISON: Yeah. Can you tell us
19 about the process that you undertook in creating
20 that Commission?

21 MS. FLANIGAN: Yeah. So I worked with a
22 colleague or two of mine, most dominantly, Council
23 Member Austin, and we researched. Both of us have
24 some education background in public administration.
25 And we looked at some of the different options

1 available. And then we worked with our City
2 Auditor and our mayor to bring forward an agenda
3 item which was passed unanimously by the Council
4 and then handed over to the City Clerk. And now
5 the assistant deputy -- the Deputy Assessment City
6 Manager who are moving through that process and
7 reporting back to us regularly.

8 But I think that the most important part
9 of the process in the creation was the research and
10 outreach to the community, ensuring that this is a
11 direction that they wanted to go. We really
12 involved communities of faith and communities of
13 color and multi-generational groups in the
14 community and talked to them about what it would
15 mean.

16 And when we did bring it to Council,
17 eventually, we were really touched by the
18 overwhelming response, positive response in so many
19 of the individuals who we had kind of talked to
20 over the prior six months in doing our research and
21 leading up to establishing the independent
22 commission. They actually came to Council. And
23 you may know, Long Beach is a very, very large
24 city. And going downtown for a Council meeting on
25 an evening can be quite a trek, especially for a

1 senior. We do offer alternatives that people often
2 use to make online comments or to submit early.
3 But they felt so passionately that this is a
4 direction that they really wanted us to go, that
5 they showed up in great numbers in person.

6 And we're really proud of where it's come.
7 We funded it at what we believe to be a level that
8 will really give them the funding that they need to
9 get the work done.

10 And then we hope that, through this
11 process, it will be a less contentious process than
12 it was in the past when elected officials drew
13 those lines.

14 I think the thing that really, really
15 touched people was that there was an authority that
16 we had as elected officials that we were really
17 choosing to hand over to the community because we
18 trust them and we trust their perspectives. And we
19 believe that, though we may believe in our ability
20 to impartial today, that the long-term benefits of
21 a process like this that includes the community in
22 this way was just more important.

23 CHAIR DICKISON: Great.

24 So that Commission is currently going to
25 do the redistricting for the next round?

1 MS. FLANIGAN: Yes, it is.

2 CHAIR DICKISON: That's right. Okay.

3 MS. FLANIGAN: Yes.

4 CHAIR DICKISON: What did you learn about
5 groups in your community through this, through your
6 interactions with this process?

7 MS. FLANIGAN: Well, I guess I would start
8 by saying that I learned a lot about my community
9 starting in 2013 when I was encouraging one of my
10 friends to run for City Council. And we were
11 knocking on doors and going to meetings to learn
12 about the process to become an elected official.

13 When my neighbors really kind of coalesced
14 around me and said, "Stacy, we know you're really
15 supporting Barbara but we want you to run."

16 And that year, I knocked on every voter's
17 door three times. They weren't always home. But I
18 took over a year to really canvass and hear the
19 community and their needs and concerns at that
20 time.

21 And then ever since then I try to get out
22 into the community on a regular basis and hear from
23 them, whether it's visiting different parishes
24 across the city, whether it's participating in
25 different community groups, whether it's going out

1 and -- they say it's lecturing at the high schools
2 but I really think it's about listening to the
3 students in the high schools, a lot of government
4 classes.

5 I actually do a couple of events during
6 the year where I pull together high school students
7 from different schools throughout the city and we
8 take them on a boat ride together to learn about
9 the port but also to hear about themselves or for
10 us to hear about them and their perspectives.

11 And I would say that, similarly, in this
12 process to form the Independent Redistricting
13 Commission in the same way, that we consistently
14 listen to our community throughout the year,
15 through our budget process, through everything. I
16 think it's important to know that there is a love
17 of a process that is fair and transparent. People
18 want to be heard and they want to be a part of
19 something they believe in. And they can believe in
20 it when it's fair and transparent.

21 And that, it just speaks volumes to I know
22 that you're going to win in the next election but
23 I'm still going to vote because it's important that
24 my vote is recorded. It's important that I come to
25 the Council meeting when you're talking about this

1 because it's important that my opinion is recorded.
2 And for those reasons, I think that it just has
3 reinforced consistently that if you listen, people
4 will continue to bring forward their ideas.

5 CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you for that.

6 So you mentioned your training earlier.
7 In your essay on impartiality, you talk about that
8 your most recent training included an implicit bias
9 component --

10 MS. FLANIGAN: Um-hmm.

11 CHAIR DICKISON: -- that speaks to one's
12 ability to recognize biases and be able to set them
13 aside.

14 MS. FLANIGAN: Um-hmm.

15 CHAIR DICKISON: So how does one recognize
16 their own bias?

17 MS. FLANIGAN: So when we do that
18 training, we do a lot of activities and we work
19 with individuals to know the history of where
20 biases come from. We take a couple of excerpts
21 from a pretty well-known book by Malcolm Gladwell,
22 Blink. And it kind of talks about how your
23 experiences over time create a pattern. And so you
24 really have to be in tune to knowing your
25 background and history and how it could influence

1 you.

2 And then we also are very fortunate to
3 have some great tools provided by the university of
4 Illinois that help people kind of identify those
5 challenges. I think that about that training that
6 we provide is we actually go out into the community
7 in advance to hear from the community on what they
8 believe the biases of their local police force are.
9 And then we're able to bring that back in a way,
10 through the training, where we talk with, first,
11 the command staff, and then the front-line staff,
12 to kind of hear what the community's perceptions
13 are because the perception is reality, and then we
14 work through, every single individual that serves
15 in that role has those same biases, but being able
16 to figure out and understand on both sides what
17 that looks like and how you can correct for them.

18 So I would say listening and then being
19 able to use the information we found from the
20 community and provide some examples that they may
21 have come into, may have experienced while on duty,
22 and then their ability to identify, yes, I did feel
23 that, and then to be able to tie that to, "Ooh, if
24 I felt that, I need to control for that."

25 And I can do that myself as well. I may

1 show a particular additional empathy for someone
2 who's had an experience similar to mine and,
3 instead, I want to make sure to be aware of that
4 empathy and apply it more universally.

5 CHAIR DICKISON: So I think you went into
6 my next question.

7 What are your biases and how will you
8 ensure they don't affect your decisions?

9 MS. FLANIGAN: So I would say that
10 throughout your life, your biases change. I, as a
11 younger person, probably had a bias against absent
12 fathers. I had a lot of frustration and resentment
13 for the situation that I was in or that my mom was
14 in as a young person. And I recognized and
15 controlled for those through training and
16 awareness. You really have to be aware of those
17 biases to be able to prevent them from impacting
18 your emotion, especially when you're putting
19 yourself in situations like domestic violence or
20 other things. Because if you allow your biases to
21 get in the way, what can happen is your own safety
22 or the safety of your partner can be at risk. And
23 so just an emotional awareness.

24 I think that people don't always know and
25 recognize when their heart rate increases, when

1 they become flush, and other things.

2 And in law enforcement, in the very high
3 stress situations, those things are more
4 exaggerated so they're easier to identify. But you
5 also have to identify them as a council person,
6 sitting for hours of public testimony, when people
7 say things that are unkind of untrue to you or to
8 your colleagues, you have to really set that aside
9 and then hone in on the kernel of information that
10 they're really trying to communicate about the
11 issue being considered.

12 And I think that one of the things that
13 really helps me is I really take impartial notes
14 and I work hard to use language that helps me
15 remember the -- what I hope I heard as their goal
16 of the communication and, maybe, sometimes not the
17 anger of the words that were said but to note I'm
18 very passionate about this because passion can
19 sometimes come through as anger or frustration.

20 CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you.

21 You talked about in your diversity essay
22 how you serve as a traveling trainer --

23 MS. FLANIGAN: Um-hmm.

24 CHAIR DICKISON: -- and have demonstrated
25 and taught your appreciation for California's

1 diversity.

2 Can you expand on how you taught your
3 appreciation for California's diversity?

4 MS. FLANIGAN: Yes. So some of the places
5 that I've trained were right after major incidents,
6 so Sanford, Florida, after the Trayvon incident,
7 the Trayvon Martin incident, Colorado, after their
8 major incident. And I think that one of the things
9 that I was able to articulate and share through my
10 training was how many, many different communities
11 that just 20 years ago were violent towards one
12 another have really transitioned over the last 20
13 years. We do a lot of programs in the community
14 where we teach others how to listen and put
15 unlikely people in rooms together, in smaller
16 groups where we are able to break down those
17 stereotypes and the weight of the hurt caused in
18 the past by, whether it's one gang member's -- how
19 do I explain this?

20 Lots of things have happened a long time
21 ago. And the next generation of youth and/or young
22 adults in our community often wear that pain for
23 them. And so when we bring people together, we
24 kind of talk about, what does that look like and
25 how do they move forward from there? Where can you

1 get forgiveness from?

2 And when we go out into some of these
3 communities after major incidents, we talk about
4 those trainings, but we also have a more particular
5 trainer called, "Why Did You Stop Me?" and the
6 misunderstandings between people and how those
7 misunderstandings can escalate to a point where if
8 you don't understand something small -- I'll give
9 you an example.

10 Certain cultures are patriotic. Some
11 cultures are matriotic. And if you don't know a
12 lot about the cultures in your community, and
13 there's an incident happening and you're not
14 approaching the right person of that family to help
15 you rein in either a family or a community,
16 especially when you're in a large park or you're in
17 a tough situation where you don't have the vantage
18 point that's necessary to maintain safety, you
19 really need to know those things, other things that
20 can cause trouble.

21 Certain communities don't allow wearing
22 shoes in their homes. And they feel super offended
23 when an officer steps into their home in boots.
24 And having that dialogue before you enter about why
25 you -- I notice that your family takes off their

1 shoes. I hope you can understand, for officer
2 safety, that I'm unable to take off my boots
3 because I'm unfamiliar with your home. Are you
4 okay and understanding and comfortable? And what
5 does that dialogue look like in different
6 communities in that different cultural differences?

7 And then to be able to apply that in these
8 communities that look very different from ours.

9 I'm trying to think a community that I've
10 trained in. I mean, I've trained in Chicago and
11 Florida and Colorado, but also up and down
12 California. I've trained in all parts of Southern
13 California, including Irvine up to Gardena. Every
14 single community is different. And so being able
15 to first hear from the people you're training, and
16 then being able to correlate the appropriate story
17 to help them identify where they can make that leap
18 and then, hopefully, implement in their own
19 community is really the meat of what we're trying
20 to accomplish in that training.

21 CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you.

22 MS. PELLMAN: Two minutes, thirty seconds
23 remaining.

24 CHAIR DICKISON: Okay. Thank you.

25 If you were selected as one of the first

1 eight Commissioners who are selected randomly, you
2 would be tasked with selecting the next six. What
3 would you be looking for in those individuals?

4 MS. FLANIGAN: I guess I would go back to
5 the question number one, which was the additional
6 competencies that I hope that the Commission has,
7 excellent listening skills, ability to communicate
8 concisely and effectively. And then, hopefully, by
9 looking at what the first eight bring to the table,
10 where those gaps are and where we could fill those
11 in with others who have, perhaps, extra
12 competencies in areas that maybe the first eight
13 could build our bench with to make sure that we
14 have a very robust group of individuals that are
15 representative of the whole state.

16 People think about different communities
17 of interest and there's so many ways to define it,
18 whether it's socioeconomic, ethnic, but also
19 geographic or industry. I mean, you have certain
20 parts of California that are really identified as
21 the almond farmer communities and the dairy farmer
22 communities and the apples and the -- there's just
23 so many different things and how they all work
24 together. I would just hope that every community
25 feels like at least one of the entire Panel really

1 identifies with them. And then the rest of us
2 would work really hard to be great, active
3 listeners and hear their perspective and
4 communicate that they are heard.

5 CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you.

6 Okay, I have no further questions at this
7 time, so I'm going to turn the time over to Mr.
8 Belnap.

9 MS. FLANIGAN: Thank you, Ms. Dickison.

10 CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you.

11 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Good morning, Ms.
12 Flanigan.

13 MS. FLANIGAN: Which -- there we go.

14 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: After obtaining a
15 master's degree from USC, you began working for the
16 County of Los Angeles, and I believe that was 2005.

17 MS. FLANIGAN: Yes.

18 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: And you still work
19 for the County of Los Angeles; correct?

20 MS. FLANIGAN: I do.

21 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay. Help me
22 understand your career path from your beginning to
23 how you became the Division Chief over Fire?

24 MS. FLANIGAN: Great. So I actually
25 wasn't looking for a job. When I was in my

1 master's program, I went there because I wanted to
2 be the executive director of the YMCA. I was
3 really passionate about the work we were doing.
4 And I went to a social event that was set up for
5 meeting prospective job individuals and I kind of
6 hung out towards the back. I had a great job. I
7 was working in Santa Ana at a manufacturing plant
8 making garments and really enjoying what I was
9 doing because the job had kind of just come up.

10 While I was in grad school, one of the
11 board members of the YMCA asked me to come help run
12 his company. And I went to my executive director
13 and said, "What do you think?"

14 And he said, "I think you can grow a lot
15 from this. And in a few years, you'll be able to
16 come back and be the executive director of the
17 YMCA. So get that master's degree and take this
18 role and see where you grow."

19 Well, at this mixer with prospective
20 employers, I was waiting because after that event
21 was going to be a time where a lot of the grad
22 students were going to get together and have
23 dinner, and so I was just waiting for dinner. And
24 I was approached by -- his name was Mike Henry and
25 he was the H.R. Director of all of L.A. County,

1 which at the time had almost 100,000 employees.
2 And he said, "What are you doing back here? You're
3 so inquisitive and curious but you're not actually
4 talking to any of the employers."

5 And I said, "Well, I'm here because I'm
6 looking to be social with my classmates and I have
7 a great job that I'm really appreciative of and I'm
8 not really looking to make a change."

9 And he gave me some inspiring words and at
10 the end of it, he really challenged me to apply for
11 an administrative intern program. It was the
12 program that was created in the '70s that he
13 applied for and, eventually, he became the Director
14 of Human Resources 30 years later. And he talked
15 about how the program really rotated you around
16 different areas of the county to learn and
17 understand, not just the ivory tower of the CEO's
18 office that you get to work in or Human Resources,
19 but actually be in the field where the great work
20 was being done in Community and Senior Services and
21 Animal Control and all the different places.

22 And so I started in that program with a
23 three rotation. And from there, I really met a lot
24 of contacts, and my career has really taken care of
25 itself since then.

1 After serving through my rotation in Human
2 Resources and CEO, I was recruited by Animal
3 Control, along with three other departments. And I
4 went to Animal Control and was a Budget Director at
5 a very young age. I remember telling my mom, "Mom,
6 I'm in charge of \$30 million. I think they made a
7 mistake."

8 And she said, "Honey, you've never bounced
9 a check. You're the perfect person for this job.
10 That's what every good government needs is someone
11 to take every dollar very seriously. You're so
12 frugal. This is a great job for you."

13 And I spent several years in Animal
14 Control. And while there, they had some immense
15 conflict. Upon my arrival I noticed there was a
16 lot of vacancy. Ten percent of the Department was
17 out on employee discipline. They'd have some major
18 challenges in the prior years with less than
19 appropriate work-time behavior between staff and,
20 sometimes, criminal activity amongst the staff.
21 And so working with a really, really, really lean
22 team was a learning opportunity. And it was a time
23 where a lot of individuals had a lot of different
24 emotions. And I was able to, while working in this
25 department, really make some huge milestones for

1 the organization.

2 As one of the largest animal agencies in
3 the world, we automated all of our data, and that's
4 a really, really important thing for the animal
5 community. We were able to make a live dashboard
6 where cities that we served, there are 88 cities in
7 L.A. County and of those, 51 of those cities were
8 our contracts and we would do all their animal
9 services. We automated all their reports. And
10 that was something that had never been done before.
11 And the animal rights activists could see whether
12 or not we'd vaccinated animals upon impound and
13 what the euthanasia rates were.

14 And because this project received such
15 notoriety, I was really recruited to Community and
16 Senior Services. And it really happens from one
17 director calling another director and saying, "I
18 have a job opening and I want you to encourage
19 Stacy to apply," and so I would. And I would
20 participate in the process. And many times, I was
21 fortunate to take those new roles, sometimes at a
22 lateral when a department needed me, but often at a
23 promotion.

24 And so I was fortunate to eventually
25 become the Budget Director of Community and Senior

1 Services and, as I mentioned, to really be immersed
2 in what was the challenges of transitioning from an
3 all paper-based organization to a more efficient
4 and effective organization. We took those
5 dashboard ideas that we had in Animal Services and
6 we really applied them to workforce. How many
7 unemployed individuals are going into your
8 WorkSource Center? And how many of them are in the
9 process for how long? And how many of them are
10 getting jobs? And how many of them have those jobs
11 60 days later, 6 months later, 4 years later, and
12 what does that look like?

13 And that really helped us on the long run
14 in that as Workforce Investment Act, WIA, WIA
15 became WIOA, and it wasn't about the number of
16 clients served, it was about outcomes. We were
17 ready for that. And because we were ready for
18 that, again, we got a call from another department
19 and a chief deputy at -- I'm sorry, an
20 Administrator Deputy called my Chief Deputy and
21 said, "We'd like Stacy to come over. The L.A.
22 County Assessor is in jail and we have 214 audit
23 findings. And she seems to be a problem solver.
24 We'd like to borrow her for two to three years.
25 What do you think?"

1 And so I would get called into the office
2 and asked, "Are you up for the challenge?" And I
3 always am up for a challenge. I love -- I have the
4 curiosity to solve problems and to listen and to
5 really find the root of things.

6 And so from there, I went to Community and
7 Senior Services. Within two years, we pulled
8 together a lot of different people to solve -- we
9 had solved 204 of the 214 audit findings in about
10 22 months. And I was wrapping up a lot of those
11 reports in October of that year. And I got a call
12 from someone who I'd actually lectured to at USC.
13 I had kind of guest lecturer in this class and he
14 had become the Chief of Staff to the Fire Chief.
15 And he reached out and said, "I hear you do audit
16 findings. I thought you were a Budget Director."

17 And I said, "I am but I'm willing to get
18 into whatever needs to happen."

19 And he said, "Well, we have a few in our
20 Grants and Cooperative Agreements Division. Would
21 you be interested in coming over and helping us
22 with those? We've had them on the books now for
23 quite a while and we haven't been able to find a
24 solution, so we'd really love to see you on our
25 team."

1 And from there, I joined the Fire
2 Department. And I would say the last five weeks of
3 my life have been some of the busiest I've ever had
4 but also some of the most rewarding.

5 And so I would just say that my career has
6 been really paved with collaboration
7 (indiscernible) and hard work. There's no job that
8 I'm not willing to take on. There's no job that's
9 below me. And I am willing to just dig in and roll
10 up my sleeves and find the solution. Because it's
11 really with the people who have been there that
12 long time, they are the subject matter experts.
13 They know where the issues lie and where the
14 solutions are. And so it's a lot about listening.

15 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right. Thank
16 you.

17 I have a question about your time in L.A.
18 County management but I'll come back to it because
19 I want to make sure --

20 MS. FLANIGAN: Okay.

21 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: -- I touch on a few
22 others.

23 You're a Trainer in Procedural Justice for
24 the University of Illinois or the University of
25 Chicago?

1 MS. FLANIGAN: The University of Illinois
2 at Chicago.

3 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Oh. Okay. And how
4 long have you --

5 MS. FLANIGAN: They have multiple
6 campuses.

7 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay. How long have
8 you been a trainer for them?

9 MS. FLANIGAN: Ooh, that's a good
10 question. I'd have to pull up my resume. But I
11 would guess, let's see, I've been with -- I would
12 say four years.

13 I would also say that a majority of the
14 grant funds were mostly available during the Obama
15 Administration, while a lot of the trainings that
16 are available at this time are paid for by the
17 agencies themselves, so there's a lot fewer of
18 them. But because there's fewer of them, I've also
19 had some great opportunities to work with trainers
20 I hadn't worked with before and gotten some
21 additional perspectives that I think are very
22 valuable.

23 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: So about how many
24 times a year do you participate or do you lead one
25 of these trainings?

1 MS. FLANIGAN: So 2020, we haven't had any
2 yet. Part of it is travel is completely on hiatus.
3 Last year, I want to say there were three that I
4 was invited to train on. I had a medical emergency
5 during my postpartum and pregnancy and so I chose
6 not to take on that training. There's a cohort of
7 20 of us and so they kind of come out to us. And
8 the first one to say yes, then they try to find a
9 balance for that person, kind of like when the
10 Panel, the first eight are selected and then the
11 next are selected, they find a balance. And so I
12 would say four times a year.

13 But I would be surprised if 2020 or 2021
14 had any funding available. I think the only
15 requirement this year will be to do my continuing
16 education, which is just a few hours.

17 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: So how did you
18 become a Trainer in Procedural Justice?

19 MS. FLANIGAN: Great question. I was,
20 again, guest lecturing at USC in their Masters of
21 Leadership. And one of the students was Chief Ed
22 Medrano. And he was a Police Chief -- I don't know
23 if he was a chief at the time he was a student but
24 he eventually became the Police Chief. And when
25 they were reaching out for applicants, he actually

1 called me and said, "I am being recruited to be an
2 applicant for this and they need another Southern
3 California applicant and I think you really could
4 fill the role. There's going to be a huge
5 candidate pool but I'd really appreciate if you'd
6 put in your name."

7 And so I submitted a resume and I kind of
8 forgot about it. It was four to six months later
9 before they actually got back to any of us. I
10 guess the applicant pool was pretty large. And
11 then a few weeks later we all flew to Chicago and
12 were trained, and then we just started training.
13 And that first year, it was pretty intense, a lot
14 of trainings. My County schedule of having a
15 regularly scheduled day off on a 4/10 really helped
16 me to be able to travel to and not miss work and be
17 able to contribute. And then it kind of tapered
18 off.

19 And then in the next year, it really built
20 up again. It's very ebb and flow. And it's really
21 as you want to part to participate. So, as I
22 mentioned, I don't think there will be a lot of it
23 this year. And if I was given this opportunity, I
24 wouldn't take any of those at this time because
25 this would be my number one priority.

1 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right. Thank
2 you.

3 I want to talk to you about your time as a
4 City Council Member.

5 MS. FLANIGAN: Sure.

6 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Can you describe an
7 instance where, as a City Council Member, you had
8 to set aside your personal beliefs to achieve a
9 broader objective?

10 MS. FLANIGAN: Absolutely. I think that
11 that's -- I represent a very large and diverse
12 city. A lot of people say, "Oh, you're the 5th
13 District Council Member, you represent the 5th
14 District." No, we represent the whole city. We're
15 elected by districts but we really represent the
16 whole city. And so nearly on every matter, we are
17 receiving in communication from the community and
18 kind of reviewing all the different perspectives
19 from the communities that it comes from, and then
20 kind of trying to pull together solutions. So
21 every week, I would say, that's happening. I'll
22 give you an example.

23 Balancing the needs of our law enforcement
24 and our community outreach programs, our park
25 programs, each and every single one of those

1 programs has needs. And some might say that as a
2 sworn Sheriff and as a member of a different fire
3 department, not Long Beach but a different fire
4 department, I might give favor to police or fire.
5 And I think that I've demonstrated that I do not.
6 I believe in proportional share, even though that
7 is not always what -- I guess I shouldn't say
8 always -- even though that it is not what police
9 and fire would prefer but it is what has been
10 demonstrated by our community to be what they want
11 in terms of the way that we handle application for
12 an reductions of grants and funding. I think that
13 that will be pretty big in the next year as we see
14 so many reductions in revenue due to the current
15 pandemic.

16 And so I think that if you were to sit
17 down with either police officers, firefighters, or
18 either of their unions, they would tell you she's
19 balanced and fair. And sometimes that means that
20 that's not in support of their perspective and
21 that's how we, as a Council, function. We really
22 have to apply what the community needs, not our own
23 personal perspectives.

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

1 So I see in your application that you
2 first got on the City Council in 2014.

3 MS. FLANIGAN: Yes.

4 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Four-year terms
5 is --

6 MS. FLANIGAN: Yes.

7 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: So you sought
8 reelection in 2018 --

9 MS. FLANIGAN: Yes.

10 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: -- and won. So your
11 term would come up in 2022.

12 If you were selected to be a Commissioner
13 on the Redistricting Commission, what's your
14 intention regarding your Council Member membership?

15 MS. FLANIGAN: That's a good question. My
16 husband and talk about this often. When elected,
17 we had a two-term term limit. And so the plan was
18 that I would serve my two terms and that would be
19 that.

20 I think it's important to always keep an
21 open mind. I also believe there's great value in
22 different members of the community taking a
23 leadership. And so I hope that there will be many
24 community members that want to step up and take on
25 this great responsibility of service. And I've

1 already started to talking to members of my
2 community who have said they might be interested.
3 And I take it day by day. And, I mean, no one
4 could have imagined the position we're in today
5 just six months ago and so you never say never.

6 But I hope that I have mentored and
7 invested in enough individuals that would be
8 interested in taking on a role like this. And I
9 think that the challenge with the recent vote of
10 the people to have third terms, I think it's great
11 that they believe in us and they want us to stay.
12 And it's a real testament to how much they
13 appreciate the current Council. It also brings
14 back people who have served two terms in the past
15 and want to now, 8 years later, 16 years later,
16 perhaps, serve a third term. And I think that all
17 those dynamics in where our community is and what
18 opportunities are there will play into that
19 decision but I have not made any decision.

20 My husband often tells people, "We took
21 this road when it was only four years, so don't
22 count on it. Make sure you're developing the
23 leadership of others," and when constituent groups
24 come up to us. And he also says, "Which one of you
25 are willing to serve? It's easy to ask Stacy to do

1 it again but Stacy wants to work with you to make
2 sure that you're ready to run for office." And so
3 we are pretty open about the possibility that I
4 would not be running.

5 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay. Thank you.

6 I do want to make sure that you're aware
7 of some constitutional provisions that would
8 prohibit Commissioners from holding elected office,
9 so I'm going to give Mr. Dawson a chance to
10 summarize those.

11 MR. DAWSON: Hi, Ms. Flanigan. Chris
12 Dawson. I'm the Panel Counsel.

13 I just wanted to call your attention to
14 Article 21, Section 2, subdivision (c)(6), "A
15 Commission member shall be ineligible for a period
16 of ten years, beginning from the date of
17 appointment, to hold elected public office at the
18 federal, state, county or city level in the state."

19 MS. FLANIGAN: Hmm.

20 MR. DAWSON: So in my reading, and I
21 encourage you to talk to your city attorney, that
22 if you were appointed to the Commission, you would
23 not be eligible to be a City Council Member at the
24 same time.

25 MS. FLANIGAN: Okay.

1 MR. DAWSON: All right.

2 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: So thank you.

3 I think the thing that's remarkable about
4 you is that you're passionate about your city,
5 passionate about that position, and you're also
6 passionate about being on the Redistricting
7 Commission. And I understand that that's a
8 decision that you and your family would need to
9 make, should you continue through this process.

10 One of the -- I want to return to your
11 experience in L.A. County management. I'd like you
12 to describe the types of analysis you performed.
13 And it doesn't have to be as a Fire Division Chief.
14 It could be earlier. I can see that there's a
15 number of different areas that you've served. And
16 I'd like you to walk us through an example of an
17 analysis that is most applicable to the work of the
18 Commission.

19 MS. FLANIGAN: So I will use, I guess both
20 in Community and Senior Services and in the Fire
21 Department, we use a lot of census data and we use
22 a lot of maps. So maps more in the Fire Department
23 because we also are responsible not only from L.A.
24 County but for federal lands that are adjacent to
25 us. And so there's an entire GIS Division that we

1 rely upon to provide use the data that's necessary
2 in applying for a lot of our federal and state
3 funds. And then also in our --

4 MS. PELLMAN: Sorry. Sorry to interrupt.
5 We have just one minute left of this --

6 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay.

7 MS. PELLMAN: -- questioning period.
8 Sorry.

9 MS. FLANIGAN: I'll try to make it quick.

10 I would say that, first, you have to
11 identify the types of data you need, and then you
12 need to identify where you can get the data from a
13 reliable source, and then you need to put that data
14 into a perspective that really folds into what
15 you're trying to accomplish. So within Workforce
16 Investment and those tools that we were trying to
17 create and have created, we really wanted to use
18 census data and other data to pull together and
19 recognize where we needed to focus and,
20 potentially, open up additional WorkSource Centers
21 based on the funding available through the new
22 program.

23 In the Fire Department, when we're doing
24 an analysis, I'll give you one that some people
25 don't know, trees are being eaten by bugs all over

1 the state of California and when that happens, they
2 die. And when those trees die they become a fire
3 risk. And so for us, to use map data to not only
4 find out, where are the greatest areas of risk but
5 where can we make the most impact by addressing
6 that risk, would be a set of different datas that
7 we kind of pull together to make the decision on
8 what to apply for and how to apply for and then put
9 it together with what can we have capacity to
10 accomplish with the grant period?

11 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right.

12 MS. PELLMAN: That is time.

13 MS. FLANIGAN: Thank you.

14 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Thank you, Ms.
15 Flanigan.

16 Madam Chair, no further questions.

17 CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you, Mr. Belnap.

18 Mr. Coe, your time. It's your turn.

19 PANEL MEMBER COE: Thank you, Madam Chair.

20 Good morning or, yeah, it's still morning,
21 still good morning, for another few minutes, to you
22 Ms. Flanigan. Thank you for taking the time to
23 speak with us today.

24 MS. FLANIGAN: Thank you.

25 PANEL MEMBER COE: I wanted to go back to

1 some of the volunteer efforts that you talk about
2 in your application. And --

3 MS. FLANIGAN: Sure.

4 PANEL MEMBER COE: -- you missed quite a
5 few. And in your application you state that you
6 have a passion for public administration in local
7 government. And I'm wondering where you think this
8 passion comes from? What pulls you towards those
9 types of roles?

10 MS. FLANIGAN: I come from a family of
11 public servants. My grandfather was a street tree
12 trimmer and my mother served in the court system
13 and was a paralegal that helped people get self-
14 help divorces after she went through a pretty
15 tumultuous divorce herself. My grandmother worked
16 as a secretary in the public school system. So did
17 my aunt. I think that it's just who we are as
18 people. It's kind of in our blood.

19 And when I was a young person and was
20 going through what was a pretty traumatic divorce
21 of my parents in a community where none of the
22 other kids had divorced parents, I was fortunate to
23 find some respite in the YMCA. And my mom enrolled
24 us in some programs there and I think that's really
25 where the connectively in others, being able to

1 really identify with the things that I was
2 understanding and going through, helped me
3 transition. And I feel like as I grew into a young
4 adult, I worked at the YMCA and I was able to pay
5 it forward in the same way that others invested in
6 me.

7 Eventually, there was a program that you
8 may have heard of, it's called Youth and
9 Government. And Youth and Government was my
10 passion for a little while. When I heard about
11 this program where young people could get together
12 at a pivotal age, really in that 10th, 11th and
13 12th grade age when so much is going on, and really
14 be focused on something bigger than themselves and
15 understanding something that I had already felt
16 really passionate about, as I mentioned, our Sunday
17 dinners and, actually, we make dinners every day
18 were about what was going on in the world and what
19 was in the Weekly Reader. And so that was kind of
20 a topic my family really embraced.

21 And so for me, when I heard about this
22 Youth and Government Program, I took it to the
23 executive director and I said, "We have to do this.
24 What can I do?"

25 And he said, "If you can raise the money,

1 you can launch a program."

2 And so I had to figure out, what does it
3 cost to start a program? And then what would be a
4 reasonable amount for the youth to pay to
5 participate? And at the time, having come from a
6 family that was really decimated by a divorce, I
7 wanted it to be almost free for the students to
8 participate in. And so I worked really hard to get
9 a Mervyn's Grant and a couple of other big donors
10 to pull in and we launched a program that brought
11 20 kids to Sacramento. And, really, I watched
12 through their eyes what they felt they could
13 accomplish in the bigger world. They really debated
14 issues that, eventually, were going to come forward
15 to the state, whether -- I mean, we're talking ten
16 years ago when the youth were talking about
17 recycling and plastic bag bans. And, I mean, this
18 is long before city councils across this state were
19 taking on those issues. And our state is one of
20 the first to tackle a lot of those issues.

21 And so the idea that government is really
22 by, for, and about people really just -- I can only
23 say that I have an implicit bias towards
24 contribution back because I feel that flushness and
25 the pitter-patter of your heart when you talk about

1 it.

2 PANEL MEMBER COE: Understood. Thank you.

3 I wanted to go back to something you
4 talked about in your essay on appreciation for
5 California's diversity. And you mentioned earlier
6 about living in America's tenth most divorce city,
7 in Long Beach.

8 MS. FLANIGAN: Yes.

9 PANEL MEMBER COE: And that you believe
10 that your overwhelming reelection, I guess it would
11 have been, in 2018 in such a diverse constituency
12 demonstrates that the diverse community believes
13 that you represent them well.

14 So my question is: Why do you believe this
15 -- that these diverse communities think that you
16 represent them well?

17 MS. FLANIGAN: Because I listen. I mean,
18 I'm open and approachable, sometimes maybe too
19 approachable. We'll be sitting at dinner at a
20 local restaurant and another person or couple might
21 even come sit down with us and talk to us about --
22 and I say us because, as my husband knows, when I
23 was reelected, there is no one Council Member, it's
24 a Council family. And people will sit down with us
25 and tell us about their challenges and their

1 frustrations and their ideas and their solutions
2 anywhere and everywhere we go. And that does not
3 prevent us from going out. We actually embrace it
4 and love it. My husband is also a public servant
5 for a different organization.

6 And I think that that ability to open your
7 heart and hear from people, that's what they want,
8 they want to be heard. And they know that not
9 everything can be solved. I don't have a magic
10 wand.

11 Often, after great research and additional
12 information, I'll reach back out to the individual
13 and say, "Here, here was your idea and here's the
14 path we took to look into and investigate if this
15 is possible, and here's the reason why it's not
16 really feasible at this time. And if you come up
17 with any more ideas, never hesitate to reach out.
18 If you have any additional comments on anything
19 we're working on, don't hesitate to reach out."

20 And I think people appreciate that. They
21 appreciate that even when we cannot solve their
22 issue, even if it's out of the scope of our
23 authority, even if it's something that's in the
24 scope of our authority but has come to Council and
25 did not have the political will at the time to have

1 a majority vote, that transparency, I think it
2 really resonates.

3 PANEL MEMBER COE: Thank you. I'd like to
4 talk a little bit about your experience in
5 different regions of the state, outside of L.A.
6 County and the Long Beach area, and maybe some
7 experiences you've had with people that you've met
8 in these different areas that may -- they may have
9 different priorities, perspective, or different
10 concerns based on where they live.

11 What experiences --

12 MS. FLANIGAN: Yes.

13 PANEL MEMBER COE: -- have you had with
14 people in different parts of the state that you
15 think would make you an effective representative
16 for them on this Commission?

17 MS. FLANIGAN: So as a part of the
18 Community and Senior Services Department, I was
19 fortunate to travel with our Workforce Investment
20 Board. And so I was able to see and understand and
21 go to conferences in different communities where we
22 were able to hear from people in different parts of
23 the state. I remember a particular conference in,
24 I think it was Monterey.

25 I think that that, along with general

1 travel, I've been to and taken students from the
2 YMCA to Riverside County and Santa Barbara and the
3 Inland Empire and down towards deep San Diego as an
4 advisor of different programs that I've
5 participated and I would say that another process
6 that I think added a lot of perspective in the
7 different communities in California.

8 And while I cannot release who we
9 interviewed, but we recently interviewed for a new
10 city manager. And there were applicants from up
11 and down California. And we not only heard about
12 what is going on in those cities in the way it is
13 portrayed in the media but the hard, cold facts
14 from a city manager who has a group of elected
15 officials they work for and are addressing major
16 issues. We heard from a city manager who went
17 through a crisis within the last, I'll say, four
18 years to kind of broaden that range so they're not
19 as easily identifiable. But -- and hearing from
20 how they handled some of those really key
21 situations in communities that they served in that
22 disaster and what really came forward from people.

23 Even in Long Beach there are residents
24 whose number one concern is water pooling in front
25 of their driveway, where in other communities

1 they're major concern is where they're going to be
2 able to -- whether or not they're going to be able
3 to eat dinner that night and what that looks like.
4 And so everyone's concerns are important and they
5 all need to be heard because everyone is a part of
6 the process and the government is here to serve us
7 all.

8 PANEL MEMBER COE: Thank you.

9 I want to talk a little bit about
10 communities of interest. It's been touched on a
11 little bit already, specifically in terms of the
12 communities within your constituency in Long Beach,
13 I think.

14 But, you know, one of the biggest
15 challenges in front of this Commission is going to
16 be identifying those communities of interest all
17 across the state. Some of those are going to be
18 easier to identify than others. They're more
19 engaged. They're more obvious. There's other ones
20 that are going to be harder to identify --

21 MS. FLANIGAN: Yes.

22 PANEL MEMBER COE: -- for one reason or
23 another.

24 So I'm wondering, as a Commissioner, if
25 you -- how would you go about having the Commission

1 identify communities of interest and try to avoid
2 kind of inadvertently overlooking some of those
3 communities that are maybe less obvious and harder
4 to find?

5 MS. FLANIGAN: So I've been participating
6 in the census process pretty actively, both as a
7 county employee and as a Council Member. I've gone
8 to some of our census hard-to-count meetings.

9 I think that we should be reading a lot of
10 the reports that come out of the census activities.
11 I think that it will help us identify where people
12 felt in those communities, the hard-to-reach
13 communities, are and the communities of interest.

14 An example might be we have a community
15 that is not as politically active and it's a faith-
16 based community. And there was an organization --
17 I'm sorry, there was a time in L.A. County where a
18 law was passed that because they were not very
19 participatory in local government the local elected
20 officials didn't realize how negatively it would
21 impact the committee.

22 Supervisor ZEV Yaroslavsky spoke about a
23 time when we passed a law in L.A. County where to
24 cross the street, you had to push a button that
25 made a little green man appear and let you know it

1 was your turn to walk. And yet there are
2 communities who do not turn on electricity or
3 interact with electricity on Sabbath. And that
4 meant that when that was implemented there were
5 decisions that had to be made by individuals of
6 whether or not to cross illegally and there were
7 tickets being given.

8 And it was upon that group of elected
9 officials to kind of roll that back and come up
10 with a solution where every light turns green in
11 those -- I'm sorry, every walk turns to a walk in
12 those communities on the Sabbath because they don't
13 have the -- because it is against their faith to
14 participate in that.

15 And we have to recognize those things by,
16 hopefully, listening to the communities that have
17 already participate in and identified those
18 communities of interest and hard-to-reach
19 communities.

20 I think it's really striking right now
21 with the current pandemic how the nonprofits have
22 really had to change their communication. A lot of
23 communication was typically through email and the
24 internet. But another hard-to-reach community is
25 our seniors.

1 My specific district is very disconnected.
2 And I can see that in my newsletter. My newsletter
3 goes out, and we've tried it on different days of
4 the week, and no matter what day of the week it
5 goes on we see a large portion of those opens are
6 Saturday morning. And Saturday mornings are when
7 some of the seniors in our community walk down to
8 the local library and participate in senior hours
9 to open their email. And now you know you have a
10 community that only receives information on
11 Saturdays. And now they can't go to the library
12 because the library is closed and they need to get
13 information. And so their only source of
14 information may be a television and may not even be
15 a television.

16 And so we, as a Commission, have to step
17 up, listen to the work that has been done so far,
18 and then build upon that great work.

19 PANEL MEMBER COE: Thank you. To kind of
20 continue that line of thought, and you touched on
21 this a little bit earlier, but some communities,
22 even -- they may even be aware already of -- well,
23 let me back up -- they may generally not engage
24 with government for one reason or another. They're
25 uncomfortable doing so even. If they're aware of

1 the opportunity to do so, they have concerns about
2 it, and that can be for --

3 MS. FLANIGAN: Yes.

4 PANEL MEMBER COE: -- a number of reasons.

5 But to -- since input is so important for
6 the work of this Commission in drawing these lines,
7 how would you go about trying to make some of those
8 communities that are less comfortable engaging, how
9 would you make them feel comfortable or try to help
10 them feel comfortable in order to share their
11 perspectives with the Commission?

12 MS. FLANIGAN: So I think working with and
13 identifying who those tipping-point people are. In
14 Long Beach, sometimes we use an Interfaith Council
15 we created -- well, actually, not we, my Council,
16 but we, in partnership with many other
17 organizations, kind of brought together a lot of
18 pastors that work together. That's one way.

19 Another way is -- and I know this sounds
20 very rudimentary, but there are certain cultures
21 that I can identify that their weekly thing is
22 sitting at the donut shop together. I mean, when
23 you drive through some of our Cambodian
24 communities, even during the pandemic, that was one
25 of the hardest things for them to relinquish was

1 that connectivity with their peers once a week at
2 the donut shop for coffee.

3 And we need to be able to find who those
4 tipping-point people are in each of these hard-to-
5 county communities and engage with them and build
6 trust with them and let them be our spokesperson,
7 and let them come and be an example to connect with
8 us and then being able to tell the story of I went
9 and it was great and they heard us and they care
10 and they want to know more. And I call upon you to
11 come with me.

12 PANEL MEMBER COE: Thank you.

13 MS. PELLMAN: You have five minutes,
14 thirty-five seconds remaining.

15 PANEL MEMBER COE: Thank you, Madam
16 Secretary.

17 Ms. Flanigan, if you were to be appointed
18 as a Commissioner, which aspects of that role do
19 you think that you would enjoy the most and which
20 aspects of that role do you think you would,
21 perhaps, struggle with a little bit?

22 PANEL MEMBER COE: I think I would enjoy
23 listening. I really, really, really thrive on
24 hearing people.

25 I know that I would thrive on the

1 analytical data. I'm kind of a data geek and I
2 love to pull together that stuff. I've been a big
3 proponent for open data in my own city and in the
4 County of Los Angeles. I helped work on the
5 Assessor getting all their data online so people
6 can play with and aggregate it in different ways.
7 That's really fun.

8 I think the hardest part for me is travel.
9 As I've gotten older I like the comforts of home
10 but it's a sacrifice I'm willing to make because of
11 the important work that needs to be done, in the
12 same way that I have to travel as a Council Member
13 to D.C. and Sacramento and other places to make
14 sure that our agendas are accomplished. But I love
15 being home with my family and I love my community
16 and I love family dinner. We're very fortunate to
17 have Facetime and Zoom and all the others to keep
18 engaged and connected. And so I'm fortunate that
19 I'll be able to work through it but I know it will
20 be hard because I just love my family.

21 PANEL MEMBER COE: Thank you, Ms.
22 Flanigan.

23 At this time, Madam Chair, I have no
24 further questions.

25 CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you, Mr. Coe.

1 MS. FLANIGAN: Thank you, Mr. Coe.

2 CHAIR DICKISON: Mr. Dawson, the time is
3 yours.

4 MR. DAWSON: Thank you, Madam Chair.

5 Ms. Flanigan, welcome once again and thank
6 you for being here.

7 I wanted to return to a statement that
8 you'd made, and you discussed it with Mr. Coe, when
9 you described Long Beach as the tenth most diverse
10 city in the country. How do they measure diversity
11 in that context?

12 MS. FLANIGAN: That is a very good
13 question. And the measurements change regularly.
14 It is something that is awarded by different
15 organizations. I think that a lot of the
16 contributing factors on the -- so you can click on
17 the website when it comes out. And there's a lot
18 of different factors. There's age. There's
19 socioeconomic. There's language. There's culture.
20 There's faith. There's -- even down to, I want to
21 say, I saw the different types of schooling
22 available, whether children are home schooled or
23 Catholic schooled or a private school that's not
24 Catholic or Christian schooled, or the range of
25 types of education programs, the diversity of

1 participation I your process and the engagement of
2 your community in local government.

3 So there's a multi-factor system. It is
4 not determined by the city. We apply for it
5 through -- of course I'm going to forget the name
6 of it right now. But if you call the phone number
7 for city hall, it tells you on the message when
8 you're on hold.

9 MR. DAWSON: Okay. Thank you.

10 Well, the reason I ask the question is
11 that the Panel -- I'm sorry, the Commission is
12 intended to reflect California's diverse
13 demographics and geography. Obviously,
14 demographics probably what we normally thing
15 of --

16 MS. FLANIGAN: Yes.

17 MR. DAWSON: -- with diversity but
18 geography is also called out.

19 There are lots of applicants from L.A.
20 County, fewer from the northern part of the state.
21 And my question is: How does an L.A. County native
22 express or understand appreciation for other parts
23 of the state?

24 MS. FLANIGAN: So I think, uniquely, that
25 I get to see that regularly in my role with

1 analysis of data from the state regarding the Fire
2 Department. I also think that the work that I did
3 with Workforce Investment in better understanding
4 data up and down the state. Again, that was
5 different census data. I'll obviously have a lot
6 of work to do and research to listen and read the
7 reports provided so that I'm up to date on a lot of
8 that.

9 But geography matters. I mean, even in
10 our 50 square miles of the City of Long Beach, and
11 we have many peninsulas of other cities, Lakewood,
12 Paramount, we have unincorporated islands within
13 our city, we have a city within a city of Signal
14 Hill, but even within that, you have areas of
15 extreme density and you have areas of just wetlands
16 and regional parks. And then you have other
17 communities that don't have access to parks. And
18 the same is true up and down the state.

19 Long Beach used to be farmland. And there
20 are still many farm estates in the City of Long
21 Beach and they are vocal about their interests as
22 well. I think that the uniqueness that I bring to
23 an applicant from L.A. County, and I imagine there
24 will be at least one that is selected, is the
25 statewide perspective that has come with many of my

1 different roles, whether it be my role as a Youth
2 and Government advisor, hearing from youth up and
3 down the state. Those youth today are young
4 families. And I'm sure their perspectives have
5 changed. But those 7,000 kids on an annual basis
6 that got together and really talked about what
7 their communities' needs were from their
8 perspective, hopefully the data has shown that
9 individuals who participate in that program are in
10 the high 90s of civic engagement and voter
11 participation.

12 And that's one of the main reasons why,
13 when we recruit those students, we recruit from
14 hard-to-recruit communities and why I was so
15 passionate about the program being nearly free. I
16 mean, you don't want to always give something away
17 for free because they might not value it. But,
18 literally, in the low \$50.00 to \$150 to \$200 range
19 depending on a student and their needs, and often
20 times waived completely to make sure that those
21 communities who are not typically engaged were
22 getting their youth involved and engaged so that
23 they would be in that 90 percent in the future.
24 And those are young families now.

25 And so my experience as a Youth and

1 Government advisor, sitting for hours and hours,
2 days and days, weekends and weekends in the
3 barracks at Camp Roberts and in the state capitol
4 listening to youth from all over our state and
5 their perspectives, I think, gives me a lot of
6 that.

7 And then to build upon that, the same type
8 of work with our Workforce Investment Commissions
9 and the reports that they provide, and the data and
10 accomplishments that they're really having, I stay
11 apprised of a lot of that. And that gives some
12 additional perspective that I hope will be valued.

13 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

14 Madam Secretary, how much time do we have
15 left in the 90 minutes?

16 MS. PELLMAN: Five minutes, thirty
17 seconds.

18 MR. DAWSON: Okay. Thank you.

19 Just one more quick follow-up. In your
20 response to standard question three, you said one
21 of the potential problems was outside influence.
22 Now you've sat through many public meetings and a
23 lot of public comment.

24 Do you think that you have a particular
25 sense of when somebody might be not presenting who

1 they actually are and are trying to gain some
2 additional influence that maybe they're not who
3 they say they are?

4 MS. FLANIGAN: So I would say, yes, but I
5 would also say that I'm reading a book right now, a
6 new book out by Malcolm Gladwell, where he provides
7 some data related to people's biases of listening
8 to testimony. There's actually a chapter in the
9 book that talks about judges and judges' ability to
10 identify risks of a person presenting information
11 that's less than their own or truthful to their
12 heart.

13 And so I stay on top of that in my
14 listening. And I want to be sure to not discount
15 anyone and the things they say because all
16 perspectives are valued. And hopefully then kind
17 of ordered in a way that prioritizes those of the
18 community that we're really commissioned to serve
19 here.

20 PANEL MEMBER COE: I see. Thank you.
21 Those are all my follow-ups.

22 Madam Chair, if there are any additional
23 Panel follow-ups?

24 CHAIR DICKISON: I have no further follow-
25 ups.

1 Mr. Belnap?

2 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: I don't have any
3 further questions.

4 CHAIR DICKISON: Mr. Coe?

5 PANEL MEMBER COE: No follow-up questions.

6 MR. DAWSON: All right. Thank you.

7 With the time remaining, Ms. Flanigan, I'd
8 like to offer you the opportunity to make some
9 closing remarks to the Panel, if you wish?

10 MS. FLANIGAN: Thank you. I am so
11 passionate about redistricting. I was going
12 through old files. And while I couldn't find an
13 application from the first Redistricting
14 Commission, I did find a letter of support from one
15 my professors at the Sacramento Center at USC, Chet
16 Newland, he really inspired me through the way of
17 participatory government.

18 As I mentioned, when I went into my
19 master's program, I wanted to be the Executive
20 Director of the YMCA. But him and his leadership
21 and his continued friendship and support really
22 inspired me to want to be involved in this process
23 ten years ago. And I was younger and less
24 experienced and hadn't had a lot of the, really,
25 seasoning that I feel is necessary to this process.

1 But I also feel that I do bring a fresh and young
2 perspective. I often hear from residents and
3 constituents and neighbors, "You're a lot older
4 than you look. You're patient and more seasoned
5 than your age."

6 But I hope that youth is considered, as
7 well, because I really felt, at that time in my
8 life, I was inspired and ready to give back. And
9 Professor Newland, Dr. Newland, really did that for
10 me.

11 And I hope that when considering L.A.
12 County candidates, if I'm fortunate enough to be
13 right there on the borderline, that another piece
14 of the diversity is youth. And I know I'm not that
15 young. I'm under 40, though, barely under 40 but
16 under 40. And I think that that says a lot to our
17 young families who are not typically participatory
18 in the process. They're very busy. I mean, maybe
19 not right now during the pandemic but they want
20 government to work. They want to go to yoga. And
21 they want to take their kids to soccer practice.
22 And they've got to get dinner on the table. And
23 they've got to pack lunches for tomorrow. And they
24 have Common Core homework they've got to get
25 through. And they elect people and hope

1 commissions do the right thing without their
2 participation. And I think that sometimes seeing
3 someone in their age demographic can also be
4 helpful.

5 So that, and I've also worked a lot with
6 the immigrant populations. As I mentioned, I
7 worked in a factory in Santa Ana for several years.
8 And I think that being able to know and relate to
9 those communities has really helped me in my role
10 as a Council Member, but also helped me in my role
11 as a teacher. We have a lot of international
12 students when I was an adjunct at USC as well.

13 And I think it also has helped in my
14 training with procedural justice because a lot of
15 the communities that our law enforcement come in
16 contact with have typically been disenfranchised.
17 And I hope that I can be a voice of support and
18 reason and encouragement for all of those
19 populations.

20 So thank you for your time today. I again
21 want to thank everyone who's taken part in this
22 Panel, the support staff. This is a big
23 undertaking and a lot of time. And you guys have a
24 lot of really important decisions to make. And I
25 thank you for being thoughtful in your reviewing of

1 all of the information and your questioning. Thank
2 you so much.

3 CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you. We appreciate
4 you meeting with us today.

5 Our next interview is at 1:15, so we are
6 going to recess until 1:14.

7 (Thereupon the Panel recessed at 12:30 p.m.)

8 (Whereupon the Panel reconvened at 1:14 p.m.)

9 CHAIR DICKISON: Time being 1:14 p.m. calling the
10 Applicant Review Panel meeting back to order. I'd like to
11 welcome Mr. Kosmo. Did I say that correctly?

12 MR. KOSMO: Kosmo.

13 CHAIR DICKISON: Kosmo.

14 MR. KOSMO: Like Cosmos.

15 CHAIR DICKISON: Welcome for your interview
16 today. I'm going turn the time directly over to Mr. Dawson
17 to review the five standard questions.

18 MR. DAWSON: Thank you, Madam Chair.

19 Mr. Kosmo, I'm going to read you five standard
20 questions that the Applicant Review Panel has requested all
21 applicants respond to. Are you ready, sir?

22 MR. KOSMO: I am ready.

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

25 What skills or competencies should the Commission

1 possess collectively?

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

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

6 MR. KOSMO: Do you want me to answer -- go ahead
7 and answer those?

8 MR. DAWSON: Go ahead.

9 MR. KOSMO: Well, first of all I just want to say
10 thank you. I appreciate being allowed to interview. And I
11 know we're all remote, but I was looking forward to flying
12 up to Sacramento to participate. And it's nice to see some
13 of you. I've watched some of the meetings online so it's
14 good to see everybody and talk to you.

15 In regard to the first ones, I mean I tried to
16 give them some thought. And I thought about it if I was
17 trying to pick the Commissioners what I would look for. So
18 my thought was on the skills and attributes that everybody
19 should have or all Commissioners should have, I would be
20 looking for people that have demonstrated impartiality,
21 people that have done things that are what I'll call
22 nonpartisan. And I think that's -- you know I think that's
23 very important, especially for a Redistricting Commission,
24 because everybody has to have trust and faith that people
25 are going to look out for the best interests of everybody

1 in California and not one particular group.

2 I would also look, as part of that demonstrated
3 impartiality I would look for people that have done things
4 that indicate that they represented groups that were
5 underrepresented or stood up for groups that were
6 underrepresented. And I would look for people that have
7 done things that support sort of people protection under
8 the law.

9 And then the second thing that I would look for,
10 in that category, would be for all Commissioners is what I
11 would call technical skills. And when I say technical
12 skills obviously one of the things about my application and
13 my background is I've been on Redistricting Commissions. So
14 it can be an intense process. And you get lots of pressure
15 from different areas. So I would look for people that had
16 the technical skills, background and talents to be able to
17 -- to listen, understand and also to be able to discount
18 things that are maybe too one-sided. So I would look for
19 people that had a kind of a combination of a demonstrated
20 impartiality and strong technical skills to do the job
21 well.

22 And so as far -- do you want me to keep going
23 then? I will.

24 The second part of the question is the skills and
25 attributes that all the Commissioners should have

1 collectively. So this would be my -- my view on that is
2 that I would start with, obviously, demonstrated
3 impartiality. The second one, technical skills, I think
4 people need to be able to -- you've got to have enough
5 people that can analyze complex information. They've got
6 to be able to analyze contracts. And they've got to be
7 able to work with staff.

8 And I guess actually that was one of the things I
9 put down there, because not just for a redistricting
10 commission but ethics commission or when I was on the water
11 board I mean there's a lot of commissions, federal offender
12 board, you have to be able to work well with staff. And
13 you've got to be able to work well with experts that you
14 hire too, so technical skills to be able to analyze
15 contracts, work with staff, complex information.

16 And then another attribute that I think that
17 we've got to have somewhere on the Commission, you've got
18 to have people that have legal abilities and ability to do
19 legal analysis.

20 So I think that there's the big issues, which I
21 call the big three in my experience which are to make sure
22 the people are focused on the redistricting law, equal
23 population, natural boundaries, communities of interest.
24 And if you let that guide you through the process it's
25 very, very helpful.

1 But I also found that there were a myriad of
2 legal issues that came up during the course of scope of
3 being (indecipherable), right? You're going to have issues
4 with the Brown Act. You're going to have issues -- I mean
5 you may have to hire people or put out RFPs. And you have
6 to have government contracts. And so people -- there's
7 going to be unforeseen legal issues that are going to
8 arise. And so having somebody on the Commission that can
9 converse with the staff attorney and help protect the
10 interests of the organization is good, as well as to make
11 sure that the map is consistent with the law.

12 Another thing you need to have, collectively on
13 the Commission, is you need to have people with good
14 listening skills. And public outreach, in my opinion, is
15 an important thing. And so you can't have effective public
16 outreach unless you have people that are good listeners.
17 So I think you have to have people out there that can go
18 and they can listen, they can be patient, but they can also
19 glean information from people that bring it.

20 And consistent with sort of the listening sort of
21 the communications skills I guess -- listening and
22 questioning. So you have to have people that can make
23 thoughtful questions. So people are going to present
24 evidence and there's going to be gray areas. And so if
25 people can ask thoughtful questions that helps to focus the

1 process and helps inform not only yourself but everybody
2 who's on the Commission.

3 Sort of the fifth bucket, I would say if I was
4 looking for everything I want on the Commission, I'd say
5 you want to have diversity, right? California is a broad
6 and diverse state. So you've got to have diversity. And
7 that comes in many different forms, right? But you're
8 going to have to have ethnic diversity. You're going to
9 have to have gender diversity. And then I would say I
10 think you've got to have geographic diversity. So you're
11 going to want people that come from parts of the state.

12 And then I think as part of geographic diversity,
13 I think it's nice to have some of the Commissioners who are
14 familiar with more than just their particular area of the
15 state. So people that have lived, practiced or worked
16 throughout the entire state, I think that that's important
17 to have. And when I think you need to have people with a
18 diverse educational and a diverse employment background.
19 So I think you need to have people from different areas in
20 that regard.

21 And then lastly, if I was going to list out all
22 the six things that I think that you have, I think if you
23 could find and have some people on the redistricting
24 commission that actually have redistricting experience and
25 expertise, I think that would be a real bonus. I think

1 that from going through it once, the first time is great
2 because everything was new, right? But it'd be a lot of
3 help for the other Commissioners to have some people on the
4 Commission that are familiar. And when they hear community
5 of interest, natural boundary, those kinds of things it's
6 not the first time they've ever seen it or talked about it
7 and those kind of things.

8 So the question is then which of those attributes
9 do I possess? And I think that I guess I have to say that
10 I think that I have all of them. And I think that's what
11 makes me a strong candidate.

12 As far as the demonstrated impartiality, I've
13 done a redistricting commission. That's what it was all
14 about. And that was all about protecting the citizens and
15 people of San Diego, so not quite as big as the state of
16 California but San Diego is a big city. So I've done that.
17 I've been the Chair of the Federal Magistrate Judge
18 Selection Committee down here for the Southern District of
19 California. And so the selection -- identification and
20 selection of federal court judges is an important public
21 service. And that protects everybody, not just one side or
22 other. But that's a non-partisan thing that protects
23 everybody.

24 And then I think another example for me is that
25 I've been appointed to the San Diego City Ethics

1 Commission. And so the San Diego City Ethics Commission
2 oversees the city's political and city leaders and makes
3 sure that they comply with them. And we do -- if somebody
4 -- if there's a complaint against somebody we have to
5 investigate it and we have to determine the facts. And we
6 have to come up either dismiss or we have to come up with a
7 punishment that's fair under the circumstances.

8 So, I think I have the first one. The second one
9 is complex technical skills. And certainly day-to-day in
10 my role as a business trial lawyer we do that all the time.
11 And I certainly had to do that when I was on the
12 redistricting commission. So I think that the ability to
13 see, read, understand and then make complex information
14 easier for other people right, because that's the whole
15 thing about teaching a jury. You take something that's
16 super complex and then you make it into something that
17 everybody can understand. So I have that from my 30 years
18 plus of litigation experience. And I've done -- I think
19 I've got that one.

20 On the legal training, I think I fit under that
21 category and I think I would be very helpful on the
22 Commission for that. Obviously I have direct experience
23 with redistricting law and the issues that come up with
24 that. And from being on the Point Loma Planning Board,
25 the ethics commission, I was on the water board. So I have

1 lots of experiences with the Brown Act and other kinds of
2 legal issues and government contract initiatives that come
3 up there.

4 Listening and questioning as a trial lawyer. I
5 have those skills, because I have to take depositions. I
6 have to put witnesses on at trial. So we had many, many,
7 many redistricting meetings. I listen to people carefully.
8 I formulate a question. And I think I can help move that
9 process forward.

10 On diversity, I'll say I can't change my gender,
11 but I think that I have a demonstrated commitment to
12 diversity. And that's based upon my background. And as I
13 put in my application, as I say is that if you look at my
14 law firm, Wilson Turner Kosmo, I'm one of the three main
15 partners. We started the firm 30 years ago with four
16 lawyers, three men and one woman. And now we have 36
17 attorneys, 80 percent of which are women or people of
18 color. And so we had a commitment to diversity for the
19 last 30 years and we built a firm that's a lot different
20 than most law firms in California and different than many
21 businesses. And so I think I have a demonstrated
22 commitment to diversity.

23 I certainly have a geographic diversity since I
24 grew up in Ventura, Santa Barbara. I lived in Los Angeles.
25 I live in San Diego. My son lives in San Francisco. I

1 grew up on a farm in the San Joaquin Valley, camped and
2 hiked in virtually all of the mountains of California and
3 walked most of the coastline. So I know the state well.

4 And then I guess as far as my legal education
5 obviously that's important, but I think I have to mention
6 too that I do also have a fine economics degree,
7 undergraduate. So I bring a certain math and expertise
8 that's helpful.

9 And then lastly the number six one is that I was
10 on the San Diego Redistricting Commission. And so I do
11 bring a redistricting expertise and experience that I think
12 is unique and would be very helpful to the Commission.

13 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Mr. Kosmo, I want to
14 make sure that you have the opportunity to address all five
15 questions. And we only have 30 minutes.

16 MR. KOSMO: Okay, sorry.

17 MR. DAWSON: Question 2. Work on the Commission
18 requires members of different political backgrounds to work
19 together. Since the 2010 Commission was selected and
20 formed, the American political conversation has become
21 increasingly polarized, whether in the press, on social
22 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?

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

4 MR. KOSMO: Fine. Well, I thought about what I
5 just went through. And I think that -- and I've been on
6 different Commissions such as the Magistrate Judge
7 Selection Committee has lots of people. But the things
8 that I think on the hyperpartisan are that you need to have
9 people that are open minded, treat people with respect.
10 Again, good listening skills. And then you need to have a
11 little bit of a thick skin.

12 And so what happens is like I'll say with our
13 redistricting commission you have seven people that were
14 put together that never know each other. And so you have
15 to build relationships. And so you have those things where
16 you meet people or new people you meet and you're open
17 minded, you treat them with respect, you listen to what
18 they have to say. And if they say something back at you
19 that's a little sharp then you have a little bit of a thick
20 skin and you say okay, okay. Don't take everything too
21 personally, right? You can develop the relationship.

22 And I have a theory that I've used in all -- in
23 my different capacities, which is that it's sort of the
24 bell curve that they taught us when we were in elementary
25 school. And I know that it seems like the political

1 parties are driven by the far right and the far left. But
2 I still believe that if you look at the bell curve of
3 California or America, but California, center right and
4 center left are the big part of the bell curve. And those
5 people are a lot closer together than the people on the
6 fringes.

7 And so it may seem simple, but I think if you
8 look at that and you -- that's the problem with social
9 media, it's all negative. Don't focus on the differences
10 and look for things that you can see in Commissioners that
11 are in common. Look for common issues, common views, ways
12 to unite. And then when you start working with your fellow
13 Commissioners, you deal with them in good faith, respect
14 and you build up a deposit of good will is what I call it.
15 A deposit of good will and the math is sort of the last
16 thing you do. But you have to do everything in the process
17 to get there. And so if you work with people in good faith
18 all the way along the process, you build good solid
19 relationships, so when you get to a thorny issue on where
20 is this line going to be drawn at the end, you can have a
21 fair discussion with somebody and you give or they give or
22 you can work it out.

23 So that's -- and so what would I do? I think
24 part of the question is what would I do? I would do the
25 same thing that I've done on the early redistricting

1 commission is I try to build a personal relationship with
2 everyone on the Commission; all seven people, well the six
3 others. And so I was on the California State Redistricting
4 Commission I'd try to build a relationship with all the
5 other 13 members, as well as the staff people too.

6 And I want to have a good -- I mean, I probably
7 won't be best friends with everyone, but I'd like to have a
8 good solid working relationship with everybody on the
9 Commission. And I'd like to feel like anybody on the
10 Commission that had a question or a concern would feel
11 comfortable coming to me to talk about it. And so
12 that's what I've done when I managed the Federal Magistrate
13 Judge Selection Committee. I did the same thing.

14 And I think it's really important that you
15 protect your Commissioners, because there's always going to
16 be some of those cheap shots. So you've got to protect
17 Commissioners against cheap shots and stand up for
18 Commissioners and don't let people get away with doing
19 that. And so I think if you do that, that would be my
20 suggestion.

21 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

22 Madam Secretary, how much time is remaining?

23 MS. PELLMAN: Twelve minutes remaining.

24 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

25 Question 3. What is the greatest problem the

1 Commission could encounter and what actions would you take
2 to avoid or respond to this problem?

3 MR. KOSMO: Yeah, I think that this one is a lot
4 like the previous question. But I, instead of calling it
5 hyperpartisanism, I call it factions. So I've seen in
6 different groups you get factions. You get factions where
7 it's this group against that group. And you end up with
8 situations where certain people put their self-interest
9 above and ahead of the group and maybe power, control, that
10 kind of stuff.

11 And so I think it's sort of the same thing is
12 that you have to try to make the Commission if you can, and
13 I would be firmly committed to that is to do that, is to
14 work as a team. There's no "I" in team. And the good of
15 the many outweighs the good of the one. And so I always
16 try to get everybody on the Commission or on the Federal
17 Magistrate Selection Committee to always think of it as
18 we're all in this together. We're the ones coming up with
19 it. And so it comes down to the same thing where you've
20 got to make sure that every Commissioner's views are heard.
21 Everybody's views are considered and their respected.
22 You're not going to accept them all, but you've got to at
23 least hear them and respect them and think about them.

24 And so in treating people with respect and
25 listening to them and building relationships. I think

1 those are the most important things to get away from the
2 factions and have people work as a group.

3 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Question 4. If you are
4 selected you will be one of 14 members of the Commission,
5 which is charged with working together to create maps of
6 the new districts. Please describe a situation where you
7 had to work collaboratively with others on a project to
8 achieve a common goal.

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

12 What lessons would you take from this group
13 experience to the Commission if selected?

14 MR. KOSMO: Yeah, well I mean I've done that
15 many, many times. So it seems the one that's most relevant
16 to everybody is the redistricting commission and San Diego
17 City Redistricting Commission and the goal there was to get
18 a map that was fair to everybody.

19 And so we started out. It was like my son's
20 favorite show, Survivor. We have seven strangers that have
21 to work together. And so in our situation what I view is
22 that you get -- the more you put in the more you get out.
23 And I had to develop relationships. So what we did in that
24 was we had to get an executive director. So I volunteered
25 to be on the subcommittee to help get an executive

1 director. Then we had to get an RFP to get a redistricting
2 expert. Then we had to get redistricting software.

3 And so through those processes, I volunteered, I
4 was on different committees and I worked with -- and the
5 subcommittees would always be kind of a different mix of
6 the Commissioners, so you get to work with -- that's how
7 you kind of get to work with everybody on that.

8 And then we had fun. Public outreach was a big
9 deal for us, because we wanted to make sure that the
10 community felt that our map was fair. And so we held
11 numerous meetings all across San Diego. And the way we did
12 it to be cost effective was we did them in the libraries
13 all across the city. And so one night you'd be driving
14 down to south San Diego. Another night you'd be going up
15 to Rancho Bernardo. Any way I got to know the San Diego
16 City Libraries very well. And so I showed up at those. It
17 was a lot. I had a busy law practice. I've got a lot
18 going on. But if I'm taking a deposition or I get a court
19 hearing they're usually done by 5:00. The meeting would
20 start by 6:00. I could drive there. I made all the
21 meetings. So I made the meetings. I participated. I
22 treated people with respect. And I built relationships.

23 And so I think that that was a key for us in
24 coming up with a map at the end that was not a map that was
25 a favor to anybody other than it was good for the entire

1 community and we got all the Commissioners to vote for it,
2 seven to nothing. And there were no legal challenges to
3 it. And to say after it was over, I had the head of the
4 LGBT community come up to me and tell me I did a great job.
5 And then I had the head of the Democratic people come and
6 tell me I did a great job. And then I had the head of the
7 Republican Party come up and tell me I did a great job.

8 So I put those three together. I figured maybe I
9 did okay.

10 MR. DAWSON: So thank you. Question 5. A
11 considerable amount of the Commission's work will involve
12 meeting with people from all over California, who come from
13 very different backgrounds and a wide variety of
14 perspectives. If you are selected as a Commissioner what
15 skills and attributes will make you effective at
16 interacting with people from different backgrounds and who
17 have a variety of perspectives?

18 What experiences have you had that will help you
19 be effective at understanding and appreciating people and
20 communities of different backgrounds and who have a variety
21 of perspectives?

22 MR. KOSMO: Yeah. On this one I think it starts
23 with just growing up in California. I mentioned this a
24 little bit before, but growing up in Ventura, going to
25 college in Santa Barbara, camping, hiking, river rafting,

1 fishing, hiking through the mountains, I've been through a
2 lot of the parts of California. And certainly I think that
3 it also helps that I -- we had a family farm. So I learned
4 how to drive tractors as a young boy and live in the San
5 Joaquin Valley and thinking that going out for a Saturday
6 night dinner in Bakersfield was a big deal. So and then
7 I've lived in Los Angeles and I've gone to law school there
8 and now I live and raise my family in San Diego.

9 So part of my job as a litigator is representing
10 a wide variety of people and talking to them. And I have a
11 lot of common backgrounds with people from being involved
12 in all those different areas and being in California. So I
13 think I mentioned in my application, I represent clients
14 across the state. So I represent clients in San Francisco
15 and Oakland, Sacramento, Los Angeles, Orange County, San
16 Bernardino, Riverside and San Diego. And so I meet people
17 in those areas.

18 I talk to people in those areas. And sometimes
19 they're technical experts and they're very sophisticated
20 people. But a lot of times we have retail clients. So I'm
21 often times working with people that are regular retail
22 workers from Petco, Target, Ralph's, Home Depot, those kind
23 of people. I work with a current case I've got out in San
24 Bernardino where we're representing Cardinal Health, which
25 is a big medical manufacturer. But it's a case involving

1 warehouse workers in their distribution center in San
2 Bernardino. So the case is really dealing with warehouse
3 workers and warehouse managers and hourly workers and all
4 that kind of stuff -- those kind of people.

5 So I think that I've got a broad background. I
6 want to say also -- and I promised I'd do this. Also, I
7 have a grandson. So I show people a picture of my grandson
8 Benjamin, and people are usually nice to me. So I think
9 that there are different ways to develop a relationship
10 with people. And so that sort of diverse background and
11 then the technical skills of being an attorney help me to
12 meet people from all different walks of life.

13 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. We'll now go to panel
14 questions. Each panel member will have 20 minutes to ask
15 his or her questions. And we'll start with the Chair, Ms.
16 Dickison.

17 CHAIR DICKISON: Good afternoon, Mr. Kosmo. So
18 something you mentioned and was in the application was that
19 you served on the 2010 Redistricting Commission for the
20 city of San Diego. How was that Commission selected? How
21 did you come to serve on that Commission?

22 MR. KOSMO: Well, I decided to say this, but so
23 in 2009 they had this thing called a newspaper. And they
24 would throw the newspaper up on your driveway. And my two
25 boys had graduated from high school and they left. One got

1 into Notre Dame, one went to Georgetown. So I was looking
2 to get involved in something. I had mentioned that to my
3 wife. And so she was reading the newspaper and she saw
4 this article that the San Diego City was doing a
5 redistricting commission and she suggested that I apply.
6 So that's how it happened.

7 Before that time, we were raising our kids. I
8 was involved. I was on the board of directors at the high
9 school. I was on the PTG, obviously that kind of stuff. I
10 was involved in sports and I was building my practice. I
11 was President of the Association of Business Trial Lawyers.
12 And I was a president of a local in accordance. (phonetic)

13 So what I told my wife was that I wanted to do
14 something that was -- now that the boys were gone --
15 something that doesn't have anything to do with the boys.
16 And it doesn't have anything to do with the law, it's
17 something to give back to the community. So they had an
18 independent commission, sort of like the three of you. And
19 so I wrote up an application and I put it in there. And
20 then I went down and I gave a five-minute speech. And I
21 was one of the seven selected.

22 CHAIR DICKISON: Okay, thank you. What was your
23 primary role on the redistricting commission team?

24 MR. KOSMO: I think, as I described a little bit,
25 there was some people that really -- I wanted everybody to

1 have a voice. And it was still a time -- and I still have
2 an active law practice. I have an active law practice.
3 And so one of the things that I did when the boys were
4 growing up, when I was on the PTG instead of being the
5 president of the PTG I was the Vice President because
6 sometimes I'd be out of town for a deposition and that kind
7 of stuff.

8 And so with the redistricting commission there
9 were some people that wanted to be chair and some people
10 that wanted to be vice chair. And so I'm like "Okay.
11 That's fine with me."

12 But really my role was I wanted to fill in an
13 active spot but not necessarily -- if somebody wanted me to
14 be chair, they could do that. So what I did was I just
15 participated in everything. So whenever -- I let other
16 people be chair and vice chair, but then when we had a
17 subcommittee to pick the executive director, I volunteered
18 for that. When we had a subcommittee to do an RFP to get
19 our redistricting expert, I did that. And I was helpful on
20 that because obviously my legal expertise I could
21 understand the RFP process. And so I interviewed people
22 and I did that.

23 And then I was actively involved in all the
24 public outreach. I went to all -- I think I went to every
25 public outreach meeting we had except for one. There was

1 one time I could not get back. I think I might have even
2 been in Sacramento for something that ran late. But I
3 couldn't get a flight back for that one. But I went to
4 everything. I fully participated.

5 And then at the end I did help. After we heard
6 lots of testimony I drafted a draft map that I posted to
7 the whole community, because this was the Brown Act and all
8 above board for public comment. And then I presented it at
9 the next meeting and described sort of my consensus of what
10 I thought a fair map might look like.

11 CHAIR DICKISON: Okay. Speaking of public
12 comment, what did you learn about outreach when you were on
13 that Commission that you could use to assist the statewide
14 Commission in its efforts?

15 MR. KOSMO: Well, I think first of all the more
16 public outreach you can do the better. And you need to
17 publicize it. And you need to do it in ways that people
18 can actually show up. And so I like doing it in the
19 evenings. And we did them in different communities. And we
20 did lots of them. And so that way each community had an
21 opportunity.

22 I think that one of the other things that we did,
23 in San Diego, the city is made up of 54 planning groups.
24 And so one of the things we looked to was that the planning
25 groups for University City or the planning groups for

1 Hillcrest, we would contact them when we wanted to do a
2 public outreach, because they were leaders in their
3 different communities or district branch. So we would try
4 to encourage them to reach out to people they knew too.
5 And so we used the planning groups as another way to filter
6 out information to make sure that people participated.

7 And so we had quite a bit of participation. And
8 we had lots of meetings that went for a long time. So I
9 would say that it's bigger, but to the extent that you're
10 going to have something in Redwood City. I mean you've got
11 to look to the leaders of Redwood City and try to help them
12 get people out. Get communities' leaders out so that
13 people in the community know about it and they have an
14 opportunity and meaningfully participate.

15 CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you. One of the things
16 the 2010 Commission had been concerned with is that they
17 thought that there were instances in which someone would be
18 speaking on behalf of a group. And they questioned whether
19 some of those individuals were actually members of the
20 community that they were speaking on behalf of or whether
21 they were trying to forward their own agenda.

22 With your background in litigation do you have
23 some skill sets you think would assist the Commission in
24 recognizing that type of thing?

25 MR. KOSMO: Yes, yes. I think absolutely.

1 Absolutely and I do that on a daily basis in regular
2 litigation. But I'll just give an example of something
3 else. I don't think this is probably in my application,
4 but I also get hired as an independent investigator. And
5 so I was thinking you could add that, because it's kind of
6 a unique thing. And I've done that for some big companies
7 like Sempra Energy. And so they hire me not to be a lawyer
8 but there'll be an ethics issue or a finance falsification
9 issue or something like that. And so you've got to go in
10 there. And you do an independent factual investigation.

11 My only client in those cases is the truth. And
12 somebody's accused of something and I just need to go out
13 and find out whether somebody's telling the truth or not
14 telling the truth and looking at the documentation.

15 And so those are sort of the same kinds of skills
16 that I used when we did have a special interest group make
17 presentations to our redistricting commission too. And so
18 you have to judge the leaders of those groups and judge
19 their creditability, judge the information they give you
20 and you try to come to a reasonable -- because some of the
21 information they give you is really good and very helpful.
22 And some of it is self-centered and not helpful for the
23 rest of the community.

24 And so I mean that's why my view on the whole
25 thing was I'd rather draw a map that's fair to everybody.

1 And so I know you want the map this way, but and that's
2 great for you, but what about everybody else? So the
3 pieces of the puzzle have to fit together so that the map's
4 fair for you, but it's also fair for the people over here
5 and the people over there.

6 CHAIR DICKISON: That segues into my next
7 question. You talked about on the San Diego Redistricting
8 Commission you had to go from eight districts to nine and
9 so in that instance you had to redraw a lot of the
10 districts. There is concern that California will lose a
11 congressional district after this next census. What can
12 the Commission do to ensure that communities feel
13 understood and heard when their representation may decline?

14 MR. KOSMO: Well, I mean that really was the
15 biggest challenge going from eight to nine meant that
16 virtually all lines were changed. And I don't know -- one
17 district in California may not change every line, but my
18 view would be is that I think we want to do public outreach
19 to try to tell everybody that we're going to make the
20 changes. We have to make them. They're required. But
21 we're going to try to draw the map, so that everybody does
22 get their representation.

23 I don't think I would feel comfortable voting for
24 a map if I thought in your old district you used to have
25 representation, now in your new district you don't, or you

1 have less. I mean I think you should -- I would really
2 strive towards it might be a different configuration, but I
3 would want to make the map in such a way, so that you are
4 still fairly represented, because I'm still going to look
5 for the same thing. I'm going to try and find some
6 communities of interest for you to bond with.

7 CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you. So you talked about
8 growing up and your family having a family farm, I guess it
9 was? And you had apples and alfalfa. Does this give you a
10 different perspective than somebody else from San Diego or
11 from the other coastal communities?

12 MR. KOSMO: Well, I think absolutely. I think
13 absolutely it does, because those were my formative years.
14 My dad thought it was important for me to be good at
15 digging a ditch. So now my wife gardens, so I can dig a
16 very round circle hole right just, put down a base and I
17 can get things to grow. But yeah, I spent my formative
18 years with digging a lot of ditches, driving tractors,
19 self-reliance. And really getting to know people in sort
20 of the lower San Joaquin Valley, the greater Bakersfield
21 area. And so yeah, I think there's no doubt that it gives
22 me more depth of experience as to what the state entails.

23 I like driving through the San Joaquin Valley.
24 So when I drive from San Diego to go visit my son up in San
25 Francisco, I enjoy going up I-5. So yeah, I think it makes

1 me a broader candidate.

2 CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you. You talk about
3 building relationships, because the Commissioners aren't
4 going to know each other, what steps did the San Diego City
5 Commission take to build relationships? And how can you
6 translate those into a statewide Commission?

7 MR. KOSMO: Yeah, I mean they didn't do anything
8 formal. So I think that's probably a weakness. And so I
9 would certainly start off within the basis that I talked
10 about, which is I would try to develop a personal
11 relationship with each person that's on the Commission.
12 But I guess I think it's a great question. And so could
13 you have -- this would be a suggestion off the top of my
14 head is -- should there be some type of orientation meeting
15 or a day or two to sort of to give people a general feel
16 for what's going on with the Commission? And to get to
17 know each other, and to have lunch together and then talk
18 about things and have some presentations on redistricting
19 and maybe give people an overview on how redistricting
20 software works, that kind of stuff.

21 And so maybe a day-long redistricting get-to-know
22 you seminar would be a good way to do it. And you could
23 even come up with some type of -- I know that people don't
24 like it, but some kind of break people into groups and give
25 them activities so that they -- exactly, how we all feel

1 about it, but it's a good way to start people off.

2 MS. PELLMAN: There are 6 minutes, 30 seconds
3 remaining.

4 CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you.

5 So you talked in your application about being on
6 the Board of Directors for the Federal Defenders of San
7 Diego? What is that organization?

8 MR. KOSMO: And it's part of what I was talking
9 about also equal protection. So Federal Defenders is
10 probably all of the group, there's the US Attorney. So the
11 US attorneys are federal prosecutors. And in the early
12 '60s public defenders, which would be in the state court,
13 started to develop. And Federal Defenders is essentially
14 the same thing. It's a federally-funded organization that
15 defends people that don't have money and they're charged
16 with crimes in federal court.

17 So they're definitely an under-protected and
18 underserved community. And so they have 80 or 90 lawyers.
19 They represent clients in a wide variety of legal cases.
20 They are on the front edge of a lot of border crime, here
21 in San Diego. So there's a lot of border crime that they
22 represent people in. And so being on the Board of
23 Directors, I'm part of guiding the organization and helping
24 to make sure that the organization runs smoothly.

25 One of the biggest things that I think we had to

1 do and in that type of organization the Executive Director
2 is a huge deal. And so the Executive Director who had been
3 there for about 10 years resigned two years ago. And so I
4 volunteered to be on the search committee. And so I was on
5 the search committee and we did a nationwide search and we
6 found a new Executive Director whom we hired about a year
7 and a half ago. And she's taken over and I think the Board
8 is very happy with her. And I think the organization is
9 happy with her. And it's been a big transition.

10 And she took over the Operation Streamline went
11 into effect and so there was a lot more border crime and a
12 lot of activity going on and she stepped in at an active
13 time. But we helped to shepherd her through in the
14 organization, so it's a commitment to equal protection
15 under the law.

16 CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you. What motivated you
17 to work with that organization?

18 MR. KOSMO: Well, again I'll tell you since I
19 told you that I grew up on a farm outside of Bakersfield.
20 So when I went to law school, my goal when I went to law
21 school was to help people and to make a difference. And my
22 goal really, when I thought I was going to graduate, I
23 thought I was going to move to Santa Maria and become a
24 prosecutor. I always wanted to be do criminal law. And
25 anyway, I ended up getting married, had a baby, my first

1 son Eric, when I was in law school. And I ended up doing
2 really well in law school. So I got offered a high-paying
3 job at Gibson, Dunn, & Crutcher, which was a big law firm.
4 So my wife told me instead of being a low-paying criminal
5 lawyer I was going to take a job with Gibson, Dunn. So
6 anyway I took the job with Gibson, Dunn and then I started
7 my own firm.

8 So I've always been interested in criminal law.
9 And long way of getting around it, when I was Chair of the
10 Federal Magistrate Judge Selection Committee, it's a
11 combination of high-powered lawyers all across San Diego.
12 A lot of them are civil. And a lot of them are criminal.
13 And so I'd run the panel for selection maybe of four or
14 five judges.

15 And after the fourth or fifth one that I did, one
16 of the prominent criminal attorneys came up to me and she
17 said, "We have an opening on the Federal Defender Board and
18 we think you would be great."

19 And I'm like "Well, you know I'm a civil lawyer."
20 And she said "Yeah, but we need people on the Board that
21 have a different perspective. We can't just have everybody
22 on the board who just thinks criminal-criminal-criminal.
23 We need somebody with a different background, a different
24 perspective. And from watching you do and manage and Chair
25 the Federal Magistrate Selection Committee, I think you

1 would be great."

2 And so I said "Well, I've always been interested
3 in criminal law. I've always wanted to do it." And so I
4 said yes. And so I've been doing it since what 2000 and --
5 I can't remember -- 2004 or something -- no 2000 -- I don't
6 know. I've been for the last seven years, maybe 2004.

7 CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you. The first eight
8 Commissioners are selected randomly. And they are tasked
9 with selecting the next six. If you were one of the first
10 eight, what would you look for in those final six. And I
11 think you have about a minute.

12 MR. KOSMO: Yeah, okay.

13 MS. PELLMAN: Yes. About one minute remaining.

14 MR. KOSMO: Well, in one minute, I guess I would
15 look at who the eight were. And then I would look at what
16 we're missing. So and I would look at sort of those six
17 criteria I had. And I would like -- so if we needed
18 diversity or if we needed a specific expertise I might look
19 for those things. And I'd try to balance the Commission
20 out. And of course I would look for people that I thought
21 fit within the independent nonpartisan good contributor.

22 CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you.

23 Mr. Belnap, it is your time.

24 VICE CHAIR BELNAP: Good afternoon, Mr. Kosmo.
25 Thank you for being with us. My first question is, in

1 either your experience on the judge selection committee or
2 on the ethics Commission, can you provide an instance where
3 you had to set aside your personal views to achieve a
4 broader objective?

5 MR. KOSMO: Okay. Well, I'll say start with the
6 -- I would say to both of them the answer yes and all the
7 time. And so on the Federal Magistrate Judge Selection
8 Committee, we have I think 12 or 13 people on that. And we
9 have to pick the finalists to become the next federal
10 magistrate judge. And just like the map is all about the
11 citizens of San Diego or citizens of California, the judges
12 are -- we want to pick a good judge for San Diego, because
13 everybody is going to appear in front of that judge.

14 So whenever I ran -- and I think that's why they
15 liked me as a Chair was I all put aside my self-interest.
16 I knew, because I'm a prominent lawyer here, I know who
17 some of the people are, but I never pushed anybody to
18 become, be the selection. The goal was always to try to
19 get a consensus, which is part of sort of the team
20 building.

21 And so on the Federal Magistrate Judge Selection
22 Committee, what I would do is I would have an early meeting
23 for what I was talking about which didn't have anything to
24 do with selecting a judge. It was just to get all the
25 attorneys in the room, so they all got to know each other

1 better, familiarize themselves with the process. I would
2 feed them lunch and try to get them to know each other.

3 And then as we went through the process, my goal
4 as the Chair, I always put aside my self-interests, because
5 my goal was to make sure that everybody on the Federal
6 Magistrate Judge Selection Committee, their views were
7 heard and they were understood and they were part of the
8 discussion. And so at the end, the goal was to get
9 everybody to buy in and get a consensus as to what our
10 selection was going to be.

11 And so the same thing with the Ethics Commission
12 in that I don't see how I can be on the Ethics Commission
13 and try to have my personal agenda influence an outcome.
14 The goal on the Ethics Commission is right, you're going to
15 have city council people, the mayor, prominent city
16 officials accused of stuff, a city attorney, and so if
17 people are going to have faith in the system they need to
18 have faith that those people are doing the right thing.
19 And if they didn't do something right that they're called
20 on it.

21 And so you just -- I put all that stuff aside,
22 because I want to make sure that every decision by the
23 Ethics Commission is made consistent with the facts, the
24 circumstances. And everybody feels like they were treated
25 fairly. Do that on both of those.

1 VICE CHAIR BELNAP: All right, thank you. Second
2 question: How was your jury selection work in the various
3 locations that you've worked increased your understanding
4 of, and appreciation for California's diversity?

5 MR. KOSMO: Well, I think just sort of the
6 obvious way right? I mean, when you pick a jury in Orange
7 County you get a different -- you know, you meet different
8 types of people, a little more conservative, a little bit
9 more white. You pick a jury in downtown LA it's going to
10 be a much more diverse jury pool. San Francisco's
11 different, Oakland's different, Sacramento's different,
12 Riverside and San Bernardino certainly and San Diego. And
13 so it's not just picking the jury, it's also because those
14 cases are venued there, because that's where usually the
15 incident happened. So you're going to have witnesses,
16 depositions, lawyers, different lawyers that I know.

17 I think when I turned in my application I was
18 President of the Association of Business Trial Lawyers.
19 And I haven't mentioned that yet, so I just wanted to get
20 that out there. That one of the things about the
21 Association of Business Trial Lawyers, ABTL, is that it's
22 another sort of nonpartisan organization, because it brings
23 together both defense lawyers and plaintiffs' lawyers in an
24 educational scheme. And in that way we're able to bring
25 judicial members in there too, because it's not one sided.

1 It's not a partisan thing.

2 And so but as part of that, we have chapters in
3 San Francisco, Northern California, Oakland, San Joaquin
4 Valley, Orange County, LA, San Diego. So I know lawyers,
5 judges, witnesses, court reporters, jurors and sort of the
6 whole gamut of people that would be involved with cases in
7 those various regions.

8 VICE CHAIR BELNAP: Okay, thank you. You
9 mentioned here today, and also in your essay, that the
10 makeup of your law firm is relatively unique. You
11 mentioned 80 percent of the lawyers in your firm were
12 either female or from underrepresented groups. What I want
13 to know is how did it come to be that way and what was your
14 involvement in making it be that way?

15 MR. KOSMO: Well, as I say we started out with
16 four lawyers. And there were three men and one woman. And
17 as the firm grew, the other two men were more self-
18 centered, more greedy and so there was kind of a natural
19 evolution of the firm. And so Claudette Wilson, of Wilson,
20 Turner, Kosmo, Claudette and I there was kind of a division
21 of the firm. And the two other men left. And then it was
22 Claudette and I would be the leadership of the firm. And
23 so that was it.

24 So once we made that change that really changed
25 the whole landscape of what the firm was about. And so

1 then we got to choose lawyers that we liked and choose
2 lawyers that we felt comfortable with. And we do do a very
3 high level practice, similar to what I did when I was at
4 Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher, as I said. We'd represent
5 Cardinal Health, Home Depot, PetCo, United Technologies,
6 Nissan, all kinds of large companies. But we also do small
7 individual clients too.

8 So we had the whole variety, but we needed good
9 lawyers. So we concentrated for the longest time on trying
10 to sort of seek out diverse. And diversity we always
11 thought was an important attribute. And so if we could
12 find a young woman associate, a young person of color,
13 anyway we just started doing that. We thought it was
14 important.

15 And we thought it made our firm stronger. And
16 certainly when we go to different areas in the state and
17 then we have people that are diverse that can go there,
18 that's helpful too. And so the firm kind of built a
19 momentum. And so it was kind of a goal of us to do that.
20 And in the 1990s it was kind of a changing thing. And so
21 we kind of developed a reputation as a really, really good
22 law firm. And a really good law firm where a woman and
23 person of color would have a great opportunity. And so
24 we'd have (indecipherable) come to us. And so just we were
25 committed to it and then it grew.

1 VICE CHAIR BELNAP: So you indicated that felt it
2 was important, because it would make your law firm
3 stronger. Can you describe a way that it's made your law
4 firm stronger to have a more diverse group of lawyers?

5 MR. KOSMO: Yeah. Well I think absolutely. I
6 think we have a wider variety of opinions. And so but the
7 firm -- and again it's sort of what I like to say like
8 building relationships. The firm, because of its
9 diversity, has a strong culture and a strong commitment to
10 making sure everybody's voice is heard.

11 In the last 20 years, 15 years since we got rid
12 of those other two guys, 20 years, I guess we've really had
13 only one vote. And we have a partner meeting every month.
14 But we try to rule the firm by consensus. And so if
15 sometimes people complain, because it takes us a long time
16 to make a decision because to get a consensus it takes a
17 lot longer than if you just have a dictator. So we don't
18 have a dictator. We have a consensus-building mechanism in
19 the firm. And so I think that our diversity helps us and
20 lends to that. Certainly, clients like it.

21 Clients like it. So that makes the firm better.
22 I think the judges and the juries like it. That makes it
23 better. And so on multiple different levels, internally
24 and externally, it helps.

25 VICE CHAIR BELNAP: All right. I certainly don't

1 want you to reveal trade secrets for other law firms, but
2 if you wouldn't mind, what's your consensus mechanism that
3 you've developed within your firm?

4 MR. KOSMO: Well, it's not -- I don't consider it
5 a complete trade secret, but it's really I guess, patience.
6 I mean there's sort of the three of us, Wilson, Turner and
7 Kosmo. I mean we're sort of the senior partners and so
8 we're patient people and we listen. And so there'll be a
9 decision on are we going to get rid of or do we have to let
10 an attorney go or something like that? And if half the
11 attorneys say yes and half the attorneys say no then we're
12 not going to get rid of that attorney. But if that
13 attorney continues to be a problem, then we'll talk about
14 it the next month.

15 And so I don't know if it's a formal mechanism.
16 It's just more of a firm culture. And so it may take us
17 six months. Maybe we've identified this attorney is not
18 going to make it. And so instead of getting rid of the
19 attorney at that time it takes us six months to get to a
20 spot where we have a consensus and everybody says, "It's
21 okay. We've got to do it." And so when we get consensus
22 then we take action.

23 VICE CHAIR BELNAP: And everybody in that
24 instance is the three partners, or everyone in the firm?

25 MR. KOSMO: No. It would be the partnership,

1 which would be I think we have 13 partners.

2 VICE CHAIR BELNAP: Okay. I don't have any
3 further questions at this time, Madam Chair.

4 CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you, Mr. Belnap.
5 Mr. Coe, the time is yours.

6 VICE CHAIR BELNAP: Mr. Coe?

7 PANEL MEMBER COE: I'm sorry, Madam Chair. Did
8 you pass it off to me? I'm having some connectivity
9 issues. I'm cutting in and out of the audio.

10 (Pause to fix audio issues.)

11 PANEL MEMBER COE: Okay, good afternoon Mr.
12 Kosmo. I hope you can hear me. I'm having a little bit of
13 network connectivity problems here. Can you --

14 (Feedback issues.)

15 MR. DAWSON: Mr. Coe, is he -- he's getting the
16 audio, but?

17 MS. PELLMAN: I'm tracking the time, so that we
18 can record the amount of time that we have.

19 CHAIR DICKISON: Hi, this is, Mrs. Dickison. I
20 was unable to hear but I am back on now. I think I can
21 hear everybody.

22 MR. KOSMO: I can hear you.

23 CHAIR DICKISON: Okay, great. Thank you. Is Mr.
24 Coe on?

25 MR. DAWSON: Madam Chair, it appears that Mr. Coe

1 has lost audio. Oh, he seems to be coming back.

2 CHAIR DICKISON: Okay.

3 PANEL MEMBER COE: Apologies for that everybody.
4 It's been working really well the last couple of weeks, I'm
5 not sure what's going on today. Can everybody hear me
6 okay?

7 MR. KOSMO: I can hear you now.

8 PANEL MEMBER COE: Okay, great. Apologies again,
9 good afternoon to you, Mr. Kosmo. Thank you for taking the
10 time to talk with us today.

11 MR. KOSMO: Well, thank you.

12 PANEL MEMBER COE: My colleagues touched on a lot
13 of my questions. So where I'll start is in your
14 application a few times you mentioned using redistricting
15 software as part of the 2010 San Diego City redistricting
16 effort. I'm curious, what software did you use and what
17 was the input into that software? Was it Census Date or
18 something else?

19 MR. KOSMO: It's a great question. I don't
20 remember. I'm sorry.

21 PANEL MEMBER COE: Okay.

22 MR. KOSMO: I don't know exactly what it -- but I
23 used it. And I don't know exactly what they put as the
24 input, but it moved the line and recalculated the numbers
25 and all that kind of stuff. So I don't remember.

1 PANEL MEMBER COE: Okay. So and you guys used
2 some type of demographic data right, whether it was Census
3 or otherwise, that was probably a large input into the
4 effort?

5 MR. KOSMO: Right. Correct. And it --

6 PANEL MEMBER COE: I'm sorry. Go ahead.

7 MR. KOSMO: It was nonpartisan. So there was no
8 the -- I'm sure I knew that much as I recall. It was
9 nonpartisan. So it was really the number of people within
10 little blocks within precincts probably within the city.

11 And we had an overlay, because we thought that
12 the planning districts, helped us with the outreach, but
13 they also kind of formed sort of interest groups. So we
14 had an overlay on the map of where the University City
15 Planning Group was, where the La Joya one was, Point Loma.
16 And so the 53/54 planning groups were also overlaid on
17 that. So if you wanted to put all the people in Tallmadge
18 together, you could do that too.

19 PANEL MEMBER COE: Okay. Thank you. And how did
20 you in that effort, you kind of had that hard data, the
21 demographic, the census type information. And you also had
22 public input which was kind of squishy or softer data that
23 is harder to quantify. It's more public concern and input.
24 How did you mix those two kind of very different types of
25 input into how you guys drew your lines in conducting your

1 project?

2 MR. KOSMO: I guess I would say how I did it was
3 I started by not drawing the map for a long time. And so
4 because it seemed to me that drawing the map would be
5 easier if you did it later in the process after you sort of
6 heard a lot of the public outreach and the public input.
7 So I would say for months and many, many, many hearings I
8 went there and I took notes. I took notes and I kept
9 copies of presentations by different groups that I liked
10 and I thought were incisive.

11 And so I had a folder. I had a folder and I had
12 -- and so you think about it and it kind of sinks in,
13 right? Sometimes I do that when I'm getting ready for a
14 deposition or a court argument I like to go for a -- you
15 have everything and you go for a long walk or a run or take
16 my dog Brady for a walk and just think it through. And so
17 as I sort of thought it through for quite a while I kind of
18 had an idea how the map would work. And so eventually I
19 told my wife that I'm just going to go in the office on a
20 Saturday when there's nobody there. I've got some ideas on
21 how I think the map would be fair for everybody.

22 And so I went in on a Saturday morning and stayed
23 for about 10 or 12 hours and I talked to another person and
24 worked with the redistricting software. And at the end of
25 that Saturday night, I kind of came up with a map, which I

1 thought was fair. And it was fair enough that I published
2 it and the end map was relatively similar to that. Then I
3 took my wife out to dinner.

4 PANEL MEMBER COE: When you published your map,
5 was that put somewhere that allowed the public to review it
6 and provide input? And did the other Commissioners also do
7 the same thing?

8 MR. KOSMO: Exactly, exactly. Yeah, we thought
9 it was important. So if people from the community wanted
10 to publish a map they could and if the Commissioners wanted
11 to publish a map they could too. And so obviously we
12 wanted to be consistent with the Brown Act too, is that if
13 a Commissioner wanted to develop a map or something like
14 that as the way to put it out we had a website. And I'd
15 labeled it "Commissioner Kosmo's Draft Map" and I published
16 it on the website and opened it up for comments. And then
17 at the next meeting I went through it and described some of
18 my thoughts as to why I drew lines here and there. And why
19 I thought they fairly represented the community and
20 solicited comments. And it certainly wasn't the final map.
21 It was similar. People had some ideas. And some
22 suggestions and people worked on it and it evolved.

23 PANEL MEMBER COE: Okay, thank you. So Mr.
24 Belnap asked you a question and you gave an example of when
25 you had to make an impartial decision to set aside your

1 self-interest. I'm going to ask you a slightly different
2 one, but on that topic. And that's can you give us an
3 example of have you ever I guess changed your mind about a
4 decision after gathering more evidence or hearing
5 additional perspectives. And if you have, if you could
6 provide an example?

7 MR. KOSMO: I'm trying to think of a specific
8 example. I mean that happens all the time in cases. It's
9 a daily experience right, is that you get a case. And
10 you're saying, "Hey, this is a slam dunk winner. You've
11 got a great defense." And then all of a sudden you get a
12 document from the other side that shows that your client
13 isn't telling you the exact truth. So and naturally
14 that'll cause you to change your mind.

15 So I'm working on a response right here to a
16 letter to be a real life example of that where my client
17 said, "This never happened." And then we sent out off a
18 demand letter. And I just got one back that said, "I
19 think your client did it and here's a letter indicating
20 that he did it or an email that he sent to Client Z." So
21 that causes me to think, "What happened here?" So I'm in
22 the processes of further investigation of that.

23 PANEL MEMBER COE: Okay, thank you. You also
24 discussed in your essays a little bit today about having
25 met or worked with diverse groups of people of various

1 backgrounds. And from what you've learned from them, in
2 your interactions with these people what is it that you've
3 learned about their preferences and their concerns and
4 their perspectives that you think would make you an
5 effective Commissioner or effective representative for the
6 diverse population of California?

7 MR. KOSMO: Well, I think that what the main
8 thing that I would probably say on that is that I think
9 that a lot of the diverse communities are very sensitive to
10 the feeling that they've been underrepresented in the past.
11 And so I think that that's probably the most important
12 thing that I would say is that me as a Commissioner if I
13 was a Commissioner or the Commission should be very
14 sensitive to that concern.

15 And that when you draw the maps that you don't
16 just say hey this is the map and it's fair. I mean, you
17 have to develop a map that is part of the listening,
18 respect, understanding and communication that respects the
19 sincerely-held beliefs by a variety of different
20 communities that in the past they haven't been treated
21 fairly. And so I think that we try to make statements
22 consistent with that and we developed a map and we held our
23 meetings. And so I think we want to do the same thing on
24 the state level where we'd want to make sure that those
25 concerns, because those concerns are sincerely, sincerely

1 held. And so you want to make sure that you address it.

2 PANEL MEMBER COE: Thank you. I want to turn for
3 a moment to the topic of communities of interest. And
4 obviously one of the biggest tasks in front of this
5 Commission is going to be identifying communities of
6 interest throughout the state. Some communities are easier
7 to identify. They're more engaged. They're more obvious.
8 And some are less so and their harder to find for one
9 reason or another. How did the 2010 Redistricting
10 Commission in San Diego go about identifying communities of
11 interest?

12 MR. KOSMO: Well, I think that in a couple of
13 ways. But public outreach is a good way to do it, because
14 people will come and tell you what their community of
15 interest is. So if you listen and you take notes you can
16 start to figure it out. And so you keep track of those as
17 people tell you. All right, I mean if you go to the
18 Kensington public meeting and they say we think we should
19 be with Talmadge. And you go to the Talmadge one and they
20 say we should be with Talmadge. And these are why these
21 two communities get together and people should be together,
22 then you're like oh well, that sounds like a community of
23 interest.

24 I would say in addition to the public outreach,
25 me, I do and that I look for natural boundaries that also

1 created a community of interest. And so that was another
2 way which I was able to figure out what I thought were
3 communities of interest.

4 So for example, in San Diego we have an area
5 called Balboa Park. And so there was a whole group of
6 communities that live around Balboa Park. And so one of
7 the areas that I suggested we consider was that Balboa Park
8 is a community of interest. So there was a lot of
9 discussion when we were drawing the lines as to whether we
10 should break some of those communities off and put them
11 with other communities that we on another side of a
12 freeway. And so we had discussions about that. And I
13 certainly took a position. It's like I think these people
14 in Golden Hill have a much stronger interest in the Balboa
15 Park community than they have with people that are across
16 the other side of a freeway.

17 PANEL MEMBER COE: Do you think that that process
18 could be extrapolated to the much larger statewide
19 environment? Or would you have come up with different
20 tactics in order to gather that same information covering
21 such a much bigger area?

22 MR. KOSMO: I think you're going to have a
23 combination. It's bigger, so it's going to be more
24 complicated. But I think you can do a combination.
25 There's going to be different areas. I mentioned in my

1 application too, I mean I like the California coastline.
2 So I mean there's certainly going to be areas where you're
3 going to see things like the California coastline.

4 If I was in Los Angeles, I would think Manhattan
5 Beach, Redondo Beach, Torrance, all those kinds of areas
6 that are all right together on the beach would all kind of
7 tie together. And so those kinds of beach communities in
8 Los Angeles seem to be areas that would have a community of
9 interest as far as protecting the beaches, having traffic
10 that goes through there, that kind of stuff.

11 And so I think you can find some of those similar
12 things all across the state in different areas. But it's
13 certainly going to be more complicated with the whole
14 state. But I think you're going to find those, the
15 demography.

16 We had another area called Mission Trails Park.
17 So that's a big park that sort of affects the Tierrasanta
18 Community. But you've got Fresno. And you've got
19 Yosemite. So there's going to be Yosemite as a national
20 treasure, but clearly a California treasure. So there's
21 going to be a lot of communities that are going to be near
22 Yosemite, so I would think about things like that. Like
23 what groups in that area or communities in that area really
24 care about Yosemite and is there a way to tie them together
25 and still have a population?

1 PANEL MEMBER COE: So I mentioned a few moments
2 ago that some of these communities of interest are harder
3 to identify. They're less out there, less engaged, less
4 obvious for one reason or another. How can the Commission
5 avoid inadvertently overlooking some of these harder to
6 find communities?

7 MR. KOSMO: Well, I would think we would do --
8 and what we did is we hired a public outreach person or
9 consultant. And I would think the statewide Commission
10 might have a better budget, maybe. But I would recommend
11 if we have the budget, that we would consider retaining a
12 public outreach consultant. And so we would get some
13 expertise and advise from that consultant on how, in what
14 ways, could we reach those communities that were -- you
15 know people -- between the 14 people on the Commission
16 we're going to be able to think of what they are and how do
17 we reach them and do we need to have some type of social
18 media campaign? Do we need an advertising campaign?

19 There's different ways to reach out. So I would
20 think that and we certainly have to consider social media.
21 So is there a social media way that with an outreach
22 consultant that we can get the community that might not
23 want to turn out at a library on a Tuesday night to give
24 their two cents?

25 PANEL MEMBER COE: Thank you. One further

1 question on this is once you identify communities, some of
2 them may be less eager to come forward. Some communities
3 are concerned about engaging government bodies for a
4 variety of reasons. How would you make those communities
5 feel comfortable enough to come forward and share their
6 perspective with the commission?

7 MR. KOSMO: Yeah, I think that would be the same
8 way as everything else. You have to develop a relationship
9 with them. You have to understand that if they're
10 reluctant to come forward then they have probably a sincere
11 belief that there's some reason why they're
12 underrepresented or feel they've been underrepresented. So
13 you have to try -- you might have to try more than once and
14 build a consensus. Sometimes it takes a while to build a
15 bridge. And so you have to reach out them more than once
16 and contact them multiple times and develop a rapport,
17 education and contacts, so that they start to understand
18 that we're an independent Commission. We're not the
19 government. And we're here to make sure the goal is here
20 and make sure that everybody gets represented. And that
21 everybody gets fair representation.

22 And so that's why we need to bring people out, so
23 that they get that. So we're trying to help you. You've
24 got to help us.

25

1 PANEL MEMBER COE: Thank you.

2 MS. PELLMAN: There are 4 minutes and 5 seconds
3 remaining.

4 PANEL MEMBER COE: Thank you.

5 Mr. Kosmo, if you were to be appointed to this
6 Commission, which aspects of the role of Commissioner would
7 you enjoy the most? And conversely, which aspects of the
8 role do you think might cause you to perhaps struggle a
9 little bit?

10 MR. KOSMO: I think I like the whole thing. I
11 mean I really enjoyed being on the San Diego City
12 Redistricting Commission. And the Tuesday night meeting at
13 one of the various libraries and my wife would be like,
14 "Why are you so excited?" I'm like, "I don't know. I'm
15 going to listen to public comment for three hours." So you
16 might say that if I take an airplane ride up to Redding to
17 listen to public comment, people might not think that was
18 interesting, but I would look forward to it. I liked the
19 public comment. I liked working with the other
20 Commissioners. And I liked the working together and trying
21 to build a puzzle that was fair to everybody.

22 So I had a good experience and I think everybody
23 on the Commission had a good experience. And I enjoyed it.

24 PANEL MEMBER COE: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Kosmo.
25 I appreciate it.

1 Madam Chair, at this time, no further questions.

2 CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you, Mr. Coe.

3 Mr. Dawson, do you have any questions?

4 MR. DAWSON: Yes, thank you, Madam Chair.

5 Mr. Kosmo, I just want to follow up on a couple
6 of things. I see from your application that you graduated
7 from UCSB in '81. And then you went to work for Hughes for
8 four years?

9 MR. KOSMO: Yes.

10 MR. DAWSON: And then you went to USC Law School.
11 Why did you decide to go to law school?

12 MR. KOSMO: All right, well I was an economic
13 major. And I had spent a fair amount of time in the San
14 Joaquin Valley. So I wanted to live in Los Angeles because
15 it was a big city. And I had a finance background, so I
16 worked on the F-15 radar. And I enjoyed it. And I did
17 well at it. I did that for what, three or four years. And
18 during that process, I sort of came to a conclusion that I
19 needed to go back and get an MBA, or I needed to go to law
20 school.

21 And ultimately the decision was, in my own mind
22 was that if I got an MBA, then I would probably end up
23 working at a large corporation. And I don't mean any
24 disrespect to anybody, but my boss was an alcoholic at
25 Hughes Aircraft. And so these things are making a

1 difference in your life. And so I was always worried that
2 I'd end up in a large corporation of 60 or 80,000 people
3 with an alcoholic guy who was unpredictable, who had
4 control over my life.

5 And so ultimately I decided that I wanted to help
6 people, make a difference and then if I went to law school
7 then I would have my own independent ability to do that and
8 not have my life controlled by somebody like that.

9 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. I wanted to ask you a
10 little bit about the Ethics Commission. I think you talked
11 about it a little bit. How were you appointed?

12 MR. KOSMO: I was appointed by the mayor, the
13 city mayor. So I did the redistricting commission. I got
14 that all by myself. I had no -- we went over that process.
15 So I did that.

16 And then after I finished that I thought I really
17 enjoyed public service and I really enjoyed doing something
18 for the city. And so I contacted the Mayor's Office and I
19 got in touch with the appointment person for the mayor.
20 And I went down and I met with her. I told her how much I
21 liked being on the redistricting commission. And I really
22 would do whatever I could to try to help the city. And
23 that I think that I was well qualified and based on my
24 experience that I could do something.

25 So several months later they called me up and

1 they asked me to be on the water board, IROC, independent
2 rate. And I don't know if that's in my application or not.
3 So it wasn't one that I was really looking at, but I
4 thought I've got to say yes. So I got on the water board
5 and I served on the water board for a little over a year.
6 And I ended up really liking it. They're doing a pure
7 water project down here to try to reclaim wastewater and
8 it's very environmentally protective. So anyway I kind of
9 ended up really enjoying being on the water board. And I
10 was really getting involved.

11 And then I'd been on the board for about a year
12 and a half and then the Mayor's Office called and asked me
13 whether I'd be on the Ethics Committee, because they had an
14 opening. And so it seemed like the Ethics Commission was a
15 perfect match for my skill set as an attorney. And so I
16 had to -- the deal was though since you oversee all the
17 city boards you can't -- I had to resign the IROC, the
18 water board. And then I went on the Ethics Commission.

19 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Is that a paid position
20 or is it per diem?

21 MR. KOSMO: No, no. That's why I consider it
22 public service. I don't get paid. I didn't get paid on
23 the redistricting commission. I didn't get paid on the
24 water board. I didn't get paid on the Ethics Commission.
25 I don't get paid on Federal Defenders. I don't get paid on

1 (indecipherable). So it's all free.

2 MR. DAWSON: Okay. Thank you.

3 MR. KOSMO: But it does have psychic benefits. I
4 do enjoy them all.

5 MR. DAWSON: Does the Commission make final
6 decisions or are these recommendations to the city council?

7 MR. KOSMO: They make final decisions.

8 MR. DAWSON: Okay. Thank you.

9 MR. KOSMO: We can fine people.

10 MR. DAWSON: Okay.

11 Madam Secretary, how much time is remaining?

12 MS. PELLMAN: Nine minutes, 52 seconds.

13 PANEL MEMBER COE: Okay. I just wanted to ask
14 you one more question about the COVID-19 situation. And do
15 you have any concern about its impact on the Census and the
16 data that comes out of it?

17 MR. KOSMO: That's a great question. I haven't
18 really thought about it that much, but when you mention it,
19 I would say yes. I would think that that's would be a fair
20 concern. I'd have to think about it some more. I'd be
21 happy to talk about it.

22 But I would think that -- I just got something in
23 the mail on the Census. So sure since people are home and
24 they can respond to it, but it's a very -- I mean, I run a
25 business now with 75 people. And they're all working

1 remotely. We're trying to make payroll. We're applying
2 for a small business loan. And we're trying to keep the
3 place afloat and all that kind of stuff. So it's a very,
4 very, very stressful time, so on its face I would be
5 concerned as to whether or not people are focused on
6 completing the Census data.

7 PANEL MEMBER COE: All right, thank you.

8 I have no further questions. Madam Chair, if
9 there are any follow-ups from the panel?

10 CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you. I have no further
11 questions. Mr. Belnap?

12 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: None here.

13 CHAIR DICKISON: Mr. Coe?

14 PANEL MEMBER COE: No follow-up questions.

15 CHAIR DICKISON: Okay, Mr. Dawson, there's no
16 follow-up questions.

17 MR. DAWSON: All right. Thank you, Madam Chair.

18 Mr. Kosmo, with the time remaining -- and Madam
19 Secretary, once again how much time is remaining?

20 MS. PELLMAN: Eight minutes, 25 seconds.

21 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. With the 8 minutes and
22 25 seconds remaining, Mr. Kosmo, if you would like to make
23 a closing statement to the panel?

24 MR. KOSMO: I'm not going to take all of your
25 time there. How about that? I just want to say thank you.

1 I have enjoyed the interview. I think we hit on all the
2 highlights. I think I'm well qualified. I'm very
3 interested in doing it. I think I would do a good job.
4 I'd represent all the people fairly across the state and so
5 I just really want to thank all of you for your time today
6 and I appreciate you getting me this far in here. And I
7 hope that you give me due consideration. So thank you.

8 CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you, Mr. Kosmo.

9 Our next interview starts at 3:00 o'clock. So we
10 will recess now until 2:59.

11 (Off the record at 2:39 p.m.)

12 (On the record 2:59 pm)

13 CHAIR DICKISON: The time being 2:59, we'll call
14 the Application Review Panel meeting back to order. I'd
15 like to welcome Dr. Hussey for his interview. Welcome, Dr.
16 Hussey.

17 DR. HUSSEY: Thank you.

18 CHAIR DICKISON: I'm going to turn the meeting
19 directly over to Mr. Dawson to read you the five standard
20 questions.

21 MR. DAWSON: Thank you, Madam Chair.

22 Dr. Hussey, I'm going to read you five standard
23 questions that the Applicant Review Panel has requested
24 that each applicant respond to. Are you ready, sir?

25 DR. HUSSEY: I am.

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

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

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

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

9 DR. HUSSEY: Well, as my students know I'm going
10 to apologize in advance. When I get excited I tend to talk
11 fast, so I'm going to warn you all ahead of time. Feel to
12 ask me to so slow down if you feel like I'm going too fast.

13 I think for this first question it's very similar
14 to the supplemental application you ask people to fill out.
15 I think you -- a good Commissioner should be impartial. I
16 think a good Commissioner should understand California's
17 bountiful diversity. And I think the Commission and the
18 Commissioners should have good analytical skills. But I
19 also think there's other things that are important too:
20 works well in a group, a good listener, a hard worker, and
21 someone that just has a strong passion and interest for
22 making good lines, which is a weird thing to say but having
23 a comfort level designing lines that represent California
24 and Californians.

25 How will I contribute? Well I think I'm

1 impartial. I'm a professor and I try really hard in the
2 classroom to be impartial with students and let all
3 viewpoints be heard. And I've taught at a state
4 university. And I'm from the product of a UC system. I
5 understand California's diversity and I'm excited to learn
6 more about it, but it's something that I'm very comfortable
7 with. And I have a PhD in Political Science from UCLA in
8 American Politics. I have a pretty strong analytical
9 background and analytical skills of computers, in
10 statistics. And so I think I'd be a good candidate.

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

17 What characteristics do you possess -- and what
18 characteristics should your fellow Commissioners possess --
19 that will protect against hyperpartisanship?

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

23 DR. HUSSEY: Well, it is an increasing problem.
24 It's something that political scientists talk a lot about
25 and the public is concerned about as well. This whole

1 process of taking a lot of people who can apply, which I
2 love, it's open and transparent. But slowly boiling down
3 people is partly to get rid of people who are not biased --
4 I mean, who are biased, who have shenanigans involved. And
5 so I think that that's a really good process. I think by
6 the final number of people who are applicants we are going
7 to have some strong people who I think are going to be
8 really good about that.

9 But you know I also think that you know we can't
10 see ourselves as agents of political parties or factions or
11 ideologies. Our job is to represent California. And we
12 need to be vigilant against groups and organizations that
13 are going to come in and try to push a partisan or
14 ideological agenda and try to disguise that as a community
15 group or an interest group. And we always have to be
16 polite. We always have to be excited people are coming to
17 talk to us. But we also have to be aware that there might
18 be people trying to subvert the process.

19 And it's important to understand that. But I
20 also think it's important that the Commission be open,
21 transparent, friendly and let people know there's nothing
22 going on here. There's no secrets happening. There's no
23 meetings occurring without public access and open-record
24 laws. So it would be really hard for people to
25 successfully have a chance at a lawsuit. I have a feeling

1 that we're going to get sued. It happened last time. It's
2 probably going to happen in the future. But the better the
3 Commission does at being open and transparent with no
4 implicit bias the harder it is for those lawsuits to win.
5 The same way that other states have lawsuits that are very
6 quickly dismissed when it becomes clear that there's no
7 real grounds for it.

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

11 DR. HUSSEY: Well, defining communities of
12 interest is a really tough situation, particularly when
13 there is a lot of cross cleavages. (phonetic) And so I was
14 thinking about this the other day. I'm by no means an
15 expert on Asian American politics or South Indian politics,
16 but I know there's been a huge rise of people from the
17 South Asia, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh into the Bay Area,
18 particularly San Jose. And that's a community of interest
19 that's often been ignored.

20 But at the same time that's a group that we have
21 to have a conversation with. Do they feel comfortable
22 being part of a broader Asian American group? Are there
23 factions within it? Does it turn out that Pakistani
24 Americans and Indian Americans don't want to be part of the
25 same community? Are there geographic boundaries that make

1 that easy or are there none? Are there people who are
2 Indian American who are Muslim who are not happy with maybe
3 the dominant Hindi Indian American thing?

4 So kind of figuring that stuff out is really
5 tough. And that's going to, I think be a major undertaking
6 of this Commission. And I would look forward to being part
7 of that. But even if I'm not I look forward to the
8 Commission kind of tackling those problems.

9 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Question 4. If you are
10 selected, you will be one of fourteen members of the
11 Commission which is charged with working together to create
12 maps of the new districts. Please describe a situation
13 where you had to work collaboratively with others on a
14 project to achieve a common goal.

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

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

20 DR. HUSSEY: That's a good question. I've served
21 on dozens of committees at the University level, very small
22 to very large, and so I'm very used to interacting with
23 other people and having conflicts.

24 I think the best example I can give, you guys
25 have already had Steve Boilard come in here who was the

1 Executive Director for the Center for California Studies.
2 Well, when he retired we had to look for a replacement and
3 they asked me to be on this committee to look for a
4 replacement. And this was a very big committee. This had
5 a lot of downtown stakeholders. Some were from the
6 Assembly, the Senate, the Governor's Office, other big-name
7 people. I was the only faculty member on there.

8 And there was a lot of difference of opinion of
9 who we should have come look for the job and what we were
10 looking for. And it never got tense and it never got ugly,
11 but it definitely did get pretty boisterous at times. And
12 one of the things that I saw that worked really well was a
13 respect for the other members and where they were coming
14 from. And so you might disagree with them, you might not
15 actually think that they have the best vision in mind, but
16 you can't make those decisions until you've heard them out,
17 until there's been a respectful process involved.

18 And that's what we did. And so we had a lot of
19 big politicos come and there was a lot of pressure I think
20 from various downtown elements and the university. And one
21 of the things that we did was we collectively worked
22 together by respecting each other, working out those
23 differences. And ultimately we were able to send some
24 really good names to the University and they chose the
25 person who's been fabulous as a replacement. And I've been

1 so happy that Leonor is part of the Center for California
2 Studies.

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

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

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

16 DR. HUSSEY: Well, one of the things I have to do
17 every day is as a professor is interact with the public,
18 interact with my students. I give a lot of interviews to
19 the press. I deal with communities both on the campus and
20 off the campus sometimes. And so I'm very comfortable
21 interacting with the public. I'd love to do it in person.
22 Right now I know we can't and that might go on for a little
23 bit, but that's a part that I really look forward to is
24 having people come in and talk to us, have us go out
25 communities and talk to them.

1 You know, one of the things that is really
2 important is bias, both explicit and implicit. One of the
3 great things I love about California is we're working
4 through a lot of our explicit bias. We had a lot of
5 racism, a lot of bigotry over the years. We probably still
6 have way too much, but as Californians we're a pretty
7 tolerant group these days. But there's a lot of implicit
8 bias. There's a lot of bias that you're not even aware of,
9 from where you come from and your background. And that's
10 something that's really important when people come to speak
11 to us that we're seeing them as excited Californian
12 citizens just like we are on this Commission. And taking
13 them at face value then spending some time thinking about
14 where are they coming from?

15 And I think that's a really important process.
16 And it's something I'd love to see the Commission do a
17 great job on. I think they did that last time as well.
18 But I'm very comfortable talking to the public, I'm very
19 comfortable interacting with people. And I look forward to
20 that. I think that that's -- I love the analytical part, I
21 love drawing those maps. But those maps are only really
22 well drawn until after we've spoken to the public and we
23 have a sense of what they want. Because a lot of those
24 decisions shouldn't be made by us, they should be made
25 through us with the public.

1 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. We will now go to panel
2 questions. Each panel member will have 20 minutes to ask
3 his or her questions. We'll start with the Chair, Ms.
4 Dickison.

5 CHAIR DICKISON: Good afternoon, Dr. Hussey.

6 DR. HUSSEY: Good afternoon, hello.

7 CHAIR DICKISON: You talked about in your essays
8 about how you try not to influence your students' political
9 leanings. Can you talk to us about how you go about doing
10 that?

11 DR. HUSSEY: Well, I'm a political scientist.
12 And I got my bachelor's degree and my graduate in the UC
13 system. And I'm not going to shock anyone by saying I've
14 seen a lot of political science professors influence the
15 classroom. Browbeat people they disagreed with on the left
16 or right, or just openly talk about there their own
17 political viewpoints. I don't do that. I'm very
18 interested in sharing knowledge that I know and helping
19 students learn a lot of stuff about California politics,
20 that's my expertise. But also things like Congress,
21 political parties, other American institutions.

22 And I think a lot of students leave the class
23 having no idea what my own political ideology is. And part
24 of that comes about, because we're busy talking about the
25 McGovern-Fraser Commission and how we change presidential

1 primaries or we're talking about a filibuster. Well we're
2 not talking about the Republicans or the Democrats or the
3 Liberals or the Conservatives or Trump, whether you like
4 him or dislike him. I spend very little time on that. I'm
5 not interested in current events and that's not what
6 political science is. And a lot of my students probably
7 think I'm of a different political party, probably think
8 I'm a Democrat. A lot of people think I might be
9 nonpartisan or NPP. But I'm just not interested in trying
10 to influence students. I'm interested in trying to educate
11 students.

12 CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you. You mentioned that
13 you served on a number of boards or committees. Can you
14 give us an example of a time when you had to make a
15 decision in which you put your own view aside for the
16 greater good, even if it means having to have changed your
17 mind at some point?

18 DR. HUSSEY: Yeah. I've been on a lot of faculty
19 hire committees, both in my department and
20 interdisciplinary. And I even share one in our
21 department. And sometimes I think there is a perfect
22 candidate and the rest of the committee doesn't agree, to a
23 variety of degrees. And rather than just sitting there and
24 fighting them and saying you're wrong in a polite way. And
25 you guys don't know what you're talking about, but again a

1 polite way, I'm interested in why they think that. Like
2 why am I so off here or why are we not on the same page?
3 And a lot of times that back-and-forth dialogue gets me to
4 where I want to be. But I'll be honest, sometimes it
5 doesn't. Sometimes I'm still like eh, I just don't see it
6 that way. But I loved that we were open and trusting and
7 willing to have that conversation.

8 And so sometimes I feel like you've done enough
9 to get you to the point where a majority rules anyway, but
10 I don't feel like my voice hasn't been heard and I haven't
11 been able to say what I've said. I agree with moving on
12 with the Commission. And in many cases man, they've been
13 right. I've just been so excited that I didn't put my foot
14 down or insist on something. And sometimes even when I'm
15 like well I still think I might have been right in the long
16 run, it's never turned out wrong when we were open and
17 respectful and went through that process.

18 CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you. You also talked
19 about in your essays that your academic research and study
20 is in California politics and how that's given you an
21 insight into the diversity of California. Can you expand
22 on that? How has your academic research and study given
23 you an insight into California's diversity that would
24 assist the Commission in identifying communities of
25 interest or reaching out to them?

1 DR. HUSSEY: Yes, that's a great question. You
2 know, one of the jokes I make with my students the first
3 day in California Politics is the last time they probably
4 thought about California in school was in fourth grade when
5 they were making a mission out of popsicle sticks or sugar
6 cubes. So we don't spend a lot of time learning about
7 California in schools after fourth grade, which is a real
8 shame. But what it means is myself, a native Californian,
9 someone who grew up in Orange County and went to public
10 school, I didn't learn much about California.

11 So when I started learning more about it in grad
12 school and then even more once I began teaching like I
13 didn't realize how much we annihilated the native
14 California population. Like I thought like a lot of cases
15 around the United States we -- there was smallpox and there
16 were diseases, but the actual systematic attempted genocide
17 right after California became a state was unknown to me.

18 And that has a real big impact on when we talk in
19 our class about relations between ethnic groups where we
20 have to talk about the first group that was here and how
21 they were pushed aside by a lot of groups over time,
22 including the white Californians who became a state later
23 on.

24 But also things like before my time covenants
25 where certain ethnic groups couldn't live in areas, because

1 of there being real estate transactions and deeds. And how
2 that took until like 1960, 1964-'65 before that was thrown
3 out by courts.

4 So why is that important for the redistricting
5 Commission? Because a lot of groups are going to come in
6 front of us who have real legitimate grievances where
7 economically and politically and culturally they're still
8 suffering, and they still feel like they haven't gotten a
9 fair shake. And they haven't gotten in their opinion good
10 representation. And it's one thing to say being respectful
11 is important, because it is. But it's another thing to go
12 like, "You have a legitimate grievance." Or this group in
13 this area has not really been heard. They've been pushed
14 aside are they been conveniently folded into a larger group
15 that subsumes them. And I want to hear about this.

16 And I want to hear if there's a smart way to
17 divide up an area that allows groups to have different
18 assembly districts, or in different congressional districts
19 without violating any other rules or procedures that we're
20 required to do.

21 CHAIR DICKISON: What methods do you think the
22 Commission can take to identify those groups that don't
23 come forward and that aren't speaking out at meetings and
24 whatnot?

25 DR. HUSSEY: Yeah, that's a really good question

1 too. I mean one thing we need to be aware of is the
2 smallest district that we would be dealing with on the
3 Commission is the Assembly District. We're talking about a
4 half a million people in each of those districts. So
5 there's going to be very small groups that still have felt
6 disenfranchised and still feel like they have gotten the
7 poor end of the deal, and they have. And it's just there's
8 no way to give them proper representation in the number of
9 districts that are available in California. And that's a
10 different matter and a different group that makes those
11 decisions in the redistricting commission.

12 But the Census information becomes very helpful.
13 It dives pretty deep and you can get good precinct-level
14 data and city-level data. And it can turn out that there
15 could be groups growing that we're kind of unaware of. We
16 could talk about Hispanics and Latinos. Well you know
17 they're not all from Mexico and increasingly very few of
18 them are actually emigrated from Mexico. So there might be
19 a large Latino area, but in fact there might be a critical
20 mass of Salvadorans or Guatemalans or Hondurans. And maybe
21 creating a Central American Assembly District in an area
22 that's going to produce two or three assembly districts
23 already is respectful. And it's smart even those groups
24 don't come out and say, "We demand a Central American
25 district." We have information, we have data. And it's

1 part of our responsibility along with consultants that we
2 hired to analyze those and give options.

3 CHAIR DICKISON: Okay. You just mentioned
4 importance of the Census data. Do you have any concerns
5 regarding Census data given the COVID-19 with just the
6 accuracy of it number one, and maybe the timing of it,
7 number two?

8 DR. HUSSEY: Well I mean as many of you probably
9 know the Federal Administration has just asked for an
10 extension, which is going to completely cause problems with
11 our deadlines that are written in the Constitution. We'd
12 have to ask an extension from the Legislature. I'm not
13 exactly sure how that would go. So that's a big concern.
14 A deadline, when the Commission would receive the precinct-
15 level data would be disastrous for the Commission.

16 But I think you're right about this, the first
17 point, which is this virus came right as the Census was
18 being done. And we already knew there was going to be
19 underrepresented groups not getting the proper numbers. I
20 think that might be exaggerated. I think that might be --
21 I'm exacerbating -- that might be a lot bigger problem.
22 And I'm really concerned about that.

23 And one thing the Commission can't do is can say,
24 "Well, we think it's 2 or 3 percent off, so we'll adjust."
25 We don't have that right, nor should we be thinking about

1 that. So that is a concern. And I do worry about certain
2 groups being marginalized and their numbers not being what
3 they actually are because of what's happened right now.
4 And I'm also concerned that these numbers are going to come
5 later, which is going to be a big problem as it is.

6 CHAIR DICKISON: You talked about training
7 students to read statistics. How can you use your
8 experience in training students and using statistical and
9 analytical skills to assist with the work of the
10 Commission?

11 DR. HUSSEY: You know, I think a lot of the
12 technical stuff can be done by consultants we hire. And
13 oftentimes we have a technical person on hand. Last time
14 they hired someone too. But I just think just to be able
15 to understand regression. My dissertation used logistic
16 regression. I use regression a lot when I taught my
17 student statistics. It is an important thing.

18 I gave a presentation when I was a grad student
19 looking at city-level data of ethnicity and vote share for
20 certain police bonds. And one of the things like the kind
21 of myth is that like the African American community doesn't
22 support the police, but in fact African American cities are
23 overwhelmingly used to support strong police bonds, because
24 they wanted more policing. And you could even show that
25 with city-level data in the County of Los Angeles, because

1 there's 88 different cities. In more recent times that's
2 not been the case anymore, to me that's an interesting
3 change.

4 So there's a lot of stuff we can do with 80
5 assembly districts. With that you can do simple regression
6 to show interesting things. Or that nearly 500 cities that
7 lets us to interesting things, or 58 counties, without
8 being very sophisticated. And presenting it in a way where
9 I think the other Commissioners without even a statistical
10 background would understand. And also be able to have a
11 conversation with the consultant and the technical people
12 on for simple stuff to kind of look at the data behind the
13 scenes.

14 CHAIR DICKISON: Given your background what do
15 you see your role on the Commission would be?

16 DR. HUSSEY: You know what? We have a tendency
17 in academics to be pontificators. So I'd love to say that
18 I'm not going to do that, but I'm going to do that. I
19 think the fact that I have some back -- I think by the end
20 if I was on the Commission the other Commissioners would
21 know as much as me about the nitty-gritty of redistricting
22 and a lot of the details of the California Voting Rights
23 Act and the Federal Voting Rights Act and all of the rules.
24 But I think being comfortable with that at first is helpful
25 when people come before the Commission and start talking

1 more technically. And I can understand what they're doing
2 before the Commissioners have caught up.

3 As well as because I have a foundation in
4 statistics then I can have a conversation with the
5 consultants and others in a way that I think maybe other
6 Commissioners would be more uncomfortable with. Like I
7 don't know this world, Ms. Sanchez, but as an r-squared of
8 .38 is good for this kind of analysis? And you know that's
9 a helpful thing to have, that we can have that
10 conversation. So I think that would be an important part.

11 But also just I really love California. There's
12 a reason why I've stayed here. I love doing this stuff.
13 Obviously it's harder to teach California politics in
14 Wisconsin, but I really like being in the state. And so I
15 think that I'm just maybe bring a strong love of California
16 and be excited to see 13 other Commissioners have this
17 strong love of California too. And an interest in getting
18 into these maps and getting into making California better
19 by having strong communities of interest represented in our
20 Legislature, in our Congressional Delegation and our Board
21 of Equalization, let's not forget about our wonderful Board
22 of Equalization.

23 MS. PELLMAN: You have 6 minutes, 23 seconds
24 remaining.

25 CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you.

1 Let me take a minute real quick. If you were
2 selected as one of the first eight Commissioners who are
3 selected randomly you would be tasked with selecting the
4 remaining six. What would you be looking for in those
5 other six individuals?

6 DR. HUSSEY: Yeah, the lucky die roll. So I
7 applied to the Commission last time, made it all the way to
8 as a finalist. Did not make it in one of the first eight,
9 did not think I was going to make it in to the last six
10 because of that. And I'm not bitter about that at all. I
11 haven't written large poems about it and talked about it to
12 my cats, although my cat just left, because she didn't want
13 to hear anymore.

14 I think last time I was upset, because I didn't
15 get chosen and that's fine. But I also felt like I should
16 have been discussed more at the meetings with those final
17 six. But the reality is the people who are left at the end
18 are fabulous. The people who are randomly chosen are
19 fabulous. You guys do a great job of reducing the pool,
20 the Legislature removes who they remove. The last people
21 who are left are going to be just really good. And so I
22 understand why probably the biggest conversation of those
23 first eight is going to be what group ethnically,
24 geographically, gender-wise is underrepresented? Who are
25 people we're not hearing enough from because of the random

1 die roll or the bingo card of who got chosen?

2 And last time a lot of people from Northern
3 California were selected, so now they're looking for more
4 people from Southern California. And so I knew because I
5 had to check a box that said, "Northern valleys and
6 mountains," -- which just rolls off the tongue -- that that
7 was a group that I just wasn't going to get chosen. Even
8 though at that point I had spent three years at SAC state,
9 but I'd spent 30 years or 33 years in Southern California.
10 Like I'm more Southern Californian than I am Northern
11 Californian at that point, but my box said "No." So they
12 were looking for people to fill things in geographically.
13 And I'm going to unfortunately do the same thing.

14 Now if I was the first eight, one thing I would
15 do is look over all the rest of the applications and say,
16 "Are there are people who actually fit what we're looking
17 for that maybe by a box or something don't just kind of
18 like pop out. Is there someone that actually fits that
19 category perfectly that doesn't look like it on the form?"
20 And my cat is stealing the show again. And so that's
21 something I would look for, right?

22 But I totally understand where if the first eight
23 are overwhelmingly white dudes we're not going to probably
24 choose another white dude to be on the Commission. And
25 that would make total sense to not be thinking that way.

1 So that's going to drive a lot of those last six despite
2 the fact that 10-year-ago I was was not happy about that.
3 He got over it.

4 CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you.

5 Thank you. I don't have any further questions at
6 this point. Mr. Belnap, the time is yours.

7 VICE CHAIR BELNAP: All right, good afternoon,
8 Mr. Hussey.

9 DR. HUSSEY: Good afternoon.

10 VICE CHAIR BELNAP: In your essay on
11 impartiality, you talk briefly about your experience as a
12 Republican working in a field dominated by Democrats.
13 Please describe that experience and explain how that
14 experience would help you be a more effective Commissioner.

15 DR. HUSSEY: Yeah. I mean, I mean I think our
16 field is a 95 percent, 96 percent Democrats. And the real
17 debate is between the super-left wing and then the super-
18 super-duper-left-wing people.

19 And I don't go around with a Republican tie. I
20 don't really normally wear ties, maybe I should have
21 dressed up for the occasion. And as a consequence people
22 don't always know that I'm Republican, because that's not a
23 conversation we would usually have. But inevitably when
24 people find it out in my circles they'll be like, "I can't
25 believe you're Republican or how can you be so intelligent

1 and being Republican?" And of course, 1) I'm offended by
2 that, but then 2) I'm like this is a big problem in our
3 field when we're so on one side we don't even understand
4 the other side.

5 I don't feel like it's my job to educate other
6 academics on what it is to be Republican. That would be a
7 losing -- a tie. But it definitely has made me aware that
8 that implicit bias is real and it's powerful, and it can
9 produce really negative results.

10 And so when debates, not necessarily about
11 politics, but about broader issues in our discipline are
12 just kind of starting and ending from one perspective
13 politically, I understand the danger of that. And I also
14 think that that fuels hyperpartisanship. I think it fuels
15 people on the other side are like, "Oh, those academics,
16 those liberal professors, they don't know what they're
17 talking about." And I've had students in my class say
18 those things to me, not knowing I'm a Republican. And I'm
19 like, "Well I'm not going to out myself for my class,"
20 because I don't do that AS a normal thing. My graduate
21 class I tell students my own personal background. It's a
22 very different mechanism, but yeah it's a weird thing to
23 experience. And it gives me a little more insight about
24 how important it is to be impartial. And sometimes it can
25 be very frustrating.

1 And I'll have to say honestly I've been very
2 blessed that most of the time when people learn things and
3 we have that initial horrible conversation they kind of
4 come around. Maybe they even apologize at some point.
5 Like, "Yeah, that wasn't really professional." Or, "I
6 can't believe I said that like that." And I'm like,
7 "Yeah." I know it's important in our classroom we listen
8 to students of all viewpoints and not assume things about
9 them when we start. And that's a really important lesson
10 that I've learned in academia. And I think it's helped a
11 little bit, because I'm a little bit unusual.

12 VICE CHAIR BELNAP: And then, how would you take
13 that lesson into your work as a Commissioner if you were
14 selected?

15 DR. HUSSEY: Well, I think one of the things that
16 happens is I work really hard when other people were or are
17 in front of me, whether it be in a Commission setting or
18 other Commissioners, of not putting together in my mind who
19 this person is, you know, listening to them. It's great to
20 know background. It's great to have information. But it's
21 so easy to start using heuristics and shortcuts that lead
22 to problems.

23 So one of the things I would do is when a
24 community group comes and talks to us I want to be open
25 with them. I want to have -- I want to hear them. I want

1 to see them. I want to understand what they're saying.
2 And it's only maybe later with more information if it turns
3 out that interest group or community group is actually some
4 sort of a closet or ninja partisan group that's trying to
5 get something out of us. But then we make that decision
6 with real information.

7 But not sitting there as I'm listening like, "You
8 know, I don't buy this, I don't buy this." I'd be like,
9 "Okay, what are they saying? What are they trying to get
10 out of us? What do they want us to hear? Let me hear
11 that, let me write that down. Let me take that to heart."
12 And then with further information over time we can analyze
13 that, we can assess that. But not at that moment, because
14 then I'm constantly in my mind thinking this is a skeptical
15 group, rather than hearing what they actually want. And I
16 think that's an important skill that a lot of us make
17 mistakes on. And I'm guilty of that too.

18 VICE CHAIR BELNAP: All right, thank you. In
19 your essay on appreciation for diversity you spoke of the
20 diverse student body at CSU Sacramento, the university
21 where you teach. Can you describe an experience working
22 with students that increased your understanding of and
23 appreciation for California's diversity?

24 DR. HUSSEY: Yeah, so SAC State is one of the
25 most diverse campuses in the country. And I guess I've

1 increasingly gone to more diverse places as I've gone
2 through education; UCI was extremely diverse, UCLA more
3 diverse, Sacramento State then some.

4 One of the things that I would get really excited
5 about is when I meet a critical mass of students from a
6 certain part of the country or of the world, whether
7 they're born in America but ethnically and culturally have
8 gone back to a certain area or they're actually just from
9 there. Like you know, Latin America is such a diverse area
10 that overwhelmingly California Latinos were Mexican. But
11 increasingly that's not the case. So I know a lot of
12 Salvadorans and Hondurans and Panamanians that are at SAC
13 State.

14 And there's a lot of difference of opinion. Not
15 all of them are Catholic, a lot of them are Pentecostal and
16 Protestant, are non-religious. Not all of them are the
17 kind of classic Mexican American kind of part of the
18 Democratic thing. They're nonpartisan or they're
19 Republican or they're looking for things different. Or
20 they feel like they've been discriminated against by
21 California sometimes. But they're also discriminated
22 against by the kind of more dominant Mexican American group
23 that is the kind of dominant political Latino group in the
24 state. And they've struggled with that. Or they fit
25 exactly well with them. Like they were trailblazers and we

1 appreciate that we worked really well with them later on.

2 So kind of learning that nuance, learning that
3 level of detail is exciting. And part of that is because I
4 love detail, I mean as a political scientist and academic.
5 But part of it is it kind of rounds out my knowledge of
6 things so much better. So I feel like I have a better
7 understanding of Latino politics and California Latino
8 politics, because of that.

9 Also when we talk about generations in California
10 and with a lot of ethnic groups that have been here five,
11 six generations and we see a lot of differences in
12 generations. We see people who are third or fourth
13 generation Mexican American, who the American is so much
14 more powerful than the Mexican part; and the people who are
15 here six generations who are still very much Mexican
16 American and very proud of that. And that's interesting
17 too, because there's that whole debate about America
18 melting pot or a mixed salad, and those analogies. So it's
19 kind of interesting to see that in reality amongst
20 students. It's also interesting when students aren't
21 really aware of that. And I see them blossoming as people
22 and as students and as an ethnic group and as an American.
23 And that's just so exciting.

24 VICE CHAIR BELNAP: All right, thank you. Can
25 you summarize your experience researching and teaching

1 about voting rights issues?

2 DR. HUSSEY: Yeah. So I started seeing that
3 voting rights became a really important issue, because
4 California with the old preclearance of the federal voting
5 rights had these four counties, later three that required
6 preclearance which then basically meant that the Federal
7 government got preclearance for the whole state. Because
8 once you kind of have to draw lines and include those
9 counties you have to kind of include the other counties as
10 well.

11 So I was really interested in the idea that some
12 states required entire preclearance and some states
13 required regional preclearance, but it basically meant the
14 same thing oftentimes. So that became something that was
15 my initial area of interest.

16 I also was interested in the difference between
17 the 2000 kind of bipartisan gerrymander. And what happened
18 afterwards that led to this proposition to create this
19 Commission and the differences that that produces
20 electorally.

21 But also, I'm increasingly interested, and I talk
22 with my students about and I'm writing about, The
23 California Voting Rights Act, which was started in 2001
24 which is dramatically changing local government in
25 California cities, school districts, special districts.

1 We're moving from the progressive view of at-large
2 elections to district-based elections. Something the
3 Progressives would have hated, but it's produced this kind
4 of renaissance of local politicians winning in very small
5 districts. And the Progressives thought that was horrible,
6 because they wouldn't be thinking of the larger entity.
7 They'd only be kind of thinking of their small ward or
8 precinct. And the jury is still out on that completely.
9 But it has definitely created a pipeline of future
10 politicians for the state level, which is something that
11 this Commission is obviously interested in drawing the
12 district lines for the Assembly and Senate.

13 So it's something I love talking with students
14 about. Once students realize this is not just an academic
15 discussion this affects where they live, their cities and
16 these local districts. And they are going to change
17 dramatically. And they can run now in a 50,000-person city
18 for a 10,000-person district rather than the whole city.
19 Like oh, they start doing the internal math. "I could
20 actually win that. I could actually walk all those doors
21 and have a chance to win." And that's really exciting too,
22 because I want to see the next generation be as passionate
23 and excited as me.

24 VICE CHAIR BELNAP: Okay, thank you. So although
25 it may not be part of the formal legal criteria, but do you

1 think the Commission should adopt a preference where
2 possible for competitive districts?

3 DR. HUSSEY: Yeah. You guys have asked that to
4 other people before. That's a really very good question.

5 The spirit of competitiveness was built into the
6 Proposition, but it can be a dangerous game. Because you
7 can draw districts that are competitive being a primary or
8 secondary goal, and create just the same problems as before
9 of gerrymandering, packing people in. Like so for example
10 if you want a 50/50 district you could take a part of the
11 state that has a lot of Republicans and a lot of Democrats
12 and then split it equally and force them together when they
13 have nothing in common. And draw things that would be an
14 abomination district that no one would be happy with. And
15 ta-dah, you've got your competitive district.

16 Congratulations. But not only would it be violating all of
17 the actual written parts of this proposition. You'd be
18 destroying the whole purpose of creating fair districts.

19 And fairness is really important too. Fairness
20 isn't just always competitive, fairness is does this area
21 produce representatives that look like that area, that
22 speak of that area, that have the backgrounds of that area?
23 It doesn't have to necessarily be all the checkmarks, but
24 something there like yeah I could see why that person won
25 there. That's a fair district. There's a chance for those

1 groups to win and have a good chance there. And it's not
2 just about drawing competitive districts if you're
3 violating the principle of fairness.

4 On the other hand, there's a lot of parts of
5 California where the blue and red mix and you get these
6 interesting purple areas in the Central Valley and the
7 Inland Empire. And once you've drawn districts fairly
8 using all of the principles of community interest and
9 geographic boundaries you're going to create, if you're
10 doing those things, a fair district. And it might go back
11 and forth in the next five elections and that's okay too.
12 Because that's following the principles of fairness that
13 voters wanted.

14 VICE CHAIR BELNAP: All right, thank you.

15 Madam Secretary, I have no further questions.

16 CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you, Mr. Belnap.

17 Mr. Coe, the time is yours.

18 PANEL MEMBER COE: Thank you, Madam Chair.

19 Good afternoon to you Dr. Hussey. Thank you for
20 taking the time to speak with us today.

21 DR. HUSSEY: Good afternoon. Thank you.

22 PANEL MEMBER COE: I wanted to talk to you about
23 one of your letters of recommendation that was from a
24 gentleman named Lee Fink who identifies as a lifelong
25 Democrat that has served the Democratic Party a number of

1 times in a voter protection capacity during the 2008, 2012,
2 2014 and 2016 elections. And you are a registered
3 Republican as you mentioned before. So despite the voting,
4 your political loyalty is to different parties, and
5 considering the current environment of hyperpartisanship
6 that was discussed in Standard Question 2, the letter
7 writer wholly endorsed you for this Commission. Why do you
8 think that is?

9 DR. HUSSEY: I've been friends with Lee and best
10 friends since 7th grade. And we were the only two people
11 in 7th grade who had a real good knowledge of politics.
12 And we would just fight all the time in a friendly,
13 wonderful way. And we just built our strong friendship on
14 that. And over the years we've disagreed on things very
15 passionately. And then one or two of us have come along
16 the other way over time. And if Lee was applying for this
17 Commission I would be writing that letter and saying the
18 exact opposite, "As a lifelong Republican, as a strong
19 Republican, I think Lee would be great for this Commission
20 too."

21 I think that our love of politics transcends our
22 partisan differences. And it also helps that I think Lee
23 is an honest, sincere, strong worker who has helped
24 government not hurt it when he's represented it. And I
25 hope he feels the same things. That letter was pretty

1 strong, and it made me feel really proud to be his friend.
2 So I think that's an important thing that binds us
3 together. It's something that also is important to
4 remember about America, that we can disagree, but we can
5 respect each other. And man, as one of my best friends I
6 respect the hell out of Lee Fink.

7 And I think he's done great work, working in the
8 federal government and working in the state government.
9 Even though oftentimes he's making policy decisions I wish
10 he wouldn't make, or he'd make the opposite. But that's
11 his own political beliefs and I understand where they come
12 from and I think he understands where some of my political
13 beliefs come from. And that doesn't mean I can't learn
14 from him or learn new things about politics from him and
15 vice versa.

16 PANEL MEMBER COE: Thank you. I wanted to talk
17 about your impartiality essay for a moment. In that essay
18 you, and I think it was alluded to a little bit earlier
19 with Ms. Dickison, you mentioned that in your interactions
20 with journalists or the public or you students and even in
21 your writing and your scholarship, you remain impartial so
22 that others will trust that your findings are not tainted
23 by your own biases or interests. My question is how does
24 one recognize their own bias and how do you ensure that it
25 doesn't interfere with your decision making?

1 DR. HUSSEY: Yeah, that's a great question.
2 Well, one of the things that you can do is you can have
3 someone look over your work. And I've had people over the
4 years, academics I trust look at my work and make sure I'm
5 not trying to make an argument that's political or
6 ideological.

7 But the other thing, it comes from a consistent
8 working on being objective. It's not something that you
9 just turn on and turn off or do every now and then, it's
10 thinking consistently and strongly about what kind of bias
11 am I sending? Or what kind of bias do I have? How can I
12 correct that? How can I in the classroom make sure when
13 I'm giving both sides of an argument I make a really damn
14 good argument for the Democrats? And I make a really
15 strong argument for the Republicans. And as a Republican
16 one argument might be easier than the other for me to make,
17 but I can make sure the other one is really good. And so
18 that makes me think like well what is that argument? And
19 how do I work it through? And how am I being not biased
20 here, giving both sides?

21 Or when I'm not trying to give an actual
22 political opinion in saying this is how the Senate works
23 versus the House on bringing staff to the floor. (phonetic)
24 You know I'm not trying to do that as a Republican
25 professor or as a Democrat professor, which I'm not. I'm

1 trying to do that with the knowledge I have and trying to
2 analyze California politics with the knowledge I have.

3 But it definitely I think having a check is
4 helpful. I mean, people you can rely on. But also just
5 consistently being careful about what you think about
6 things and the bias you have. And as academics we try to
7 do that. And I think some of the best academics I've met
8 who turned out are very strong Democrats are doing the same
9 thing. And I trust their opinion very strongly, because I
10 know that they're being objective in their research and
11 their objective when they come up with things.

12 Or, sometimes they'll say, "You know, I have a
13 bias here. Is there a way we can work through this?"
14 Because I can't see this, right? And I might help them and
15 they might help me. And I'm hoping the Commission can do
16 that. I'm hoping we're choosing 14 people who are not very
17 biased people, who are very objective people. But if there
18 is a chance when that starts happening that we've developed
19 a relationship and a professional working relationship
20 where we can call each other out politely and lightly and
21 maybe kind of right the ship. And I'm hoping that doesn't
22 happen, but I'm also hoping we have tools in place in case
23 it does.

24 PANEL MEMBER COE: Okay, thank you. You
25 mentioned a little earlier about how you had applied to 10

1 years ago from the 2010 Commission.

2 DR. HUSSEY: Uh-huh.

3 PANEL MEMBER COE: And I'm wondering if you, when
4 you think about the environment and the political
5 atmosphere then versus now, do you see any distinct
6 differences in the environment that this Commission it's
7 going to have to operate in as opposed to the one 10 years
8 ago?

9 DR. HUSSEY: What a great question. Let me think
10 about that for a second. And then I can write an article
11 about that and get credit for that somewhere. So I like
12 that.

13 I think one of the big differences is there was a
14 lot of opposition to the Commission the first time and a
15 lot of belief that it was going to fail. And so there was
16 a stronger need I think in the Commission to bunker down
17 and let's get this right. Let's kind of reduce tension so
18 we can get maps out that are going to be -- we're going to
19 be sued, but we can hold it together.

20 And then also there was a broader issue of
21 whether or not the Citizens Commission could even draw a
22 district. It wasn't the responsibility of the Legislature.
23 And that eventually took a Supreme Court decision on that.
24 So a lot of that's off the table now. So a lot of like are
25 we allowed to draw districts, are people going to challenge

1 the districts, have gone away.

2 And the difference between the Citizens
3 redistricting maps, which produced shifts in elections
4 based on shifts of vote share, which have incumbents lose,
5 which have the parties switch sides, compared to 10 years
6 of basically nothing shifting before that when the
7 political parties secretly wrote the maps is monumental.
8 So a lot of skeptical people who maybe just don't like the
9 Commission would honestly say, yeah, it's done some good
10 stuff. It's produced some fair election results. The
11 swing vote share connects to the seat chair swing. So
12 that's one thing.

13 Obviously, this pandemic is going to change
14 things when it comes to those numbers coming out. And my
15 gosh, we've got to get those numbers. We've got to keep
16 going back to that. Those numbers need to come out as soon
17 as possible and they can't be delayed. I don't know if
18 Congress will go along with the Federal Administration.

19 The other thing though is because of the success
20 of the Commission is also going to bring out more groups
21 that are going to try to influence the Commission. They're
22 going to be like, "Oh this is our opportunity to try to
23 like get what we want," even if what they want might not be
24 fair. A lot of them are going to be like totally, "We
25 haven't heard from you. Thank goodness you've talked to

1 us." We're going to try to incorporate that in the maps
2 and that's fabulous. But there is going to be some
3 shenanigans, more than last time because we've been
4 successful.

5 And again I think we have to always start with
6 the idea that these groups are being sincere when they
7 approach us and listen to them. And then only when other
8 additional evidence comes out do we start going, "Mm okay.
9 So is that actually an honest group or is that
10 astroturfing? Is that some sort of a cover for some other
11 political or ideological faction?" So that's important.

12 So I do think there's going to be big differences
13 between ours and last time comma and a lot of them are
14 going to be very positive. But there are going to be some
15 potential pitfalls and challenges along the way that these
16 new 14 people are going to have to overcome.

17 PANEL MEMBER COE: Thank you very much.

18 DR. HUSSEY: Yeah, that's okay

19 PANEL MEMBER COE: So you mentioned also in your
20 application that handling media requests is part of your
21 job at the University of Sacramento State. And I know Ms.
22 Dickison asked you about a potential role on this
23 Commission before. But do you see what that experience
24 kind of being a Commission spokesperson as a potential role
25 for you to play?

1 DR. HUSSEY: I'd be happy to do that. But that
2 would require the rest of the Commission to be comfortable
3 with me handling that role. There's no outliers here,
4 there's no lone gunman, this is about 14 men and women, 14
5 people carefully thinking about our roles. And I'm happy
6 to offer that. And if we decide we need to have people
7 talk to the media I have a feeling just by listening to the
8 other people and reading some of their files there's a lot
9 of media-savvy, competent people that are going to be on
10 that Commission along with me. In fact, some people who
11 even have more of an experience doing PR for a living or
12 having that as a serious part of that as a profession. And
13 they might want to take a lead on that.

14 But I'm definitely happy if we need to kind of
15 divide up interviews and have the media talk to us at
16 various points in doing that. And reaching out to the
17 media and having them reach out to us and you know, talking
18 with them and letting them know how I feel but also how the
19 Committee feels, which the Commission feels, which might be
20 difficult because I'm not always sure what the Commission
21 would want. But yeah, I'd love to do that. I just don't
22 want to overstep my role before what that role is been
23 established by the rest of the Commission.

24 PANEL MEMBER COE: Understood, thank you. So in
25 some of your testimony today, and in your essays, you

1 talked about your interactions or with diverse groups of
2 people, whether that'd be people at your college or people
3 that are your students or other capacities. And I'm
4 wondering if from your interactions with the diverse groups
5 of people that you've met, what is it that you think you've
6 learned from them about their preferences and their
7 concerns and their perspectives that would make you an
8 effective representative for the broadly diverse population
9 of the State of California?

10 DR. HUSSEY: Yeah, that's a good question too.

11 One of the things that I've learned is, and as I
12 get older it just becomes even more important, is nuance is
13 so important that, you know -- and this is a very sanitized
14 version -- the first Latino you meet doesn't represent all
15 Latinos, right? And the more people you meet of an ethnic
16 group the more you realize that these are people. They all
17 have their -- they're as diverse as any other group.

18 And so if you hear from a group that's repeatedly
19 saying the same thing, "We've been marginalized or we
20 haven't been heard on this issue," or something to that
21 effect that's when you realizing that's a real thing. When
22 the critical mass of a group keeps saying the same thing
23 without them being an organization, without them being
24 prepped ahead of time that's when you start realizing man,
25 this is a real organic thing that has to be addressed.

1 As opposed to like oh this is the African
2 American perspective on something, because I have three
3 black friends, right? I have five African American
4 students in my class.

5 And so, listening is so important. And man, I'll
6 be honest as an academic I love to talk more than I like to
7 listen. But I do so much better when I listen. I do so
8 much, I learn so much more, I become so much more valuable
9 as a teacher when I listen. And as I get more comfortable
10 older being in the classroom I listen more. I don't feel
11 like I have to represent that I to know things. Students
12 pick that up pretty quickly.

13 And now I can shift into like well what do you
14 know? What do you understand? And a lot of times they
15 don't understand much, so we work through that. And then
16 well what do you know? What do you understand? And then
17 now the floodgate of really awesome stuff. "Well, you know
18 my family never talked about this because of this issue."
19 Or, "We always lived in this area and never understood why
20 we didn't." That's always heartbreaking, but so important
21 intellectually and academically and democratically.

22 PANEL MEMBER COE: Thank you. So in keeping with
23 the idea of listening and receiving the input, earlier you
24 talked with Ms. Dickison about communities of interest and
25 locating those communities throughout the state. And

1 certainly, that's one of the biggest tasks or challenges
2 ahead of this Commission after it's formed. But my
3 question is slightly different is once communities have
4 been found not all of them want to engage, not all of them
5 feel comfortable engaging. Some of them have some real
6 concerns about engaging what is perceived as government
7 bodies for a variety of reasons.

8 But input as we've been discussing is so
9 important to the work of the Commission. How could the
10 Commission go about making those particular communities who
11 may have some concern or apprehension about sharing their
12 perspectives and their concerns, how can the Commission
13 make them feel comfortable to come forward and share those
14 to better informed the Commission and its work?

15 DR. HUSSEY: Yeah, that's a great question.

16 I think there's a lot of ways of handling that.
17 One of the smart ways of handling that is the same thing
18 that you guys have done, the Search Commission has done, is
19 have partners. And have partners in communities that can
20 help us find groups that are marginalized and
21 unrepresented. And are uncomfortable coming to us, so we
22 could come to them, because we have partners to help us
23 with that. Having a diverse Commission is really important
24 to help reach out to different groups.

25 You know using data and analysis to figure out

1 well what groups are being just under represented here? We
2 have a large group in this area and that they've never
3 elected anyone locally or statewide. Are there
4 organizations we can approach? Are there staff? Are there
5 groups that we can try to reach out to? Is there a way we
6 can work with the media to broadcast in that community? Is
7 there local media? Is there specialized media? Is there
8 anything like ethnic media as a way of reaching these
9 groups? So we have to be smart about it. We have to
10 understand that sometimes we're not going to be able to do
11 that by ourselves and having partners is helpful.

12 And we also have to give ourselves time to do
13 that too. It's not like okay, here's our swing through the
14 Bay Area in two days. Like that's a diverse area with a
15 lot of rich tapestry of groups and complexity. Let's spend
16 some time learning about it first before we show up in
17 talking to groups. And then come back.

18 And so one thing I'll say that's horrible, but
19 that's positive about, if they push back our date when we
20 get Census data, it might give the Commission more time to
21 talk with groups more than once. And then say, "Hey we
22 heard you the first time. This is what you said. We
23 wanted to come back before those numbers come out and say
24 like here's what we're thinking. How do you guys think
25 about that?" Or like, "What have you told us that we

1 didn't hear the first time that we want to hear the second
2 time?"

3 And that could be a very useful endeavor with
4 that extra time despite the fact that we don't have the
5 extra time.

6 PANEL MEMBER COE: Thank you. I wanted to ask
7 you about something you mentioned in your essays that's
8 kind of along the same topic, is that you mentioned that
9 you co-hosted a political affairs radio show.

10 DR. HUSSEY: I did, at the college.

11 PANEL MEMBER COE: Yeah. Can you say that the
12 radio show discussed, agreed and often argued about
13 politics and political events. A couple of questions on
14 that is did that involve people calling in and providing
15 their perspectives along to the host of the show?

16 DR. HUSSEY: It did. Although you can imagine on
17 college radio we did not get dozens and dozens of listener.
18 We were not Air America or Rush Limbaugh. And the people
19 who called in would be really interesting, but that was
20 enjoyable. I've lost track of my co-host; Casey give me a
21 call sometime. He was a grad student. I was an undergrad.
22 I was Republican, he was a Democrat. And we disagreed
23 about everything and it was so much fun. We called the
24 show "Articulate Violence." It had been done before with
25 other hosts before both of us and it was a lot of fun. And

1 I think it needed to be more serious.

2 And if I was an older person doing it now it
3 would be a lot more serious show. But yeah, it was really
4 interesting to hear a smart person on the other side who
5 knew things able to challenge me. Able to say, "Yeah,
6 you're making this argument based on other people you've
7 heard, but what about this point or what about that point?"
8 And then making me later on having to go look that up and
9 saying, "Oh, that's a really good point or like no, that
10 was actually a good response for that." So it made me a
11 sharper political person.

12 But I also know when people would call in it made
13 us both learn how to listen to people that we weren't
14 always the biggest fans of. Like hey, this is our second
15 guest ever. After three episodes we're going to let you
16 talk about the crazy cats and the waves from the aliens,
17 because we're just happy to have a second person talk,
18 while being respectful. And that's a really important
19 skill to have when you don't always agree with someone and
20 you think that there not being 100 percent honest or
21 coherent. But being polite and listening to them.

22 And man, I could have done a better job looking
23 back, but even then I felt like well you know we should
24 listen to these people. They're calling in. They somehow
25 found us on the radio, the three-watt thing that UCI had as

1 its college radio, why not? Let's talk.

2 PANEL MEMBER COE: Thank you. Madam --

3 MS. PELLMAN: A time check --

4 PANEL MEMBER COE: -- Secretary, yeah go ahead
5 please.

6 MS. PELLMAN: Yeah. Just 1 minute, 20 seconds.

7 PANEL MEMBER COE: Okay, really quickly if you
8 can, Dr. Hussey, if you were to be appointed as a
9 Commissioner which aspects of the role do you think you
10 would enjoy the most? And which aspects of the role do you
11 think you would struggle with?

12 DR. HUSSEY: Yeah. The data would be awesome.
13 To have that kind of data and analysis and have a
14 consultant and a technical person we've hired to help me
15 look at maps and help me show the other Commissioners some
16 of the things we can do with those maps would be fabulous.
17 Anytime that happens I would be having a ball. Hearing
18 from different parts of the state that I don't always know
19 very well; I'm not an expert on Upstate California. I've
20 lived in Sacramento, but I've never lived in Fresno or
21 Bakersfield, I'd love to get those to know those
22 communities better and get to know different parts of the
23 state better, Inland Empire. So those parts would be
24 really exciting for me, right?

25 I don't mind committee meetings, which scares my

1 colleagues and it means they put me on more committees.
2 But sometimes I don't like when committees are talking
3 about talking. Like, "We're going to have a discussion now
4 about our next discussion." I'm like, "No, no, no. We're
5 just -- we're going to talk now." Like, "Well we don't --
6 we're not ready to talk." Well then why are we talking?
7 Why are we doing an hour and a half of that, so that I can
8 imagine not being my favorite thing. And if you're going
9 to watch the video of that or look at the transcripts
10 you're like, "Wow! Commissioner Hussey didn't really talk
11 much for that hour," because in his mind he was thinking,
12 "Why are we doing this? Why are we doing this?" But I
13 love when committees are really gelling and are moving to
14 that next level.

15 MS. PELLMAN: That's 20 minutes.

16 DR. HUSSEY: And when there's respect.

17 PANEL MEMBER COE: Thanks. Thank you, Madam
18 Secretary.

19 Dr. Hussey sorry, it sounds like we're out of
20 time. Thank you very much.

21 Madam Chair?

22 CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you, Mr. Coe.

23 Mr. Dawson do you have any follow up questions?

24 MR. DAWSON: Yes, I do. Thank you Madam Chair.

25 Thank you again Dr. Hussey for being here. I

1 wanted to follow up on a couple of the things that you'd
2 had in your application and some of the responses you'd
3 had. Your PhD is in PoliSci. You studied legislative
4 strategy and the roles of parties?

5 DR. HUSSEY: Yes.

6 MR. DAWSON: And was that your dissertation work?

7 DR. HUSSEY: For my dissertation it was called,
8 "The Coalition of Extremes: Ends Against the Middle in the
9 United States Congress." It's something that I call--
10 Colfax for short.

11 I looked at cases when Conservative Republicans
12 and Liberal Democrats voted together on legislation. So
13 when groups that shouldn't have anything in common are
14 voting together, and it happens a lot more than most people
15 realize in Congress. It's always like well why is that?
16 What's going on? It's very complicated. There's issues of
17 multi-dimensionality, there's issues of one group thinking
18 "We kill it. And we come back later and it'll be better,"
19 and they're wrong. There are strategic amendments. But it
20 just fascinated me that there were times when groups that
21 shouldn't be together were together. And I guess that's
22 when I started thinking like you know, maybe this doesn't
23 have to just be a nasty hyperpartisan world." But even
24 groups that disagree strongly might strategically vote
25 together. And maybe relationships can be built off of that

1 strategic-ness.

2 MR. DAWSON: Have you seen that play out here in
3 Sacramento?

4 DR. HUSSEY: Sacramento, because the Legislature
5 is smaller I think it's more personal. I have looked at
6 eight cases of Colfax before in the California legislature.
7 It happens a little bit less because there's less need for
8 that strategic voting. But it can also happen based on
9 more mutual respect. In Congress it turns out here is not
10 of these Colfax votes, not a lot of these ends against the
11 middle," that are based on groups working together. Civil
12 liberties might be one exception, most of the time it's
13 kind of one group is being strategic and riding off the
14 other one.

15 In Sacramento it can actually come off of
16 personal relationships, which I thought was going to happen
17 when I started my dissertation more than that turned out.

18 MR. DAWSON: All right. I see. So, you've
19 studied parties. But I take it from some of your answers
20 today that you don't really I think that parties are the
21 right entities to be drawing lines for districts.

22 DR. HUSSEY: No, I don't because either you're
23 going to get an extreme partisan gerrymander or you're
24 going to get what we got in 2000, a very bipartisan
25 incumbent protection plan. I think, and it's not really

1 parties to be honest, it's Legislatures. Legislatures I
2 don't think should draw their own seats. They do so many
3 good things, but drawing their own seats is not something
4 that's really helpful for California or American democracy.

5 And when you remove them from doing that it gives
6 them more time to do the things they do a really good job
7 of, coming up with good legislation, working together to
8 pass a huge, giant annual budget, overseeing the Executive
9 Branch. So I like that, I think it frees them to do what
10 they do better. And I don't always think that they have
11 the best interests in mind when they're drawing them,
12 because they're protecting themselves. And a lot of our
13 legislators want to jump up to a Congressional seat so
14 they're looking to draw a Congressional seat that might
15 help them to jump for that too.

16 MR. DAWSON: Okay, thank you. In your response
17 to Standard Question 3 about the greatest problem that the
18 Commission could face you brought up the example of a
19 burgeoning South Asian group. I think you said it was in
20 Santa Clara County.

21 DR. HUSSEY: Yeah. That's one of the groups
22 there. They're all over the Bay Area, which is fabulous.
23 But a lot of them are in Santa Clara.

24 MR. DAWSON: So I don't know if you looked at the
25 2010 Report. And in fact during one of the trainings one

1 of the 2010 Commissioners noted that as part of their
2 public meetings they seemed to be surprised there was a
3 large Sikh community in the North Valley. Are you
4 surprised that they were surprised?

5 DR. HUSSEY: No. I'm not, because oftentimes the
6 Sikh community has kind of different SES levels than other
7 parts of the South Asian population. And they were drawn
8 to kind of different types of work and different economic
9 aspects in the Valley. So that didn't surprise me. When
10 we think of the Bay Area we think of tech, which is not
11 always the case. Or there's very different types of tech
12 which is customer service versus high-end app development
13 or like big company development. So that doesn't surprise
14 me.

15 But the more you divide a group the harder it is
16 for that group to get representation in a legislative or a
17 congressional seat. And one of the things you have to
18 honestly ask the groups are do you guys work well together?
19 And sometimes the answer is yes and you're like oh perfect.
20 Now they're not being a critical mass, they really consider
21 that community in a group by following all the other rules.
22 If the answer is no or there has been division then it's
23 like well it's going to get a lot more complicated. Are we
24 going to get lucky and have to split this area
25 geographically anyway? And then carefully, skillfully kind

1 of divide that community up or are we going to have a big
2 problem here?

3 MR. DAWSON: Okay, thank you. Sort of on the
4 same topic, when we're talking about communities of
5 interest, and this goes to the question of South Asian or
6 other groups, traditionally we've seemed to think of
7 communities of interest that might -- may being an ethnic
8 or cultural or linguistic identity. But as some of these
9 communities become more enculturated you talked about the
10 third, fourth, fifth generation, some of those identities
11 tend to, I don't want to say fade away, but they've become
12 more integrated in a larger California community. Are
13 there other identities that the Commission should be
14 looking for beyond ethnic, cultural, linguistic?

15 DR. HUSSEY: Yeah. I mean, I think the
16 Commission maybe the last time too. Oftentimes economic.
17 Sometimes they've drawn districts because there's a strong
18 economic linkage to these different -- like they're doing
19 the same stuff and they're involved in the same industry.
20 Or there's a pattern here. And I think that can be very
21 helpful.

22 I also think some obviously political subgroups,
23 which is definitely part of the rules have to be
24 considered.

25 But also we can see a case with religious groups.

1 If there's a subset of one of these other groups it has a
2 kind of difference of religion, and again Protestant
3 Latinos or Pentecostal Latinos. If there's a kind of
4 critical mass of that group and that can be drawn out then
5 that can be helpful too.

6 We're not Santa Claus. We can't give every group
7 a district, because we have so few of them. And a lot of
8 these groups are very small. They're growing and that's
9 exciting, but they're not at any level where they're going
10 to be influential in affecting an assembly district race,
11 let alone the larger districts. I mean a million people in
12 each of our state Senate districts, that's crazy. But if
13 it can be done and we learn more and we're open to it I
14 think there's a lot of awesome possibilities.

15 MR. DAWSON: All right, thank you. It's been
16 noted that it's likely that California will lose a
17 Congressional seat in the next go-round. Does that present
18 any particular challenge to this Commission?

19 DR. HUSSEY: It does. But that's a huge
20 challenge to California. California has always grown or
21 not gained a seat. And it sends a strong cultural message
22 to Californians and the rest of the country. Something's -
23 - we're not growing as fast as the rest of the country.
24 Something's wrong here. And you know it's not the
25 Commission's job to fix that, but it's the Commission's job

1 to understand that there's going to be consequences to
2 that. It's not our job to figure out which member of
3 Congress loses their seat.

4 Not only do we not have that responsibility I
5 think there's very strong language against that. We don't
6 know where incumbents live. But it means that there's
7 going to be losers.

8 And I think because of this, the coronavirus and
9 because of the Census we're most likely going to lose a
10 seat now. Because I think we're going to have an
11 underreported population in the Census numbers. And that
12 worries me intently, because it's going to make that job a
13 lot much harder for the Commission whether I'm on it or
14 not.

15 MR. DAWSON: So you're saying that it had already
16 been anticipated we were going to lose one, that the
17 problem of undercounts will be exacerbated by COVID-19?

18 DR. HUSSEY: Yes, I do. And I think that a lot
19 of groups won't respond. I mean the underrepresented
20 groups historically or nonwhite minorities or people who
21 are poor, who are homeless, and we have all of those. And
22 I think the virus is going to magnify that and to the
23 degree where before I was like 50/50. And now I'd probably
24 say 80/20 we're going to lose that congressional seat.

25 MR. DAWSON: And those groups are not spread

1 evenly across the state, correct?

2 DR. HUSSEY: They are not. I don't know what --
3 before the smarter people than I who had done the more
4 statistical work thought it might be in Southern
5 California. You know, geographically one less seat in that
6 area. And I don't know if that's going to be the case or
7 not. I can imagine it's the Bay Area has a lot of seats,
8 it could be there too. It's probably not going to be
9 Central Valley which is growing. It's not going to be
10 inland California which is growing. So it might be coastal
11 or near coastal Southern California and Los Angeles County.

12 MR. DAWSON: All, right thank you. I have no
13 further follow-ups.

14 Do any of the panel members have any follow-up
15 questions?

16 CHAIR DICKISON: I have no follow-up questions.
17 Mr. Belnap?

18 VICE CHAIR BELNAP: I don't have any other
19 questions.

20 CHAIR DICKISON: Mr. Coe?

21 PANEL MEMBER COE: No further questions.

22 CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you. We have no further
23 questions.

24 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Madam Secretary, how
25 much time is remaining in the 90 minutes?

1 MS. PELLMAN: 19 minutes, 20 seconds.

2 MR. DAWSON: Okay. Thank you

3 Dr. Hussey, with the time remaining I'd like to
4 give you the opportunity to make some closing remarks to
5 the panel if you wish?

6 DR. HUSSEY: Sure. Well, thank you again for
7 inviting me, I really appreciate it. This is a fabulous
8 process, it's convoluted. I love it, because it takes a
9 long time to explain it to my students in class and a lot
10 of them get lost along the way and we go back and explain
11 it.

12 And ultimately, one of the things that I'm trying
13 to show them is this process is convoluted for a reason.
14 It's convoluted to make it harder for a group or a faction
15 to take over the job of drawing districts. And I would
16 love to be on this Commission. And I would love to be
17 advancing to the next level. I'd love to survive the
18 "Sauron's Eye" of the Legislature and move on to that final
19 group. I'd love that spinning ball to call my name. But
20 if I'm not on the Commission again I'd like this next round
21 of the Commission to do what the first round did, which is
22 draw fair districts and think about the future of
23 California.

24 We don't have to add all of our hopes and dreams
25 into these 14 people, we just expect them to do an open and

1 fair job. Sometimes not perfectly, but honestly and openly
2 to talk to each other, to talk with the people they hire,
3 to talk with the community and talk with Californians about
4 how we can draw districts that bring out California, that
5 empower California. That bring the people to our
6 Legislature, into the halls in DC who have never been there
7 before. Or groups that should have been there and weren't.
8 Or groups that have just recently emerged that should be
9 there. And I think that makes our state better. I don't
10 think that makes our state worse.

11 And I love the process of a Citizens
12 Redistricting Commission not just because it makes
13 California better, but as I said the very first time when I
14 was interviewing is it's a beacon to the rest of the
15 country. California leads the nation in ideas: crazy
16 ideas, smart ideas, ideas from the right, ideas from the
17 left.

18 And other states stop and listen. Other places
19 in the world stop and listen. That's one of the great
20 things about California is we are a breeding ground for
21 ideas. And a Citizens Redistricting Commission is an idea
22 whose time has come. And when California gets it right it
23 sends that strong signal to the rest of the country you can
24 do this. Legislatures don't need to draw their own lines.
25 Send them back to do the job they do a better job of,

1 legislating, overseeing the Executive Branch, working on
2 the budget, dealing with constituents, making people happy,
3 that they like government. And not trying to draw lines to
4 help them out.

5 And so I look forward to the final 14 and here's
6 hoping I'm one of them. Thank you for your time today.
7 And I appreciate that you guys have sent me to this level.

8 CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you, Dr. Hussey.

9 Our next interview is tomorrow morning, Wednesday
10 April 15th at 9:00 a.m. So we're going to recess now until
11 8:58 tomorrow morning. Thank you.

12 (Recess at 4:13 p.m.)

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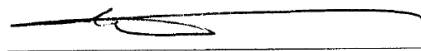
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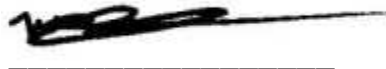
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