

August 5, 2020

California Citizens Redistricting Commission
C/O California State Auditor
621 Capitol Mall, Suite 1200 Sacramento, CA 95814
Sent via electronic Transmission

RE: Candidacy of CRC Applicant Richard Albert Gallegos

Dear Citizens' Redistricting Commissioners,

I am writing in response to the letter of opposition for a commission position. The Letter in question, specifies that I may lack the – analytical skills, ability to be impartial and the appreciation for California's Diversity.

I wish to respond after being disheartened upon reading the misinformation included in the letter that was presented to the commission. I will prove that I have the characteristics needed to be a good commissioner and supply examples. I would first like to acknowledge that I grew up in the heart of the Imperial Valley, in the small farming city of Brawley. Upon graduating from High School, I attended California State University Fresno. I believe it is extremely important for the migrant community of the Imperial Valley and the Central Valley of California to have representation in the redistricting process. The authors of this letter saw that I have a law enforcement background and decided to paint me with a broad brush. My entire identity is more than law enforcement and I wish they were not biased based on my past career. I also believe this is "Political Theater" on their last minute and strategic submission of this letter.

1.

a. **My ability to be impartial:** Throughout my life, I have treated everyone fairly and give people the opportunity to express their views. I consider every individual's needs and use that information in making decisions while being transparent and open-minded. I make sure my decisions are fair, unprejudiced,

unbiased and objective even when this might not be popular. I would never let my political party interfere in making the right decision for the right reason. I used this impartiality in making decisions while attending Fresno State and working as a counselor at a group home. I mentored and built relationships with black youths, out of Oakland California, who were wards to the court. I was able to remain impartial everyday with every decision I made. I also used this ability while working at the Sheriff's Department. I volunteered to work in the Summer Program for juveniles who lived in small migrant cities in Fresno County. In this program, I had to organize and implement activities for youths. I occasionally had situations that arose, where I became a mediator and had to use my impartiality to make decisions. I would volunteer my time to take these impressionable young people on field trips to broaden their experiences. I would mentor and tutor them and sometimes help them navigate personal trauma. I constantly had to remain impartial. As an instructor at Fresno City College and Clovis Community College, I once again have to use my impartiality to make decisions. I'm always fair, unbiased and objective in lecturing and answering questions in class. My classes are very broad on the spectrum. I teach basic courses such as Introduction to Criminology, and I also teach more advanced courses such as California Criminal Law and Constitutional Law. These courses require me to be unbiased when teaching a very diverse student population. The student population at Fresno City College is 40% Hispanic, 18% Asian, and 6% Black. The Clovis Community student population is 40% Hispanic, 11% Asian, and 3% Black.

Being a first generation Mexican American (Latinx) has helped me learn the importance of being impartial. I learned to be sympathetic and empathetic towards other people. My mother only speaks Spanish, which resulted in us being a Spanish only speaking home. I had to learn how to speak English in Elementary school, much later. While growing up, I saw first-hand the importance of being relatable. There were often times my mom felt intimidated and did not participate in certain governmental outreach. The intimidation factor prevented her from participating in things like the Census.

b. Fresno's History of Law Enforcement Racial Discrimination:

Once again, the authors of the letter, have painted me with a broad brush. My entire identity is not Law Enforcement. I grew up in a small Imperial Valley city, which had constant struggles with law enforcement. There were constant issues being brought up, which put the Citizens of my poor, lower social-economic

community against local law enforcement. I vowed to change the criminal justice system, from within. I believe in "Community Policing" and constantly interacting in every community that I would work in. I made sure I knew the citizens, not as "US versus Them", but as "US". The letter referred to a specific court case. That case was settled without any implications and was only added to the letter in order to smear my name. I would never target anybody based on sexual orientation. Once again, the letter states that I fed into the discriminatory practices of the Sheriff's Department. The authors chose one incident to define my career. I wish the authors of this letter would have chosen to get to know me and not generalize my career in law enforcement. This attempt is very disheartening. They didn't include any of the "good" I did for citizens of Fresno County or the public in general. I often volunteered my time without pay to form clean up groups, beautification events or just help people that needed help. Growing up, my father had a small grocery store that catered to the local community. My dad was loved by the entire community, which helped me be fair and understanding. I included a Los Angeles Times article which quotes my father in the story. The story is about one of those incidents where police and the citizens became heated. I learned everything from him. Nobody left his store hungry or without food, even if they didn't have money. My family is well known in the Imperial Valley, because of his actions and kind heart.

Implicit Biases: I stand by my statement that I don't see people with implicit bias. Being a person of color, I see that people are diverse and I appreciate that. Being able to identify these biases, put them aside and make decisions fairly and objectively is a characteristic that I possess.

Biased letters of Recommendation: I chose my three letters of recommendations, strategically. I chose one person who knew me from my occupation, one who knew me personally and one who knew my analytical skills. The analytical skills, letter was extremely important, because he knew my ability to apply my master's in political science and my education in the Doctorate Program. I've assisted in the statistical aspect of politics and possess the ability to write grants and proposals

2.

a. **Failure to Understand the Concept of Community of Interest:** The authors of the letter, took my statement out of context. They referred to a statement that I said, “we’re the same” and “I didn't’ see his neighbors as being different, just my neighbors”. I grew up in a poor, lower social-economic neighborhood and didn't see my Mexican-American and African-American neighbors as wanting anything different then we all did. We want to be heard and not taken for granted. I believe that my neighborhood while growing up, was a community of interest and had similar beliefs and needs.

b. **Derogatory Statement Towards “Some Cultures”** Once again this statement was taken out of context. As a person of color, I saw this firsthand. The author referred to a statement “*some cultures become intimidated if they can’t relate to the people talking to them*”. I was referring to people like my mother, who would be hesitant to speak to or approach people who don’t look like people they can relate to, especially if they can’t speak Spanish. As a person of color and a Spanish speaker, I still think this is relevant. The author once again has chosen certain sentences out of context in order for the board to remove my name. I honestly find it hard to understand their motives.

c. **Clovis Doesn’t Represent the Diversity of Fresno County or the Central Valley:** The author refers to the current city I live in but fails to acknowledge that I was raised in the Imperial Valley, where the current demographics is 80% Hispanic. I then moved to the City of Fresno and lived there for about 18 years. I then moved to the City of Clovis. They failed to recognize that I have lived in Fresno longer than I have lived in Clovis. With that being said, the fact that I live in a city that has less minorities then my previous city, they want you to believe that I should be disqualified for this alone.

d. **No Tangible Examples of His Appreciation for California’s Diversity:**

Being a person of color and a first generation Mexican-American, I take great offense to this. While I was in my summer break during high school, I would work in the fields. I would load the bus around 4:40am, before the sun came up. We would have to start early, because it was not unusual for the temperature in Imperial Valley to get up to 120 degrees. With the Latino population in California being about 40%, this is where I learned to appreciate the diversity of California. Working as a counselor for a group home for African American juveniles is

another time where I learned to appreciate the diversity. Upon receiving this letter, I was able to call people who know me professionally and me as a person. I have included a letter from Joseph RioFrio Mayor of Mendota (city located in the westside of Fresno County, which is predominantly migrant and agriculture). I also have included a letter from Elizabeth Kipp who is the Tribal Chairperson for the Native-American Tribe of Big Sandy Rancheria.

In closing, I would love to have the opportunity to be a member of the California Redistricting Commission. I believe that I explained why I would be a great asset to the Commission. I am very disheartened that somebody would question my characteristics, impartiality and appreciation for diversity without knowing me. As a person of color and a first generation Mexican-American, I hope the Commission can see that I am very sincere, honest and truthful person.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Richard Gallegos

Los Angeles Times Article Link:

<https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1993-04-20-mn-25036-story.html>



August 5, 2020

Re: Richard Gallegos

To Whom it May Concern;

On behalf of Big Sandy Rancheria, a Federally Recognized Tribe, within in Fresno County, I share this letter of support for Richard Gallegos.

I have known Mr. Gallegos since 2004, as he was involved in investigative cases over the years, which I witnessed Mr. Gallegos to be very professional and fair in his mannerisms and involvement with all individuals involved.

Mr. Gallegos would be a great asset to any organization, as he has portrayed, great respect to all ethnic groups, especially within the American Indian community.

Please contact me at 559-374-0066 ext 212 or by email Lkipp@bsrnation.com if you have any further questions.

Respectfully

Elizabeth D. Kipp,
Tribal Chairperson

Elizabeth D. Kipp
Chairperson

Pearl A. Hutchins
Vice Chair

Matthew Munoz
Secretary

Leann Anguiano
Treasurer

Samuel C. Atwell
Member-At-Large

37387 Auberry Mission Rd, PO Box 337, Auberry CA 93602

Phone: (559) 374-0066

Fax: (559) 855-5509

To whom it may concern:
Re: Mr. Richard Gallegos

I write these words with the utmost confidence as they pertain to a person I have known for many years. I became acquainted with Richard when he was a Deputy Sheriff in Western County, in Mendota California where I served 5-terms on the Mendota City Council, 2-terms as Mayor. Richard would stop by our family store regularly. His father a store owner too, in Brawley California, my mother born in Brawley. As you can imagine with so much in common, we immediately became friends. While seeing Richard interact with my patrons, especially children, I could see that he was a perfect fit for our community which is nearly one hundred percent Hispanic. We were fortunate to have such a great role model for our youth. In my official capacity as an elected official in Mendota I was also in a position to observe Deputy Sheriff Gallegos as our law enforcement officer. Deputy Gallegos was professional, capable and well liked by the community. Please take my words to heart. Mr. Richard Gallegos is my friend, he is a good humble man, an asset to anyone or any particular setting.

Thank you

Joseph R. Riofrio

[REDACTED]

Mendota Ca 93640

[REDACTED]