

Sharon Brumley

From: gmb1943 [gmb1943@sbcglobal.net]
Sent: Monday, September 07, 2009 10:37 AM
To: Sharon Brumley
Cc: Assemblymember.Duvall@assembly.ca.gov
Subject: Proposed regulations, Redistricting Commission

TWIMC:

Upon reviewing the current proposal for the selection of the Redistricting Commission, I feel the following specific requirements need to be added to Phase I and/or Phase II of the process:

1. Convicted felons should not be members of this commission. Especially: murderers, rapists and child molesters. They can not and should not vote and should not be part of the commission.
2. Non-citizens should not be members of this commission. They also, can not vote and should not be part of the commission.
3. All members of the commission should be required to communicate both verbally and in writing using the English language. Both verbal and writing skills are a requirement outlined in your proposed rules. If the commission is to work as a cohesive unit, the commissioners should all speak and write in a common language. English seems to be the most appropriate.

These seem like obvious issues. However, history has shown that, if issues like these are not specifically identified the lawyers and special interest groups will find away around them.

Sincerely yours,

GM Bisbee

PS: I attended the Fresno meeting and gave a verbal presentation, which was documented on your site. However, my follow up letter was not identified nor documented on your site. I do not know if it was never received, omitted intentionally, due to lack of relevance, or an oversight on your part.

I am attaching a copy of that correspondence so that you may take whatever action is appropriate.

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February 25, 2009

Bureau of State Audits
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Subject: Interested Persons Meetings

TWIMC:

My name is Mike Bisbee. I am a retired telephone employee, with post retirement experience as a Communications Contractor, Business Consultant and Real-estate Broker. I attended the February 19th, Proposition 11, discussion in Fresno. I presented verbal testimony at that meeting and promised to follow-up with a written version of my testimony.

The following constitutes a written summary of that testimony. Also included are some additional thoughts that have come to the forefront through follow-up discussions with friends, family and neighbors, subsequent to the February 19th meeting.

Representatives from AARP, the League of Women Voters and the Hispanic community expressed the importance of Commission diversity. Their position reflects the importance of ethnic, gender, religious and age diversity.

However, I feel more weighting should be put on political diversity. This will provide a pool of candidates that responds to the basic purpose of Proposition 11, more competitive elections. Following this approach will provide a pool more concerned about American and Californian principles and less concerned about any single group, or any multiplicity of single groups.

Once a competitive pool is established, any statistically based random selection process will result in an appropriate and representative Commission.

The next thing to consider is the criteria to set up this Commission. Section 2, of the Proposition: "Findings and Purpose", provide us with a clue. While there are many words here, the bottom line is: 1) get the politicians out of the process and 2) make elections more competitive.

The proposition, itself, establishes many standards to minimize political impact. It eliminates friends, family and political associates from the process. This is a good first step, however, also needed as part of the application process is: The elimination of current and past felons, a check for proof of citizenship, USA and California, and the inclusion of only financially responsible individuals.

Additionally, the application process should seek to give preference to individuals who: want to serve (*Self-Nomination*), are able to serve (physically, emotionally, and psychologically) and are qualified to serve (proper skill sets).

Self-Nomination:

It is important that individuals serving on the Commission want to serve. The best way to accomplish this is to select Commissioners who volunteer for the position through Self-Nomination. Advertise these positions in newspapers, magazines, on Television and on the Internet. Make applications available through a call-in number, on the Auditor's Web Site and at Governmental Sites around the State.

If after screening "Self Nominees", using all applicable criteria, a reasonable statistical representation is not available; then and only then should one consider the use of other sources for recommendations (For example, members of the State Legislature).

Ability to Serve:

Serving on the Commission will be a full time responsibility for up to nine (9) months. This will require all members to be free from other commitments. Anyone with commitments, outside of the Commission, interfering with the full execution of responsibilities should not be on the Commission.

Additionally, the selection panel should exclude felons, alcoholics, drug addicts, and individuals with a mental disease from the application process. This may require that the panel have access to professionals in these fields as consultants in the selection process.

Finally, members of the Commission should be US citizens, have no foreclosures or bankruptcies in the past ten (10) years, be able to pass a security screening and qualify for bonding.

These considerations will require the selection Panel to do background checks on each applicant and personally interview each individual.

Skill Sets:

This is a more complicated issue, as it requires preset notions on the make-up of the final Commission. Do we want the Commission to be full of managers who oversee a large staff of consultants and analysts with the technical skills necessary to prepare the final maps? Alternatively, do we want the Commission to be full of analysts and technicians who oversee a small staff of consultants and associates and are able to prepare the final maps themselves? On the other hand, do we want a mix of managers and technicians with the managerial, analytical and technical knowledge necessary to become personally involved with the implementation of the final maps while managing supportive staff personnel and professional consultants?

Whichever one prefers, to overcome the randomness of the final selections, one must include a thorough mix of candidates with appropriate characteristics and backgrounds. While many will want this to be completely open to all, some basic skills are necessary. They include the ability to manage the personnel and problem universe, quantify the problem, analyze the data and develop a final solution.

If the Commission is to select and manage a staff, supervise a group of consultants and develop an appropriate product, it must contain individuals with professional management skills. To quantify the problem at hand, it must contain statisticians, and/or mathematicians. To analyze the data, it must contain engineers, architects and/or accountants. To develop the final decision, it must contain digital mapping and computer experts and willing decision makers.

The purpose of Proposition 11 is to provide a competitive political environment. In this environment, a candidate of any political party has a fair opportunity of success, regardless of political affiliation, ethnicity, gender, religion, or age. The people of California have chosen this route in an attempt to reach this goal.

As the final Commission will be determined through a random selection process, the selection pool needs to contain the proper mix of candidates. This mix needs to emphasize political affiliation before considering other diversities. While there will be a lot of pressure put on ethnic and gender diversity, more consideration needs to be put on Self-Nomination, Ability-to-Serve and Proper Skill Sets.

If you have questions or want clarifications about any of these points, please call.

Sincerely yours,

G. M. (Mike) Bisbee.

PS: Please include me on your mailing list so I may stay up-to-date on the status of this project.

CC: Michael D. Duvall, Assemblyman, 72nd Assembly District