

BEFORE THE
CALIFORNIA BUREAU OF STATE AUDITS (BSA)

In the matter of

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

555 Capitol Mall, Suite 300
Sacramento, CA 95814

WEDNESDAY, August 18, 2010
9:15 A.M.

Reported by:
Kent Odell

APPEARANCES

Members Present

Nasir Ahmadi, Meeting Chair

Mary Camacho, Vice Chair

Kerri Spano, Panel Member

Staff Present

Donna Neville, Panel Counsel

Diane Hamel, Executive Secretary

Interviewees

Edward J. Scheidegger

Samuel Torres

Lilbert "Gil" R. Ontai

Robert Y. Gonzales

Charles E. Starr

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

2 MS. NEVILLE: Good morning. It's 9:15 a.m. and we
3 are on the record, and Mr. Scheidegger, is it
4 "Scheidegger?"

5 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: Yes.

6 MS. NEVILLE: Welcome. We are ready to begin and
7 we are going to start with the five standard questions.
8 The first question is: What specific skills do you
9 believe a good Commissioner should possess? Of those
10 skills, which do you possess? Which do you not possess,
11 and how will you compensate for it? Is there anything in
12 your life that would prohibit or impair your ability to
13 perform the duties of a Commissioner?

14 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: Well, thank you, Ms. Neville.
15 And good morning to all of you. I appreciate this
16 opportunity. I am an enthusiastic supporter of this
17 effort and glad to be a part of it.

18 The way I'd like to respond to this first
19 question, if it is okay with you, is I'd like to review
20 what I think are the most significant skill sets required,
21 and then relate my particular experience to each of those.
22 First of all, I think it is imperative that the members of
23 the Commission exhibit skills in conducting and
24 participating in public hearings. This is important
25 because we need to gain insight and present a proper image

1 to the citizen's citizenry out there in terms of our
2 efforts. I have skills and experience in this area that I
3 would like to relate. First of all, I worked in the
4 Legislative Liaison Office of the Attorney General's
5 Office for a couple of sessions. During that time, I
6 participated actively in legislative hearings and had to
7 work out compromise in terms of legislative proposals, and
8 worked very closely with the public in securing what the
9 best means of securing legislation was.

10 I also had an opportunity to participate and, in
11 fact, chair some statewide task forces as the Chief of the
12 Bureau of Forensic Services in the Attorney General's
13 Office. I chaired the Statewide DNA Task Force, which was
14 comprised of law enforcement, prosecutors, the defense,
15 scientists, and interested citizens in terms of securing
16 the legislation that enabled us to implement the Statewide
17 DNA Program that is in effect today.

18 I was also a participant, a representative of the
19 Attorney General's Domestic Violence Task Force a few
20 years ago, a statewide task force that conducted meetings
21 up and down the State to try and identify what the most
22 significant issues were relating to domestic violence, and
23 how the criminal justice system, in particular, could
24 intercede and be most effective in terms of providing
25 information - pardon me - intervention and relief to this

1 serious problem.

2 I think that, in all these efforts, it was
3 important to show impartiality, to allow various points of
4 view to be introduced, to be patient in many cases, and to
5 really get people to feel they were encouraged to
6 participate and offer the most that they could to the
7 product.

8 In terms of data comprehension, which is my next
9 area that I think is an important skill set for
10 Commissioners, I think that I have tremendous background
11 and experience in this area relating to my experience as
12 the Chief of the Bureau of Forensics - excuse me - Bureau
13 of Criminal Statistics, also. I ran the AG's Criminal
14 Statistics Unit for a few years and we were responsible
15 for gathering statewide data on crimes, arrests and
16 dispositions, analyzing those data, and publishing them,
17 making them available both throughout the state and
18 reporting them to the FBI for national data. It's
19 important to understand how data are gathered, to be able
20 to look at data and see whether or not it's tangible,
21 whether or not it's valid, whether or not it's effective.

22 We prepared presentations of data, which I think
23 is another relevant skill set. We didn't do mapping, but
24 we provided the input in terms of crimes by geography, by
25 race, by various demographics, that enabled the mapping to

1 be done by those that needed to do that.

2 A third skill set that I think is critical is
3 decision-making and consensus building. And here again, I
4 think I have a lot of relevant experience. In the
5 Legislative Affairs Unit, I'm sure most of you know that
6 compromise is the essence of securing legislation, and
7 being able to negotiate with people of similar views, as
8 well as people of divergent views, to get the best product
9 was critical.

10 I also had occasion to, for five years, I was the
11 CEO of the Western Identification Network, which is a
12 consortium of nine states that rely on this service for
13 identification of information services. And this enabled
14 me to move outside of the statewide service experience I
15 had in California in dealing with these states. We dealt
16 with representatives of large urban areas to small rural
17 areas, so my perspective is broad in terms of California,
18 it is also outside of California.

19 I also chaired a National Task Force, which was
20 responsible for revising the criminal history record, or
21 rap sheet. This task force was comprised of
22 representatives from 13 states, as well as the FBI, and
23 various other Federal agencies. And, again, a good deal
24 of input from the public in terms of what was needed, what
25 concerns were there in terms of safeguarding information,

1 and we successfully modeled a new rap sheet which is in
2 use today.

3 The fourth element that I'd like to relate to is
4 management skills in state government, and basically, as
5 you can see by my application, I've had extensive
6 experience in managing large statewide organizations,
7 which I think applies very much to some of the initial at
8 least efforts that will be undertaken by this Commission.

9 One of the things in relating my management
10 experience that I want to add is that I'm very proud of
11 the fact that I received the Attorney General's Award for
12 Excellence in Affirmative Action during the course of my
13 career because of efforts that we have made in focus
14 recruitment and retention and promotions.

15 I don't think I'm lacking in any skills, and I
16 have nothing to prohibit my fulfilling the obligations of
17 this Commission.

18 MS. NEVILLE: Describe a circumstance from your
19 personal experience where you had to work with others to
20 resolve a conflict or difference of opinion. Please
21 describe the issue and explain your role in addressing and
22 resolving the conflict, and if you are selected to serve
23 on the Citizens Redistricting Commission, tell us how you
24 would resolve conflicts that may arise among the
25 Commissioners, your fellow Commissioners.

1 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: Thank you. The circumstance
2 that I would use to illustrate the skill sets that I bring
3 to this particular area, as Chief of the Bureau of
4 Forensic Services, I was responsible, as I mentioned
5 earlier, for securing the legislation implementing the
6 Statewide DNA Program. At the outset, while many of us
7 were excited about the opportunities that DNA would
8 provide, there was a lot of concern by a lot of users, and
9 interface members of the Criminal Justice community.
10 Certainly, the defense was concerned about how this
11 information would be used. The public was concerned as to
12 whether or not we were going to go beyond the application
13 that was stated of the data. Scientists were concerned as
14 to whether or not good science was going to be applied
15 when a bunch of cops started using this highly technical
16 field.

17 Now, I need to say that I'm not a lawyer, I'm not
18 a scientist, so the question was, how are we going to deal
19 with these concerns and, ultimately, the important thing
20 in dealing with concerns - for this Commission, or the DNA
21 Program - is to get the best product, how are we going to
22 do that? And what we did was we formed a statewide task
23 force that I chaired. It was comprised of representatives
24 of the broadest spectrum possible. We had defense teams,
25 we had scientists, we had citizens, and we went up and

1 down the State and got input on what concerns were,
2 objectified the concerns, and then dealt with them
3 sufficiently to where the legislation passed.

4 And a lot of the offshoots of this were really
5 very positive, and they relate, again, to the efforts of
6 this Commission; for example, the scientific concerns got
7 us to the point of discourse where we placed the first DNA
8 laboratory on Cal, at the campus. We had scientists from
9 Cal on the Board and they helped us overcome those
10 concerns by having the proximity and the relationship with
11 them. Again, I think that's a real benefit of having open
12 public forums. It's interesting, you know, today the DNA
13 program is very functional, very successful, and one of
14 the things that I enjoy pointing at in overcoming the
15 early concerns, is that actually more people are cleared
16 today by the use of DNA than are convicted.

17 My role was to factually identify the issues, make
18 sure that the debate was focused on the facts, and then to
19 try and speak to those issues and see what could be done
20 from both sides on each of the issues, to each compromise
21 and address them. And, again, we successfully did that.

22 In dealing with conflict, I try to objectify the
23 issues, never personalize the issues, delineate the
24 differences, and actualize them as much as possible,
25 develop alternatives, debate those alternatives, and seek

1 compromise. And I think that has been very effective.

2 MS. NEVILLE: How will the Commission's work
3 impact the State? Which of these impacts will improve the
4 State the most? And is there any potential for the
5 Commission's work to harm the State? And if so, how?

6 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: The Commission's work is going
7 to have a tremendous impact on the State. I believe in
8 Democracy, but there's a crisis in Democracy in this state
9 now. When you look at voter turnout, when you look at
10 polls, and when you just simply realize how low voter
11 confidence is, it has reached crisis proportions.
12 Democracy is great, as long as it really is reflective of
13 the people's will and the people's participation. And I
14 think what is happening with all of this dissatisfaction
15 that's occurring by the public in government today,
16 unfortunately we're not reaching our maximum capability
17 with Democracy because people are disenfranchised. And
18 the apathy is lessening the value.

19 I think what the Commission needs to do to
20 maximize its efforts is to maximize participation, get
21 people franchised with the process, make sure that the
22 process is fair, that the products are fair, that
23 communities of interest are sufficiently identified and
24 brought into the process, and I think that what will
25 result from that will be a more responsive and

1 representative form of government in the state.

2 The potential harm? If those things don't happen,
3 if the Commission's work is viewed as behind doors, not
4 transparent, if it's politicized, if it's seen as another
5 "here we go" sort of thing, I think with this bad starting
6 point in terms of voters' consideration of the system,
7 it's going to get really worse. And so, there's a
8 tremendous risk in this process. That we assure that the
9 product is fair, open, that the right people are involved,
10 and by when I say "the right people," I mean the broadest
11 extent of people, and that the product is seen as fair and
12 reasonable.

13 MS. NEVILLE: Describe a situation where you had
14 to work as a part of a group to achieve a common goal,
15 tell us about the goal, describe your role within the
16 group, and tell us how the group worked or did not work
17 collaboratively to achieve that common goal. And if
18 you're selected to serve on the Citizens Redistricting
19 Commission, tell us what you would do to foster
20 collaboration among your fellow Commissioners.

21 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: During the course of my career,
22 I went through many Attorneys General; one of them, when
23 he came on board, asked that a group be formed of Senior
24 Managers in the Division of Law Enforcement, an
25 organization of about 2,500 people, and basically look at

1 restructuring the Division based upon what our clients
2 needed and wanted, which I think is a comparable sort of
3 exercise, if you will; in other words, not just having the
4 Legislature redraw boundaries, but have the organization
5 go out to our clients and ask them how they would like the
6 services to be provided, what priorities are, and what
7 really is important. A team was formed of about 13 senior
8 members representing all of the areas of the Division and,
9 as you might imagine, when the team came together, there
10 was a good deal of contention. Everybody was trying to
11 protect their area, "Mine's more important than yours,"
12 "Narcotics is more important than...", whatever.

13 And it was very difficult for us at first to get
14 people focused and get the right process going. So, what
15 we did is we objectified the process and we made it as
16 open as possible. We developed a survey that we sent out
17 to all of our major clients, police, sheriffs,
18 prosecutors, courts, public defenders, and then we held
19 hearings up and down the State, and we solicited broad-
20 based objective input. And we took this input and
21 quantified it, put it together in a way that you could
22 look at it very clearly in terms of where the yardsticks
23 were placed, in terms of the significance, so the services
24 from each of our client areas.

25 MS. HAMEL: Five minutes.

1 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: Thank you. The data was used
2 for group discussions and we prepared proposals for the
3 AG's review, and then went back out to the clients and got
4 their buy-off on it. It was very successful. To foster
5 collaboration, we gathered valid data for Department of
6 Finance, Census, we went to public hearings, we did a
7 survey, and we objectified it and measured it very
8 seriously.

9 MS. NEVILLE: A considerable amount of the
10 Commission's work will involve meeting with people from
11 all over California who come from very different
12 backgrounds and very different perspectives. If you are
13 selected to serve on the Commission, tell us about the
14 specific skills you possess that will allow you to be
15 effective in interacting with the public.

16 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: Well, I have a long -- not
17 distinguished -- career in statewide public service. And
18 I worked, thus, in every area of the State, extensively.
19 First of all, specific to this process, again, I worked
20 with the Legislature and, in doing that, you have to work
21 with constituents of all types to be successful. I
22 participated in the AG's Domestic Violence Task Force
23 where, again, we held hearings up and down the State, and
24 solicited input from every aspect concerned with this
25 problem. I ran statewide operations and, again, I went to

1 another organization and was responsible for that, which
2 was outside of the State.

3 You know, it's interesting, one of the things I
4 want to say on this is that, during the course of my
5 career, I worked with an Attorney General who was very
6 interested in Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity,
7 and he stressed that with the Senior Managers. And so we
8 started developing various yardsticks and measurements to
9 ensure that we were successful in these efforts. And
10 because, I guess, of that emphasis, and because of the
11 reality that ensued from it, my Assistant Chief was an
12 African-American, and the woman that I ended up hiring to
13 head the first DNA Program was a real testament to it,
14 which had been formerly a predominantly male environment.
15 So I guess what I want to say is that I learned the value
16 of these sorts of applications of diversity and emphasis
17 on diversity.

18 MS. NEVILLE: Thank you. Mr. Ahmadi, your 20
19 minutes.

20 CHAIR AHMADI: Yes, thank you. Good morning, Mr.
21 Scheidegger.

22 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: Good morning, Mr. Ahmadi.

23 CHAIR AHMADI: I'm going to start off with a few
24 follow-up questions on your statements in response to the
25 standard questions.

1 You mentioned a couple of times objective findings
2 of data, or the concerns. How is that skill useful to
3 your work as a Commissioner, should you be selected?

4 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: The Commissioners, hopefully,
5 are going to be confronted, if you will, with a tremendous
6 amount of information. We are going to be looking at
7 population data, we're going to be looking at race,
8 ethnicity, we're going to be looking at communities of
9 interest, we're going to be looking at voting patterns, we
10 are going to be looking at geographical boundaries, etc.

11 What I think is important is that people that are
12 evaluating data don't just simply accept it, but look for
13 the relevance, look for the source, look for the
14 significance, if you will. Let me give you an example, if
15 I might, about one of my concerns with data. One of the
16 things that is often pointed to in my field is
17 victimization data. And there simply are not any good
18 sources of victimization data out there. And,
19 unfortunately, one of the main sources that are used for
20 victimization data are surveys. So, if I go out in the
21 field and I say, "Have you ever been a victim of a crime,"
22 well, just about any of us are going to say, "Yeah, I've
23 been a victim of a crime." Well, but the fact is, as it
24 relates to the purpose and use of the data, meaning, "Have
25 you been a victim of a crime in a particular area, as a

1 representative of a particular gender, as a representative
2 of a particular community," whatever, it may not matter or
3 be relevant to the question because you were a victim of a
4 crime and that somebody didn't stop when you were crossing
5 the street? That's not something that is relevant to what
6 we are looking at. So, I think being able to understand
7 data and understand its pertinence and relevance is very
8 important.

9 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you, sir. How would you
10 maximize participation of the public in the Commission's
11 work?

12 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: A couple of things in my mind,
13 first of all, our outreach initially is going to be
14 critical. It's going to be critical that, before we
15 schedule these hearings, we do all that we can to ensure
16 that we have the greatest amount of diversity and
17 representation possible for those communities that we are
18 representing. And so, we're going to have to give a lot
19 of thought to how we do that. I mean, if we're going to
20 the rural communities of Northern California, maybe we
21 want to contact the Grange, you know, if we're going to
22 Orange County, we certainly will want to contact groups
23 that are involved with the Southeast Asian community. My
24 point is that we want to use a lot of effort to schedule
25 these and make sure we get maximum input and

1 participation.

2 Secondly, in terms of participation, specifically,
3 I think that how a panel conducts themselves and reacts is
4 very critical. Again, having done this, I think it's
5 important that panel members attempt to establish rapport
6 with those who are speaking. I've been on that side of
7 the Board where you are and, certainly, it's important
8 that - it's intimidating to be on this side. I'm
9 intimidated right now. And it's important that you have
10 an air about you, that exudes outreach, and compassion,
11 that you listen whether or not I'm saying what you want to
12 hear, that you give me the impression that what I'm saying
13 is significant, and that your actions show that you've
14 been listening. What I mean by that is that the follow-
15 up, that the reports, and the data that are gathered from
16 those hearings, reflect divergent views as much as
17 possible.

18 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you, sir. As you know, the
19 Commission has such a short timeframe, about eight and a
20 half months to get the product out which are the maps.
21 Have you thought about what might be the most efficient
22 approach to get the public input? And how important is
23 that? And basically, you know, if you can help us with
24 your thoughts about, you know, what would the few first
25 days or weeks being on the Commission will be like?

1 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: The timeframe is scary. But it
2 can be done. We worked in lots of compact timeframes
3 before. As I understand it, you know, the first eight,
4 their goal is going to be to set about to select the
5 remaining six Commissioners as soon as possible, and I
6 think that's critical because you want to have full
7 participation as soon as possible. And then, I think
8 staffing, and I think getting the staff on board as
9 quickly as possible to be a part of this team is critical.
10 In terms of a project management for this, I think what
11 you do is you start at the end. In September, there are
12 three reports that are due, and that product is the first
13 milestone that we set. And then we look at what the other
14 major objectives of the program are, for example, the
15 Census data, we want to look at the Census data. Well,
16 the Census data are not going to be available until April,
17 and my experience in that is that, good luck if you're
18 looking for April 1st. But, you know, there are some
19 alternatives, I'm digressing here if I may for just a
20 minute.

21 CHAIR AHMADI: Sure.

22 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: To that, that I'd like to see
23 the Commission look at, for example, the Department of
24 Finance has tremendous geographical and demographic data
25 available that the Commission might want to look at as

1 some initial factors to be considered. Now, I think all
2 of that would have to be verified with the actual Census
3 data later on, but I think the use of Department of
4 Finance's projections, which go up to 20 years and which
5 include the important not only geographic boundaries, but
6 the demographics within the geography, in other words,
7 gender, race, etc., for the areas should be looked at; so,
8 the Department of Finance, and going different ways where
9 we can to get there as quickly as possible.

10 So, anyway, we have our end milestone, which is
11 the submission of the reports. We have things that we
12 can't control, like when we are going to get DOF Census
13 information. We have things we can control, for example,
14 the hearings. And I think identifying as soon as possible
15 where the hearings should and could be scheduled, and
16 getting out into the community to find out who we need to
17 invite, to ensure the maximum inclusion as quickly as
18 possible. I would say that we probably would want to
19 schedule hearings before we got the DOF information
20 because we're going to just be waiting anyway. And then
21 take the hearing information, which I think is going to be
22 vital citizen input, again, try to quantify and objectify
23 that, get the Census data, apply that to what the hearing
24 information was, and then we're going to have to - the
25 next milestone would be the deliberation and negotiations

1 that the Commission would have to undertake to arrive at
2 the boundaries. But, I think you would have, as I think I
3 just said, about five milestones, you start at the end,
4 back up, plug in what you can control, and then place the
5 other milestones into the area that remains. Did I answer
6 your question?

7 CHAIR AHMADI: Yes, thank you, sir.

8 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: Yes, sir.

9 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you. It has been a long time
10 since you worked with the Legislature and staff as
11 Department of Justice Advocate. Are you still in touch
12 with them, or with any of them?

13 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: No, I'm not. It has been a long
14 time - gray hair. It's been over 20 years. It was a
15 great experience. I didn't get the job because I was
16 political, and I retained my interest and contacts with
17 law enforcement personnel throughout the country, but not
18 in the legislative process in any way.

19 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you. You say that, in the
20 past, many individuals have not participated in the
21 electoral process to the desired degree, due to social,
22 economic, racial, or geographical limitations. How have
23 these limitations contributed to the lack of participation
24 in the recent years? And how would you go about
25 considering those limitations and resolving it?

1 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: Well, I think the first element
2 in answering your question would be apathy. I think - and
3 that bears directly on this effort, and that's why I'm
4 excited about this effort. The fact of the matter is that
5 a lot of people have not felt a part of the process. The
6 way boundaries in some cases have been drawn, the
7 representatives are not their representatives, and they
8 don't represent what their concerns are, they're not
9 speaking for their community of interest. They're not
10 representing what matters to them. And if they're not
11 representing me, what's the point of being involved? Why
12 should I vote?

13 I think there have been other economic issues in
14 terms of people's ability to get time off from work, and
15 vote, and actually get involved, but I think the critical
16 issue is simply franchisement, if you will, franchisement
17 with the Democratic process. And that's why I'm excited
18 about this effort, because I want to do what we can do to
19 get all people involved because that's how we get the best
20 process, the best result, and the best functioning State.

21 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you, sir. You have a very
22 long career, a distinguished career, being part of an
23 agency that enforces the nation's law, or the state law.
24 Let me hear, or let us hear from you, what are your
25 thoughts about undocumented citizens of the state. And

1 whether or not you see yourself, should you be selected on
2 the Commission, when you are trying to get input from all
3 the citizens of the state, what kind of role would you
4 take?

5 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: Well, in terms of input, I think
6 this Commission is going to benefit from the broadest
7 input it possibly can get. You know, our goal is not to
8 make laws, our goal is not to enforce laws as members of
9 the Commission, that is, the public laws. Our goal is to
10 define the boundaries for this state in a way that will be
11 the most effective in terms of getting the most people to
12 participate in governance. The fact of the matter is that
13 there is a large proportion of the population of this
14 state that are undocumented, and however you feel about
15 that, whether or not we're doing enough, doing too much,
16 whether it's fair, etc., the fact of the matter is that
17 they are a large proportion of the population of this
18 state, and I think that is an issue that needs to be
19 included in our consideration. We're not granting the
20 vote to documented or undocumented aliens, we are simply
21 looking for input to get to the best construct, if you
22 will, of the Districts and boundaries for the State.

23 CHAIR AHMADI: Okay, thank you, sir. What would
24 you say to a person who suspects that your personal family
25 and financial relationships, commitments, or aspirations,

1 may improperly influence your redistricting decisions?

2 What would you say to that person?

3 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: Well, first of all, if anybody
4 were to say that, it would not be based on any fact or any
5 reality. And I guess I would seek from that person the
6 rationale for giving that input. I simply don't have any
7 personal aspirations at this stage of my life that would
8 benefit from participating in this Commission, other than
9 being a part of improving the participation and governance
10 in California.

11 CHAIR AHMADI: Okay, thank you very much, sir. I
12 have no more questions at this point.

13 MS. NEVILLE: Ms. Camacho.

14 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Thank you. Hello, Mr.
15 Scheidegger?

16 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: Scheidegger.

17 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Scheidegger, okay.

18 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: Good morning.

19 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: I have a few follow-up
20 questions that I just wanted to ask for a little bit of
21 clarification. One of Mr. Ahmadi's questions was about
22 how - what people should be involved and everything. You
23 stated that the issue that should be - that people should
24 be included. How would you include everyone in your work
25 as a Commissioner?

1 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: I think there are two major
2 means of inclusion that will affect this Commission, the
3 first is the public hearings. And as I think I alluded to
4 earlier, I think what's really important in the success of
5 these public hearings is the outset, the efforts at the
6 outset, and our outreach in terms of notifying the
7 broadest range possible of these hearings and letting them
8 know what's going on, what the purpose is, and inviting
9 them. And, in fact, encouraging them, if you will. You
10 know, your efforts in terms of getting people to volunteer
11 for this, for Commissioner Seats, were a great example. I
12 mean, you went to outreach committees and you went up and
13 down the state, and I think the Commission needs to do the
14 same sort of thing, and I think you do that through local
15 publications. I mean, in Orange County, there are
16 Southeast Asian Newsletters, or publications, if you will;
17 in rural California, in Northern California, there are
18 agricultural newsletters, there is the Grange, there are a
19 lot of forums that we could contact and assure maximum
20 participation and input.

21 Secondly, we talked about this transparent process
22 and I think it's important that we make this as open as
23 possible to the public, make the people feel invited
24 through e-mail, or through letters, etc., to submit their
25 concerns. You know, a lot of people may be intimidated to

1 come to a public hearing and speak, that doesn't mean that
2 they don't have vital and important information to this
3 process, and we can benefit from any means of input, so I
4 would use those two mediums and stress those for input.

5 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: After you gather all this
6 information and you kind of already alluded to how you
7 would go through the information, how would you weigh the
8 information from these public meetings that deal with
9 undocumented citizens and other areas, for example, the
10 Gay and Lesbian community? How would you weigh those when
11 you were deciding to draw those lines?

12 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: Well, whether or not I'm on the
13 Commission, I think it's important that the Commission is
14 very careful in assigning, as you say, weights to the
15 information. I use the term "objectify information" and
16 what I like to do is just simply create charts and
17 matrices of what's important, if you will. Okay, that
18 just objectifies it, and put those out there. And then,
19 in terms of weight, I'm concerned by that term because I
20 would be rather reluctant to attach, if you will,
21 subjective weights to input from one person vs. another
22 person. I think what we need to do is identify what
23 people's concerns are, identify what people feel they need
24 to see to be a participant in our Democracy, and then put
25 that out there without trying to assign more weight

1 because of somebody's background or who they represent.

2 Did I answer your question?

3 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Don't worry, I'll ask other
4 questions if need be. When you were saying "objectify,"
5 when you are objectifying this information that you
6 receive, because obviously you're going to have
7 communities of interest that are going to be dealing with
8 the Gay and Lesbian issues, the African-American issues,
9 maybe Immigration, how would you objectify that
10 information?

11 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: I think the key first step in
12 objectifying information is to try to record it
13 accurately, which you typically would do, to put
14 generalized headings, you know, a heading might be, and if
15 I could in my vernacular, "Types of Crime," okay? And
16 then, under that, you would put, you know, "Property
17 Crimes" and you would list them. And then you would
18 group, if you will, respondents or issues that relate to
19 those groups. And what that allows you to do is it allows
20 you then to further, as you go through the synthesizing
21 process, to aggregate appropriately issues and elements so
22 that they can be used. And that helps you in terms of
23 down the road seeking compromise.

24 You know, one of the things I think is going to be
25 really difficult in this, as you get into more urban

1 areas, is that the lines - I mean, the boundaries are
2 going to be more compact, the lines are going to be more
3 diffused, more difficult in terms of the representation
4 and input, and so it's important that we look for elements
5 or issues that have commonality, that we can group them
6 and successfully aggregate. Okay?

7 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Those issues, could you kind
8 of list some of those issues that you think would be on
9 your list?

10 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: Well, certainly issues that
11 relate to communities of interest, you know, whether or
12 not it's vocational sorts of things, economic sorts of
13 things, whether it's language issues, whether or not it's
14 educational issues, those sorts of things, I would think,
15 would be generalized groupings, and then, within that, we
16 would find subsets that we would put together.

17 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Thank you. You were talking
18 about transparency and that the process needed to be
19 transparent. What exactly do you mean by "transparent?"

20 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: Well, you're certainly setting a
21 good example, your meetings prior to this were public, the
22 records of those meetings are public, these interviews are
23 public, everything is being published and people are being
24 forewarned, if you will. You are able to identify what
25 you want to look at, what you're interested in, what's

1 important, and I would analogize that, if you will, to the
2 work of the Commission. I think that the Commission needs
3 to set out these milestones that I alluded to early on,
4 they need to incorporate the schedule for the hearings as
5 early as possible, outreach to people as early as
6 possible. Everything needs to be published. Everything
7 needs to be out in front. You know, one of the
8 prohibitions is any contacts or discussions outside of
9 open public forum, you know, the Bagley-Keene Act, the
10 Brown Act, I mean, I just think that making things out
11 front and open, published, letting people know in advance
12 what's coming up, these are ways that you make the process
13 transparent.

14 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: If a citizen comes up to you
15 and obviously, if you are a Commissioner, you're going to
16 be out in the public, and a citizen comes up to you not
17 during a public meeting, or during a Commission meeting,
18 and tells you their concerns, or tells you some issues
19 that could be helpful to the Commission, how would you
20 handle that?

21 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: It's a good adjunct to
22 transparency, isn't it? You know, the natural reaction
23 for all of us is to say, "Yeah, talk to me. I want to
24 hear." I don't think that's conducive to a transparent
25 process. I think what I would tell that citizen is, "You

1 know, I'm really interested in what you have to say. But
2 I'm a part of a process that has to be transparent, I'm a
3 part of a process that has to be public, and if I
4 negotiate with you in a private confine like this, then
5 whatever good you give me is going to be lost. So, for
6 the benefit and respect of what you're offering me, please
7 do this in a public way, and I would suggest a couple of
8 ways, 1) come to a hearing. Here's the schedule; 2)
9 communicate with me, you know, send something to the
10 Commission in the form of an e-mail, or a letter, whatever
11 is best for you, but because I value you, because I want
12 your input, I don't want to do this on a private basis
13 like this.

14 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Okay. You were talking about
15 that you held public meetings and public forums. Was that
16 out to the general public? Or were there specific
17 individuals that you sought for your particular needs?

18 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: Both. In terms of Domestic
19 Violence, the task force published an agenda, in other
20 words, we're going to be in these areas in these
21 timeframes, let the local individuals know as much as
22 possible, and then we asked people to come. We asked
23 Domestic Violence intervention specialists to come, we
24 asked psychologists to come, we asked law enforcement to
25 come, so we asked certain people to come and testify, but

1 we also opened it to the public because we sought public
2 input. The same thing with DNA. When we did hearing up
3 and down the state, we made sure that the defense bar came
4 because we really needed to have defense input to make
5 this thing effective. Obviously, we had the cops come.
6 We had prosecutors come. But we also, because there was
7 public concern over this, we also invited the public to
8 come and speak. So, if I may, can I answer your question
9 with a "both?"

10 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Okay, no, that's exactly. I
11 noticed that you received an award for your affirmative
12 action efforts. Could you please describe your approach
13 and the outcome associated with increasing diversity?

14 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: Well, it was a result of work
15 that I was responsible for in two assignments, one was as
16 Director of the Bureau of Medi-Cal, Fraud, and Elder Abuse
17 in the Attorney General's Office, and the other was Chief
18 of the Bureau of Forensic Services. In Forensic Services,
19 when I went in there, there was a predominantly male
20 oriented society, if you will. And what we did, I mean,
21 quite frankly, getting qualified applicants was a real
22 issue. And what we found is that there were a lot of
23 people out there, that weren't necessarily police
24 oriented, but were oriented towards public service and
25 science, so we went out and did focused recruiting at

1 various universities in California and outside of
2 California. And it resulted in not necessarily just
3 getting the traditional lines of cop-type people into the
4 business, but we were very successful at getting, if I
5 may, a lot of females who were interested in science, and
6 we were also able to get a wider range of racial ethnicity
7 into the program by doing this recruitment and expanding
8 the base, well, changing the requirements to enter the
9 field with less focus on just "copology" if you will and
10 broadening it to science.

11 In Medi-Cal fraud, we also - Medi-Cal fraud has
12 special agents, auditors, which I hired the first auditors
13 in Medi-Cal fraud - no relevance here - and attorneys, and
14 we found that, by going to the schools and letting people
15 know what we did, and letting people know that weren't -
16 you know, people at the AG's Office, they think of
17 "copology" or "lawyerology," I guess, if that's a term I
18 can use, but getting out and outreaching and finding
19 individuals of a broader range opened the door, and we got
20 more applicants, more qualified applicants, and more
21 diversified applicants, as a result.

22 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: When you went out to
23 colleges, were there certain colleges that you focused on?
24 Was it just in California? Did you go out of California?

25 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: In BFS, mostly in California.

1 And part of that, to be candid with you, there are
2 restrictions on travel. I mean, it was difficult to put
3 in an out-of-state travel request in, though, in BFS, in
4 the early days, we did go to some of the Southern Black
5 colleges. We were successful in getting out-of-state
6 travel approved and successfully recruited people.

7 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Okay. When you were talking
8 about selecting or what you would do is you would start
9 from the end and then work your way back, and the first
10 things you would do was the eight people would select the
11 remaining six. If you were one of the eight individuals,
12 what considerations would you look for in the remaining
13 six Commissioners?

14 MS. HAMEL: Five minutes.

15 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Thank you.

16 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: Well, one of the first areas
17 that I would want to meet, I would be considered about the
18 end product of the Commission, and I think the end product
19 of the Commission is largely going to be decided upon
20 people's perspective and diversity is a big part of that.
21 I would want to make sure that, as I understand it, the
22 eight are going to be largely a function of the draw, and
23 as I understand it, who knows how you control that draw?
24 So, I would expect that there's a high probability that,
25 in that draw, there are going to be some under-

1 representation, and I'm not sure which way it's going to
2 go, but the balance would be one of my first concerns in
3 terms of selection of those remaining six. And, of
4 course, that balance would be in every aspect that we're
5 looking at, gender, race, ethnicity, etc.

6 I would also want to look for balance in terms of
7 composition. I'm not going to tell you that I could
8 recite your candidate, but I will tell you that I've
9 looked at it. And, you know, it's interesting to think
10 about who these people are and what they represent, so,
11 you know, the right mix of Geographic's, the right mix of
12 background, maybe the right mix of age, those
13 considerations, because I think people -- the citizenry --
14 when making their judgments of this Commission, their
15 early judgments, and their subjective judgments, if I may,
16 I mean, it could be the greatest group, or they could come
17 up with the greatest solution imaginable, but some people
18 will be questionable just in looking at the group, so I
19 would look for balance, that would be my major issue.

20 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Thank you. That was my last
21 question.

22 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: Thank you.

23 MS. NEVILLE: Ms. Spano, your 20 minutes.

24 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Thank you. Why would you
25 feel that -- oh, good morning, sorry.

1 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: Good morning, Ms. Spano.

2 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: I didn't want to lose my
3 thought, sorry. Why would you feel that it would be
4 questionable looking at the group if it wasn't diverse?

5 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: Well, as I said, you know, the
6 end product of the group, regardless of who was on it, you
7 now, could be perfect, but I think there's going to be
8 skeptics of this effort. And I think one of the major
9 issues to guard against that skepticism and that
10 negativity is to balance the group.

11 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: So skepticism in the
12 diversity composition, you believe?

13 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: Well, I think, you know, to make
14 the group as broadly representative as possible. The
15 group is going to benefit from broad representation. I
16 mean, whether representation includes race, ethnicity,
17 gender, or geographic location, you know, I would like to
18 think that I'm a candidate that has a lot of experience up
19 and down the state. If all of the candidates end up from
20 rural Northern California, that's going to make people
21 from Southern California pretty skeptical.

22 So, I think we need to look at balance in the
23 group as much as possible to overcome that skepticism.

24 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: How would it benefit the
25 group in terms of its decision-making, not only in its

1 public appearance, but in its decision-making?

2 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: That question relates right
3 directly to the goal of this Commission. This Commission
4 is going to benefit from the broadest range of input, and
5 California's Democracy is going to benefit the most from
6 the broadest range of participation. So, to the degree
7 that I have the broadest group of fellow Commissioners,
8 that can share their experiences with me, whether it's
9 their gender, or their race, or their geography, the more
10 I'm going to benefit from the decision-making process and
11 the input that I get in terms of my own decisions.

12 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Thank you. You said
13 initially in response to one of Nasir's questions about
14 when you initially start up the Commission, if you are
15 selected as a Commissioner, outreach is critical, you'd do
16 it early on. And you said that we have to achieve the
17 greatest diversity of representation for certain areas, we
18 have to go select those areas. Why do you believe that?

19 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: Why do I believe that early
20 outreach is critical?

21 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: For certain diversity areas
22 with the greatest diversity? I remember you said that we
23 have to seek out representation in areas that represent
24 the greatest diversity, and I was curious to know why you
25 believe that.

1 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: I think the outreach effort is
2 going to be most critical and important in reaching those
3 people who have felt most disenfranchised in government.
4 And I think it's going to be imperative if the Commission
5 wants to get positive input and get input that matters,
6 that we get the maximum range of input and participation.
7 And it's not just, you know, going to where traditional
8 sources might be. As I think I alluded to, we might want
9 to be a little creative, we might want to seek out, as an
10 example, there are ethnic newspapers and newsletters in
11 areas. I believe in the Fresno area, there is a large
12 contingent of Armenian residents, and I believe that there
13 are publications in that area that, you know, we might
14 well publish our effort with a little quick ad saying
15 "this is happening."

16 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Why would you target certain
17 races like that to look at first?

18 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: Well, first of all, I don't mean
19 to exclude anybody by saying "targeting."

20 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Sure.

21 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: And I want to make sure that the
22 notice that we would publish would be to the broadest
23 range of people that everybody would know about it. But,
24 again, I think that we would want to make a little bit of
25 a special and concerted effort to attract those people who

1 might not necessarily feel the most franchise or who had
2 historically participated the most, because we are going
3 to benefit from that input, you know, define those
4 communities of interest and to get that input from them,
5 we're going to need to make sure they participate, or
6 we're not going to get their input.

7 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: I know you mentioned earlier
8 that you would actually conduct hearings in these certain
9 areas, and try to solicit input from them, the best that
10 you could, either through electronic communications,
11 through partners, or - in other ways, or in other areas
12 where they don't have the privilege of having an interest
13 group available to represent them to get their voices
14 heard, or where they don't have electronic communications,
15 how would you propose you would do that in such areas,
16 like a rural community?

17 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: Like a rural community where
18 people are a great distance from where hearings might be
19 held, where there might be less of a possibility that they
20 would be hearing about our efforts, I think what we need
21 to do is recognize the diversity in this state in our
22 approach to getting the word out, and recognize that there
23 are going to be different approaches in different areas.
24 I've referenced several times, you know, specific racial,
25 ethnic newsletters and things like that. In a rural area,

1 there are forums that are common, you know, there is a
2 Grange, there are local newsletters that are not
3 necessarily geographically boundaried [sic], they are area
4 sorts of things, so I think we need to outreach and get
5 with people that understand - I don't understand every
6 Measure, but that's the sort of help I think we would need
7 to get early on.

8 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Okay, thank you. You
9 mentioned earlier, in response to one of Nasir's
10 questions, about looking at alternatives of data because
11 the Census data wasn't going to be available until April,
12 sometime in April, and you mentioned that some of the good
13 alternatives are the Department of Finance geographic and
14 demographic data. And you said there should be initial
15 factors to be considered, to be verified later, after the
16 Census data arrive. I was curious how you would utilize
17 the Department of Finance data in your initial review to
18 assist you with the Census data and be maybe a tentative
19 plan on how to go out and tentatively focus on how you
20 would draw the lines first, for certain communities.

21 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: Well, in terms of specifics and
22 how DOF data might be used, if you go on their Website,
23 you can see that they break down population by traditional
24 means, counties, for example, and they show current and
25 projected demographics like race, okay? Now, we're going

1 to be concerned, you know, with the 14th and 15th Amendment,
2 the Civil Rights Act, etc., and balancing, okay? And if
3 we were to begin to look at boundaries as they are now,
4 for example, and identify some of the issues or concerns
5 that exist, again, prior to the hearings, even, the
6 Department of Finance information, which gives us current
7 information and projected information, as I described,
8 would be a good source to use and begin to develop some
9 tentative moves. And then, we're bound to use the Census
10 data, we should use the Census data, that's how we would
11 verify, you know, at a later point in conjunction with the
12 input from hearings and other objective and subjective
13 data. We could validate with the Census data what those
14 proposals that had been earlier described would be.

15 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Would you objectify like how
16 you described your methodology before? Would you
17 objectify the Department of Finance data? And integrate
18 any community of interest information in there?

19 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: Absolutely, I mean, that's part
20 of the process. And I don't mean to say that the
21 Department of Finance data would be the deciding factor,
22 it would be an instrument that we could use early on to
23 give us some indices as to where shifts are occurring, for
24 example.

25 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Thank you. Going back to

1 your response to Mary's question about your recruitment
2 efforts at, I believe, the Bureau of Medi-Cal Fraud and
3 BFS, you had an incredible outreach effort to the schools,
4 and in one of your responses you said that BFS, for the
5 BFS, I guess, it was mostly California recruitment because
6 of the budget constraints, however, you were able to reach
7 out to Southern Black colleges. Why was that important?
8 And why that demographic?

9 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: Well, as I indicated, the
10 Attorney General at that time made affirmative action and
11 equal employment opportunities a high priority, and we
12 were utilizing, if you will, matrices that indicated by
13 position, gender, race, etc., and to answer your question
14 directly, we were woefully underrepresented by African-
15 Americans, and so, by targeting a couple of schools, you
16 know, we had some positive results.

17 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Was the AG under scrutiny
18 because of the lack of diversity at that time?

19 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: No, as a matter of fact, it was
20 just a personal belief on his part.

21 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Do you remember what AG this
22 was under?

23 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: Yes.

24 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Would you mind telling us?

25 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: Van De Camp.

1 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Hmm, okay. You don't want to
2 tell me?

3 What was the impact of hiring more African-
4 Americans in BFS - in the production and the quality of
5 work that you were able to get out of the staff?

6 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: I didn't hear the last part.

7 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: In the quality of the work,
8 in the cohesiveness of the staff?

9 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: It was great. Once we opened
10 the door, you know, and as I indicated, the effort wasn't
11 just focused on African-Americans, it was focused very
12 heavily on women, particularly in California. And as
13 women came into the field and were successful, as African-
14 Americans came into the field and were successful, and as
15 other groups came in, we did things like recruitment
16 posters and were very careful to make sure that
17 representation was clear in the posters in terms of the
18 professionals in the field. And, you know, again, this
19 relates very much to the work of the Commission. As you
20 open the door, the door is open, and we got more diversity
21 into the field, we got excellent results in terms of their
22 success in the field, their promotion, and in terms of
23 their career paths, and we have a better product today
24 because of it.

25 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Which communities do you

1 believe you were most successful in your recruitment?

2 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: I guess I would have to say L.A.

3 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Can you tell me why?

4 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: Well, there was a concentration
5 of schools and there was, I think, more diversity in L.A.,
6 say, than in some other areas, I guess. But I think
7 primarily the concentration of the schools. And, again,
8 by looking at the minimum qualifications and focusing on
9 the science and a broader range as opposed to, you know,
10 just the typical "copology" thing, it enabled us to get a
11 broader pool in and have success.

12 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Was race and ethnicity a
13 primary factor in recruiting in these fields?

14 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: Was it a primary factor? My
15 hiring teams knew that we had objectives and that those
16 objectives were to be met, but I think quality, you know,
17 certainly meeting minimum qualifications and the qualities
18 that the applicants presented were never sacrificed.

19 MS. HAMEL: Five minutes.

20 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: What kind of qualities did
21 you look at?

22 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: Well, first of all, there were
23 certain academic requirements that needed to be met in
24 terms of qualified for Forensic Science background, but
25 beyond that, the qualities that we looked at were honesty,

1 integrity, desire for public service, and I think personal
2 qualities because criminalists have to testify, you know,
3 we were very concerned that they had the personal
4 fortitude to do that. Does that answer your question?

5 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Sure. How do you see Title 6
6 of the Civil Rights Act and the VRA working close together
7 in relation to the work of the CRC?

8 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: Well, the Civil Rights Act talks
9 about equal access regardless of race and what this effort
10 is going to do is assure that that happens, and we are
11 going to do that by looking at the demographics of the
12 Districts that are composed, and by listening to people
13 and getting their concern to assure that what we do
14 maximizes access and participation.

15 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Okay, thank you. How many
16 minutes do I have?

17 MS. HAMEL: Two and a half.

18 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Two and a half. I am going
19 to pass right now and look at my notes a little bit more
20 before posing further questions, so that will be it for me
21 right now. Thank you.

22 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: Thank you.

23 MS. NEVILLE: Panelists, are there other follow-
24 ups right now?

25 CHAIR AHMADI: I do not have any.

1 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Not at this time.

2 MS. NEVILLE: Okay. Mr. Scheidegger, tell me if
3 you could, what is the purpose of the Federal Voting
4 Rights Act of 1965? What is it designed to achieve?

5 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: To assure that there is a fair
6 and open process, that people's rights cannot be abridged
7 based upon race, color, or literacy, again, to I think
8 very closely coincide in parallel with what our efforts
9 are, to maximize access and participation.

10 MS. NEVILLE: Thank you. And there is a term of
11 art that is used in the context of that law, this term,
12 "community of interest." What is your understanding of
13 what that phrase means?

14 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: Well, you know, I think
15 community of interest has a lot of characteristics. A lot
16 of people would look at community of interest by cities
17 and counties and current boundaries; I think what is
18 important in a community of interest is shared values,
19 shared concerns, often borne of race, sexual orientation,
20 gender, commonality. The community of interest might -
21 and I think that is a real complex issue as it relates to
22 what we are going to be doing because communities of
23 interest cross traditional boundaries, you know, there are
24 large concentrations of every type of community in various
25 places of the state. But, I think what we want to do is

1 draw the boundaries in a way that the communities that are
2 representative of areas have a maximum chance to
3 participate.

4 MS. NEVILLE: Thank you. And you used the phrase
5 "traditional boundaries," and you say, in some cases,
6 those communities of interest may need to sort of cross
7 traditional boundaries. What do you mean by that?

8 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: Well, you used, I guess, kind of
9 a -

10 MS. NEVILLE: Or what is a traditional boundary in
11 your mind?

12 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: A city, a county --

13 MS. NEVILLE: Okay -

14 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: -- and so, a city or a county
15 might, if you just draw that line, it might break off,
16 part of a community of interest.

17 MS. NEVILLE: Okay, good. And so, one aspect of
18 the law in this area is that there may be circumstances
19 where, in order to comply with the law, the boundaries for
20 a district may need, under certain circumstances, to be
21 drawn in a way that really ensures the rights of certain
22 racial or ethnic minorities to elect a candidate of their
23 choice. And that can mean drawing District boundaries in
24 a way that is kind of irregular, maybe it doesn't coincide
25 neatly within the boundaries of a city because it's

1 designed to achieve a different legal goal. Is that
2 something that you're comfortable doing?

3 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: Absolutely. I don't think the
4 geometry of this is what matters. I think it's drawing
5 boundaries that are going to maximize people's
6 participation and feeling for being a part of the
7 government.

8 MS. NEVILLE: Okay, so you've talked - we've
9 talked here a lot about the data that's going to assist
10 the Commission in its work, and we've talked about
11 testimony. How do you bring those two pieces together?
12 You've got quantitative data that you're getting from the
13 Census Bureau, or Department of Finance, and then you're
14 hearing stories from people. How do you mesh those two?

15 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: Well, first of all, I think it's
16 important that you aggregate data as much as possible. In
17 other words, what you want to do is take testimony, which
18 is subjective, if you will, to a large - where there can
19 be objective information from testimony - but, to a large
20 extent, testimony is more subjective than data from the
21 Census Bureau, if you will. And I think you want to
22 categorize the data. And, if you will, to the degree
23 possible, overlay it, juxtapose it, whatever you want to
24 say, put it in a way that you can see the degree to which
25 objective data matches what people are saying, and

1 confirms suppositions, confirms people's input, if you
2 will.

3 MS. NEVILLE: So, would it be fair to say that you
4 would see the testimony as helping you to draw more
5 informed - an informed understanding of what the data is
6 telling you, that the testimony is going to help you
7 interpret the data? Or - I don't want to put words in
8 your mouth, I'm just trying to get a sense of how you
9 bring those two pieces together.

10 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: I think the testimony and the
11 data tend to validate and invalidate each other, as
12 appropriate. I think if we hear certain sets of input
13 from people, but the facts don't support it, conversely, I
14 would hope that facts -- numbers, for example, tend to
15 support people's allegations, or people's points to
16 testimony.

17 MS. NEVILLE: All right. And I just had a few
18 questions. You have mentioned a number of task forces and
19 other things that you've participated on and I just had
20 some follow-up questions related to those. You referred
21 in your application to the Statewide Domestic Violence
22 Task Force. When did you serve on that?

23 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: I believe that task force
24 occurred about four years ago.

25 MS. NEVILLE: Four years ago. Are you still

1 serving on it or -

2 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: No.

3 MS. NEVILLE: Okay, and who appointed you to serve
4 on that?

5 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: The Attorney General.

6 MS. NEVILLE: Okay, and who else participated on
7 the task force?

8 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: We had a good number of
9 practitioners, representatives of women's intervention
10 groups and shelters from throughout the state, it was
11 chaired by the City Attorney of San Diego, we had District
12 Attorneys, we had Judges, we had Defense Attorneys.

13 MS. NEVILLE: Great, and what was the end result
14 of your work? Was there a report?

15 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: A report, a commissioned report.

16 MS. NEVILLE: And who was that report provided to?
17 Was it -

18 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: Well, it was put out by the
19 Attorney General's Office and it was provided to the
20 people of the State of California. And it was very well
21 received, if you will, by the Victim's Rights groups, who
22 I believe were major, if you will, clients of this.

23 MS. NEVILLE: Great, thank you. And you also
24 refer to this national task force where you worked on the
25 National Criminal History, otherwise known as the "Rap

1 Sheets. How did you come to be appointed to that? And
2 when was your service on that?

3 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: I was the California
4 representative to a consortium known as Search Group,
5 which was a representative from every state in the Union,
6 primarily the Chiefs of the Identification and Information
7 Bureaus in each state, I was California's representative.
8 And the FBI and the CJIS Group wanted to change rap
9 sheets, they're difficult to interpret and use, so Search
10 Group appointed me as a representative from California,
11 along with 13 other members, to chair it.

12 MS. NEVILLE: Okay, Search Group, it's -

13 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: It's a national consortium that
14 is concerned with the improvement and use of criminal
15 justice information.

16 MS. NEVILLE: So it is a non-governmental entity?

17 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: It is a non-governmental - I'm
18 sorry.

19 MS. NEVILLE: Very good. And just a final
20 question. Judge Sumner, one of you letter writers, is he
21 a personal friend or a professional acquaintance?

22 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: I had the pleasure of working
23 for Allen Sumner when I represented the AG's Office to the
24 Legislature. He was the head of the Legislative Unit.
25 And Judge Sumner and I retained a personal friendship

1 since then.

2 MS. NEVILLE: Okay, great. Thank you. I have no
3 further questions. Panelists?

4 CHAIR AHMADI: Neither do I.

5 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: I don't have any questions.

6 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: No.

7 MS. NEVILLE: All right, well, thank you. You
8 have about 15 minutes left. If you wish to make a closing
9 statement, you may.

10 MR. SCHEIDEGGER: Thank you, Ms. Neville. I do.
11 I want to reiterate that I deeply appreciate this
12 opportunity. I am a deep believer in what's happening
13 here. I'm concerned about voter apathy. I'm concerned
14 about disenfranchisement by the voters with the process in
15 California. And I think this is, if you will, a last
16 great hope for this State to get back in to successful
17 government.

18 I believe in Democracy, but I believe that
19 Democracy by its very nature has to be by the widest group
20 of people participating in the process. I think too many
21 people have fallen out of the process in California and I
22 think this is a real chance to get people back in. If this
23 doesn't work, I don't even want to think about how bad
24 it's going to get.

25 Again, I thank you for your opportunity to be here

1 today, to meet with you, I offer you unqualified,
2 uncompromised, absolute dedication to this project if I
3 get this chance. Thank you.

4 MS. NEVILLE: Thank you.

5 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Thank you.

6 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you, sir.

7 MS. NEVILLE: Thank you for meeting with us today.
8 We will be back at 10:59.

9 (Off the record at 10:33 a.m.)

10 (Back on the record at 11:00 a.m.)

11 MS. NEVILLE: We're back on the record. It's
12 11:00 a.m. Good morning, Mr. Torres, and welcome.

13 MR. TORRES: Good morning.

14 MS. NEVILLE: We're going to begin with the five
15 standard questions. The first is: What specific skills
16 do you believe a good Commissioner should possess? Of
17 those, which do you possess? Which do you not possess,
18 and how will you compensate for that? And is there
19 anything in your life that would impair your ability to
20 perform the duties of a Commissioner?

21 MR. TORRES: Thank you. Good morning, Ms. Spano,
22 Ms. Camacho, Mr. Ahmadi, Counsel Neville. My name is
23 Samuel Torres and I believe a Commissioner should be
24 impartial and understand California's diverse geography
25 and socioeconomic differences.

1 A Commissioner will need to possess strong
2 analytical and leadership skills. By analytical skills, I
3 believe the Commissioner should be an effective fact
4 gatherer, be able to digest data, and come up with legally
5 defensible plans. Twenty-five years as a lawyer and
6 counselor have given me the experience, I believe, that
7 qualifies me for the Commission.

8 The Commissioner will also need to understand
9 communities of interest, those social and economic
10 interests that are common to the population of an area,
11 and that are the likely subject of legislative action.
12 The Commissioner will also need to have the ability to
13 understand the Voting Rights Act and its interplay with
14 state law.

15 Commissioners will also need to have experience in
16 group public process. They will need good administrative
17 skills and, among the leadership skills that they will
18 need, they will also need to have experience in public
19 group process. The leadership skills that I believe is
20 most critical will be one of an effective communicator,
21 not only a good public speaker, but also a good public
22 listener. The person will need to understand the public
23 process and group dynamics. The person will need to be
24 open-minded and willing to learn from others, and will
25 need to have demonstrated exceptional judgment as

1 demonstrated by their life's experiences because this
2 person will need to be a bridge builder and a peace maker
3 at times on the Commission.

4 At the end of our discussion today, I trust that
5 you will agree with me that I possess those skills. All
6 of us have skills that can be improved. In particular,
7 I'd like to know more about communities of interest
8 outside of my own areas of personal knowledge. I would
9 use the public hearings, other Commissioners, and my own
10 research to bring myself up to date on those matters.

11 While I am familiar with spreadsheets, word
12 processing, and power point software, I have not worked
13 with the current redistricting software, even though I am
14 familiar with GIS systems, having worked with those at the
15 County. I also would want to become - I understand that
16 staff will be training the Commissioners in the use of the
17 redistricting, the regulations that are proposed currently
18 include that as one of the topics.

19 As my other topic, also, that I would like to
20 improve, which is the current redistricting law, even
21 though I've been through two redistrictings, I have no
22 experience and, actually, no one has any experience in
23 implementing California's current system of redistricting.
24 I would rely on staff counsel for that, to explain the
25 nuances of the law. And, at present, I believe there is

1 nothing other than perhaps my audiologist told me I'm
2 losing a little bit of my hearing at a very certain high
3 rate and can't hear certain voices, but other than that, I
4 believe that I could make the adjustments to my time. I
5 have a desire to serve and I understand what the job
6 entails. Thank you.

7 MS. NEVILLE: Describe a circumstance from your
8 personal experience where you had to resolve a conflict or
9 difference of opinion. Please describe the issue, explain
10 your role in resolving the conflict, and if you are
11 selected to serve on the Citizens Redistricting
12 Commission, tell us what you would do to resolve conflicts
13 among your fellow Commissioners.

14 MR. TORRES: I've been involved in a lot of
15 conflict resolution. The difference of opinion I would
16 like to describe arose in 1991. The five Santa Cruz
17 County Supervisorial Districts at that time needed to be
18 redrawn. It was a major difference of opinion on how to
19 draw the Supervisorial Districts affecting the Pajaro
20 Valley and Southern Santa Cruz County. The Valley is
21 bounded by the Santa Cruz Mountains on two sides, the
22 Monterey Bay on the other, and the Pajaro River separates
23 it from Monterey County.

24 Historically, the area is a rich agricultural land
25 and has its urban hub at the City of Watsonville, which,

1 at the time, was 75 percent Spanish speaking, officially.
2 Historically, the Valley was represented by one person.
3 The 1991 redistricting would shift a portion of the Valley
4 into the adjoining northern District. The Board of
5 Supervisors directed the County Administrative Officer to
6 convene a task force; the Administrative Officer
7 designated the County Counsel, my boss, the Information
8 Technology Department head, the Elections Official, the
9 GIS Coordinator, and two Board members, as the task force.
10 I was assigned to assist the task force by my supervisor,
11 the County Counsel. I was given a specific assignment.
12 My specific assignment was to monitor the public process
13 and to perform the necessary legal analysis specific to
14 the Pajaro Valley Redistricting. At the time, I was
15 unfamiliar with redistricting law, never having gone
16 through a redistricting process.

17 I began my research by pulling cases and reading
18 scholarly articles on the policies behind redistricting.
19 I also was fortunate enough to be a member of the County
20 Counsels Association, which is the professional
21 association of the County Counsel Offices throughout the
22 State; all 58 County Counsels belong to that group.
23 Through that group, I was able to network with other
24 counsel, who were working on similar projects in similar
25 jurisdictions at the time.

1 In addition to that, I also attended training
2 sessions that were put on by MALDEF, the Mexican American
3 Legal Defense and Education Fund. They were putting on a
4 series of trainings for community leaders at the time. I
5 signed up for those. And the reason that MALDEF was
6 putting on these sessions was that they had previously
7 brought a case in the City of Watsonville. And in 1989,
8 the Federal Court of Appeals found that the City of
9 Watsonville had violated Section 2 of the Voting Rights
10 Act and ordered District Elections for Watsonville. This
11 was the background into which I went. I knew the City
12 Attorney. At these meetings, I got to meet and talk with
13 community leaders and MALDEF attorneys.

14 I personally attended all task force meetings and
15 I provided legal analysis to the County Counsel. I
16 analyzed all the Pajaro Valley options and created dozens
17 of options, trying to figure out different ways that
18 individuals might want to split the District, and what the
19 consequences of those might be. I worked with the task
20 force members to understand the public comments, and we
21 reviewed the six maps that were turned into the task
22 force. After the Commission worked together to review
23 those maps, we presented the final map to the Board of
24 Supervisors, who, after another series of public hearings,
25 approved the maps, and there was no public - no major

1 public dissent, and there were no legal challenges at all
2 at that time.

3 Conflict resolution, I believe that constructively
4 managed, conflict has a very high social value. It's been
5 my experience that understanding is the key, understanding
6 the people involved, the rules involved, and the substance
7 of the disagreement. Be specific and concise and clear
8 about what you are disagreeing about. Are you disagreeing
9 about where the lines should go? Or are you disagreeing
10 because of where the people are and where the population
11 is, according to those lines, and what the interests are
12 in those communities?

13 You also need to know the procedural rules of how
14 you're going to resolve your conflict. This is not like
15 the bully in the play yard who can just, with the biggest
16 voice say, "This is the way it's going to be." The
17 Constitutional provisions have specific guidelines as to
18 majority action by the Board, and even what I would call
19 Super Majority and a Bipartisan Super Majority required to
20 issue the final maps.

21 In dealing with others, I would seek first to
22 understand their position. This becomes easier for me
23 because, as a public defense attorney, basically defending
24 actions of the Board of Supervisors, I have always been
25 the second one to appear in a court. I have always had to

1 present my court after the Plaintiffs have presented their
2 case, so I am used to listening the other side to try to
3 formulate what the best position would be.

4 As we all know, impasse will arise at times, and I
5 would try to be calm, respectful, and patient. I would
6 look for areas of common agreement, and then work from
7 there. And I would defer judgment until all sides have
8 had the opportunity to make their views known. This is
9 how I would approach conflicts on the Commission. Thank
10 you.

11 MS. NEVILLE: How will the Commission's work
12 impact the State? Which of these impacts will improve the
13 State the most? And is there any potential for the
14 Commission's work to harm the State? And if so, in what
15 ways?

16 MR. TORRES: The impacts of this political
17 experiment will be far reaching on many levels. The
18 effects of redistricting span more time than the effects
19 of a typical electoral cycle of two, four, or even six
20 years. How the redistricting is done will define how key
21 reforms and policies are decided for the next decade.

22 How the Commission identifies communities of
23 interest will influence issues of education, taxation,
24 government spending, population growth, land use, resource
25 allocation, and civil rights, just to name a few.

1 Damage or harm? This is not a scientific process;
2 there are a lot of variables. We are going to be tasked
3 with placing over 37 million individuals into lots of
4 three, 40, or 80. There are a lot of variables there.
5 And even intelligent, well-intended impartialists can create
6 Districts that would dilute a community's influence, or a
7 certain portion of a community's influence. The
8 constraints faced by the Commission to achieve a legal
9 redistricting plan, which are the criteria that one must
10 follow, call for tradeoffs between the criteria. As a
11 former assessor of risks for the County of Santa Cruz, I
12 came up with a lot of negative scenarios and things that
13 could go wrong, but I would rather focus on the positive.

14 The Commission promises improvements.
15 Transparency of the process is the most important. The
16 public hearings, deliberations, should give confidence to
17 the electorate. The opportunity to observe the line
18 drawing and to submit plans of their own will ensure that
19 a broader number of options are considered. The
20 Constitutional bipartisan makeup of the Commission also
21 encourages cooperation, even though it does not guarantee
22 cooperation because there is a provision for Special
23 Masters or someone else to take over the process, should
24 the Commission not reach agreement.

25 Public awareness should also increase, as the

1 public will be educated as to the difficulty of the
2 process and the many factors that have to be taken into
3 account. Will the Commission give California a black eye?
4 Or will it positively influence the attitude of voters in
5 this state and in other states? Stay tuned.

6 MS. NEVILLE: Describe a situation where you have
7 had to work as a part of a group to achieve a common goal.
8 Tell us about the goal, describe your role within the
9 group, and tell us how the group worked or perhaps did not
10 work collaboratively to achieve that common goal. If you
11 are selected to serve on the Citizens Redistricting
12 Commission, tell us what you would do to foster
13 collaboration among your fellow Commissioners.

14 MR. TORRES: The situation I would like to
15 describe is a 2001 Santa Cruz County Supervisorial
16 Redistricting. The goal there was to come up with a
17 legally defensible redistricting plan through a sound
18 public process. The County Administrative Officer, the
19 same County Administrative Officer that, 10 years earlier,
20 had supervised the previous task force, was again on the
21 task force. And, again, the Elections Official, the
22 Information Technology Department head, the GIS
23 Coordinator, two Board Aids, instead of Board members this
24 time, and the County Counsel, were also on the task force.
25 This time, I am the County Counsel on that task force,

1 having been unanimously approved and appointed by the
2 Board of Supervisors just six months earlier as the County
3 Counsel.

4 This time, it would be my legal team doing the
5 redistricting law review and analysis and providing that
6 analysis to the Board and to the public. I participated
7 in all Board meetings, I participated in all public
8 hearings on the redistricting, and I discussed the process
9 with and answered questions for all Board members, both
10 liberal and conservative members. Once again, community
11 groups were following the process. Population shifts
12 would again require the shifting of the Supervisorial
13 Districts. I, and other task force members, met with
14 community members before the public hearings and, after
15 the public hearings, the task force reviewed proposals and
16 issued its proposed map. The Board approved that map.
17 And, again, there were no legal challenges. I'm not sure
18 that that will be the same case with the State, but our
19 goal was accomplished. It was accomplished by a very
20 bright, energetic, good hearted group of professionals, it
21 was a team effort. Everyone understood their roles, used
22 their collective skills and knowledge of the County to
23 come up with a defensible plan. I understand legal
24 deadlines. I've spent 25 years as an attorney meeting
25 deadlines, legal deadlines.

1 To foster collaboration on the Commission, I would
2 try to be a model of efficiency, calm, and a willingness
3 to take on whatever task needs to be taken on.
4 Collaboration involves leadership. Leaders come in all
5 shapes, colors, sizes, and from all backgrounds. The
6 Applicant Review Panel and California are lucky, you have
7 lots of leaders to choose from. I feel that I have been a
8 leader in my community, and I feel ready to help lead at
9 the State level. Thank you.

10 MS. NEVILLE: And finally, a considerable amount
11 of the Commission's work will involve meeting with people
12 from all over California who come from very different
13 backgrounds and very different perspectives. If you are
14 selected to serve on the Commission, tell us about the
15 specific skills you possess that will make you effective
16 at interacting with the public.

17 MS. HAMEL: Five minutes.

18 MR. TORRES: My professional career has involved
19 interacting with the public, listening and answering
20 questions, devising legally defensible action plans. I've
21 previously touched on some of those skills I believe I
22 possess, effective fact gatherer, good public communicator
23 and listener, remaining open-minded and willing to listen,
24 and most importantly, respectful of people's differences
25 and their experiences. I have been a professional

1 bilingual interviewer, a public information specialist, I
2 spent a year on the Scotts Valley General Plan Citizens
3 Advisory Committee in my community; they prepared the
4 first General Plan for the City of Scotts Valley. That
5 was a year-long process. I have been the County's Chief
6 property negotiator for public projects, and I have served
7 as the County Counsel.

8 Put another way, I feel comfortable with most
9 segments of the public, willing to listen and respectfully
10 asking the probing questions. I try to treat all people
11 with respect, whether it is interviewing Spanish speaking
12 applicants, agricultural workers for their Social Security
13 benefits in Watsonville, or interviewing college
14 professors at Berkeley for those same benefits. At the
15 County Counsel's Office and the County Administrative
16 Office, staff monitored weekly Board meetings. Often, we
17 were sent out to talk with irate members of the public, or
18 individuals who had just made a presentation to the Board
19 in order to seek out further information from these
20 individuals. I was given the opportunity to refine my
21 skills at the County Counsel's Office. One day, I would
22 find myself in jeans and a baseball cap, sitting out in an
23 apple orchard with an apple farmer, negotiating with him
24 for an easement so that the County could rebuild a bridge
25 that was adjoining his property. The next day, I would

1 look a lot like I do today with my suit, maybe downtown,
2 talking to the attorney for one of the largest property
3 owners in the County, negotiating public improvements,
4 sidewalks, curb cuts, signals, and other constructions and
5 improvements that would affect the commercial property -
6 this owner. Another day, I would find myself
7 communicating with community activists seeking public
8 records. I've been able to effectively communicate with
9 members of the public, and I am willing to use those
10 skills for the benefit of all California. Thank you.

11 MS. NEVILLE: Thank you. Mr. Ahmadi, your 20
12 minutes.

13 CHAIR AHMADI: Yes, thank you. Good morning, Mr.
14 Torres.

15 MR. TORRES: Good morning, sir.

16 CHAIR AHMADI: I would like to start with a few
17 follow-up questions on your responses that you just
18 presented. In response to standard question 1, when you
19 were describing areas that you feel that you need to
20 improve on, one of those areas, if I heard you correctly,
21 was in knowing outside of your own area of knowledge into
22 the communities of interest.

23 MR. TORRES: Yes, sir.

24 CHAIR AHMADI: Could you please elaborate on that,
25 what you mean?

1 MR. TORRES: Sure. I have lived in several
2 different parts of the State. I am more familiar with,
3 for instance, the Bay Area, where I went to school and
4 lived for a number of years. I am very familiar with the
5 coastal regions having spent 30 years living there. I am
6 not as familiar with the areas, in particular, I would
7 like more information about the Los Angeles Area. Los
8 Angeles is a very very diverse community, very very - many
9 different communities of interest there. I honestly could
10 not today draw the redistricting lines in that area by
11 myself because I'm not familiar with the differences, say,
12 I do know that, for instance, you know, there are the
13 areas of Compton, the areas of Monterey Park, there's
14 Santa Monica, there's Los Angeles, there's Pasadena,
15 Beverly Hills, but in terms of how they actually combine
16 their interests, today I could not be in a position to
17 describe that for you.

18 CHAIR AHMADI: How would you improve that -

19 MR. TORRES: As I said in my answer, I would do
20 that in one of three ways, I would rely on the
21 Commissioners on the Commission. You are going to be
22 choosing individuals with diverse - from diverse areas,
23 and I would rely on them to give me input on that. I also
24 would look myself to do my own research in terms of
25 reading, trying to find out what have been some of the

1 socioeconomic and political issues that have come to those
2 communities, and how they have reacted to those
3 communities.

4 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you. Do you think
5 communities of interest formed based on ethnicity and
6 racial commonality of the groups are more important than
7 communities of interest formed based on other elements?

8 MR. TORRES: I am sorry, on what elements?

9 CHAIR AHMADI: Other elements and factors.

10 MR. TORRES: The redistricting will have to
11 consider a number of elements. The state law, for
12 instance, lists six different categories, maybe seven, of
13 things that have to be considered, and the first ones are
14 the issues related to one vote, one person. It is
15 followed by the Voting Rights Act. And the Voting Rights
16 Act specifically does require us to consider the ethnic
17 and racial makeup of particular communities. As the
18 Supreme Court said, when it was reviewing the Voting
19 Rights Act, it made a conscious decision and it said it
20 was time to shift the balance from those that had been
21 trying to forestall the implementation of the Voting
22 Rights Act and, instead, to change the inertia; as a
23 matter of fact, the specific language is that, "Congress
24 might well decide to shift the advantage of time and
25 inertia from the perpetrators of evil to its victims."

1 And this is from the Supreme Court, following up on the
2 Congressional Declarations in the Voting Rights Act. So,
3 yes, those are important issues and items, and those are
4 not the only ones.

5 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you, sir. You also mention,
6 as part of your areas that you need to focus on and
7 improve, in response to Question 1, that you have
8 knowledge of the law related to the redistricting practice
9 is somewhat limited.

10 MR. TORRES: I didn't say it was limited, I - I am
11 sorry, I didn't mean to -

12 CHAIR AHMADI: Please clarify.

13 MR. TORRES: No, I didn't say it was limited, I
14 said that I have extensive experience in the redistricting
15 law as it existed through the year 2001.

16 CHAIR AHMADI: Correct.

17 MR. TORRES: The current Constitutional Amendment
18 that formed this Commission has not been interpreted by
19 anyone; this is the first time we will be using that. I
20 would be curious to hear counsel's position on that since
21 the law itself has phrases such as "to the extent
22 practicable," and a number of "reasonable," and a number
23 of qualifications in there. And I would like to hear what
24 counsel would have to say as to how we should interpret
25 that and how we should use that information.

1 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you for clarifying that.

2 MR. TORRES: Thank you, sir.

3 CHAIR AHMADI: My question was, just to follow on
4 that, as you stated, the Commission is allowed by the law
5 to hire consultants to provide services for the
6 Commission. What qualities would you be looking at when
7 hiring legal consultants?

8 MR. TORRES: I would be looking for a lot of the
9 same qualities that Commissioners have. I would want them
10 to be impartial, I would want them to have good analytical
11 skills and good communication skills. I believe that it
12 may be difficult to find counsel that don't have
13 experience either on the Democratic side, or the
14 Republican side, since redistricting is something that
15 happens only once every 10 years, and attorneys or any
16 other consultants can't work just every 10 years. I
17 believe that perhaps one solution, or something that I
18 would look into would be whether or not there are state
19 employees either within the Bureau, within the Secretary
20 of State, the Attorney General's Office, individuals who
21 have proven to be impartial, and understand public
22 process.

23 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you again. A follow-up on
24 your answer to standard question 3, you mentioned that
25 there is a potential for the Commission work to not to be

1 successful. Should you be selected as a Commissioner,
2 please share with us some of the steps that you would be
3 taking to ensure that the Commission's work is successful
4 and it doesn't go to the Special Masters for
5 redistricting.

6 MR. TORRES: I believe that what I would work on
7 would be, as I mentioned earlier, the collaboration, and
8 the cooperation, and the sharing of information amongst
9 the Commissioners. When individuals take a very very
10 strong position, they do this for a reason. I believe
11 that differences of opinion or conflict are very personal
12 to an individual. When someone comes as a Commissioner
13 and comes and says, "No, I believe the line of Los Angeles
14 should be drawn here, as opposed to there," there is a
15 reason for why that person believes that, and you have to
16 honor their experiences, and you have to try to understand
17 what it is that drives them to take that strong of a
18 position on that particular issue that would cause some
19 sort of stalemate or impasse on the Commission.

20 CHAIR AHMADI: What would you do if you are one of
21 the five Commissioners who disagree with the majority
22 rule?

23 MR. TORRES: I would, as is the practice in our
24 nation, majority or whatever the rules are, I've been a
25 rule follower my entire life. I would respectfully

1 dissent, I would make my position as articulately as I
2 could, I would try to persuade the other parties, but
3 failing that, I would realize that I would come out on the
4 short end of that particular discussion, but I may come
5 out on the winning end of some other discussions and
6 someone else might be in the five that is against it.

7 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you, sir. You are a member
8 of the Cesar Chavez Democratic Club?

9 MR. TORRES: Yes, I am, sir.

10 CHAIR AHMADI: Could you please tell us a little
11 bit about what that organization is about? And what is
12 your involvement? And how long have you been a member of
13 that club?

14 MR. TORRES: I have been a member of the club, I
15 think, two years. The club, I believe, was formed in 2004
16 with a specific emphasis on voter registration. The
17 Watsonville community, after the Federal Court of Appeals
18 case, has become very active, trying to involve the
19 community, and voter registration was one of the main
20 thrusts of the Cesar Chavez Club. I am an active member,
21 which means I paid my dues and have attended at least two
22 functions in a year. I would not consider myself an
23 overly active member of the club, but I've been civically
24 engaged wherever I've lived.

25 CHAIR AHMADI: How would that experience help you

1 with your work being on the Commission?

2 MR. TORRES: Well, it's given me the opportunity
3 to see a lot of young Latino leaders who have an interest
4 in being involved in the electoral process, and it would
5 help me to understand some of the comments that might come
6 from other Latino communities, or Asian communities, or
7 any other communities where the diverse people from that
8 community have begun to and want to be involved in the
9 electoral process.

10 CHAIR AHMADI: How diverse are the members of that
11 club?

12 MR. TORRES: The members of the club, again, you
13 have to keep in mind that the City of Watsonville today is
14 85 percent Latino, but the club does have a significant
15 number of non-Latino members, its current President is
16 non-Latino, as is its Secretary and Treasurer. And its
17 first Chairman was a female, a White female.

18 CHAIR AHMADI: Okay, thank you, sir. You have
19 been involved with the redistricting at the county level
20 back in 1990 and 2000, as you stated, and also in your
21 application. How do you think some of the tasks of
22 redistricting have changed since you were involved in the
23 1990 redistricting effort?

24 MR. TORRES: The most obvious change is the
25 technical assistance available. In 1990, when I went to

1 training sessions, we were literally trained with pieces
2 of paper and pen, you know? There was one exercise I
3 remember, in particular, where you would be given a
4 square, 10 X 10, and given certain characteristics within
5 each of those squares, and asked to create a certain
6 number of Districts out of those. Today, you would be
7 able to go to a computer and, through the redistricting
8 software, be able to do that. That's the biggest change.
9 There have also been a significant number of legal cases
10 defining and explaining what the redistricting process is.
11 The Voting Rights Act has not been in effect that long and
12 has not been interpreted that long; there have been a
13 number of cases since then that have clarified the role of
14 what they call "Minority Districts," and there have been
15 changes in that I believe more people are now aware of the
16 redistricting process, also.

17 CHAIR AHMADI: Okay, thank you. So, based on that
18 experience that you have, what do you see as some of the
19 primary differences between local redistricting and a
20 statewide effort of redistricting? What are some of the
21 differences?

22 MR. TORRES: Well, the major difference is the
23 size. While I do have experience in Santa Cruz, you know,
24 we were talking about doing five supervisorial districts;
25 we're talking now about doing 80 Assembly Districts, the

1 sheer size, volume, and magnitude of what we're going to
2 be asked to do. Also, I believe that Santa Cruz County
3 has a lot of different communities of interest, it has
4 conservative areas, it has inland areas, it has rural
5 areas, it has a university and a very urban area, these
6 are things that, throughout the state, you have similar,
7 but, again, I am not in any way trying to say that, just
8 because I was able to do redistricting in a small area,
9 that automatically I can do this at the state level, it's
10 a big task, it's going to need a lot of people working on
11 it, and the Commission does have 14 people working on it.

12 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you again. Obviously, you
13 have been involved with public meetings as part of your
14 work and career, and the CRC is also bound to have open
15 meetings and interaction with the public. How do you feel
16 about that?

17 MR. TORRES: The transparency is the biggest plus
18 going for the Redistricting Commission and that's what the
19 intent of the framers of the Constitutional Amendment had
20 in mind. I feel very comfortable with disclosing - let me
21 back up - I'm not sure what rules the Commission will
22 adopt exactly, or how they will work in terms of
23 communications to Commissioners, for instance, I have a
24 question about how the training for Commissioners will
25 work. There is going to be training for them, but will

1 this be open to the public? Will anyone be able to
2 observe that training? I am not familiar with such a
3 process, usually, I know that Board members, when the
4 Board of Supervisors, when the City Counsels members are
5 trained, they do go to private trainings, you know,
6 trainings that are not open to the public; that may not be
7 the case with these Commissions, I don't know. I would
8 have to rely on counsel to let me know what the parameters
9 are. I have familiarity with other Commissions - other
10 Boards - where members have to make disclosures as to who
11 was contacting them, what was the nature of that contact,
12 for instance, on the Coastal Commission and some of the
13 Regional Water Quality Control Boards that I've appeared
14 before, the members have to disclose, "Today, I spoke to
15 X, Y, and Z." The problems are going to come up, I think,
16 in terms of, I am sitting at the grocery store and one of
17 my neighbors comes up to me and says, "Samuel, how you
18 doing? I want to talk to you about this." I'm not sure,
19 you know, I don't want to be rude to my neighbor, but I
20 also will need some guidance on what might be the most
21 appropriate way to handle that. Might I be okay to listen
22 to them? And then I just need to come back to report to
23 the Commission, "Yesterday, when I was over at the Deluxe
24 Market, you know, John Phillips talked to me."

25 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you. You can go ahead.

1 MR. TORRES: I think that's the answer.

2 CHAIR AHMADI: Okay, thank you so much. Five
3 minutes? Thanks. Please allow me to ask this question.
4 What resources or individuals did you consult with in the
5 process of completing your application?

6 MR. TORRES: The resources that I used included
7 the Website for the Commission, which was very helpful, it
8 gave me all of the regulations and all of the criteria
9 that would be used. I got on the Internet. I researched
10 - I didn't go to a lot of legal research, I was
11 researching more sort of policy concerns on redistricting,
12 reading - I remember reading some articles from the Rose
13 Institute, the Institute for Governmental Studies, the
14 Brennan Center for Justice in New York, you know, these
15 types of places to kind of understand policy and
16 understand what some of the current policy concerns were.
17 I also did - I asked for a copy of the 2001 Santa Cruz
18 County Redistricting - actually, I went on the Internet
19 and pulled up the packet from that time because I had
20 forgotten some of the details as to what I had done
21 previously. In terms of individuals, my wife is probably
22 my biggest help. I did take advantage of - I was
23 contacted by two organizations, one was NALEO, the
24 Association of Locally Elected Latino Officials, I
25 probably did not give the Acronym right, but that group,

1 and by a group called Cause that specializes in the
2 Central Valley - or, excuse me, the Central Coast. I was
3 sent e-mails from those individuals, I did have one
4 session with a very bright woman from NALEO who listened
5 to my presentation and gave me some feedback on it. Other
6 than that, I have not talked to others about this.

7 CHAIR AHMADI: What were the feedback?

8 MR. TORRES: The feedback had to do with portions
9 of my presentation and ordering of the presentation, just,
10 "You might want to say this before you say that." "That
11 section there sounded..." you know, "...good." "You might
12 want to be a little clearer." Like, for instance, on my -
13 and this was several weeks ago when I talked to her, so
14 this was when I was first starting out, in putting this
15 together. So, it was very rough, my initial presentation.
16 So it helped me focus my presentation to what it is today.

17 CHAIR AHMADI: Okay, thank you so much. You also
18 mentioned that, you know, as part of your research, you
19 were looking at some policy concerns that related to
20 redistricting. Is there anything that you found out that
21 you found helpful that you want to share with us? Or --

22 MR. TORRES: You know, it was all helpful, okay?
23 Because it has been 10 years since I've looked at these
24 matters and I think it just sort of put me in the right
25 mindset for thinking about these issues.

1 MS. HAMEL: One minute.

2 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you. We have one minute.

3 MR. TORRES: That was my end to my answer.

4 CHAIR AHMADI: Okay, thank you very much.

5 MR. TORRES: Thank you.

6 CHAIR AHMADI: No more questions.

7 MS. NEVILLE: Ms. Camacho, your 20 minutes.

8 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Thank you. Hello, Mr.

9 Torres.

10 MR. TORRES: Good morning.

11 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: In one of the answers that
12 you provided, you stated that you would meet with the
13 public before some of the meetings in your 2001 Santa Cruz
14 redistricting. Which individuals or groups would you meet
15 with prior to those meetings, and why?

16 MR. TORRES: I met with - having lived in Santa
17 Cruz for as long as I have, I have a pretty good sense of
18 who are the organizations in the community that are active
19 in these areas. I also have experience from the 1991
20 redistricting. So, the groups included groups like
21 environmental groups. Santa Cruz has a very strong
22 environmental faction to it, two of the Supervisorial
23 Districts are in areas that have lots of beautiful natural
24 resources and state parks. I also met with LULAC. LULAC
25 was one of the - was actually in that year the only

1 organization that actually provided a map, and I had
2 talked with LULAC and met with LULAC back in 1991, so in
3 2000, I again contacted them and they were involved in the
4 process. I also, for example, met with the Farm Bureau.
5 The Farm Bureau had also been very active; as I said,
6 Watsonville is a very heavily agricultural area and the
7 Farm Bureau is a major player in that region, so I got
8 their input because how you would divide the line between
9 urban and rural, and how much urban to combine with how
10 much rural was something that was very close and near and
11 dear to the hearts of the Farm Bureau. Those would be
12 some of the - those are, for instance, three of the groups
13 that I met with.

14 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: I'm hoping I'm saying this
15 right, LULAC, what organization is that?

16 MR. TORRES: LULAC is an organization that has
17 been around for quite some time, they are the League of
18 United Latin American Citizens. I believe they were
19 formed right after World War II, and they are community
20 advocates for the Spanish speaking, and they are very
21 active in the Salinas area. They are not as active in
22 other areas.

23 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Was there any other
24 organizations that provided you maps? Or was LULAC the
25 only one?

1 MR. TORRES: In 2001, the Board of Supervisors
2 only received one map. In 1991, I believe we had six maps
3 that were presented to us, and I don't remember who
4 presented them.

5 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: That's okay. One of the
6 questions you were talking about is the communities of
7 influence and ensuring that they're not diluted. How
8 would you deal with a community of interest when you're
9 also dealing with population size and the Voting Rights
10 Act? Would you be comfortable with breaking up a
11 community of interest if need be? And if so, why?

12 MR. TORRES: Well, I would be comfortable breaking
13 up that community of interest if I had to because, just
14 looking at it in terms of just raw numbers, take for
15 instance that the Senate Districts will have, using round
16 numbers, say a million people, it is actually going to be
17 less than that, let's say they had a million people; well,
18 supposing that you had a community that was 50,000 people
19 that were all pretty cohesive, had similar communities of
20 interest, but you already had a million individuals that
21 were going to go into that District. My review of some of
22 the previous State redistricting has found that every
23 single redistricting has had to break up some community,
24 whether it was Solano County, or whether it was Kern
25 County at one point, my own county right now, Santa Cruz

1 County, is divided into two Assembly Districts, and we
2 have less than a quarter of a million people. I actually
3 live two houses out of one District and the District
4 starts right on my street, okay? On one side of my
5 street, my neighbors are in one Assembly District, on the
6 other side, I'm in another. A number of the people in the
7 community were upset at that, thinking that, you know,
8 "Why are you dividing the street, you know, the community
9 is now a street?" Well, I'm a pragmatist, also, I'm a
10 practical person, and I realized that just the sheer
11 numbers are going to require that some community will have
12 its influence diminished, that's what I said in my initial
13 response, and that's part of the rationale for why I
14 believe that, it's going to be inevitable. You are not
15 going to be able to make everybody happy, but you're going
16 to do the best that you can to follow the law and to
17 follow the criteria.

18 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Thank you. Can you tell us
19 about a personal or professional experience where you have
20 reached out to other communities of interest than what
21 you're familiar with?

22 MR. TORRES: Yes. I would say a community of
23 interest that I've reached out to, which is not here in
24 California, okay, but from my personal experience, my wife
25 was a 19-year-old civil rights worker in 1965, she was

1 sent to Alabama to register voters before the Voting
2 Rights Act was passed. We went back this summer to
3 Camden, Wilcox County, Alabama, and reached out to the
4 Black community there. We met with - when my wife was
5 there in 1965, there were no Blacks in any elected office,
6 and there were no Blacks voting, period, there was not a
7 single registered voter in 1965 in the entire county.
8 Today, the Sheriff, all of the Council members, and the
9 Mayor are all Blacks. We went back there and met with
10 those people. We actually put on - my wife put on a
11 training session for the Community Foundations there on
12 fundraising since that particular area is one of the
13 poorest areas in Alabama, actually, one of the poorest
14 areas in the entire nation. So, you know, we went there,
15 we identified those people, I made some good friends, and,
16 as a matter of fact, still have communications with some
17 of the elected officials back there. We were also
18 introduced to the Black Mayors of Alabama. There was a
19 conference going on at the time we were back there, and we
20 were invited to participate in that conference, and wound
21 up meeting all of the Black Mayors in Alabama. And,
22 actually, one of the people came up to my wife and thanked
23 her for having come in 1965 because she said, if it hadn't
24 been for the work that she and others like her did, she
25 probably would not be elected today. So, I feel that I

1 have reached out to other communities.

2 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: From that experience that you
3 just told us about, how would you be able to use that
4 information and that knowledge that you gained from going
5 back there and applying that to the Commission work?

6 MR. TORRES: The application to the Commission
7 would be relevant with regard to the significant Black
8 communities that might be throughout the State, especially
9 in the Los Angeles and the Bay Area. We are - most of us
10 in this room here are fortunate enough that, when you walk
11 in a room, you don't automatically have something going
12 against you, okay? It's easy to see that, when a Black
13 person walks into a room, that that person is Black. They
14 cannot hide from that. And that gives them a certain
15 history. And understanding that history and that sense of
16 history is helpful to being on the Commission since the
17 Voting Rights Act was originally devised to enfranchise
18 those Blacks, it was later changed in the '70s to include
19 others, Asians and Latinos and other national origin
20 groups.

21 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: So you feel that this
22 experience would help you go out in public meetings and
23 being able to talk to various different - various groups,
24 so, like you were saying, Compton?

25 MR. TORRES: Yes. As a matter of fact, speaking

1 of Compton, one of my letters of recommendation is from a
2 Judge in Compton, he was one of my law school classmates
3 and, you know, in terms of individuals, you know, he was
4 just recently honored by the Black Chamber of Commerce in
5 Compton, okay? I believe that both my experience there
6 and the fact that I have contacts with individuals in that
7 community, even though I am not active in that community,
8 and I would hope that the Commission would also have
9 members who can identify with or speak on behalf, or
10 present a case for those communities also. And I believe
11 that I would understand the case being made by them, for
12 them, or, for instance, Filipinos, when I went to
13 Watsonville, they had a very large Filipino population,
14 and having to learn the nuances and differences between,
15 say, an Ilocano speaking person and a Tagalong speaking
16 person. I had an office of 12 people, we had a Tagalong
17 speaking interviewer in my office that I hired, an Italian
18 from Southern California, who had been in the Peace Corps.
19 Today, he is the manager of a Social Security Office in
20 Gilroy, still working for the Government. There are other
21 diverse communities. I grew up in New York City - gotta
22 be the most diverse place in the whole world, okay? I
23 never really thought about people's differences that much
24 when I was growing up in New York because it was all over
25 the place. I could walk down the street and see the Black

1 neighborhood, I could see the Italian neighborhood, I
2 could see the Jewish neighborhood, I could see the Puerto
3 Rican neighborhood, I could see the Dominican
4 neighborhood, I could see the Cubano neighborhood, and
5 these were all people that I went to school with and
6 interacted with. I think that, even though I may not have
7 had direct experience with some of these minority groups,
8 or some of these diverse groups, rather than minority
9 groups, since we are now a majority, but even within a
10 particular group, say, taking the Asians group, you know,
11 there are at least a dozen different subsections or ways
12 to self-identify within that group. If you look at the
13 Census data, it lists, you know, Filipino, Chinese,
14 Indian, a number of different Asian groups, so there are
15 even within a group many many differences. And I am not
16 coming here to tell you that I am the one who can speak
17 for the Latino community, or for the Black community, or
18 for the Asian community, I am here as a individual who has
19 had a lot of blessings from the State of California, and I
20 want to return some of that, and working with diverse
21 people is something that I feel comfortable with, and have
22 ever since I was a little kid.

23 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Okay. In your application,
24 you stated that you're an effective, blunt, compassionate
25 negotiator and advisor, which you engaged in numerous

1 instances of conflict resolution. How do your mediation
2 skills ever - or have your mediation skills ever collided
3 with your bluntness in effecting the outcome of
4 negotiations? And then, how do you handle such
5 situations?

6 MR. TORRES: Well, you can be blunt and not be
7 obnoxious. I think that there are ways to respectfully
8 dissent, to respectfully show that you differ with
9 someone, someone might take it the wrong way. If I see
10 feedback that I'm coming across the wrong way, then I
11 might need to change my approach. I have changed my
12 approach - probably my approach today is more - it is
13 different, certainly than when I was in my '20s, but I am
14 not one to shy away from seeing a situation and saying
15 what I see. I am a lot more careful about how I say it,
16 but I do not hold back if it is something that I think is
17 important. You don't have to be blunt about everything,
18 that's not going to get you anywhere; you have to decide
19 when and where to "pick your fights" and how to state your
20 position.

21 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Okay -

22 MR. TORRES: May I give another example of
23 bluntness? "Blunt" might have been a wrong choice, you
24 know, a little too strong maybe, but, for instance, there
25 is a Supervisor, a County Supervisor, who was brand new,

1 and she and I sort of had a joke after a year, she said to
2 me, "Samuel, you've never told me I could do anything I
3 want to do. I would come in here and ask you, 'Can I set
4 this up this way? Can I do that?'" And I'd say, you
5 know, "I don't think that's going to be legal," or, "Have
6 you considered the consequences of that action? Have you
7 considered this? Have you considered that?" I think as a
8 counselor and an advisor, you have to be blunt with your
9 client, or whoever it is, in front of you.

10 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Okay. Is there - I know you
11 talked about your 1991 and 2001 Santa Cruz redistricting.
12 What additional things did you learn from that experience,
13 or those two experiences that you would be able to bring
14 to the Commission?

15 MS. HAMEL: Five minutes.

16 MR. TORRES: I think I learned the complexity of
17 the process. And I think the complexity of the process
18 and also how special interests or interests of others, I
19 don't want to use the words "special interest," but how
20 the interests of others often collide with the interest of
21 someone else, and how compromises have to be made, and
22 that I don't have all the answers. I drew, as I said
23 earlier, you know, probably a dozen maps, none of the maps
24 I drew were adopted as I drew them by the Board of
25 Supervisors, but the framework with which I approached

1 that was helpful to me in terms of dealing with them.

2 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Did you have any insights
3 into an effective way to hold public meetings from your
4 experience?

5 MR. TORRES: The public hearings that we had, we
6 had a couple of public hearings in different locations,
7 so, again, we're a small county, so we had a public
8 hearing in the South County area, we had a public hearing
9 in the North County area. The actual holding of the
10 meetings was coordinated by the Administrative Office,
11 they were the ones that scheduled and made all of the
12 arrangements. There are - what you want to do is to make
13 yourself available to the public and give them the
14 opportunity to participate. We also had outreach, there
15 was outreach in local papers, communities, community
16 groups, so outreach to some extent will also be a part of
17 the Commission's work. But now, whether the Commissioners
18 themselves are the ones doing the outreach, whether staff
19 helps them coordinate that outreach, you know, is to be
20 determined. There are going to be 13 other people who
21 will have input into how that process will work, but I
22 think what you have to do is to make a venue available for
23 people to participate, and be respectful of their
24 testimony, and be a good listener so that they feel that
25 they didn't waste their time coming down there because any

1 time someone is going to come to a public meeting, they
2 are going to be giving up a part of their life, a part of
3 their time, to come and speak to you, and you have to
4 respect that. And so you want to create an environment
5 that encourages that and that's usually done by the people
6 who are listening to the information and the nature of the
7 questions that they ask.

8 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: That was the last question.
9 Thank you.

10 MS. NEVILLE: Ms. Spano, your 20 minutes.

11 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Good morning.

12 MR. TORRES: Good morning.

13 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: You said to Ms. Camacho that
14 you changed your approach when you started being blunt,
15 but not being obnoxious in your approach, and I was
16 wondering what prompted you to change -

17 MR. TORRES: Results. It didn't work being that
18 blunt. I - when I was a young lawyer, okay, fresh out of
19 law school, I had some attitude, and I found that my
20 attitude came across the wrong way, it came across
21 disrespectful and the individuals that I was dealing with,
22 it made it harder for me to come to a resolution with
23 them, to resolve our differences, because I had
24 disrespected them in the process. And it wound up taking
25 me much longer to settle certain cases, creating all kinds

1 of complications that did not need to be there. I think,
2 through the years, I've learned the lessons on how to be
3 in public. I can guarantee you that, you know, 30 years
4 ago, I would never have been capable of standing here in
5 front of you today and answering these questions in this
6 fashion, I probably wouldn't have been here, period. So,
7 you know, we all learn through our experiences. As I said
8 earlier, you're going to be looking for people with a lot
9 of life experiences. I'm not claiming that I have all the
10 right life experiences, I have my set of life experiences.

11 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Do you feel that being - what
12 is that term you used here?

13 MR. TORRES: Nuyorican?

14 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Yes!

15 MR. TORRES: Nuyorican is a person of Puerto Rican
16 heritage that is living in New York City, okay? And so as
17 a Nuyorican, both my parents came from Puerto Rico. They
18 both came from very abject poverty. My father had a third
19 grade education. My mother was the first person to
20 graduate from her family from high school. I was the
21 first person to graduate from college from my family.
22 Puerto Ricans, my parents came there in the 1940s as a
23 mass migration of Puerto Ricans from the Island to New
24 York City following the end of the war. That experience
25 has helped me. Puerto Ricans are usually - some people

1 say we're universal donors. We get along with everybody.
2 We have great music, we have great food, and we cover the
3 entire range of skin tones. I have cousins that are on
4 the Census probably identified as Black, and I have
5 cousins that have blonde hair and blue eyes. So, growing
6 up as a Nuyorican in New York City exposed me to a lot of
7 different things that have been helpful to me through the
8 years. And I'm proud of my heritage and that's how I
9 think, you know, being a Nuyorican helps me.

10 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: What prompted you to move to
11 California?

12 MR. TORRES: The same thing that prompts a lot of
13 people, economic opportunity. I was working at the school
14 in Arizona and was working for the Social Security
15 Administration, and I took a promotion to work in
16 Sacramento as an Operations Supervisor a few blocks away
17 from where we're sitting right now. I was promoted in the
18 shortest amount of time in grade possible, I was the
19 youngest Supervisor when I got there, I spent a lot of my
20 life being the only, or the first, in whatever group I've
21 been in. And moving to California opened up a whole new
22 universe for me. I then went from Sacramento to Santa
23 Cruz, to Berkeley to school, and then back to Santa Cruz.

24 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: You mentioned earlier in one
25 of your responses that the tasks have changed since you

1 last redistricted, and in terms of legal cases, there have
2 been, you mentioned, some clarifying roles in
3 redistricting, and you mentioned minority districts, in
4 particular. And I was wondering if you can describe some
5 of those changes in the legal cases that you're aware that
6 you feel are necessary that would apply to Commission work
7 in their decision making.

8 MR. TORRES: I really haven't looked at any of the
9 cases since 2000. I deliberately did not look at them.

10 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Oh, okay.

11 MR. TORRES: But I know that the law changes, you
12 know, in my work I've had occasion, part of my daily
13 habitat when I was working was to open up the Legal
14 Journals and read cases, so I know that there have been
15 challenges in different jurisdictions, Texas, in
16 particular, some in the South, of the Voting Rights Act.
17 And those particular cases have clarified or expounded
18 upon what and how the law should be interpreted, but I
19 have not at this point gone back to review any of those
20 cases in any detail.

21 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Okay. What parts of the VRA
22 are critical to redistricting?

23 MR. TORRES: There are two sections that are
24 probably most critical to the VRA, the first one would be
25 Section 5. Section 5 is critical to redistricting

1 because, in California, we have four counties that are
2 under what we call Section 5 preclearance. Those are
3 Merced, Monterey, Kings, and Yuba, I believe. And those
4 particular areas require special attention because those
5 are areas that both Congress - excuse me, those are areas
6 that Congress determined, were areas where special
7 attention needed to be focused, that individuals in those
8 jurisdictions had been systematically denied their
9 Constitutional rights, and it is incumbent upon us as we
10 redraw these lines not to diminish the political influence
11 of those particular jurisdictions. The other important
12 part of the Voting Rights Act is Section 2; that was the
13 Section that was used in Watsonville for the Federal Court
14 to order district-wide elections. That is something else
15 that we have to take into account as Commissioners, to
16 make sure that we do not overly "stack" is the phrase, or
17 that we split some of these concentrations of minorities.
18 That is something where all the Commissioners are going to
19 have to take into account as we decide, as I said earlier,
20 where do we divide, for instance, Los Angeles? Where do
21 we divide the Bay Area from the coast?

22 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Thank you. How do you view
23 the Supreme Court's rulings regarding racial
24 gerrymandering?

25 MR. TORRES: They are the law of the nation. As a

1 lawyer, I don't get into - you know, the law is the law.
2 And so, I personally agree with it, but if I disagreed
3 with it, it would still be the law of the land and I would
4 have to implement it because, as a County Counsel, there
5 have been times when I've had to take positions that were
6 contrary to my own personal beliefs, but my client's
7 position was X, and so that was the position that I would
8 put out. There even have been times when I would give an
9 opinion to the Board in public and say, "You can't do
10 that. I can't think of any way that you can do that.
11 That's a bad idea." Not exactly in those terms, but I
12 might have said that earlier, but in a nice legal way,
13 well written in an analysis that, you know, you can't do
14 it that way. Then, the Board says five to nothing, "Thank
15 you for your opinion, we want you to go out and do that."
16 Okay? And I would turn around and the next day I would be
17 following the direction of my client and arguing the
18 position that I had just argued for previously. That was
19 a really strange feeling, okay? But, with the Voting
20 Rights Act, I don't feel that that is the issue. I
21 believe strongly in the Voting Rights Act, I've been the
22 beneficiary of the Voting Rights Act, personally. And
23 I've seen the results of the Voting Rights Act and its
24 impact on communities. For instance, by way of example,
25 the Watsonville, the area that I'm most familiar with, as

1 I said, in 1989, they had - they did not have District
2 elections, they had never in the history of the City had
3 an elected Latino official, and the County had never had a
4 Spanish speaking Supervisor. In the 1990s, for the first
5 time after the redistricting, and after they were put into
6 Districts, Latinos were for the first time elected to the
7 City Council in Watsonville, and as we all know, City
8 Council, you know, maybe Supervisor, Assembly, District,
9 Senate, those are the normal ways and progressions that
10 people make. But for the Voting Rights Act, the current
11 community of Watsonville would not have the benefit of
12 having an elected body that is more representative of
13 them. That doesn't mean they all think the same, they
14 have conservative members that are Latino, they have
15 progressive members that are Latino, but it reflects the
16 face of the community.

17 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Thank you.

18 MR. TORRES: And that is what I believe the Voting
19 Rights Act brings.

20 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Thank you. As a
21 Commissioner, you're going to be in a public meeting like
22 this, do you feel that you're able to be approachable by
23 all people, all citizens, whether they're PhD's, whether
24 they're children, whether they're seniors, whether they
25 represent a different ethnic group makeup? How do you

1 approach that in your ability - I know you're very serious
2 about the work that you do as Counsel, and how do you feel
3 about that?

4 MR. TORRES: Well, I believe that I can
5 communicate with just about anyone. I think my experience
6 shows that, as I said in my opening statement, that I've
7 taken applications from illiterate Spanish speaking
8 individuals, I've taken applications from college
9 professors. I modify my approach with whoever is in front
10 of me and who I'm talking to. It's not going to do me any
11 good to sound highfalutin to someone who doesn't know what
12 those words mean. As a lawyer, we're trained to direct
13 our discussions and our arguments to a sixth grade
14 education or lower, okay? To make it such that these are
15 basic, you know, discussions and basic dialogue that most
16 people can understand. And I believe that, as I said in
17 my statement, understanding and being respectful of
18 people's differences. We are a nation of differences.
19 And to respect those will get you a lot further than not.

20 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Do you feel your interactions
21 with Commissioners would be a little bit different than
22 your interactions with the Commission's counsel, knowing
23 that you are counsel, you've been through the
24 redistricting process? How would you strip away your role
25 as counsel for like the Santa Cruz County redistricting

1 Board of Supervisors in your role as a Commissioner?

2 MR. TORRES: I think I would use a model similar
3 to and behave the same way that I did when I spent a year
4 on the Scotts Valley Citizens Advisory Committee. This
5 was when the City of Scotts Valley was preparing its first
6 general plan. The City of Scotts Valley, where I lived at
7 that time, is much different than the City of Watsonville.
8 The City of Scotts Valley is inland, it's highly
9 conservative, and very affluent. And it's a relatively
10 new city. And I was on a Commission where there were
11 property owners from the community, there were seniors on
12 the task force, there was a professor, you know, it
13 covered - and the City Council did a good job in covering
14 the different socioeconomic interest that were in the
15 City. And so I've been a team player. I've played a lot
16 of competitive sports my entire life, like I was short
17 stop on my baseball team in high school. I still play
18 basketball twice a week with a bunch of buddies. You
19 know, I know what it takes to work on a team, and I know
20 how to take whatever role I need to take. I would expect
21 that people might look to me at times for some legal
22 interpretation of something, but that's not what I see my
23 role as, you know, I'm there to represent everyone, and I
24 bring that skill set, and that skill set helps me analyze
25 issues and understand what's being presented.

1 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Thank you. Why were you
2 appointed to the Scotts Valley General Plan Advisory
3 Council?

4 MR. TORRES: Why?

5 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Yes.

6 MR. TORRES: I'm sorry, that was one of those I -

7 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Oh, sorry. I might not -

8 MR. TORRES: No, no. Why was I appointed? You
9 know, I had just moved to Scotts Valley right after law
10 school. And the City of Scotts Valley, there was a friend
11 that I had who was quite involved in Scotts Valley City
12 Council, and they asked me if I would be interested and if
13 I had the time to participate. And, again, having been
14 civically involved where I was, I said, well, I live in
15 Scotts Valley now, what better way to find out what the
16 community is like and to participate in the process.

17 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Were you a member or counsel?

18 MR. TORRES: No, I was a member of the Citizens
19 Advisory Committee. The Council appointed, I believe it
20 was 12 to 15 citizens to go through a process with the
21 Planning Director to create the first General Plan for
22 Scotts Valley. That was a time at which Silicon Valley
23 was starting to boom, the semiconductor and those kinds of
24 research and design firms were coming over the hill from
25 San Jose into Scotts Valley, and Scotts Valley had a lot

1 of land that was available. And so there were a lot of
2 issues related to land use and, also, Scotts Valley is
3 also a very scenic area, has beautiful visual corridors,
4 and people wanted to start building houses up in the
5 hills, and there were a number of tensions within the
6 community there over that.

7 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Thank you. You discussed
8 that there was a progressive minority in -

9 MR. TORRES: In Scotts Valley.

10 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Yeah.

11 MR. TORRES: Yeah, and it is a progressive
12 majority in Watsonville. Again, that's part of the
13 diversity which I think helps me understand that you can
14 be less than 10 miles away and have a totally different
15 community of interest. The social and economic interests
16 that are unique to Scotts Valley are different than they
17 are for Watsonville. Those two are also very very
18 different in the communities of interest in the other town
19 I lived in in that community in Santa Cruz, which has a
20 university and probably is, along with Berkeley and Santa
21 Monica and San Francisco, considered one of the more
22 progressive areas. The City Council in Scotts Valley at
23 the time was more conservative than progressive. Two
24 years later, that mix had been changed.

25 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Did anybody represent like

1 the progressive minority?

2 MR. TORRES: I was appointed by a progressive
3 minority Council member.

4 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: You were?

5 MR. TORRES: I was, yes.

6 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Because of your experience?

7 MR. TORRES: You know, you'd have to ask them.

8 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Okay.

9 MR. TORRES: You know, I was approached and I had
10 the time and I had the interest, and I had the skills to
11 do it, and I spent a year going to meetings, night
12 meetings, weekly meetings, sometimes twice a week as we
13 got towards the end when we had to make sure we got this
14 process done.

15 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: How did it feel to be the
16 progressive minority in a progressive majority?

17 MR. TORRES: You know, as I said, I've been the
18 first and the only in a lot of situations, okay? I was
19 the first Latino County Counsel in Santa Cruz County. I
20 was the first to go to college in my family. I was the
21 first to graduate from college in my family. All my
22 brothers and sisters now all have advance degrees, so you
23 know, I've been in a lot of situations that other people
24 might feel awkward, but I guess I look past that. You
25 know, I look to not myself, but what's the task at hand?

1 What can I contribute to this task? And how can my skills
2 be used? Frankly, there was a lot of uncertainty when the
3 Commission first met, you know, when that particular body
4 first met, because - and this is something that the
5 Commission will also face is that you don't know the
6 people on the Commission, you don't know where they're
7 coming from. So, whatever would come out of my mouth
8 initially would be perceived as, you know, "Oh, that's
9 coming from a progressive," but by the time the process
10 was over, I believe that all of the members realized the
11 individual skills that everybody brought, whether they
12 were coming from a progressive background, or from a
13 liberal background.

14 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: How did the members achieve
15 that cohesiveness and understand each other's point of
16 view? Did it take a long -

17 MR. TORRES: Time.

18 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: -- time. Was this a year?

19 MR. TORRES: This was a year process. We are not
20 going to have, you know, that much time to do this, okay?
21 And again, by the time the process was over, you spend
22 that much time with people over the course of a year,
23 you're going to know - you know, you're going to go out
24 and you'll have a break, you'll be talking to them about
25 their families, you see them at the soccer games, you see

1 them at the grocery store, you know, it's going to be
2 interesting and I'm not sure how the Commissioners will
3 "get to know each other," especially in light of the open
4 meeting laws and the transparency. I don't know how that
5 will work.

6 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Do you have a suggestion on
7 how to approach and go about that?

8 MS. HAMEL: One minute.

9 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Okay, sorry, we do not
10 probably have a lot of time left.

11 MR. TORRES: You know, I think that what I've seen
12 so far, and I haven't seen that many of the Applicants,
13 but the work that you have done to narrow the pool, I
14 think that the people within the pool will want to make it
15 work, will have the skills, the people skills, to be able
16 to be empathetic to the other Commission members, and to
17 work with them. And that's where you guys come in. And
18 if, based on what you've done so far, the final outcome,
19 you know, should guarantee that, unless, of course, the
20 Legislature or the ping pong ball bounces a certain way.
21 And that's another big difference between some of the
22 redistricting that I've done in the past, or some of the
23 processes that I've been involved in in the past. You
24 won't know what the Legislature's rationale is, for
25 instance, for bouncing anybody, you will just have a name.

1 And so, I may be bounced from the Commission, you know,
2 list of eligibles and no explanation needs to be made. I
3 may -

4 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Oh, time? Okay, sorry. But
5 thank you very much.

6 MR. TORRES: Sure.

7 MS. NEVILLE: Are there follow-up questions right
8 now, panel members?

9 CHAIR AHMADI: I don't have any.

10 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: I may have some later, maybe.

11 MS. NEVILLE: Okay, I will try to make sure I keep
12 myself short. What do you say to those people who are
13 watching the interviews and say, "Another lawyer and he's
14 got redistricting experience." "This isn't the ordinary
15 kind of guy we expected to be applying." How do you
16 respond to that?

17 MR. TORRES: You know, what's ordinary? All of us
18 have our own unique experiences. I think I'm rather
19 ordinary, you know? I hang out in my neighborhood, I play
20 basketball with my buddies, I go down and watch soccer
21 games, the kids playing. Ordinary depends on everybody's
22 perspective. I have been trained on a lawyer, but I don't
23 - my personality and my identity does not come from being
24 a lawyer, otherwise I'd still be a lawyer. I am a lawyer,
25 you know, standing with the Bar, but I'm not. You know, I

1 don't have active legal clients right now. My background,
2 as I said earlier, my parents came from abject poverty, I
3 was relatively uneducated. You know, most of my
4 background, early background, came from working with my
5 dad, who was actually the Bishop of his church, okay? My
6 mom was what I call the perpetual do-gooder, you know,
7 those are ordinary skills, they are ordinary parents, I
8 come from an ordinary background. I've had extraordinary
9 blessings from the State of California and that's why I
10 want to be here on the Commission.

11 MS. NEVILLE: Thank you. We talked a lot about
12 outreach and how this Commission needs to go out and
13 really learn about communities. But I do want to ask you,
14 how do you really get at that? How do you really go out
15 and take the pulse of the community you know nothing
16 about? Let's say you're sent up to Susanville and you've
17 never been there -

18 MR. TORRES: I've been there.

19 MS. NEVILLE: Okay, maybe there's a place you've
20 never been -

21 MR. TORRES: Actually, I've been to a lot of
22 places in California, I didn't elaborate on my activities
23 with the County Counsels Association, but for over 20
24 years I was very active in the County Counsels Association
25 traveling to the training sessions and other locations to

1 work with counsel from other areas.

2 MS. NEVILLE: So how do you know you're really
3 getting what makes that community tick, and you're not
4 just hearing from folks who are always heard? How do you
5 hear the unheard voices? How do you get to those folks?

6 MR. TORRES: Sometimes you can't get to those
7 folks. But some of the organizations that I've been
8 working in these communities for years, they are a valid
9 voice. You know, they are a valid voice. How you ensure
10 that you get to everyone, realistically, I'm not sure that
11 you can get to everyone.

12 MS. NEVILLE: One of the things you talked about
13 earlier is that, of course, the Commission is guided by
14 the laws that govern redistricting and that not everyone
15 is going to be happy, necessarily, with the outcome. What
16 can the Commission do throughout its work to - assuming
17 that it's work is successful and consistent with the law -
18 what can the Commission do to offer reassurance to the
19 public that it was a process that was done fairly and with
20 integrity? What are some of the things they need to do as
21 they do their work?

22 MR. TORRES: Well, I think the transparency of the
23 process will be either the reassurance or not. It -
24 you're going to have 14 people that are all going to be
25 responsible for the outcome. The public will see how

1 that's done, and they will either be satisfied that the
2 Commissioners are doing their best, or they won't be
3 satisfied that the Commissioners are doing their best, and
4 those that are not satisfied will be vocal about it, I'm
5 sure. And you will listen to that position and then
6 determine whether we, as Commissioners, would feel
7 comfortable that, "You know, we did the best job that we
8 could," because that's the only thing you can really ask
9 from people, that they do the best that they know how to
10 do.

11 MS. NEVILLE: And do they have a responsibility as
12 they are doing that work to communicate not just the work
13 itself, but to communicate about the work, and to do -

14 MR. TORRES: Yes, they need to explain the process
15 that they are going through, you know, even at the end,
16 the Commission has to issue a report, has to issue a
17 report describing all of the factors that they took into
18 account and how they came up with these particular
19 Districts. I did read the - I think it was the 19 - about
20 three weeks ago, I read the 1990 Special Masters Report,
21 and they outlined the process that they went through, and
22 laid it out for the public because theirs was a very very
23 compacted schedule. They didn't have months to do this,
24 they literally had weeks to do this. And they described,
25 you know, the factors that they took into account. They

1 acknowledge that, "Look, we had to break up Kern County.
2 We had to break up Solano County. We had to do this or
3 that." And, again, just being as open and transparent
4 about what you're doing is, I think, the best way to
5 proceed.

6 MS. NEVILLE: Thank you. And just finally, is
7 there some particular experience in your personal life
8 that really motivated you to want to become a lawyer and a
9 public lawyer?

10 MR. TORRES: Yeah, when I was in Watsonville, I
11 was the President of a nonprofit corporation, a community
12 services agency, and we would go out and look for grants,
13 try to get information to expand our services and the
14 like, and we kept running up against legal impediments,
15 and I wanted to know what those lawyers were talking
16 about. I wanted to understand the arguments they were
17 making against what we wanted to do. And my mother tells
18 me, because I was talking to her last night, my mother
19 tells me that I wanted to be Perry Mason since I was about
20 five-years-old, I had forgotten that. But, you know, the
21 specific instance that got me to go to law school and
22 decide that's where I wanted to go was my experience on
23 that Board in Watsonville, and realizing that the law
24 plays a humongous part in our lives, and I wanted to try
25 to understand how that law was set up and what those words

1 that they were using meant. But, that having been said, I
2 spent the first four years after law school not being a
3 lawyer because I didn't want to be a lawyer. I was doing
4 administrative work because I enjoyed that. And then I
5 changed my mind, as we all have the option to do, and I
6 decided then to go work in the County Counsel and use my
7 legal skills as a lawyer.

8 MS. NEVILLE: Good, thank you. Ms. Spano, did you
9 have questions?

10 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Yes. Sorry, can you hear me?
11 I didn't really ask you much about your redistricting
12 experience and I know you've already addressed a lot of
13 the issues with our fellow panel members, but I was
14 curious what critical challenges you faced on the Board in
15 the two redistricting's.

16 MR. TORRES: The most critical issue was Board
17 members not being happy with where the line was drawn, you
18 know, where the task force had proposed it. And they,
19 without revealing any confidential information, just that
20 there were differences of opinion between Board members as
21 to where a particular line should go, just as there will
22 be differences of opinion amongst the Commissioners where
23 the lines should go.

24 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Would you, without disclosing
25 too much information, tell me what those concerns were?

1 MR. TORRES: The concerns were, you know, what - I
2 think that some of those concerns were probably driven by
3 self-interest, which will not be the case, you know, with
4 this Commission. You know, in that case, politicians were
5 a part of the process. In this process, they will not be.
6 That was the hardest part of dealing with that. And
7 ultimately, the Board members got to make the decision.
8 It wasn't my decision to make. I gave them advice and
9 then they were the ones that have to pass the ordinance
10 and adopt the final map.

11 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: So there were strong partisan
12 and political influences?

13 MR. TORRES: Yes. You know, coming from both
14 sides, especially when you had Districts where one member
15 who might have been perceived as a more progressive
16 member, and one as a more conservative member, and where
17 their Districts came together.

18 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Did they get resolved?

19 MR. TORRES: Well, in 1990, they did not. As a
20 matter of fact, one of the Board members described it
21 publicly as a very contentious amongst the Board members.
22 This was not with regard to the power of redistricting,
23 but with redistricting in other parts of the county. In
24 2001, the Board members were in unanimous agreement that
25 the process was fair, logical, and that a lot of tough

1 choices had to be made, but that the task force went about
2 its task in an impartial manner.

3 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Why do you think it - okay,
4 thank you. Why do you think it was successful in one
5 versus -

6 MR. TORRES: A couple of things. The people who
7 thought the initial process was contentious participated
8 more the second time around, were more experienced
9 politicians the second time around. They tried to - also,
10 we had a very very experienced group of people working on
11 it, the County Administrative Officer at the time had been
12 the County Administrative Officer 10 years before that.
13 That County Administrative Officer today, Ms. Moriello, is
14 the President of the California County Administrative
15 Officers Association. The Elections Official that was
16 there in the second time had worked - the previous
17 Election Official had retired. The new official had
18 worked for the State Legislature as a Legislative Analyst
19 on redistricting. The GIS Coordinator was the same GIS
20 Coordinator. I was the County Counsel, I had not been the
21 County Counsel the first time around, but I had observed
22 the process, so I think we had a very experienced group of
23 people and we knew each other well. And, again, that's
24 going to be one of the differences. I knew the skills of
25 the individuals, they knew my skills, you know, we had

1 been working on many many other projects before that and
2 that's a major difference that's going to - you know,
3 again, I'm not saying that my experience would totally
4 qualify as totally transferable, but how human beings
5 learn and adapt is by past experiences, and I think that
6 my past experiences will put me in a competitive position
7 with the other 120 or 119 that are coming before you.

8 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Quickly, I know I don't have
9 a lot of time, you said that there were some people that
10 were more involved this time, why weren't they involved
11 the first time?

12 MR. TORRES: You'd have to ask them why they
13 weren't involved. My speculation might be that they were
14 - they were relatively new politicians. They might not
15 have had the background that some of the other more
16 experienced members of the Board might have had.

17 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Okay, how much time do I
18 have?

19 MS. HAMEL: Two minutes.

20 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Two minutes, okay, thank you.
21 Just briefly, I'm curious to know what - can you hear me?
22 What legal challenges - what legal issues were most
23 challenging for the Board members to understand?

24 MR. TORRES: The most challenging legal issues
25 were the issues of creating the minority districts. So,

1 you know, how to wrap their brain around that, and how
2 exactly to translate that concept into a map. That was
3 one of the hardest things that the Board members had to
4 try to understand because, at that point, again, with
5 Watsonville having recently been found to be in violation
6 of the Voter Rights Act, the climate there was such that
7 all the members were aware that this was something they
8 had to do, but it was something that was foreign to them
9 and in some cases might not have been what they wanted to
10 do.

11 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Do you feel like the CRC is
12 going to be struggling with that?

13 MR. TORRES: I don't know. If I was in a court,
14 I'd say, "Objection, Your Honor, calls for speculation."
15 But I'm hoping that the CRC won't have those challenges.
16 I believe that the three of you do your work as you've
17 been doing it so far, that that won't be an issue for the
18 Commission that the types of individuals that will finally
19 be in that final pool will be such that they can overcome
20 their personal differences and can follow the law.

21 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Thank you.

22 MR. TORRES: Thank you.

23 MS. NEVILLE: If you'd like to make a closing
24 statement in 20 seconds, you may.

25 MR. TORRES: Thank you very much for the

1 opportunity. I literally am very much honored to be here,
2 you know, as I said, the son of immigrant Puerto Ricans,
3 sitting here before you today, my mom is very proud. My
4 dad is very proud. And I thank you all for the
5 opportunity. And good luck to you all because you have a
6 most difficult task in front of you. Thanks.

7 MS. NEVILLE: Thank you.

8 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you, sir.

9 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Thank you.

10 MR. TORRES: Have a nice day.

11 MS. NEVILLE: Thank you. We will be back at
12 12:59.

13 (Off the record at 12:31 p.m.)

14 (Back on the record at 1:00 p.m.)

15 MS. NEVILLE: Good afternoon, it's one o'clock
16 and we're back on the record.

17 Welcome, Mr. Ontai?

18 MR. ONTAI: Yes.

19 MS. NEVILLE: Very good, welcome.

20 We're going to begin with the five standard
21 questions.

22 And the first is what specific skills do you
23 believe a good Commissioner should possess? Of those
24 skills which do you possess, which do you not possess and
25 how would you compensate for it?

1 And is there anything in your life that would
2 prohibit or impair your ability to perform the duties of a
3 Commissioner?

4 MR. ONTAI: Thank you. I think, first of all, I
5 just want to thank you all for the wonderful work that you
6 guys have been doing. I've been watching you on the tape
7 and it's just incredible, the areas and the intensity that
8 you've gone through over the last months, almost a year
9 now, so I just want to congratulate you.

10 I'm Gil Ontai and I'm honored to be here. I'm
11 quite actually astonished to be at this point, but I'm
12 here and I'll try to answer all of your questions as best
13 I can.

14 I am an architect and I served in many other
15 capacities on nonprofits and on the City of San Diego's
16 Planning Commission.

17 So, in terms of my skills I bring, as an
18 architect, 30 years of experience both in qualitative and
19 quantitative thinking.

20 I have years of training in terms of spatial
21 awareness.

22 And I think one of the strengths of a good
23 Commissioner is being able to look at maps statistically
24 and numerically, and to be able to add onto that this mix
25 of a qualitative notion of what makes a physical dimension

1 represent a number of values and traditions.

2 And to me, I think, this process of redistricting
3 California in the next ten years, and setting those
4 boundaries, are a mix not only of these physical
5 dimensions, but being able to add onto that the
6 qualitative mix that represents a community's values and
7 traditions, what it important to them.

8 As a planning commissioner, I think one of my
9 strengths are, and I think all of the Commissioners should
10 have some degree of this strength, but I do have a lot of
11 experience in the public.

12 So, in terms of the public process, the legal
13 process, the Brown Act, I think this is going to be an
14 important part of the Commission's experience and I think
15 that's a value that I bring to this process.

16 I think that training in this process of reaching
17 out into the communities is important because of
18 California's diverse communities. I believe I have those
19 strengths that the Commission's going to need to reach a
20 diverse array of communities that represents California.

21 I think in the next ten years the census tract
22 will demonstrate that 15 million -- at least 15 million
23 minorities and 15 million mainstream population
24 distribution is a remarkable trend in California. And I
25 think in the next ten years that trend will continue to

1 have a profound effect on California's politics.

2 So, I want to make sure that the Commissioners
3 understand and they have that skill to combine those
4 numeric trends with boundaries that are appropriate for
5 the various districts.

6 I also bring my background as a Pacific Islander
7 and Asian heritage background and I think Commissioners
8 have to have the ability to communicate with a wide
9 variety of communities.

10 Now, it would be an extraordinary Commissioner
11 that can do all of that, in terms of reaching out to all
12 of the communities, but I do know that I have that
13 strength in reaching out to Pacific Islander communities
14 and in the Asian communities.

15 I was born and raised in Hawaii, so I'm very
16 familiar with multi-cultural communities and I think, with
17 that background, I have the ability to read how cultures
18 understand and communicate language, and how they
19 communicate their feelings and thoughts. And I think
20 that's an important part of what Commissioners have to
21 have when they reach out to these various communities.

22 I'm also a college lecturer, so I'm very familiar
23 with how people learn, the process in which they take and
24 facilitate information back and forth. So, I bring those
25 skills to the Commission. And I think Commissioners

1 should have that, the ability to read and understand how
2 people learn and in what ways they learn.

3 So, as a college lecturer, my 13 years'
4 experience with that, dealing with a wide variety of
5 students, I have a fairly good understanding of how people
6 take information and how they process it.

7 So, I think the Commissioners should have that, I
8 think that's a very important skill.

9 I have no impairments, I have fully decided to
10 devote my life, just as you have, for the next nine months
11 to this project. I think this is an extraordinary
12 opportunity for California and it represents an
13 opportunity that all Californians will see as a
14 significant moment where we can inspire Californians to
15 re-believe in the political process and gain confident in
16 our political structure.

17 So, I'm very, very inspired to be part of that
18 and I've committed myself to that process. I am going to
19 take a sabbatical leave, if necessary. I am in perfect
20 health, so I'm ready and fully committed to making sure
21 this process, if I'm selected, is done to the best of our
22 knowledge.

23 MS. NEVILLE: Describe a circumstance from your
24 personal experience where you had to work with others to
25 resolve a conflict or different of opinion; please

1 describe the issue and explain your role in addressing and
2 resolving the conflict?

3 And if you're selected to serve on the
4 Commission, tell us how you would resolve conflicts that
5 may arise among your fellow Commissioners?

6 MR. ONTAI: Well, as you know from my submittals,
7 I am a city planning commissioner. And at that municipal
8 level, projects that come before us are called
9 discretionary projects, which means they're outside of the
10 stated boundaries of a zoning or building code.

11 So, projects that come before us are wide open to
12 interpretation and the nature of those projects are full
13 of conflicts.

14 So, we often have, before us, disagreements
15 amongst us. We have seven commissioners, and each of us
16 have to look at the facts and circumstances surrounding
17 each case. And because it's a discretionary process, we
18 often find ourselves looking at different angles and
19 different approaches to how to solve this project.

20 So, my experience dealing with my fellow
21 commissioners has been to listen very intently to what
22 they have to say. Each of us bring an extensive amount of
23 expertise and professional background to that commission.
24 So, as a commissioner, it's very important for me to
25 deeply try to understand the issues and the perspectives

1 that my fellow commissioners are examining.

2 And we're often not clear, ourselves, as to what
3 the issues are. So, part of that process is to demand
4 from the staff that all of the facts and the data are
5 presented to us equally, as accurately as possible, so
6 we're all on the same plane.

7 That process helps to eliminate confusion and
8 unnecessary debate, and conflicts amongst us.

9 So, I would imagine that we would request, if I'm
10 on the Commission, that we hire staff that presents very
11 clear circumstances behind an issue, so that the
12 Commission is at a higher level of decision making.

13 Now, in the event that there is conflict, despite
14 that, Commissioners, I believe, it has been my experience,
15 have to show each other respect and dignity. It's very
16 important for us to keep civility amongst ourselves and to
17 deeply try to understand what each of us are trying to
18 say.

19 That is important because you need to maintain a
20 level of respect for each other. We're all human beings
21 and sometimes if we don't say the right things at the
22 right time, or the right words, that can often build
23 conflicts in the dialogue between Commissioners.

24 So, I have learned that not only are we
25 professionals and we have to listen carefully to what

1 we're saying, but we also are human beings and we're
2 subject to errors, and we need to realize that each of us
3 has a personality type and that's an important part of the
4 decision making process.

5 MS. NEVILLE: How will the Commission's work
6 impact the State? Which of these impacts will improve the
7 State the most? And is there any potential for the
8 Commission's work to harm the State and, if so, in what
9 ways?

10 MR. ONTAI: Well, I think what is really
11 important is to look at the underlying premise behind
12 Prop. 11, and I think what is really important is that
13 gerrymandering has to be absolutely taken out of the
14 process, and the Commission has to make extraordinary
15 efforts to make sure that the boundary lines are
16 respecting nonpartisan lines, and that this truly is a
17 process that represents the voters' rights, the voters'
18 choice in the final analysis.

19 I think this will have a significant impact on
20 minority communities in California.

21 I have no doubt that with California's 50 percent
22 minority, or thereabouts, and 50 percent mainstream, that
23 the decision made by the Commission as to the final
24 boundary lines is a challenge. Because California is, I
25 believe, outside of Hawaii, the only state that has that

1 type of a population demographics.

2 So, the Commission, if they're not careful and
3 they don't bring in the expertise necessary to analyze the
4 changes that has happened in California in the last ten
5 years, and in the next ten years, we could be opening up a
6 number of challenges to the decision making process.

7 So, I want to make sure that minority communities
8 are well-represented in that process.

9 Whatever that process is, we need to make sure
10 that we have all the legal expertise and the technical
11 expertise necessary to make the final decision. There is
12 no question that the Voters Rights Act, Prop. 11, has to
13 be respected. And while I'm not a total authority on
14 that, I think we need to depend on bringing in the
15 consultants and the experts that could help us to answer
16 those questions that may arise, and I'm sure they will
17 arise.

18 Transparency's an important issue. Just as you
19 have done that throughout your year and a half here, the
20 Commission has to make sure that all of the decisions are
21 based on clear facts that are presented to the community,
22 just California, that represents the census tract data.

23 The community must have access to all of the --
24 any opportunity to express their representation of what
25 district lines are and the Commission has to take that in,

1 to see how that should be measured, and weighed in the
2 process.

3 Communities often have -- define themselves on
4 land use issues. By that I mean, in my experience as a
5 commissioner, ultimately they're going to represent --
6 they're going to elect someone that represents them, that
7 will protect their interests, their shopping centers,
8 their densities, their homes, their neighborhoods, and
9 their ethnicity and their cultural values and traditions.

10 So, I think it's important for us to recognize
11 that ultimately the election of someone to represent a
12 community has to represent that community's values and
13 traditions. So, the Commission has to recognize that
14 during the process.

15 So, those are the impacts, I think. If we make
16 the wrong choices and if we make the wrong decisions,
17 those would have significant impacts on California.

18 MS. NEVILLE: Okay. Describe a situation where
19 you had to work as part of a group to achieve a common
20 goal, tell us about the goal, describe your role within
21 the group and tell us how the group worked or did not work
22 collaboratively to achieve that common goal?

23 And if you are selected to serve on the Citizens
24 Redistricting Commission, tell us what you would do to
25 foster collaboration among your fellow Commissioners?

1 MR. ONTAI: Well, a good example of that would be
2 -- again, I'm drawing upon my experience as a planning
3 commissioner. We often have projects that are before us
4 that we have differences and in several instances I've
5 taken the lead to try to bring consensus on those issues.

6 One example would be a social service agency that
7 came before us and was seeking a conditional use permit in
8 a neighborhood that essentially did not want it there.

9 MS. HAMEL: Five minutes.

10 MR. ONTAI: So, I took a strong role in trying to
11 present the facts, requested that the agency give a
12 history of themselves, and to demonstrate that they had no
13 negative impact on the community in the past.

14 And my commissioners went along with that, even
15 though the community was against that. So, sometimes we
16 have to be fair and just, even though there's opposition
17 in the community.

18 MS. NEVILLE: Okay. And, finally, a considerable
19 amount of a Commission's work will involve meeting with
20 people from all over California, who come from very
21 different backgrounds and who have very different
22 perspectives.

23 If you are selected to serve on the Commission,
24 tell us about the specific skills you possess that would
25 make you effective at interacting with the public?

1 MR. ONTAI: Well, again, I'm -- my entire life is
2 a fabric of building these skills. I have been on
3 numerous nonprofit organizations, I've been in public
4 entities, such as the planning commission. I have been on
5 professional organizations.

6 And so, my collective experience has been,
7 through these years, the ability to read and understand
8 how different people work with each other, how they
9 process information and how they make decisions.

10 I'm aware of how Pacific Islanders and Asians
11 communicate. And in the public forum, I appropriately
12 address those communities in a different -- in a different
13 fashion.

14 With professional groups and business groups,
15 there's a different approach to making decisions and in
16 collaborating with these groups.

17 So, throughout my years I have built up these
18 skills that reflect the ability to understand how
19 different segments in a community communicate and make
20 decisions.

21 I'm also a college professor, so I deal with a
22 wide diversity of student personalities and learning
23 types. So, I'm aware that people who are disabled have
24 different ways of understanding and receiving information.
25 So, I'm acutely aware of that process, too.

1 So, I think I have the collective fabric to
2 understand how to collaborate and outreach with a variety
3 of different communities and organizations, and different
4 types of people.

5 MS. NEVILLE: Thank you.

6 Mr. Ahmadi, your 20 minutes.

7 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you.

8 Good afternoon, Mr. Ontai.

9 MR. ONTAI: Good afternoon.

10 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you. Good afternoon, Mr.
11 Ontai.

12 MR. ONTAI: Good afternoon.

13 CHAIR AHMADI: Let me make a quick follow-up on
14 your response to question number one.

15 MR. ONTAI: Yes.

16 CHAIR AHMADI: You emphasized on the fact that
17 training is one of the aspects of the first day's,
18 perhaps, being assigned to the Commissioners, once the
19 Commission is formed training is important.

20 What types of training do you think is needed for
21 the Commission?

22 MR. ONTAI: I think one of the first type of
23 training that's going to be required is an introduction to
24 the Voters Rights Act of 1965, understanding section five
25 and section two are crucial, I think, for California as we

1 move into the next ten years.

2 The urban areas, especially, will be affected by
3 these sections of the Civil Rights Act.

4 So, I want to make sure that minority communities
5 have equal opportunities to have representation.

6 So, you know, I'm not an expert on that, but we
7 do need to have some training on those issues and a bunch
8 of examples of what that means.

9 That remains a fairly gray area to me and it
10 probably will be to other Commissioners as well, so I
11 believe that's going to be a training that we need to
12 have.

13 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you, sir.

14 As you mentioned now, and also in your
15 application, you have been involved with redistricting at
16 the municipal level --

17 MR. ONTAI: Yes.

18 CHAIR AHMADI: -- in San Diego, and back in 1981,
19 I believe.

20 MR. ONTAI: That's correct.

21 CHAIR AHMADI: Just hypothetically, if you were
22 assigned to do the redistricting again for that region,
23 what are some of the things that you might be doing
24 different and why?

25 MR. ONTAI: Well, in that role I was really a

1 community activist, I was not part of a formal, city
2 organized committee.

3 The process back then, which is complete
4 different from the last two processes, involved going out
5 to the communities and asking community planning groups to
6 participate in that process.

7 So, as chair of the planning group at that time,
8 I organized the community more from the grass roots level
9 to get involved in the redistricting process.

10 So, what I learned back then was that it is
11 difficult to get people to involve because communities at
12 that level, at the grass roots level, first of all are
13 struggling to get bread on the table and so they rarely
14 have the time to spend evenings looking at complex issues,
15 as redistricting.

16 If I were to look back then and see how could I
17 have done it better, I think I would have spent more time
18 looking at how we can organize neighbors and communities,
19 and getting more people involved in subgroups to process
20 that information and reach out to communities.

21 CHAIR AHMADI: Any ideas how the Citizens
22 Redistricting Commission should go about that?

23 MR. ONTAI: Similarly, I think because the nature
24 of our demographic change and the diversity that we're
25 confronted with, the Commission has to take immediate

1 steps to addressing how they're going to reach out to half
2 the population that is minority and half the population
3 that is not.

4 Now, I don't know how that's going to take, but I
5 know that has to be done.

6 I know that in my community of San Diego, I've
7 talked to a number of people, including my own students,
8 and they're all excited and they want to reach out to the
9 community.

10 So, it has to start at the grass roots level and
11 it has to reach out to establish community groups that are
12 actively involved in community affairs. Planning groups,
13 for example, is one that would be a natural party that
14 would be interested in this.

15 But I think we need to also reach out to
16 community groups, their churches, their civic
17 organizations, their social mechanisms, the structure in
18 which communities, minority communities participate within
19 their own community are areas that we need to try to look
20 at and get those messages and that process involved with
21 the leaders in those communities.

22 CHAIR AHMADI: Could you also tell us, in some
23 specific terms, how would you overcome the challenge of
24 getting people involved in the process, or in the process?

25 MR. ONTAI: I would, myself, what I would do is I

1 -- as a college professor I have students, that represent
2 in my geographic area, for example, that come from the
3 Vietnamese community, from the African American community,
4 from African immigrant communities, and these are
5 Somalians, Ugandans, people that live in our community.

6 The college is located in a very, very diverse
7 community and as part of our mission we have attempted to
8 reach out to these communities through cultural
9 activities, expressing their art, their celebrations,
10 their rituals as a means for various groups to understand
11 and get to know each other.

12 I would see that, also, as a mechanism to reach
13 out to various ethnic groups to get them involved by
14 introducing this concept and importance that they
15 understand that they be involved.

16 So, I would overlap that into a structure that we
17 currently use.

18 CHAIR AHMADI: What tools would you use to do
19 that in terms of, you know, the means to get there?

20 MR. ONTAI: Well, one means is art. Art is a
21 universal expression of getting people together. You
22 don't have to speak the same language, but we all know
23 beauty and aesthetics, and we know dance, and we know
24 music, and those are common areas that people come
25 together.

1 And we generate a lot of interest when we do
2 that. So, I would use that as a method to get people
3 together and at that time introduce the importance of why
4 they should be involved in the redistricting process, and
5 why they should have their community leaders involved in
6 that.

7 Community leaders have to be involved in some
8 communities, especially first generation communities.

9 And what we've learned from our process is when
10 you get them involved, then the rest of the community
11 follows.

12 And so those methods, I think, are important to
13 recognize we're going to reach out to minority communities
14 and get them involved in the redistricting process.

15 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you, sir.

16 MR. ONTAI: You're welcome.

17 CHAIR AHMADI: What do you see your role on the
18 Commission would be like?

19 MR. ONTAI: My role? Well, you're going to have
20 14 Commissioners, so I'm kind of guessing what's going to
21 happen. And they're all -- by the way, all 120 candidates
22 are extraordinary people.

23 When I look at the Commission, itself, and what
24 role I can play, is that I have to draw upon my role as a
25 businessman, as an architect, as a city planner,

1 commissioner, and someone who's actively involved in my
2 minority community.

3 So, my strengths on that Commission, first of all
4 as a businessman, is to recognize that we only have nine
5 months to put this thing together and end up with a whole
6 new map.

7 So, the first four months, January to April, are
8 crucial. And I think one of my strengths as a
9 businessman, as an architect, I am familiar with
10 construction schedules. It is very common in our field,
11 we have deadlines that have to be met, absolutely have to
12 be met.

13 So, I know how to put these benchmark figures
14 together and I know how significant they mean in terms of
15 time schedule.

16 So, I would think that I could add that
17 experience to the Commission, which I think is going to be
18 extremely important, considering the compressed time that
19 it has.

20 CHAIR AHMADI: Thanks again.

21 MR. ONTAI: You're welcome.

22 CHAIR AHMADI: How do you think Southern
23 California has changed since 1981, when you were involved
24 with the redistricting?

25 MR. ONTAI: A lot more buildings. It's grown

1 significantly. The landscape has grown significantly. We
2 have more freeways, we have more suburban tract housing,
3 more subdivisions.

4 And along with that lifestyles have changed. The
5 old San Diego no longer -- well, it exists, but it has
6 evolved.

7 And I think that is a reflection of California as
8 a whole, not necessarily San Diego, itself.

9 But in the redistricting process those physical
10 changes also manifest what a community wants, what it
11 wants to protect and what it wants to see further grow.

12 And so, I think embracing and understanding that
13 process is what the community ultimately is going to elect
14 someone to represent them, to protect those interests.

15 And so, what I see California, Southern
16 California changing in the last ten years, and the next
17 ten years as well, is that people have changed. We have
18 more diversity. We have more dense communities, we're
19 moving towards smart growth, where cities are becoming
20 more compact.

21 People are living closer together and we're
22 beginning to forcefully try to understand different
23 cultures and how they live together.

24 And so, I think that's going to be a challenge,
25 also, when we put maps together that reflects that.

1 CHAIR AHMADI: What about political preferences
2 or changes in political preferences, in a little more
3 detail?

4 MR. ONTAI: Well, I think -- I think the last --
5 political preference.

6 Well, I think ethnic groups, minority groups,
7 mainstream groups, business communities, suburban
8 communities, urban communities all represent a form of
9 political representation.

10 And as Southern California, and certainly all of
11 California, has grown, we've seen more and more of the
12 inner city and coastal areas grow in terms of population.
13 The population has not shifted too much to the mountain or
14 the foothill areas, but certainly on the coastal areas,
15 and San Diego is a good example of that.

16 So, it has shifted in San Diego, which has been
17 traditionally a Republican town, to a Democratic town.
18 So, I see that trend continuing in the future and that's,
19 I guess, a preference of communities that are growing in
20 these coastal areas.

21 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you. You actually answered
22 my question that was related to that, but let me ask you
23 again.

24 If you can share with us, what factors contribute
25 to those changes over time?

1 MR. ONTAI: What factors?

2 CHAIR AHMADI: You answered part of it, but any
3 other factors in terms of, you know, representation of
4 minorities?

5 MR. ONTAI: Let me think about that for a second.
6 Other factors are, I believe, in my opinion, that there is
7 a strong desire, I believe, for Latino communities, and
8 African American communities, and certainly the Asian
9 community, and I know the Pacific Islander communities
10 have felt that they have been under-served in the past.
11 And I see that in planning commission meetings where,
12 almost inevitably, the audience in front of us are
13 mainstream, very rarely do I see minority communities.

14 There is one incident in which I had to go out to
15 minority communities to get them involved in that
16 political process because it had direct impact on them.
17 And I think one of the factors that is there and that we
18 have to address is that there is a strong will to have
19 representation.

20 And I think this Commission is going to have to
21 have ways -- figure out ways to reach out to them and make
22 them believe that they do have a voice.

23 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you very much. I don't have
24 any more questions at this point.

25 MS. NEVILLE: Ms. Camacho, your 20 minutes.

1 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Thank you. Hello, Mr.
2 Ontai.

3 MR. ONTAI: Hello.

4 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: In some of your answers, I
5 just wanted to get some clarification so I fully
6 understand.

7 MR. ONTAI: Please.

8 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: I know that you worked or
9 that you were a part of the San Diego's 1980
10 redistricting, so you were active in either providing your
11 opinion or gathering that opinion.

12 MR. ONTAI: Yes.

13 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: One of the things in your
14 application that you say, talks about the impact of the
15 minority population. Could you explain how the Fifth
16 District was able to give more people with diverse
17 backgrounds an opportunity to participate in the political
18 processes throughout the 1980s?

19 MR. ONTAI: Yes. That was a very interesting
20 process. I wore my hat as a community activist,
21 representing the community planning group at the time.
22 And what happened then was when we looked at the 1980
23 census tract data we realized that a community, part of
24 the Fifth District community, was essentially minority,
25 Filipino, Asian community.

1 And the only other pocket where there was a
2 concentration of that was on the exact opposite side of
3 the City of San Diego.

4 We also looked at the data and saw that
5 immediately to the south of that Mira Mesa community, or
6 District Five, was a growing Hmong and Vietnamese
7 community, almost contiguous, but along a Highway 15
8 access.

9 So, what our group did was advocate very
10 forcefully and strongly that that growing community south
11 of Mira Mesa be joined to the Mira Mesa proper area, so
12 that we'd have a greater concentration of minority voice
13 representation.

14 That was accepted by the city and that boundary
15 line was redrawn. And as a result of that, we had an
16 elected councilman that was exceedingly receptive to the
17 Asian community's concerns and priorities.

18 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: How did you go out to the
19 public and those communities of interest to gather that
20 information? Did you go to the Hmong communities to also
21 talk with them?

22 MR. ONTAI: Yeah, the methods we used is we went
23 to -- we went to homes, we actually went to the leaders in
24 the Filipino community. We went to their -- several of
25 their festivals. We went to the high school, where there

1 was PTA meetings. We went to the shopping center and
2 handed out leaflets.

3 And I, of course, provided a forum in the
4 planning group sessions, which met once a month.

5 So, any opportunity that we had to reach out to
6 minority communities, to say to them that you have an
7 opportunity with this new census tract data to have a
8 voice now, which has never been done in San Diego, in its
9 history.

10 And because of that they saw the vision and the
11 prospect and they were inspired by that, and that's how we
12 got them to get involved.

13 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Do you feel that process,
14 going out to the communities, do you feel that that was
15 successful? Did you feel like you had a good
16 representation of those communities or those various Asian
17 groups, and Pacific Islander groups?

18 MR. ONTAI: I do. I do. Back then I think we
19 did a very good job.

20 We contacted the elderly structure, so to speak,
21 and they all know each other. They all know the families,
22 and who's who, and all of that.

23 So, we got them involved in a very early stage
24 and started a network of communication in which they
25 called on families, they had their own events, and

1 discussion points, and we tried to collect that and
2 make -- provide more leadership on the process.

3 And I think the proudest moment is that when we
4 had our public hearing, before the city council, they all
5 showed up. So, we had a quite a number of people there.

6 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Do you think that that
7 process would still be effective in the 2010
8 redistricting?

9 MR. ONTAI: You mean in San Diego or --

10 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: For the State of California,
11 as a Commissioner.

12 MR. ONTAI: The State of California. No. No, I
13 don't know. I think that's possible, we probably need to
14 look at how we're going to do that, with the 14
15 Commissioners.

16 I certainly believe that some fashion of that,
17 some strategy has to be developed along that line. But
18 this is a huge and monumental task. California's so
19 diverse. I've traveled all over this State and it's an
20 incredible State.

21 So, to reach out to desert communities, coastal
22 communities, the northern parts of the State, imagining
23 how we're going to reach out to all these communities that
24 have very special interest in preserving their lifestyle
25 and their environment is going to be a challenge.

1 I'm ready to attempt it, but I realize that
2 that's a far more monumental challenge than little, old
3 Mira Mesa.

4 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: But you feel that some of
5 the techniques that you learned there might help with San
6 Diego, the Asian and Pacific Islanders, and in L.A., and
7 San Francisco, where the majority of those groups are
8 located?

9 MR. ONTAI: Oh, yes, absolutely. The means of
10 communication with the ethnic groups are essentially the
11 same.

12 When I approach a Samoan community, there is a
13 way in which you communicate. Pacific Islanders have a
14 different way of community, different from mainstream
15 America. We tend to say you have to look each other in
16 the eye, and the Samoan community don't do that, even with
17 the elders. We look straight ahead at the beautiful
18 landscape, and that's how we talk to each other.

19 To do anything else is somewhat intrusive and
20 stepping out of line.

21 So, I think those are little mechanisms that you
22 have to realize when you reach out to communities, that
23 there are cultural factors in which you communicate
24 appropriately.

25 So, I think that's an example of how you have to

1 do that with each community, and it doesn't matter where
2 it is.

3 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Do you think it would be
4 beneficial if all the Commissioners, wherever they go,
5 understands that community and those special customs of
6 those communities, before they go out?

7 MR. ONTAI: That would be an excellent idea, yes.
8 Yes.

9 That would be, Mr. Ahmadi, another training.

10 (Laughter.)

11 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: You also stated that you
12 would bring in expertise to help analyze communities of
13 interest. Can you expand on that?

14 MR. ONTAI: Yes. I have read, I've seen some of
15 the tapes that you had in the early beginnings on what the
16 Voters Act is and the -- and I believe Ms. McDonald showed
17 the technical side on how the computer system would work.

18 And I think that when we look at the urban areas
19 we're going to be challenged more by issues of cracking
20 and the packing, and how we're going to identify community
21 groups, minority groups, and how we expand their voice --
22 voices.

23 And I think we're going to need to rely on
24 experts to do the kind of socioeconomic studies that will
25 help us to make that decision.

1 L.A., for example, is a very complex community.
2 We have African American communities, and Latino
3 communities, and Asian communities next door to each
4 other, and there's conflict there, we know that.

5 And so, how do you get an equal voice or
6 something that represents an equal voice for each of these
7 communities?

8 I don't know the answer to that and I think we'll
9 have to rely on sociologists, people that have studied
10 these issues thoroughly, and the legal minds that can tell
11 us that we're not violating the Voters Act. And I'm not
12 sure I have that kind of expertise, so we're going to have
13 to draw on that from others.

14 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Okay. You also said that
15 you wanted to -- or if I'm wrong, let me know, that
16 minority communities should be well represented.

17 Can you kind of expand on what you meant by that?

18 MR. ONTAI: Similarly to what Mr. Ahmadi was
19 asking, I think I would like to see, for example in San
20 Diego, a councilman that's -- or councilwoman who is
21 Asian. We've never had a councilperson in San Diego, in
22 its history, that's an Asian.

23 And as I see the changing demographics of
24 California, I see this also as an opportunity, as minority
25 communities grow, that their voices have an opportunity to

1 be identified during this mapping process.

2 So, I just feel that we need to look very
3 carefully in how we're going to try to produce that, how
4 we're going to create a mapping system that allows other
5 minority groups to have a strong political voice, as well.

6 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: When you served as a
7 planning commissioner on the City of San Diego, since
8 you're a public official, how do you respond when
9 community members come up to you, or approach you outside
10 of the meeting and want to discuss issues with you?

11 MR. ONTAI: Well, I go out of my way to avoid the
12 community. Any docketed item that comes before us as a
13 public official, the seven of us have to have equal access
14 to the same information at the same time, so we are not in
15 violation of due process and offending any one of the
16 parties, the applicant or otherwise, in claiming that one
17 side has had the advantage of turning the ears to the
18 commissioners.

19 So, I really go out of my way to avoid discussing
20 any issues that are on the agenda with the public.

21 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Okay. There's no right
22 answer on here, I just wanted to ask you a question.

23 As you know, like you were saying, L.A. is very
24 complex, you can have one community of interest that is
25 the Hmong and right next to it you might have Latinos, and

1 next to it you might even have an African American group.

2 If you were looking at that and you get down to
3 an area where you have a community that is maybe a
4 40/40/20 split of these minority groups, and you needed to
5 have a minority majority district, how would you go about
6 looking at that?

7 MR. ONTAI: You know, I think, again, I would
8 have to draw on my experience as a planning commissioner,
9 where we've had incidences similar to that type of choice
10 making within a community that is essentially half Latino
11 and half black.

12 And what we did, what I did, tried to do, was to
13 reach out to essentially opposing communities, minority
14 communities within the same district, to get them to
15 realize that they have a lot more to benefit by uniting
16 together around a common issue that is going to benefit
17 them the most.

18 So, I think I've been fairly successful in
19 convincing this one particular community, for example,
20 that a health clinic, whether it's in the Latino community
21 or in the black community, is still a health community
22 that is going to benefit them all.

23 And in the very beginning it was a question of,
24 no, we don't want it because it's in their community. No,
25 we don't want it because it's in this community.

1 And the argument or the ability for me to explain
2 to them that it doesn't matter, this is going to benefit
3 everyone, is an important process of getting communities
4 to understand, to reason and to logic that there are
5 benefits that you should look at, that are mutually
6 satisfactory.

7 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: For that one example that
8 you just stated, how did you communicate with the Latino
9 population and the African American populations to give
10 that information to them?

11 MR. ONTAI: Well, I approached the healthcare
12 industry, first, in each community. So, with the Latino
13 community I had Latino doctors, and nurses, and medical
14 people take the lead --

15 MS. HAMEL: Five minutes.

16 MR. ONTAI: -- in explaining the benefit of why
17 that's necessary. And I had the same thing done with --
18 encouraged the same thing with the African American
19 community.

20 So that the health needs became the issue, not
21 race, not ethnicity.

22 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Thank you. That was my last
23 question.

24 MR. ONTAI: You're welcome.

25 MS. NEVILLE: Ms. Spano, your 20 minutes.

1 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: That's interesting to me
2 that you're able to reach out as an Asian/Pacific Islander
3 to these groups.

4 MR. ONTAI: Thank you.

5 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Do you find this approach
6 will be beneficial as you go out to the communities of
7 interest in California?

8 MR. ONTAI: I do.

9 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: And how would you, because
10 you've been in a role as an advocate, primarily, how would
11 you convince your other Commissioners how important this
12 is without telling them I've gone it, this is the way it
13 needs to be done, I've seen the positive effects? And if
14 they had a different way of doing it would you listen and
15 be open?

16 MR. ONTAI: Absolutely. First of all, I am
17 absolutely going to be respectful and open to their
18 expertise. I think all 14 Commissioners that are finally
19 selected are going to come to this forum with an enormous
20 amount of skill and talent. I've seen the backgrounds and
21 all of them are immensely talented and skilled.

22 So, to one respect I think we all are going to
23 understand that respecting each other's opinion and trying
24 to find a solution, together, is going to be universal.

25 And, yes, I would apply those same skills with

1 them as well, but I think they're already there.

2 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Okay. You mentioned that
3 some of the issues of debate and concern in the -- is that
4 the 1981 San Diego redistricting had to do with the two
5 communities, the Hmong and the Filipino, Asian communities
6 coming together.

7 How long did it take for them to realize that was
8 in their best interest and how you worked with the
9 communities to do that as an advocate?

10 MR. ONTAI: Well, again, as Ms. Camacho asked, we
11 met with -- primarily with the elders of the community,
12 especially with the Hmong. The Hmong community is a
13 very -- it's a very insular community, extremely insular.
14 And they essentially come with a village mentality and
15 structure, and social fabric.

16 So, to reach into that community to get them
17 involved meant going to the elders and the leaders, so
18 that they understood the impact that it would have on
19 them. And we sold them on that issue because we told them
20 that a councilman that represents your district has a
21 thing called CDBG funds, and if you get involved in this
22 process you will get -- your community will get a share of
23 those funds to help your social, the social needs in your
24 community. So, that they got.

25 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: I see, I knew there was a

1 connection.

2 Was it difficult for the city council, and the
3 mayor, and the city staff during this redistricting to
4 understand the importance of the merging of these
5 communities?

6 MR. ONTAI: We had a very, very tough time.

7 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Really?

8 MR. ONTAI: We had a very, very tough time. At
9 the time, the city council was -- well, it was
10 predominantly mainstream, so bringing up these issues was
11 essentially foreign. That you have a minority group that
12 wants to have a district carved out, that has a voice.
13 That has never happened in San Diego.

14 So, introducing that concept, first of all, was
15 astonishing.

16 And so, we had a number of public hearings with
17 the city council where that was not a priority in their
18 minds. So, we had to convince the other eight council
19 members that that was a very important part of San Diego's
20 growth, and that had to be there as a reflection of San
21 Diego's changing demographics.

22 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Why do you believe it wasn't
23 a priority?

24 MR. ONTAI: California struggles with that as a
25 whole, but it is -- San Diego's tradition is predominantly

1 Caucasian.

2 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Uh-hum.

3 MR. ONTAI: So, up to that point it has struggled
4 with giving minorities a voice. And I say that
5 reluctantly because San Diego's not like that, today it's
6 grown quite a bit.

7 But back then, in 1980, it was a very different
8 political structure.

9 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: What was the makeup and the
10 demographics of the committee members at that time?

11 MR. ONTAI: In our committee?

12 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: In the committee,
13 redistricting committee, do you remember the demographics?
14 You said it was mostly Caucasian in San Diego at that
15 time.

16 MR. ONTAI: Well, the city council made the final
17 decision and all nine were all Caucasian.

18 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Were they? Okay.

19 Do you find those barriers have been removed now,
20 over this time, and that they understand the needs of
21 minority interests?

22 MR. ONTAI: It has. It has changed, it has
23 changed remarkably. So, I think California, today, is a
24 lot more receptive to minority voices and, indeed, has had
25 consistently a Latino and African American council member,

1 representing a predominantly African American and Latino
2 community, respectively.

3 But the Asian community has lose, somewhere, that
4 voice, ironically, because of the last redistricting that
5 split Mira Mesa away from Linda Vista, which is an irony.

6 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Can you elaborate on why
7 they split it up?

8 MR. ONTAI: I don't know why that happened. It
9 did not follow the 2000 census tract redistricting
10 process. But it was removed from Mira Mesa and put back
11 into the old district.

12 And I know it has been, from the 1980s on, a very
13 controversial move. It was -- it raised a lot of passion
14 within that part that was added on to Mira Mesa, the non-
15 Asian communities were utterly opposed to it. But it was
16 the right thing to do.

17 And what happened in the 2000 census tract, I
18 really don't know.

19 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: So, you don't know why they
20 opted to change the process of redistricting?

21 MR. ONTAI: No, the process is the same, but the
22 final decision made by the redistricting commission was,
23 for whatever reasons, was to remove that Linda Vista area
24 from Mira Mesa, and the effect was to diminish the Asian
25 voice in Mira Mesa.

1 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Do you feel like they don't
2 have the ability to elect a candidate of their choice?

3 MR. ONTAI: No, I think San Diego's changed, I
4 think as a whole -- as a whole, I don't think California
5 is as racist as it used to be. And I think people are now
6 looking at the merits of a candidate regardless of race.
7 So, times have changed.

8 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Okay, thank you.

9 Knowing what you've experienced as an advocate of
10 this process, what kind of challenges -- I know there's
11 the minority interest, in getting their voice heard is
12 going to be one of them.

13 What other challenges do you see the Commission
14 facing as they redraw the lines now, statewide?

15 MR. ONTAI: I think this is going to be a very
16 important issue and it's something that you're concerned
17 with, and which I have to congratulate you on, and that is
18 transparency.

19 I think the 2010 census tract data and the final
20 mapping process has to be very defensible, there's no
21 question in my mind that there are going to be
22 disagreements and there are going to be challenges.

23 So, the Commission has to make sure that it's
24 very defensible, we've had the best expertise and
25 consultants available to defend those decisions that I

1 finally makes. And it has to be a very, very transparent
2 process, where the public has direct input into that, so
3 that from the very beginning the public is an author of
4 that process as well.

5 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Thank you.

6 You received an award in 1986 from the Mexican
7 American Foundation for bridging Latino, African American
8 and Asian communities together. Can you tell me about the
9 significance of that?

10 MR. ONTAI: Well, I was a bit surprised by that,
11 too. But I was honored to receive that. And it just came
12 out of the blue as the result of -- the Port of San Diego
13 is a big operation and, as you know, there are a lot of
14 vendors at the port, in any other port, they have many
15 shops and things like that.

16 And in the past it has been essentially non-
17 minority operations.

18 So, what I did was to help get African American
19 business people, Latino business people, Asian business
20 people together and to create a cohesive voice that went
21 before the Port Commission and the city council, wherever
22 we had an opportunity to underscore the need to have more
23 representation at the San Diego Port. And we were
24 successful in doing that, and so that's the reason why.

25 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: I see. How did you know

1 there was a need for this?

2 MR. ONTAI: For?

3 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: For getting the minorities,
4 the cohesive voice that they achieved --

5 MR. ONTAI: Oh, oh, I see.

6 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: -- in getting more of a
7 representation in there?

8 MR. ONTAI: Well, you know, traditionally we're
9 very insular groups, African Americans don't speak to
10 Asians, Latinos don't speak to Africans, we're just
11 separate little pieces.

12 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Sure.

13 MR. ONTAI: And what I realized was that, you
14 now, minority communities have to work together if they
15 want a bigger piece of the economic pie. And it became
16 clear to me that as a united group it would be a stronger
17 political voice in making those changes, and it worked.

18 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: There was a need for this at
19 the Port of San Diego, it was a long-standing issue there?

20 MR. ONTAI: Yes.

21 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Oh, okay.

22 MR. ONTAI: Yes.

23 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Okay.

24 MR. ONTAI: We forced a major franchise operator
25 to open up those contracts.

1 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: How long did that take to
2 achieve that?

3 MR. ONTAI: Oh, God, I don't know. I think less
4 than a year, I'm sure.

5 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: I see. Oh.

6 MR. ONTAI: Yeah.

7 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Let's see. Bear with me.

8 Describe for the Panel the issues and beliefs you
9 feel strongly about and why you have strong feelings about
10 them?

11 MR. ONTAI: On the issues?

12 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Uh-huh.

13 MR. ONTAI: On what I think are issues that I
14 feel --

15 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Strongly about.

16 MR. ONTAI: -- a passion for?

17 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Sure.

18 MR. ONTAI: I think this is an extraordinary
19 moment in California history, where the citizens passed
20 Proposition 11. I think this Commission has the ability
21 to regain, I think, a lot of confidence in Californians,
22 in the political structure and the process in which we
23 elect people.

24 As you know, you know, polls show that
25 legislative bodies suffer dismal numbers. And that what I

1 see in this Commission is an opportunity to regain that
2 confidence, that the Commission will truly make decisions
3 that represents the people's choice, not politician's
4 choice. And I'm inspired by that, I have a passion for
5 that. And so do my students.

6 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Based on your experiences,
7 what have you learned about your personal biases that will
8 assist you on this Commission work?

9 MR. ONTAI: Personal biases?

10 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Uh-hum.

11 MR. ONTAI: I probably have a few, but I'm trying
12 to think what are they? We all have biases, consciously
13 or not.

14 I think I'm going to have to be a lot more
15 careful, given the scope and the magnitude of this
16 project, to be a lot more patient than I have been in the
17 past, a lot more patient.

18 But also to fine tune my abilities to ask the
19 right questions, precise questions, because time is in
20 essence.

21 And I think I'm going to have to set aside
22 whatever biases I think, or pre-notions, or pre-conditions
23 that I have to get right to the point, to try to answer
24 questions, to try to respond to issues that come up, and
25 that's going to be a challenge.

1 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Thank you.

2 Tell us how important other forms of diversity,
3 such as geographical and economic diversity, are to
4 redistricting?

5 MR. ONTAI: Outside of geography and ethnicity,
6 culturally?

7 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Outside of ethnicity and
8 race?

9 MR. ONTAI: Other --

10 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Other factors or other forms
11 of diversity, and how important are they to redistricting?

12 MR. ONTAI: Okay. I think, yes, California is
13 more than just ethnicity and cultural groups. We have gay
14 and lesbian communities. San Francisco's a strong
15 community that has built many, many years of trial and
16 struggle to have a voice. That is a community that needs
17 to be respected and continued recognition of their place
18 in California's history.

19 MS. HAMEL: Five minutes.

20 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Thank you.

21 MR. ONTAI: And I think business communities,
22 economic interests are important, too. It's vital for our
23 economy.

24 And I don't know what shape and form that takes,
25 but we do have to look at how the business community, the

1 chambers see redistricting and how it's going to enhance
2 or detract from or economic growth.

3 And so, I think it's important to get their input
4 as well.

5 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Okay, thank you. I think
6 that's it for me right now, let me look at my notes.
7 Thank you.

8 MS. NEVILLE: Members, are there follow-up
9 questions at this point?

10 CHAIR AHMADI: I don't have any.

11 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: I don't, either.

12 MS. NEVILLE: Okay. Mr. Ontai, I have just a few
13 questions for you. One of them has to do with -- or a
14 couple have to do with your work on the San Diego Planning
15 Commission.

16 MR. ONTAI: Yes.

17 MS. NEVILLE: As a planning commissioner, I would
18 imagine that there are, indeed, a number of laws that
19 you've needed to become very acquainted with, such as
20 CEQA, and other environmental laws, laws related to land
21 use planning.

22 MR. ONTAI: Yes.

23 MS. NEVILLE: How have you familiarized yourself
24 with those laws, what have you done to do that?

25 MR. ONTAI: Well, I can't be a lawyer that

1 represents somebody that would hire me to explain those
2 laws, but I have enough exposure and content to make
3 rounded decisions that are within the confines of those
4 regulations.

5 MS. NEVILLE: So, do you have counsel who advises
6 the Commission and gives you advice on issues, or have you
7 had an opportunity to read the laws so that you know
8 you're familiar with them?

9 MR. ONTAI: Yes. In pecking order, first of all
10 there's the Brown Act. So, we have to be absolutely sure,
11 as public officials, that we conduct ourselves within the
12 letter of the Brown -- the letter of the law in terms of
13 the Brown Act.

14 CEQA is, of course, a complex piece of
15 legislation, but in many ways it's very definitive, in
16 other aspects it's opened up to wide discretion.

17 Long-term impacts, for example, is still
18 continuously an ambiguous thing.

19 But I know enough, again, of land use laws, and
20 certainly I know the land use code, itself, so I'm very
21 familiar with that. Being an architect I have to
22 implement that, as well.

23 So, I'm very familiar with the technicality of
24 land use laws. I'm familiar with the parameters of CEQA,
25 which is essentially an opportunity for the public to get

1 engaged in that decision making process.

2 And in many ways it's similar to what the
3 Commission will be doing, as well, and that is to give the
4 public an opportunity to have a voice in a project that
5 might affect their community.

6 MS. NEVILLE: Okay, thank you.

7 And I think if you're selected to serve, I think
8 CEQA will start to feel like a really straight forward law
9 to you, as you start to become better acquainted with the
10 Voting Rights Act. But I appreciate your characterization
11 of it. It is a pretty definitive law. The Voting Rights
12 Act is a law where there's a lot of case law, there's a
13 lot more interpretation that goes into that work.

14 But, hopefully, you'll have really good counsel
15 to guide you.

16 I do have another question about your position on
17 the San Diego Planning Commission. If I understand
18 correctly, you're in a term that would expire early in
19 2011?

20 MR. ONTAI: In January.

21 MS. NEVILLE: In January. Were you appointed to
22 your position by the San Diego City Council?

23 MR. ONTAI: It is an appointment.

24 MS. NEVILLE: Okay. And I'm not sure if you are
25 aware of this or not, but there are a number of different

1 office-holding restrictions that are in the Voters First
2 Act, and there are certain ones that only kick in for
3 those individuals once they're selected to serve on the
4 Commission, and they prohibit certain office holding, even
5 at the local level, for a five-year period. For
6 individuals who are selected to serve on the Commission,
7 you can't hold an appointed position for five years from
8 the date you are selected.

9 The rules around that are still being developed,
10 they haven't been adopted yet. But if it turned out to be
11 the case that you needed to vacate your position on the
12 San Diego Planning Commission in order to take a seat on
13 the Citizens Redistricting Commission, is that something
14 you would be willing to do?

15 MR. ONTAI: I, actually, serendipitously, planned
16 for it. My term actually expires in January of 2011, on
17 the City Planning Commission, so I'm essentially wrapping
18 it up.

19 MS. NEVILLE: Uh-hum.

20 MR. ONTAI: So, I don't see any conflict there.

21 MS. NEVILLE: Okay.

22 MR. ONTAI: So, if I'm fortunate to be selected
23 to be on this Commission, it is at the same time that my
24 Planning Commission term expires.

25 MS. NEVILLE: And, potentially, that might mean

1 stepping down from your San Diego position a month or so
2 earlier, so that it was -- you weren't holding the two
3 offices at the same time.

4 MR. ONTAI: That's correct and I'm prepared to do
5 that.

6 MS. NEVILLE: Okay. Yeah, I just wanted to
7 clarify that.

8 I don't have any further questions.

9 Members, other questions? Mr. Ahmadi?

10 CHAIR AHMADI: I don't have any.

11 MS. NEVILLE: Okay, Ms. Camacho?

12 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: I don't have any.

13 MS. NEVILLE: And Ms. Spano?

14 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: No.

15 MS. NEVILLE: You have some time, you have about
16 22 minutes, if you would like to make a closing statement,
17 you may?

18 MR. ONTAI: Yes, I would like to first of all
19 thank you again for selecting me to be at this point, I'm
20 very honored.

21 If you decide not to pick me, I am still very
22 honored. I'm actually astonished that I'm sitting here,
23 so I want to thank you for your extraordinary work that
24 you've done for Californians.

25 But if I may, I'd like, because I promised my

1 students that I would comment to them to -- I've asked
2 them to grade me, to watch these proceedings.

3 So, to my students, hi guys, and I hope when I
4 get back you give me a good grade.

5 (Laughter.)

6 MR. ONTAI: They are very inspired by this.

7 CHAIR AHMADI: I'm sure they are.

8 MR. ONTAI: Thank you.

9 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Thank you.

10 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Thank you.

11 MS. NEVILLE: Thank you for coming to see us
12 today.

13 We'll be back at 2:44.

14 (Off the record at 2:29 p.m.)

15 (Back on the record at 2:44 p.m.)

16 MS. NEVILLE: Good afternoon, it's 2:44 and we're
17 back on record.

18 Welcome, Mr. Gonzales. Are you ready to begin?

19 MR. GONZALES: Thank you. Yes, I am.

20 MS. NEVILLE: Great. We're going to proceed with
21 the five standard questions that you were given, beginning
22 with the first.

23 What specific skills do you believe a good
24 Commissioner should possess? Of those skills which do you
25 possess, which do you not possess and how will you

1 compensate for it?

2 And is there anything in your life that would
3 prohibit or impair your ability to perform the duties of a
4 Commissioner?

5 MR. GONZALES: Thank you. Reading off of my
6 notes, first off I'd like to say that if it's more
7 comfortable for you to call me Robert, that's fine.

8 The skills, specific skills I think, I feel a
9 good Commissioner should have should start with math
10 skills, they should be sufficient to understand and assist
11 them in understanding the statistical data that's going to
12 be presented to them.

13 Also, computer skills sufficient to use word
14 processing and GIS data programs.

15 The good Commissioner will also have effective
16 communication skills, both orally and written. They
17 should be able to have the ability to gather and
18 comprehend information, both given orally and written to
19 them, and to them determine the relevancy towards the
20 task.

21 And then another skill, a very important skill
22 that I think a good Commissioner should have is listening
23 skills. They should be able to listen and have the
24 ability to keep the focus on hand. There's probably going
25 to be a lot of sidebar conversations going on during

1 public meetings and they may need to rein some people in,
2 including the Commissioners, themselves.

3 As far as specific skills, I'm not sure if this
4 is a skill or more of a characteristic. I think the good
5 Commissioner should have initiative, not wait for anything
6 to happen, but be willing to step forward into the gap or
7 in front.

8 And given the timeframe accomplish this task,
9 initiative is very, very important.

10 And last, patience. Again, this may not be a
11 skill -- it's a skill for some people. But, again, I
12 think it's a characteristic that a good Commissioner
13 should have. Thank you.

14 MS. NEVILLE: Describe a circumstance from your
15 personal experience where you had to work with others to
16 resolve a conflict or difference of opinion; please
17 describe the issue and explain your role in addressing and
18 resolving the conflict.

19 If you are selected to serve on the Citizens
20 Redistricting Commission, tell us how you would resolve
21 conflict that may arise among Commissioners?

22 MR. GONZALES: I did fail to answer the last
23 question on number one, so I will answer it now. Will
24 anything impair me or prohibit me from working? No,
25 noting at all.

1 To answer number two, I'd like to give you a
2 personal experience. As I was working with the Elections
3 Division, in a supervisory capacity, every week we had a
4 supervisor's meeting during election periods to get
5 together, because we were on a deadline, constantly on a
6 deadline and certain tasks had to be accomplished.

7 Well, one of my co-workers felt that shortcuts
8 was the way to do it and not with -- and without any
9 inference to the Election Code.

10 I had a difference of opinion, I felt that the
11 Election Code was important for us to adhere to, so that
12 if we made an error we could point to the Election Code
13 and say this is why we did this at this point in time.
14 These are the facts that we had to deal with and this was
15 the decision that was made.

16 My role, I was a full participant in the
17 conflict. Because our supervisory meetings were in the
18 middle of the office, transparent to all the employees,
19 they could overhear our conversations and any kind of
20 conflict within the group.

21 This bothered me a little and it didn't bother
22 the other co-worker at all.

23 What I did about that is, I call, tongue in
24 check, around-the-block diplomacy. I asked the co-worker
25 to go on a break with me, a couple days -- this was a

1 couple days later. I asked the co-worker to go around the
2 block with me and a standard block has three corners and
3 the entrance to the building, once we returned.

4 On the way to the first corner I discussed with
5 my co-worker the problem that we had, as I saw it. And on
6 the first corner that we got to I explained to my co-
7 worker the reasoning that I wanted to adhere to the
8 Elections Code.

9 And then, as we approached the second corner,
10 that was her opportunity to give me her view, or basically
11 her story, what she has -- what she has experiences in the
12 past as far as shortcuts were concerned, and whether or
13 not they were budget savers or time savers of any sort.

14 So, as we got to the second corner she gave me
15 full understanding of where she was coming from, why we
16 were conflicting. And when we got to the third corner,
17 that was the compromise corner. That's where we stood
18 there for a few minutes and we talked about what we just
19 heard, asking questions, asking for clarification and
20 then, by the time we got back to the office, back to the
21 front door, we were at least understanding where each one
22 was at on their feelings and what their experiences were.

23 The following week, on our supervisory meeting, I
24 think the around-the-block diplomacy worked because,
25 again, she wanted to do shortcuts. However, after she had

1 finished explaining the shortcut that she wanted to take,
2 she threw the question to me, does the Election Code have
3 anything to say about that?

4 And so, at that time I was either to say it was
5 silent or give some sort of indication as to what the code
6 was that went to the problem.

7 Among the Commissioners, if there's a conflict
8 between Commissioners, other than myself, I'm hoping that
9 the Commissioners will be able to handle it one-on-one.
10 If there's a conflict between myself and one of the
11 Commissioners on the board, again, I hope to solve it at
12 the lowest level, which is a one-on-one.

13 If that's not possible, then I would ask one, or
14 two, or more of the Commissioners to assist. Maybe we're
15 using the wrong terminology, maybe we're not explaining
16 ourselves in a proper fashion to each other, where we can
17 understand and resolve the conflict.

18 Thank you.

19 MS. NEVILLE: How will the Commission's work
20 impact the State? Which of these impacts will improve the
21 State the most? And is there any potential for the
22 Commission's work to harm the State and, if so, in what
23 ways?

24 MR. GONZALES: With the Commission's primary goal
25 of drawing and/or redrawing lines, the district lines, in

1 a manner that promotes fair and effective representation,
2 I think the Citizens Redistricting Commission's work will
3 impact the State immediately, and also for the next State
4 election.

5 The registered voters of California potentially
6 will be able to vote for candidates that they feel
7 confident in, that they are their representatives of the
8 area, based on the work of the Commission.

9 Also, the Commission will be setting the
10 standards for any future Citizens Redistricting
11 Commission, as well as any other similar entity, involving
12 an impartial, qualified group of Californians.

13 Potential harm, yes, there is potential harm. The
14 Commission could miss the boat, they could draw the lines
15 the wrong way, they could misinterpret the data that they
16 have. They could accidentally put someone out,
17 disenfranchise voters or citizens.

18 If failure should occur, the Commission's work
19 will fail to improve the citizens' and/or voters'
20 participation in a fair and/or effective representation
21 within the State Legislature.

22 If failure should occur, the Commission would
23 have expended precious State funding, in an already
24 stressed budget, with no positive result, and that would
25 be a shame for us.

1 However, I don't think that's what's going to
2 happen. There is potential improvement and that
3 improvement is improving voter participation, improving
4 citizen participation in subsequent State election, and
5 any election afterwards.

6 I believe the improvement will also be providing
7 acceptance of the current and future Legislatures. Again,
8 the idea is that they are fair and effective
9 representatives of those districts.

10 The biggest potential that I hope, I hope will
11 come out is that it will wake the sleeping giant, and that
12 is eliminate or reduce voter apathy.

13 Voter apathy has been with us for quite some
14 time. It was with us when I was working with the
15 Elections Division and it still is here.

16 Hopefully, with the hard work of the Commission,
17 I believe that will disappear.

18 Thank you.

19 MS. NEVILLE: Describe a situation where you've
20 had to work as part of a group to achieve a common goal;
21 tell us about the goal, describe your role within the
22 group, and tell us how the group worked or did not work
23 collaboratively to achieve this goal?

24 If you are selected to serve on the Citizens
25 Redistricting Commission, tell us what you would do to

1 foster collaboration among your fellow Commissioners? To
2 ensure that it meets its legal deadlines.

3 Thank you.

4 (Laughter.)

5 MS. NEVILLE: I've been omitting that.

6 MR. GONZALES: I had a couple of instances to
7 discuss and this is the one I chose: as a volunteer
8 administrator for our church congregation, the one that I
9 attend, I was given a goal as the administrator, from the
10 eldership, and the eldership is basically the governing
11 body of our congregation.

12 The goal was to re-energize our congregation for
13 outreach, and local mission work, and then have fun doing
14 it. I wasn't quite sure how we were going to do that.

15 I was given an opportunity to select a model,
16 work with a model that would benefit the congregation and
17 so, through working with the eldership we'd selected a
18 purpose-driven life model, I'm sure many of you have
19 heard.

20 My role in this was to be the administrator,
21 partition off seven groups out of our congregation, seven
22 groups to handle the task, each one individually, and then
23 hand off the entire project.

24 However, that didn't occur. Number one, I did
25 not want to be just the sole chairman of this project, I

1 asked to be a co-chairman and I grabbed the first elder I
2 could and made them co-chairman, as well. That gave me
3 the authority, as well as the visibility of the project.

4 Then as we were defining or gathering the seven
5 groups together, we have individuals that are very, very
6 spirited, very, very forthright in coming out and helping,
7 and doing things. They wanted to do the local mission
8 work, they wanted to do the outreach, but they didn't want
9 to be in charge of the group.

10 So, the first thing we had to do with each group
11 was select a chairman. I was selected the chairman. So,
12 instead of being the chairman of that group, I asked for a
13 co-chair.

14 And so, each group that I have, we had me as the
15 chairman and someone else as the co-chair.

16 Fortunately, all I did was sit back and give them
17 the encouragement that they needed to continue on with the
18 project.

19 The groups worked well, they were collaborative
20 the entire time, and they were impressive in what they
21 were able to accomplish.

22 The model that they used and the programs that
23 they instilled are still there today.

24 Now, fostering collaboration with Commissioners
25 that I don't know, yet, all I can say is I could be

1 available to each participant. I can engage with a
2 Commissioner to let them know what my strengths are, and
3 so they can tell me what theirs are, as well.

4 What that will do is that will give us an
5 effective communication bridge so that we know what we can
6 do.

7 As a Commissioner, if selected, I'll pull my
8 weight as a Commissioner, I will be available whenever
9 meetings are necessary.

10 And to ensure that they meet their legal
11 deadlines, I will assist in providing or producing a
12 calendar of events, where we should be, at what time and
13 date. Something very similar to what I was accustomed to
14 in the Elections Division. Anyway, an election day is
15 coming, and it won't move.

16 However, I would not use September 15th as a date,
17 the deadline date, I would use September 1st. That way we
18 could always go back and look over our work one more time
19 before it's presented. Thank you.

20 MS. NEVILLE: And, finally, a considerable amount
21 of the Commission's work will involve meeting with people
22 from all over California, who come from very different
23 backgrounds and very different perspectives. If you are
24 selected to serve on the Commission, tell us about the
25 specific skills you possess that will make you effective

1 at interacting with the public?

2 MR. GONZALES: I think my greatest skill is
3 listening. Listening to individuals give me their
4 information, listening for key words to determine exactly
5 what they're talking for and what they're looking for,
6 what action they need.

7 I also will be able to speak to individuals at
8 different levels. I'm pretty good at diffusing any kind
9 of situation, should someone come at me with an angry tone
10 at first.

11 And then I will establish trust with the people I
12 speak with.

13 My experience comes from, currently, speaking
14 with college coaches, high school coaches, student
15 athletes and student athlete parents. I try and meet them
16 in different areas, at their different levels, socially
17 and economically, so that they understand what they're
18 looking at, what they're looking for, what they expect to
19 get, what's available.

20 I also have experience in speaking with the
21 congregational members. The socioeconomic levels between
22 there are very, very wide.

23 And then, also, I've spoken in front of precinct
24 officers, which are basically just a regular citizen.
25 They're registered voters willing to do their job, their

1 civic duty in helping out in the election process.

2 Thank you.

3 MS. NEVILLE: Thank you.

4 Mr. Ahmadi, your 20 minutes.

5 CHAIR AHMADI: Yes, thank you. Good afternoon,
6 Mr. Gonzales.

7 MR. GONZALES: Good afternoon.

8 CHAIR AHMADI: A follow-up on your response to
9 standard question number one, you stated that gathering,
10 or an ability to gather information is one of the critical
11 skills that the Commissioners should have, possess.

12 Could you elaborate on what type of information
13 would you be gathering, should you be selected as a
14 Commissioner?

15 MR. GONZALES: There will be several types of
16 information. First off, you'll be setting up public
17 meetings, to meet with the public and listen to issues at
18 hand, why the district line is wrong. We'll be gathering
19 information from that, verbally.

20 Written, we'll be giving -- be given GIS
21 information, census tract information.

22 Being able to obtain any voter registration
23 files, should you need to go to voter registration files.
24 That's the type of information I was referring to.

25 CHAIR AHMADI: How would you use the voter

1 registration data?

2 MR. GONZALES: The voter registration data, right
3 now, and I'm going to take this statewide, the Secretary
4 of State's Office, on their website, has their certified
5 registered -- statement of vote from the 2008 election, of
6 which Proposition 11 was voted for.

7 Proposition 11 was only voted by 50.9 percent of
8 the voters on a yes. That's barely, barely half. And
9 what you can tell on the statement of vote, on the
10 Secretary of State's Office website, is out of 58
11 counties, 34 said yes, 24 said no. So, that tells me 34
12 counties have decided there's something wrong with our
13 lines, we need help. Twenty-four said we're okay with our
14 lines.

15 However, you know, the 24 that said they're okay
16 I don't know, I didn't break down the county statement of
17 vote to find out if -- or what the percentages of the vote
18 were at that time. That's something that we'll have to
19 gather. That's how we could use it.

20 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you.

21 So, it sounds to me that you would start with the
22 34 counties -- I forgot the number, but the ones who voted
23 for or supported Prop. 11, is that where you envision the
24 Commission starting their work, to look at those counties
25 and potentially looking for some potential problems,

1 maybe?

2 MR. GONZALES: Well, I'm envisioning the
3 Commission working together and offering -- practically
4 brain storming where they'd like to start. And my
5 suggestion would be we can spend more time on the counties
6 that feel that they're being disenfranchised, and try and
7 take a look at those lines and see, you know, is there any
8 adjustment that needs to be made.

9 If there isn't, we're going to have to tell those
10 individuals there's nothing wrong with your lines.

11 CHAIR AHMADI: Where would you start?

12 MR. GONZALES: I would start with the 34 that are
13 wrong, that feel like they've been disenfranchised.
14 Because if that's the case, that will affect the remaining
15 24.

16 CHAIR AHMADI: Would you approach the county
17 offices, would you approach the organizations, what are
18 some of the specifics steps that you'd probably take,
19 given that we have a short deadline?

20 MR. GONZALES: Yeah, given that we have a short
21 deadline, I would first look at the Assembly districts,
22 the lines, and approach or work on those lines, first.
23 Because two whole Assembly districts will make a Senate
24 district, okay. So, we'll start with that. To me, it's
25 the smaller piece.

1 I would utilize the county offices as much as I
2 possible can because that is an impartial office in the
3 county, those that run the Election Division,
4 specifically.

5 I've met quite a few of these individuals in the
6 past years, when I was working with elections, and I'm
7 fairly confident that the information will be impartial.

8 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you, sir.

9 And speaking of county election offices, as you
10 stated in response to question number two, you have been
11 involved with a supervisorial election back in 2002, I
12 believe, or 2001, I believe.

13 In your response to that question, you actually
14 answered one of the questions that I was planning to ask
15 you, and I appreciate that.

16 MR. GONZALES: Oh, okay.

17 CHAIR AHMADI: But I have kind of like a follow
18 up and kind of like expanding on that a little bit.

19 MR. GONZALES: Sure.

20 CHAIR AHMADI: In your application, and this may
21 not be related to that experience, but in your application
22 you state something about in the process of redrawing the
23 lines you, unfortunately, realized that you were -- or
24 your skills were under-utilized.

25 MR. GONZALES: Uh-hum.

1 CHAIR AHMADI: Could you expand on that a little
2 bit?

3 MR. GONZALES: Sure.

4 CHAIR AHMADI: What do you mean by that as --
5 well, I'll let you expand on that, please?

6 MR. GONZALES: Okay. What I meant by being
7 under-utilized, I did receive some training through the
8 County Clerks Association, which is a membership of county
9 clerks and registrar of voters, they formed an association
10 and they work with each other, and help each other in
11 different areas.

12 In 1991 they offered a training class on
13 redrawing the Assembly and Senatorial district lines based
14 on census data, and so I signed up for that class.

15 However, I needed some additional authority,
16 because I was no a registrar of voter, but my registrar of
17 voter at that time said, that's okay, go ahead, because
18 she knew that I was just seeking information.

19 And I attended the class, we actually redrew the
20 lines here, in Sacramento County, using census data
21 information and anything else that they would have used,
22 that was available at that time.

23 The reason that they had that class, that
24 training class, is that for some reason at that time, and
25 I do not know why, but the county clerks/registrar of

1 voters were anticipating that task being handed over to
2 them because they were an impartial office, and that did
3 not occur.

4 So, that training that I received was not
5 utilized for that purpose.

6 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you, sir.

7 Another follow-up question on your response to
8 standard question number three, you said that as soon as
9 the Commission is formed there will be an immediate
10 impact?

11 MR. GONZALES: Yes.

12 CHAIR AHMADI: What is the immediate impact?

13 MR. GONZALES: The immediate impact, now, is that
14 in the November 2nd election, coming up, there are two
15 propositions, now, that address the Citizens Redistricting
16 Commission. If the Citizens Redistricting Commission
17 prevails that, to me, will tell you that the registered
18 voters of the State of California know that we need to
19 have this change.

20 We need to take the redrawing of the lines away
21 from the State Legislature.

22 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you, sir.

23 MR. GONZALES: You're welcome.

24 CHAIR AHMADI: Could you tell me what was your
25 role with the county redistricting, what was your role?

1 You probably said that and I missed it. I'm
2 sorry, but --

3 MR. GONZALES: No. In 1991 I was actually the
4 warehouse manager and also the finance and personnel
5 officer for the County Elections Offices, and I was
6 looking, just saw the information and thought it would be
7 nice to have in our office, someone to know that, so I
8 volunteered for that training.

9 And after I volunteered for that training and the
10 redistricting never occurred, it was never given to the
11 County Elections Offices, they in turn put me in charge of
12 the mapping section.

13 And so, that's where I used that training. We
14 actually drew precinct lines. In fact, what we had was
15 the result of the redistricting by the State Legislature
16 at that time, along with the census tract information.

17 So, I hope I answered your question.

18 CHAIR AHMADI: Yes, yes, you did.

19 MR. GONZALES: I wasn't supposed to be there,
20 basically, but I was.

21 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you.

22 In your application you state that your current
23 activity is working as an area director for the College
24 Prospects of America?

25 MR. GONZALES: Correct.

1 CHAIR AHMADI: And I believe, please correct me
2 if I'm wrong, that part of that -- part of the mission for
3 that organization is to -- like an outreach to recruit
4 students for universities and colleges.

5 MR. GONZALES: Correct.

6 CHAIR AHMADI: From your experience dealing with
7 or going through the outreach programs and trying to
8 recruit all these students, how would you see the
9 demographics of the population in California and how will
10 that experience help you, should you become a
11 Commissioner?

12 MR. GONZALES: Okay. Well, first off, let me
13 clarify what I do with College Prospects of America.

14 CHAIR AHMADI: Yes.

15 MR. GONZALES: I am actually a scout for
16 athletes, for student athletes who have the skills and
17 abilities to take it to the collegiate level and have the
18 academics, and want to go to college, and utilize those
19 skills and abilities to pay for it.

20 So, what I do is I travel throughout the Central
21 Valley looking for those individuals. And where I am
22 focusing on are the locations, the cities, the towns, the
23 high schools that major colleges will not -- do not go or
24 cannot go because of budget funds. They've been hit, as
25 well.

1 So, I will go to these rural locations and
2 observe the student athletes. And if I'm convinced that
3 they have the skills and abilities to take it to the next
4 level, then I will approach the student athlete to ask
5 them about their academics. And then if that's -- if it
6 proves out that their academics are there as well, then I
7 will approach the coach and the parents, and sit down and
8 talk to them about being recruited, what the recruitment
9 process actually is and the steps to take care of.

10 What that has done for me, and should I be
11 selected as a Commissioner and what I could use, is I can
12 use the information, the attitudes that those individuals
13 have of I'm out here, out here in the boondocks so,
14 basically, I'm out in nowhere and I'm not being
15 represented.

16 So, I would definitely take those -- take that
17 information with me and share that with the other
18 Commissioners, as we schedule our public meetings.

19 CHAIR AHMADI: Could you tell us about the mix of
20 students that you have recruited, in terms of diversity?

21 MR. GONZALES: If you're referring to
22 racial/ethnic backgrounds?

23 CHAIR AHMADI: That could be one aspect of it?

24 MR. GONZALES: Okay. There is -- they're a mix.
25 There is no one individual, or one type of race or

1 ethnicity that I approach. It's a matter of the
2 individual having the skills and abilities to take it to
3 the next level.

4 Economically, they're -- I've signed individuals
5 or assisted individuals in obtaining scholarships to
6 Division One schools that have absolutely no money,
7 whatsoever, at the home because they're farm laborers, or
8 they're factory workers, or they're single income teachers
9 or single income parents.

10 So, they're very diverse in all aspects.

11 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you, sir.

12 Since you redistricting experience, it's
13 encouraging to ask you this legal question. What are your
14 thoughts about the equal population requirement in the
15 Voting Rights Act?

16 MR. GONZALES: The equal population requirement
17 is good. I agree with it. However, it is one of the
18 slipperier slopes for the Redistricting Commission to come
19 up with.

20 Because there will be times where that equal
21 population will not be available and so they will have to
22 make some really tough, intuitive decisions as to how to
23 draw that line.

24 CHAIR AHMADI: Could you expand on that, please?
25 What do you mean by when the population information or

1 data is not available or --

2 MR. GONZALES: Oh, it is available, but when
3 you're looking at it -- for example, when we were doing
4 the class there, in 1991, one of the things that we came
5 across was we came to a census data tract and the line
6 could either go to the west by half a mile, or a quarter
7 mile, or to the east by a half a mile or a quarter mile.

8 And the information that we had on the census, we
9 were trying to determine where the growth of the city was
10 going to be and what population was going to be in that
11 growth, race-wise, ethnicity-wise, economic-wise, because
12 it was undeveloped land at the time.

13 And so, we had to make some sort of -- and it
14 caused quite a spirited discussion between myself, being
15 outside of Sacramento County, with the Sacramento County
16 officials that were there. And so we just went back and
17 forth as far as what the pros and cons were on which way
18 to turn.

19 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you.

20 Should you be selected as a Commissioner, how
21 important would the political boundaries of the State be
22 in your decisions for redistricting, the cities and
23 counties?

24 MR. GONZALES: The cities and counties would be
25 very important. And that's why I used the -- in my

1 example of where I would start was the statement of votes,
2 certified statement of vote for the counties because
3 that's basically where I have received my experience. So,
4 I would more than likely be looking at the county areas.

5 And in '91, I believe, if my memory serves me
6 correct, Fresno County was -- after the redrawing of the
7 lines, we came up with or we were given three Senatorial
8 districts and four Assembly districts. Which, from an
9 Elections Office, from an elections stand point I thought
10 and I -- and I will be honest with you, that when I
11 received that information on how we were to draw the
12 lines, I said "what fool did this?"

13 MS. HAMEL: Five minutes.

14 MR. GONZALES: So, you know, next year, if I'm
15 selected as a Commission and I'm sitting at a restaurant
16 and someone says "what fool did this," I would say me and
17 13 others.

18 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you. Hopefully, you don't
19 have to say that.

20 MR. GONZALES: Hopefully, not.

21 CHAIR AHMADI: What does the phrase "minority
22 representation" mean to you?

23 MR. GONZALES: Minority representation just -- to
24 me, just means that there is a group, a smaller group than
25 the whole. That there's a majority of a group, whether it

1 be six-foot-tall people versus five-foot-tall people, so
2 there's more five-foot-tall people than there are six-
3 foot, so the six-foot individuals would be a minority.

4 CHAIR AHMADI: How would it impact your decision
5 on the Commission?

6 MR. GONZALES: I don't think -- well, in my
7 experience, again looking back at 1991 and then also,
8 again, at 2000, the -- it does not carry anymore weight
9 than anything else, unless we need to find something
10 that's going to make the difference. That we see,
11 intuitively, that there is something that's there. And if
12 it's a minority representation versus geographical, then
13 the minority may take a 51 to 49 percent decision.

14 CHAIR AHMADI: Okay. All right. Thank you,
15 sir. I don't have anymore questions.

16 MS. NEVILLE: Ms. Camacho, go ahead.

17 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Thank you. Hi, Robert.

18 MR. GONZALES: Hello.

19 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Can you tell me when you
20 were or the relationship of the Elections Department was
21 with the County Records Management Program?

22 MR. GONZALES: Sure. The County Records
23 Management Program did not exist with the Elections
24 Department when I first started.

25 In the nineties, about mid-nineties, my Register

1 of Voter County Clerk needed some space to house some
2 records and we recognized that there wasn't anyplace to
3 send it. And if we kept records, we didn't have any way
4 of destroying them or a retention schedule, so to speak.

5 So, the task was asked of me, well, could I
6 create one? And so, I actually created the Records
7 Management Program for Fresno County, and at the same time
8 as I was working for the Elections Division.

9 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Okay. Because I was a
10 little confused when you were talking and I just wanted to
11 get that straight in my mind.

12 MR. GONZALES: I was also an officer of the
13 Superior Court, so at the same time, so there was three
14 functions for me.

15 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Okay. As a member of the
16 Elections Department, what would be the benefits of your
17 participation on the Redistricting Commission?

18 MR. GONZALES: The benefits would be I have drawn
19 the lines as it -- after it's been done. I've received
20 the aftermath and tried to deal with it. And so, I would
21 be able to tell to the Commissioners or explain to the
22 Commissioners -- hopefully, explain to the Commissioners
23 that this is the problem that exists if you do it this way
24 the benefits would be I have drawn the lines as it --
25 after it's been done. I've received the aftermath and

1 tried to deal with it. And so, I would be able to tell to
2 the Commissioners or explain to the Commissioners --
3 hopefully, explain to the Commissioners that this is the
4 problem that exists if you do it this way, there's a
5 problem that exists if you do it this other way.

6 So, we need to come up with a way or a solution
7 where we can work within the confines of the Voters First
8 Act, the Voter Rights Act, and the federal laws.

9 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: You were talking about
10 Fresno County being split between three Assembly and two
11 Senate?

12 MR. GONZALES: It was, I believe at that time it
13 was three Senate and four Assembly.

14 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Four Assembly. How did that
15 affect Fresno?

16 MR. GONZALES: Well, as far as elections were
17 concerned, which was my point of contention at that point,
18 is it affected us quite a bit. What we basically had to
19 do was redraw everything that we had.

20 There was a Senatorial district that just dipped
21 into the northern part of Fresno County and we could not
22 understand why that occurred or why that line was drawn.
23 The impact was devastating to the registered voters of
24 that area because they were voting for someone they had no
25 knowledge of or felt they didn't have any knowledge of.

1 And so they felt disenfranchised, and they wanted to be
2 voting for the individual that was well within the Fresno
3 County lines. So, it created quite a stir in Fresno
4 County.

5 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Do you feel that that could
6 occur with this redistricting because, obviously, lines
7 may have to be moved because populations of shift, the
8 Voting Rights Act, do you feel that could occur at this
9 point and then how would you deal with that?

10 MR. GONZALES: I don't know if -- it could occur.
11 It could occur at any county, not just Fresno County, it
12 could occur because of that very reason, the population
13 shift.

14 We would have to take -- as a Commission, we
15 would really have to take a good look at what we're doing
16 in those areas, where we start crossing county lines just
17 trying to pick up population.

18 We've got to take another look, an outside-of-
19 the-box look at how we're drawing that district.

20 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: When you were taking your
21 classes in 1991, did you -- were you able to draw some of
22 the precinct boundaries, was that some of your duties?

23 MR. GONZALES: For the class, itself, or for
24 afterwards?

25 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Afterwards?

1 MR. GONZALES: Afterwards, yes. Once I was in
2 the map -- once I was given the mapping section, what we
3 basically did, if I can kind of illustrate it for your, is
4 that we were not -- we had a mainframe computer and
5 everything was on tape. So, what we had to do was we took
6 the census tract information and we had to enter that
7 information by itself, run our computer program so it will
8 accept it, find out what census tracts were not within --
9 or were brand-new, and add them into our file.

10 After we did the census tract information, then
11 we'd go to the Assembly lines and find out what tracts
12 were involved in those Assemblies and then separate those
13 tracts, either partial or whole, into those -- into that
14 particular Assembly, and we had to do that for four
15 different times.

16 And each one, we could only do one Assembly
17 district at a time, run our program, 24 hours later get
18 the results, find out if there were any errors, if there
19 were any omissions, proof our stuff, proof our work, and
20 then do it again for the following one.

21 So, we did that. And after we were able to
22 accomplish that and getting all the tracts identified, all
23 the Assembly lines, the Senatorial lines drawn into the
24 Fresno County mapping, we physically used an electric pin,
25 to draw on a mylar map, the new lines.

1 And then we had to send the map to a vendor, who
2 would then copy that map for us. And then after we
3 proofed that information, as far as the vendor was
4 concerned, with what we had versus what the computer had,
5 then we could send off our tapes to the Secretary of
6 State's Office in three copies.

7 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: How long did that process
8 taken you guys?

9 MR. GONZALES: Once we received the information
10 in '91, we did miss Christmas. It took about three weeks,
11 a little bit more than three weeks, including weekend
12 work, a Saturday.

13 And what was the main problem at that time was
14 our technology, in that we had to wait for the computer to
15 be updated with all the information, run the programs,
16 give us the hardcopy, let us proof our work, find out
17 where there were any errors, or if there were any errors,
18 correct the errors and then run the program, the same
19 program again the following night. And that process kept
20 going and going. That has changed.

21 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: What do you think some of
22 the similarities and differences would be from what you
23 know now to what -- what you would be doing as a
24 Commissioner?

25 MR. GONZALES: The similarities and differences

1 between now and then? Well, in '91, I've given an example
2 of how we manually did the precinct lines.

3 In 2000, we had a GIS system already in our
4 office, we had perfected that GIS system to work for us
5 where we not only were able to draw maps, draw boundary
6 lines, just on real time we were able to produce
7 information that was important to candidates, and
8 campaigns, and the Secretary of State's Office.

9 So, when 2000 rolled around and we received that
10 information in 2001, following the census data and the
11 redrawing of the lines, that only took eight hours for the
12 entire county to be redrawn.

13 So, the technology between the two is great.

14 What it will allow me to do as a Commissioner is
15 that I will be able to -- knowing the pros and cons of
16 doing it manually, versus electronically, and then knowing
17 that the technology has advanced from then, as a
18 Commissioner, we should really be able to churn the
19 district lines out pretty fast.

20 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Do you think that drawing
21 precinct lines are a little bit more straight forward than
22 it would be for drawing district lines?

23 MR. GONZALES: Yes, in a way they are. However,
24 even when you draw the district lines, you have to lay
25 those lines down someplace. You're either using a mid-

1 point on a street, you're using the corner of a census
2 data, you're looking at geographic locations, either
3 there's a river or a canal through a county, where the
4 division would make it equal, so in that sense, no, it's
5 not straight forward. You really -- you are still looking
6 at anything that would cause individuals or registered
7 voters an inconvenience to vote.

8 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Being an impartial observer
9 of many elections throughout the State, what have you
10 learned about the geographic and demographic similarities
11 and differences throughout California?

12 MR. GONZALES: It seems that all the counties
13 have pretty much the same items that we look out for. We
14 all have canals, we all have railroad tracks, we all have
15 district lines that we have to adhere to.

16 So, the similarities are every county pretty much
17 has the same thing. It may be disproportionate as far as
18 how many railroad tracks you have, or how many districts,
19 special districts that you're looking at.

20 As far as the differences, again, we're talking
21 elevations, we're talking hills, mountains.
22 Communication-wise, once you've broken down the
23 information into precinct lines, to me, it's all pretty
24 much the same.

25 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: What do you feel is your

1 unique skill that you could bring to the Commission?

2 MR. GONZALES: I've done it. I have actually
3 done it, I have redistricted Fresno County. I've drawn
4 the lines manually and electronically. I can bring that
5 information on how we can do it, what problems we came
6 across, and look to make sure that we don't -- that we
7 don't make the same errors that we did then, just for time
8 purposes, timeframe.

9 I can -- what I bring from working with
10 elections, and drawing the lines, and working with the
11 registrar of voters is I understand how the counties look
12 at it, and how they work and where -- if I can see, if
13 there's an indication someplace where we can make a county
14 more fair and effective representation, then I can point
15 that out as well.

16 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: That's all the questions I
17 have right now.

18 COMMITTEE MEMBER RUIZ: Ms. Spano.

19 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Good afternoon.

20 MR. GONZALES: Good afternoon.

21 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Do you feel precinct level
22 data is necessary to look at when you start drawing the
23 State lines, and in what circumstances?

24 MR. GONZALES: In certain circumstances, yes.
25 When you start coming into the cities, if you have to go

1 into a city and divide it up because of population, yeah,
2 you are going to have to look at the precinct information
3 that's there. You'll have to go into the census tract
4 data as well.

5 You'll have to know, obviously, how many people
6 are there.

7 But one of the things I also found in census
8 tract data was that we could try and project what the
9 registration potential might be and, again, what -- are we
10 looking at a manufacturing area, are we looking at medium
11 housing, or are we looking at rural land?

12 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: So, it wouldn't be necessary
13 to apply it throughout the whole redistricting process?

14 MR. GONZALES: No, not the whole redistricting
15 process, no.

16 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: It's too detailed in certain
17 circumstances, it's not necessary?

18 MR. GONZALES: It's not a matter of it's not
19 necessary, you can, you're not going to hurt yourself by
20 doing it, you're just reinforcing your decisions that, you
21 know, we've looked at it and it's okay.

22 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: What are the core datasets
23 that a Commissioner would have to look at statewide, for a
24 statewide redistricting?

25 MR. GONZALES: For a statewide redistricting.

1 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Other than the census data?

2 MR. GONZALES: Well, one of the things, like I
3 mentioned earlier, the counties that voted yes on
4 Proposition 11, that put this Redistricting Commission to
5 push forward, that information they should be looking at.

6 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Okay. How important is it
7 to integrate communities of interest and consider that in
8 the determination of the Commission's work and how they
9 make decisions in drawing the lines?

10 MR. GONZALES: I think it's relatively, it is
11 important that the district commission hear all the
12 communities of interest, find out what they're looking at,
13 being able to gather that information at a later time.

14 When they're actually drawing the lines they can
15 take a look at that and see, okay, did -- have I covered
16 that instance or does that instance need to be covered?

17 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: When you were involved in
18 the map drawing, how did you integrate all that, at all,
19 if any?

20 MR. GONZALES: The census data or the
21 registration?

22 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: The registration and any
23 input from anybody else?

24 MR. GONZALES: No, as far as the registration,
25 when we input the precinct information onto the system, we

1 were bound by the Elections Code on how many we could put
2 into a precinct.

3 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Okay.

4 MR. GONZALES: And so, that governed how many we
5 could put in.

6 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Okay.

7 MR. GONZALES: And then based -- looking at that,
8 as well as the census data information on how many people
9 live in that area and what their age groups are, we were
10 able to determine whether or not that area was going to
11 grow, or really try and make some sort of projection that
12 there's going to be more people there, so we should leave
13 some room.

14 And at that time, in the early nineties, the
15 maximum number of people you could put in a precinct were
16 600. Now, it's a thousand. So, there's been an
17 adjustment. Or at least in 2000, in the year 2000 it's a
18 thousand. I'm not quite sure what it is now, it may still
19 be the same.

20 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: And this is referring to the
21 population?

22 MR. GONZALES: Correct.

23 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Okay. And that's all driven
24 by Elections Code?

25 MR. GONZALES: Correct.

1 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Okay. How would you
2 characterize your working relationship with the county
3 board of supervisors during this process? Did you work
4 closely together?

5 MR. GONZALES: The board of supervisors, we
6 basically -- you mean, like when we were redrawing the
7 lines?

8 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Yes.

9 MR. GONZALES: When we were redrawing the lines,
10 we did not have any relationship with the board of
11 supervisors at the time.

12 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Not at all?

13 MR. GONZALES: No.

14 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Okay.

15 MR. GONZALES: Other than the finished product,
16 they wanted to see what the finished product was, they
17 were interested in that.

18 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: And how did those
19 discussions go?

20 MR. GONZALES: This is the information that we
21 have, these are the precincts that we've drawn, this is
22 what Fresno County looks like, yeah.

23 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Okay. No debate?

24 MR. GONZALES: No.

25 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: No pushback at all?

1 MR. GONZALES: No. No, there wasn't anything,
2 other than they saw it first.

3 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Okay. Can you describe your
4 experience hearing from interested groups and individuals
5 on the Codification Committee?

6 MR. GONZALES: With the Recodification Committee,
7 again, I was in a group of registrar of voters and
8 assistant registrar of voters. So, what I was basically
9 bringing to the table was the practical use or practical
10 knowledge of those codes that they were working with.

11 And so, when it was -- we rewrote an election
12 code, we would look -- it was given to me and I would take
13 it through the process, depending on the voting system
14 that was being used in the county. There were several
15 voting systems being used and I would address or at least
16 try and address how this code would affect or not affect
17 the county using that voting system.

18 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Is it fairly complex
19 material to present?

20 MR. GONZALES: It was complex if you did not
21 know, you know, elections code or you did not know the
22 voting systems that were used and the -- the manuals, or
23 the procedures utilized that are approved by the Secretary
24 of State's Office. Yeah, it was complex and then you also
25 had -- and you had to have a good understanding of the

1 voting system.

2 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Were there any debates or
3 contentions -- contentious --

4 MR. GONZALES: Yes. Yes, there were.

5 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: And can you explain to me
6 how that was resolved and how that went?

7 MR. GONZALES: They would ask -- for my
8 participation they would ask me, okay, you took a look at
9 this particular elections code and you pointed out there
10 might be a problem in this voting system. Exactly how did
11 you arrive at that?

12 And so, I would explain to them this is the
13 process that we took, this is the procedure that we would
14 have to have established in order to -- in order to assure
15 that this, the problem that we've identified does not
16 exist or does not have a chance to come about.

17 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Okay. And that was resolved
18 pretty civilly?

19 MR. GONZALES: It was still, again, spirited
20 discussions because there were -- you know, there was back
21 and forth as to whether or not the voting system should be
22 in the State of California or not.

23 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Yeah.

24 MR. GONZALES: But it was certified -- it is
25 certified by the Secretary of State's Office, so it is

1 eligible to be utilized.

2 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Okay. Can you describe your
3 experience working with the diverse members of the public?

4 MR. GONZALES: Diverse members of the public, in
5 my mind would be someone like the precinct officers that I
6 worked with.

7 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: The precinct, pardon me?

8 MR. GONZALES: The precinct officers.

9 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Okay.

10 MR. GONZALES: Those individuals that are manning
11 the polls.

12 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Okay.

13 MR. GONZALES: Those individuals were selected,
14 interviewed, trained and assigned by my staff and I. Was
15 in front of the precinct officers pretty much most of the
16 time training them, and we had anywhere from between 40 to
17 60 training classes per election.

18 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Uh-hum.

19 MR. GONZALES: And we had anywhere between 2,400
20 and 4,000 individuals that we trained per election. So,
21 they were diverse in that they were in age group, they
22 were diverse in economics, they were diverse in location.
23 We had individuals coming from rural county areas, coming
24 into the city to receive training and inter-mixing with
25 city voters.

1 Also, meeting with student athletes and their
2 parents, I'm in front of parents, teens. I'm always
3 invited to a parent meeting, initially, to identify and
4 describe what the recruitment process is, that they might
5 be interested should their student athlete have the skills
6 and abilities to take it to the next level.

7 I've been invited to high school classrooms to,
8 again, address the recruitment process and what the
9 colleges are looking for, how much the college education
10 costs, and where those funds might come.

11 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: How does your background
12 prepare you for listening and integrating public testimony
13 into your decision making?

14 MR. GONZALES: The background, again, listening
15 to the precinct officers, the registered voters,
16 understanding what their complaints are or what their
17 understanding of the voting process is.

18 The students, where they'd like to go, what
19 they'd like to do, what their careers -- what they see
20 their careers, how can I get to that point, we would
21 discuss that, either as individuals or as a group.

22 When I was a supervisor, I would also take my
23 employees and discuss with them how, you know, where is it
24 you want to go, what is your career ambition? Are we
25 accomplishing that, are we giving you work experience that

1 will help you make that decision of where you want to go?

2 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Thank you.

3 Describe for the Panel the issues you are aware
4 of regarding public confidence in the integrity in the
5 redistricting process?

6 MR. GONZALES: Well, with Proposition 11 in
7 place, now, the voters have said that we feel that the
8 State Legislature has not done an adequate job on drawing
9 or redrawing lines, they're not paying attention to
10 something.

11 What we will do as a Commission, and if I'm
12 selected as a Commissioner, is that we will listen to
13 those individuals, as well as take a look at what's been
14 done in the past, try and get the theory behind why
15 they -- why this line was drawn at this point, or why this
16 district is looking this way.

17 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: What factors are within the
18 Commission's control to positively or negatively affect
19 the public confidence?

20 MR. GONZALES: If we hold -- you know, holding
21 our public meetings and establishing ourselves as a
22 Commission that we are a representative of the whole State
23 of California, now's the time for you to tell us what is
24 wrong, and if the public responds, and our public meetings
25 last a long time, many hours, we have many speakers

1 telling us exactly what's wrong, then I think that's --
2 what we're doing there is we're instilling public
3 confidence into the registered voters because now they
4 know they have been heard.

5 And then they'll wait for the lines and,
6 hopefully, the lines, after we've drawn them, will be
7 satisfactory and not require any legal --

8 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Challenge?

9 MR. GONZALES: Yeah, retaliation, yeah.

10 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Okay. What do you think the
11 Commission can do to manage the factors that aren't really
12 within their Commission's control?

13 MR. GONZALES: Attempt to?

14 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Yeah.

15 MR. GONZALES: Factors that may not be in the
16 Commission's control, how can you rein in the cat?

17 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Yeah.

18 MR. GONZALES: As a group we can brainstorm to
19 figure out how we can come around with a solution or
20 resolution to the problem, or the situation, or where we
21 want to go, how do we get there? We can sit down, and the
22 14 minds, together, in partial it's got to work. You
23 know, we have to find something, we should find something.

24 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: You mentioned earlier there
25 could be gaps in the census data as you apply it to the

1 statewide redistricting process. Can you give us a little
2 bit more detail about that?

3 MR. GONZALES: Well, the gaps I was referring to
4 is that when the census -- when the lines are redrawn and
5 census tract data is applied, some of the -- because of
6 the shift in population, there might be some new census
7 tracts that are not in the program, and so they fall aside
8 as an error. And so, those are the ones that I was
9 referring to that we would have to address, those -- that
10 census tract information. We have to put it back into the
11 Assembly line -- in the district that it belongs to. And
12 then we would run the program again, proof it to make sure
13 that that was included, and that finished product should
14 be compiled of all the census tract data that's there.

15 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Okay. Through a series of
16 validation measures?

17 MR. GONZALES: Correct.

18 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Okay.

19 MR. GONZALES: Proofing of the information that
20 we entered.

21 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Okay. Do morality and
22 personal beliefs have a part to play in the role of
23 redistricting?

24 MR. GONZALES: Morality or personal beliefs?

25 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Personal beliefs?

1 MR. GONZALES: To be impartial, the personal
2 beliefs, I do not believe so. Morality, there might be
3 some argument for that.

4 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Uh-hum.

5 MR. GONZALES: Morality, to me, is a part of it
6 is being honest, truthful and trustful, being able to
7 trust that individual that I'm speaking to, that there
8 isn't a hidden agenda, they aren't trying to set the other
9 Commissioner up for a failure, things of that nature. So,
10 there's a part of morality in there.

11 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Describe for the Panel the
12 issues and beliefs you feel strongly about and why you
13 have strong feelings about them?

14 MR. GONZALES: After going through the Central
15 Valley and taking a look at, and working with students
16 athletes and their parents, I feel that we need to -- my
17 strong believe is our education system needs to be taken a
18 look at and reinforced.

19 And also, the teachers that are involved in all
20 the schools, I think they need given a pat on the back
21 whenever possible, based on what I've seen from these
22 student athletes.

23 Because some of these individuals, some of these
24 students are just amazing as far as what they foresee
25 themselves doing, as a career ambition, and what they plan

1 on giving back to the community.

2 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Right. Thank you.

3 In what areas of the Commission's work do you see
4 your personal beliefs playing a part?

5 MR. GONZALES: My personal beliefs is in -- as a
6 Commissioner, or working as a Commissioner would be I
7 would be trustworthy, I would be honest, I would be kind
8 to everyone that addresses me, and I would try and show
9 that I'm a -- I'm not the enemy.

10 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: To what clubs and
11 organizations do you belong to, participate in, or made
12 any donations to, including any social, community,
13 religious, professional, political, or any other kind of
14 clubs and organizations?

15 MR. GONZALES: I do not belong to any clubs, any
16 organizations. I do participate in a couple. The Central
17 Valley Walk to Amuse, I do participate as a worker.

18 I have contributed to a high school program for
19 disabled students, to actually disabled student athlete
20 students.

21 And the only other organization that I can think
22 of, that I've ever donated to would be a police academy.

23 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Have any of these
24 organizations that you donated to taken a stance
25 officially, or unofficially, in regards to any political

1 cause or a specific candidate for office?

2 MR. GONZALES: Not to my knowledge.

3 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: That's it for me. Thank
4 you.

5 MR. GONZALES: Thank you.

6 MS. NEVILLE: Panel Members, are there follow ups
7 right now?

8 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: I can wait until after your
9 questions.

10 MS. NEVILLE: Okay.

11 CHAIR AHMADI: I have one, but I can ask at the
12 end.

13 MS. NEVILLE: Great. Mr. Gonzales, I wanted to
14 talk to you about, take you back to something you
15 mentioned a couple of times. Early on in your
16 conversation with Mr. Ahmadi you had talked about looking
17 at voter registration data. And if I understood you
18 correctly, you had indicated that in those counties in
19 California, where the voters had expressed their approval
20 for Prop. 11, that those would be the counties where you
21 would believe that the Citizens Redistricting Commission
22 should initially focus its efforts.

23 And if I understood you correctly, your thinking
24 was that those counties have approved Prop. 11, therefore,
25 those must be the counties that are kind of dissatisfied

1 with things and they need our help.

2 And tell me if I'm mischaracterizing what you
3 said but --

4 MR. GONZALES: No, that is correct.

5 MS. NEVILLE: So, help step me through that a
6 little bit more. Why would a county that -- let's look at
7 it from the different perspective, let's say I'm a county
8 where the voters didn't approve Prop. 11, and maybe you
9 know off the top of your head just which counties those
10 are, let's say we're in a county where the voters didn't
11 express their approval and it didn't go, didn't pass, why
12 would I conclude that that county doesn't need the
13 Commission's assistance as much as the others do?

14 MR. GONZALES: No, I didn't -- I would not say
15 that -- I would not conclude that a county did not need
16 our assistance as a Commission.

17 What I would say was that the counties that did
18 not approve Prop. 11, the -- whatever the voting
19 registration data, the voting, or certified statement of
20 vote for that county would indicate, would kind of tell me
21 whether or not there was any dissatisfaction because maybe
22 it didn't pass, but it was a similar percentage of 51
23 percent to 49 percent for a no.

24 It's something that I would take a look at. And
25 then, also, I would suggest that the Commission visit that

1 county just to reconfirm the vote, that there isn't any
2 problem with the districts, the way they're drawn out.

3 MS. NEVILLE: So, let me -- let me sort of shift
4 gears a bit here. The charge of the Citizens
5 Redistricting Commission is to redraw the boundaries for
6 the California's Assembly, Senate, and State Board of
7 Equalization District, and I know you're very, very
8 familiar with all of these laws.

9 But the guiding laws are the U.S. Constitution,
10 the Federal Voting Rights, all of those laws.

11 One of the things that this Commission may find
12 itself in the position of doing is redrawing the lines of
13 a district boundary in a way that really, clearly takes
14 race or ethnicity into account, and ensures that citizens
15 in that area have a right to elect a candidate of their
16 choice.

17 Is that a law that you agree with and would be
18 able to apply the principles of that law, if you were
19 selected to serve on the Commission?

20 MR. GONZALES: Yes, I do agree with that.

21 MS. NEVILLE: Okay.

22 MR. GONZALES: I have seen in different areas, in
23 my experiences in working with the -- and especially in
24 '91, when we were working with Sacramento counties, just
25 practicing with drawing the lines, how race and ethnicity

1 came into play.

2 MS. NEVILLE: Okay. So, let me go through some
3 of my other questions and maybe it will help --

4 MR. GONZALES: Okay.

5 MS. NEVILLE: -- flesh out my thoughts here. I
6 want to ask you a clarifying question about something,
7 also, that you said to Mr. Ahmadi, when you were talking
8 about the redistricting efforts that were done in Fresno,
9 and I believe it was in 1991, and you mentioned a comment
10 someone had made. And I don't believe it was you, I
11 believe it was someone else who had said "what fool did
12 this?"

13 MR. GONZALES: Oh, no, that was my comment.

14 MS. NEVILLE: That was your comment. Why did you
15 make that comment, what did that comment mean?

16 MR. GONZALES: What that comment meant was at the
17 time we did not have a -- we were not split by four
18 Assembly districts and at the end -- as a result of the
19 redistricting, for the information that we received, we
20 were at that -- at that point split into fourths, and so
21 we had to separate a smaller portion of the northern part
22 of Fresno County into a district that was further north.

23 And so, at the time that we were drawing the
24 lines, we saw where the lines were actually being drawn
25 streetwise, because we were using the parcels from the

1 Assessor's Office as guidance, and we'd go to the big
2 streets and go down a neighborhood, and we knew for a fact
3 that at that point those -- that neighborhood was going to
4 be up in arms once they found out they had been split off
5 with another district.

6 MS. NEVILLE: So, just so I'm understanding why
7 you thought, why you made that comment was you saw how the
8 maps were drawn and based on what you knew about the
9 communities there, and other things, you were seeing that
10 it looked like a community that really had a shared
11 interest was somehow now divided by this redrawing?

12 MR. GONZALES: Correct. Correct.

13 MS. NEVILLE: Was there -- to your knowledge, was
14 there anything about the redrawing of those boundaries, at
15 that point, that was unlawful or was it ever subjected to
16 a legal challenge, or do you know any more about what the
17 rationale was for drawing the boundaries that way?

18 MR. GONZALES: No, I don't know what the
19 rationale was for drawing this and I am not familiar or I
20 do not recall if there were any legal ramifications for
21 it. So, I'm sorry, my memory just doesn't serve me that
22 well.

23 MS. NEVILLE: Just curious if you knew, just
24 curious for the basis for your comment.

25 Another comment that you made, you talked about

1 how, as an elections official, you see the aftermath of
2 the redrawing of boundaries, you see what happens as a
3 consequence and you see some of the problems that result.

4 And I wanted to ask you, what are some of the
5 problems you've seen, particularly in Fresno County?

6 MR. GONZALES: Some of the problems, again, as an
7 elections official working for Fresno County, was that by
8 the way the district lines were drawn it was going to cost
9 us more money to provide the election for the county. It
10 was increasing our cost anywhere between 20 to 30 percent.

11 It was -- we had to reconfigure our computations
12 on ballot cards, machines that we had, did we have enough
13 polling places, precinct officers to cover the areas
14 because they can't be in the same -- in the same area or
15 the same polling place.

16 MS. NEVILLE: Sure. And I appreciate that and I
17 know elections are tremendously expensive to put on.

18 And I'm just going to play devil's advocate here
19 for a minute --

20 MR. GONZALES: Okay.

21 MS. NEVILLE: -- but let's say that the districts
22 were redrawn in that matter because it was really
23 necessary in order to comply with the law, some
24 requirement of the Voting Rights Act, or something, and
25 there was really a very sound legal reason for drawing

1 them as they were but, nonetheless, it cost more. Would
2 that be acceptable to you?

3 MR. GONZALES: That would be acceptable to me, as
4 a Commissioner, yes.

5 MS. NEVILLE: Okay. You've talked quite a bit,
6 if I understand correctly, about the approach that you
7 might use if you were on this Commission and, if I
8 understand correctly, you would place a lot of importance
9 on some of the traditional political boundaries as the
10 basis for redrawing, you'd look at city and county
11 boundaries, et cetera.

12 How would you reconcile the desire you have to do
13 that with the fact that you really have to look at other
14 concepts, at factors like communities of interest or other
15 things that may cross city or county boundaries, or other
16 natural, traditional boundaries?

17 MR. GONZALES: How do I reconcile? As part of
18 the Commission it would be imperative for me to take all
19 the information, comprehend what the information I have in
20 front of me, after discussion with the Commission, after
21 hearing everyone's interest in where the lines are
22 considered, I could reconcile my -- with the fact that
23 I've done and I've seen everything that I possibly can
24 that would affect that line drawing, to be drawn in that
25 fashion, and feel comfortable with that line.

1 I may not agree with it, but I would be in a state
2 of compromise where I would -- I could live with that
3 information, with that decision.

4 MS. NEVILLE: Okay. I also want to ask you about
5 a follow up to something that Ms. Camacho asked you about
6 using GIS systems to draw the maps and you talked about
7 some of the similarities and differences between the
8 drawing of local precinct boundaries and doing this on a
9 more statewide level.

10 And if I understood you correctly, you thought
11 that it would be a pretty straight forward task of
12 redrawing the boundaries and that, as I heard you say, it
13 would be able to churn these lines out, meaning the lines
14 for all the Senate and Assembly districts pretty fast.

15 Tell me more about why you think it's so straight
16 forward and why you think it could be done so quickly
17 using the data?

18 MR. GONZALES: Because the data would be in --
19 technology has advanced so much since the time that I was
20 involved with it, and taking a look at what's available
21 now, with the information that's available now, as an
22 example using the Secretary of State's website as one I
23 just recently visited, that technology would allow the
24 artwork, so to speak, the drawing of the lines would be a
25 lot simpler, a lot quicker, a lot more real time so you

1 could actually see what that line, once you put it in that
2 particular location, what the effect is.

3 And then, with the information that's available,
4 the registration, census data, and so forth, that
5 information could come up in an information block on the
6 screen, so you and all the public could see it at the same
7 time.

8 Okay, if we moved this line here, this is the
9 result of it, does -- and then, based on that result, does
10 it meet the criteria for all the laws and regulations.

11 MS. NEVILLE: So, is it your sense that this task
12 that the Citizens Redistricting Commission is about to
13 embark on is largely one of using data and manipulating
14 data?

15 MR. GONZALES: Of using data, but I think the
16 larger task is getting the information from the public,
17 the communities of interest, and understand -- trying to
18 understand what the problem is or what their perceived
19 problem is on where the lines are drawn now.

20 MS. NEVILLE: Okay. So, just to follow up on
21 that, one of the suggestions that we have often heard is
22 that this Commission, once it's fully formed, should
23 probably go out and listen to Californians early on in the
24 process, before the data, the census data even arrives go
25 out, hold hearings, talk to people, find out what's your

1 sense of how well these district boundaries are drawn now,
2 what are your concerns, what are your issues and that the
3 Commission should do that even before it sits down and
4 looks at the data. What do you think of that idea?

5 MR. GONZALES: I agree with that. I agree that
6 as soon as possible we -- the Commission should be out
7 there holding the public meetings.

8 From my understanding, the census data
9 information won't be available until around March, so that
10 gives us approximately two months' worth of meetings we
11 can hold to get information before the data comes out.

12 Then, once we have received the data, then we can
13 combine the two. So, yes, I'm very much in favor of going
14 out there as soon as possible.

15 MS. NEVILLE: Okay. Another, just a final
16 question, I know this won't be all that important to the
17 Citizens Redistricting Commission, but I'm curious to know
18 how the California Voting Rights Act has affected the work
19 that you do at Fresno, the Fresno area, what implications
20 has it had for your work?

21 MR. GONZALES: The Voting Rights Act?

22 MS. NEVILLE: The California Voting Rights Act.

23 MR. GONZALES: That's a good question because I'm
24 drawing a blank right now.

25 MS. NEVILLE: And that's okay. It's a law that

1 has implications, more implications for some localities
2 than others, and I had thought that Fresno was one that
3 needed to change some of its local elections so that they
4 were at --

5 MR. GONZALES: That may be so. Once I retired
6 from Fresno County Elections --

7 MS. NEVILLE: It's a newer law. When did you
8 retire?

9 MR. GONZALES: Okay. In 2002.

10 MS. NEVILLE: It may have just come into play
11 shortly after you retired, I think it's a relatively new
12 law.

13 MR. GONZALES: And I separated myself for several
14 years from elections, or anything like elections.

15 MS. NEVILLE: Okay. I'm going to defer and if
16 the Panel Members have follow-up questions, that would be
17 great.

18 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Go ahead.

19 CHAIR AHMADI: May I?

20 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Yeah, go ahead.

21 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you.

22 Real quick, your application suggests that you
23 have a family member who's the Director of the Council of
24 Governments?

25 MR. GONZALES: That's correct.

1 CHAIR AHMADI: Could you tell me about what is
2 the Council of Governments, what is it that they do?

3 MR. GONZALES: From my understanding, which I
4 have not really delved into it, the Council of Governments
5 is an organization that's represented by all the cities,
6 all the incorporated cities of the county, and they decide
7 where federal funds are to be distributed, how much, and
8 what projects. That's to my understanding. That may not
9 be it, but that's to my understanding.

10 CHAIR AHMADI: That's good enough. Thank you,
11 sir. No more questions.

12 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Robert, when you redrew the
13 precinct lines, when did that occur? Was that after the
14 district boundaries were redrawn --

15 MR. GONZALES: Yes.

16 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: -- was that the normal
17 process?

18 MR. GONZALES: The normal process is after the
19 district lines have been accepted and the information is
20 given to the counties so they can redraw their precinct
21 lines, or redraw the information as far as the Assembly
22 and State Senate lines are concerned, because it does
23 affect how many precincts are in those areas and what
24 areas there are.

25 Because not only are you -- when they move the

1 Senatorial district, the State Senatorial district or the
2 Assembly lines, they're also -- change could -- possibly
3 changing some of the special districts that are in the
4 area.

5 Because sometimes, in the language of a special
6 district, they may say our district line follows the
7 Assembly, and so they have to make that modification as
8 well.

9 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: I know that you kind of or
10 you've been a supervisor and that you go to supervisor
11 meetings. Was there any other meetings or experience
12 personally, or professionally, with running or
13 participating in an open meeting?

14 MR. GONZALES: Well, yes, it was during
15 recodification meetings, when we had come to the
16 conclusion on election codes. We presented that
17 information to an Assembly committee, and that was an open
18 meeting.

19 Because of my position, I was not allowed to
20 stand or make the presentation, but I was allowed to be
21 there in support.

22 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Was there any other ones, or
23 it was just the recodification?

24 MR. GONZALES: As far as open meetings are
25 concerned, as an administrator of like a church

1 congregation, as a volunteer, yes, there were open
2 meetings about the different things, specifically budget
3 related, projects that were included and everyone's
4 invited to participate and give their opinion as to
5 whether or not it was a good idea or a bad idea.

6 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: So, you were part of that --
7 I think you were like co-chair or chair of that?

8 MR. GONZALES: Correct, correct.

9 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: And so, the congregation
10 would come into the meeting and that they'd be able to
11 provide any input to the -- you and your --

12 MR. GONZALES: To the family, yes. Correct.

13 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Thank you, that was my last
14 question.

15 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Donna, can I ask another
16 question?

17 MS. NEVILLE: Absolutely.

18 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Do you find that it's going
19 to be really difficult to balance the decision making when
20 you have quantitative data and qualitative data to deal
21 with in redistricting for the State?

22 MR. GONZALES: Do I find it difficult?

23 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Yeah, do you find it's going
24 to -- it's not going to be that simple, it's not going to
25 be just using a GIS mapping program to do it?

1 MR. GONZALES: Yes, I find -- well, it's not
2 going to be that simple. If I made it as -- if I
3 portrayed it as being very simple, it's not. It's just
4 that I'm familiar with it, I'm familiar with what it looks
5 like. And when you have the qualitative data and the
6 quantitative data, because of the very nature of the
7 information that you're getting, and how you combine it,
8 and who's combining it for you, whether or not you're
9 doing it or someone else is presented it to you, yeah,
10 it's going to be very difficult.

11 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: How would you propose that
12 you ensure the accuracy that the quantitative data is
13 integrated with the qualitative to make the best decisions
14 that you can make, have you given it any thought?

15 MR. GONZALES: I haven't given that any thought.
16 But if I were to, I would say that depending on the
17 presentation, or the presenter of the information, where
18 it was arriving from, did I -- was I the one that
19 instigated that information or requested the information?
20 And if I did, then I would make sure it was as accurate as
21 possible.

22 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: And how would you do that?

23 MR. GONZALES: If I had to do it by myself, I
24 could, either using technology, the computer, internet,
25 whatever, or I may use staff, I may delegate that

1 responsibility to someone to find this information and
2 bring it back.

3 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Okay. If you were selected
4 as a Commissioner have you -- what role do you think you
5 would play on the Commission, knowing the strengths that
6 you have to bring?

7 MR. GONZALES: The role I would play?

8 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Uh-hum.

9 MR. GONZALES: I would be one of 14 or -- yeah,
10 one of the 14, and my skills, my strengths, I would say I
11 would bring -- I'd bring practicality to the table.

12 Because as I mentioned, I've done it, I've been there,
13 I've seen it, I know how hard it is to put it together
14 manually, I know how easy it is to put it together
15 electronically, I know the -- I've seen what the
16 ramifications are of a decision. I've even commented on
17 the decision process. And that's what I would be able to
18 bring to the table.

19 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Thank you.

20 MS. NEVILLE: Okay. Mr. Gonzales, if you wish to
21 make a closing statement, you may. You have about seven
22 and a half minutes.

23 MR. GONZALES: Okay. Well, I want to thank the
24 Panel for inviting me over. I feel like I've known you
25 for six months now. The process was started back in

1 February, it's been a long one for yourselves, and I
2 realize that.

3 I wasn't sure if I wanted to do this, I was doing
4 it because I had this intuition that I should be placing
5 myself on the line, my State is calling me. And I was
6 wondering, by your questions, whether or not I was really
7 adequate to be on the Commission.

8 But after listening to your questions and my
9 answers, I think I've convinced myself that, yes, I am
10 adequate to the Commission. And, hopefully, I've
11 convinced you as well.

12 One of the things that I hope, as I mentioned
13 earlier, one of the things that I hope will come about,
14 whether I'm on the Commission or not, is that voter apathy
15 will be eliminated or reduced significantly.
16 So, again, I hope that I have convinced you that I should
17 be on this Commission and that's all I have.

18 CHAIR AHMADI: Thanks.

19 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Thank you.

20 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Thank you.

21 COMMITTEE MEMBER RUIZ: Thank you for meeting
22 with us.

23 We will be back at 4:29.

24 (Off the record at 4:14 p.m.)

25 (Back on the record at 4:30 p.m.)

1 MS. NEVILLE: Okay, it's 4:30 and we're back on
2 the record with Mr. Starr, for his interview.

3 Welcome, Mr. Starr and good afternoon.

4 MR. STARR: Hi.

5 MS. NEVILLE: We're going to start with the five
6 standard questions.

7 What specific skills do you believe a good
8 Commission should possess? Of those skills which do you
9 possess, which do you not possess and how will you
10 compensate for it?

11 And is there anything in your life that would
12 prohibit or impair your ability to perform all of the
13 duties of a Commissioner?

14 MR. STARR: Okay, to start off as far as specific
15 skills that a good Commissioner should possess, as far as
16 a skill, I believe a good communicator is a skill that
17 would be crucial.

18 Analytical, a person has to be able to analyze a
19 situation and break it down, and come up with a good -- a
20 good rational decision.

21 And a good geographic knowledge of the State.

22 As far as personality and traits that I believe a
23 Commissioner should possess is to be honest, be open-
24 minded, to have good, rational thought and set aside any
25 personal opinions and focus on the ultimate goal.

1 Now, of these skills what do I possess? I
2 believe that I actually do possess a degree of all of
3 them. I also believe that I can always learn and expand
4 in every single one of them. There is not an area that
5 you can't improve on and myself, even being here is part
6 of improving myself.

7 And, you know, as far as how to compensate for
8 it, that's -- it's kind of interesting, in order to
9 compensate you kind of feel like you're -- you know, what
10 kind of crutch will you use to compensate for it.

11 I believe in order to do that you can also go ask
12 for help. I believe there's a lot of resources out there
13 and I'm not above to go ask somebody for help if there is
14 an area that I feel that I'm lacking in.

15 And one of the things that, to answer the
16 question as far as my life, and prohibiting or impair the
17 ability to perform all of my duties as a Commissioner,
18 personally, right now I don't know. And part of that is
19 going to be a question to you guys as far as the time
20 commitment. Because in my mind, that is the only thing
21 right now that I see as something that could -- that could
22 impair my ability to perform all of the duties.

23 And I hope to get kind of a good sense of it,
24 even here today, even though you might not be able to
25 answer all my questions here today.

1 You know, I've actually gone through the effort
2 thus far and called and asked people what they thought the
3 time commitments would be and so far, I'm sitting here
4 today because I believe I'm still able to perform all
5 those duties.

6 MS. NEVILLE: Okay. Describe a circumstance from
7 your personal experience where you had to work with others
8 to achieve -- excuse me -- to resolve a conflict or a
9 difference of opinion. Please describe the issue and
10 explain your role in addressing and resolving the
11 conflict?

12 If you are selected to serve on the Citizens
13 Redistricting Commission, tell us how you would resolve
14 conflicts that may arise among the Commissioners?

15 MR. STARR: I've been married for ten years, so I
16 resolve conflict daily.

17 (Laughter.)

18 MR. STARR: I'm just kidding on that one.

19 But I can honestly tell you that I have not ever
20 run up against any real large conflict in my personal life
21 or my career. I think it's probably part of my
22 personality trait to avoid conflict, if I can see conflict
23 may be an issue.

24 I believe that it's something that you kind of
25 back away from, reevaluate the position, and approach it

1 from a different angle.

2 That's not to say, you know, that as a
3 Commissioner there won't be times where people have
4 differences of opinion. There's certainly a large range
5 from a difference of opinion and conflict.

6 With that being said, when there's differences,
7 you got to figure out what those differences are. Are
8 those differences personality differences or are they
9 ideas or beliefs?

10 And by being able to break down the situation, I
11 believe you're able to come to the correct solution.

12 MS. NEVILLE: How will the Commission's work
13 impact the State, which of these impacts will improve the
14 State the most? And is there any potential for the
15 Commission's work to harm the State and, if so, in what
16 ways?

17 MR. STARR: Okay. How will the Commission work
18 impact the State? I think it will impact the State
19 greatly to begin with, I think it will impact it for the
20 better.

21 I believe the political boundaries are at the
22 root at maintaining honest elections and an open
23 government.

24 With that being said, also, with the lines being
25 drawn out there, it will eliminate a lot of the political

1 gerrymandering that we see in the current maps. I think
2 this will be a positive for the State. It will start to
3 eliminate some of the partisan political side of it, as
4 far as the Republican versus Democrat, and keeping seats
5 safe for political reasons.

6 I believe right now the boundaries are set up not
7 in -- not in favor of the people within those boundaries,
8 but set as far as political expediency for those that
9 wrote the boundaries.

10 As far as which of these impacts will improve the
11 State the most, I believe by becoming more fair. Right
12 now I don't believe the boundaries necessarily are fair,
13 to go back to the gerrymandering problem.

14 And we can create a better system that becomes
15 more politically fair for the people that live within the
16 boundaries.

17 To move on to the final part of that question,
18 does the Commission work harm the State and, if so, in
19 what ways?

20 I've read this question beforehand and right now
21 I cannot come up with any way that you can harm the State
22 more than what the process is currently doing.

23 So, I believe that the system is broke and I
24 guess there's always ways to make a problem worse but, in
25 my mind, if you go about this with an open mind, and goal

1 oriented, with the goal being what's the best for the
2 State, I don't believe you can do any harm.

3 MS. NEVILLE: Describe a situation where you've
4 had to work as part of a group to achieve a common goal?
5 Tell us about the goal, describe your role within the
6 group and tell us how the group worked or did not work
7 collaboratively to achieve this goal?

8 If you are selected to serve on the Citizens
9 Redistricting Commission, tell us what you would do to
10 foster collaboration among the Commissioners and ensure
11 that the Commission meets its legal deadlines?

12 MR. STARR: As far as working within a group,
13 every day, as position as a pest control advisor, we work
14 as a group for the common goal of bringing in the best
15 quality grapes that we can.

16 As with some of our larger clients we have to sit
17 down, as a management team, and plan out the year as far
18 as how we're going to get that commodity, or the grapes,
19 to market that year. And that is laying out a farm plan.

20 And with that, each of us have a role within that
21 group that we all need to work as a group, and work
22 conjunctively in order to reach that goal.

23 I'm also involved in a research committee for our
24 local Lodi Woodbridge Wine Grape Commission, and there
25 is -- as a group there, we have the common goal of trying

1 to get the best grower applied research to our area that
2 we can in order to create a better product.

3 And we all come to the table with kind of a
4 little bit differences of opinion, because we come from
5 different background within that group. Some of us are
6 growers, some of us are professionals within the industry,
7 there's even representatives from wineries, themselves,
8 and each of us come with different ideas.

9 One good example of the way we've come about a
10 consensus within a group, such as that, is most recently
11 creating a research priority list. And that's getting
12 ideas from everybody down on paper and creating a master
13 list of everybody's ideas for research priorities, ranking
14 each of those priorities from zero to four, and compiling
15 everybody's -- everybody's rankings into one -- into one
16 final priority list.

17 And I believe that is fair and representative of
18 the group, everyone gets their opinion, and it's weighted
19 for the consensus of the group.

20 That's something that can be evaluated every
21 year, with everybody giving their opinions and lobbying
22 for, I guess, if one idea is better than the other, why
23 they're idea is better.

24 As far as if selected to serve on the Citizens
25 Redistricting Commission, tell us what you would do to

1 foster collaboration with the Commissioners to ensure the
2 Commission meets its legal deadlines, you have to be part
3 of the solution. And as a group, it's hard to get a large
4 number of people going in necessarily the same direction
5 all of the time.

6 However, if everybody has the ultimate goal in
7 mind to be the best -- to do the best for what's best for
8 California and set goals along the way, it can be used as
9 a guideline and as a road map.

10 And if you, as a group, can come and meet each
11 one of those goals along the way, I believe as a group you
12 will lead each other to the ultimate goal.

13 MS. NEVILLE: Does that conclude your answer?

14 MR. STARR: Yes, that will conclude it.

15 MS. NEVILLE: Okay. And, finally, a considerable
16 amount of the Commission's work will involve meeting with
17 people from all over California, who come from very
18 different backgrounds and who have very different
19 perspectives. If you are selected to serve on the
20 Commission, tell us about the specific skills you possess
21 that will make you effective at interacting with the
22 public?

23 MR. STARR: Yeah, I believe I'm very open and
24 approachable, and I like to seek out different
25 perspectives.

1 One of the things brought up in the beginning of
2 that question is meeting people from all over California
3 that come from different backgrounds.

4 I think that is great because that means there's
5 a lot more to talk about. And in my mind, that's
6 diversity, and diversity is a strength. Everybody comes
7 to the table with different strengths and if you can use
8 the strength from everybody to achieve that common goal, I
9 believe that you will meet that goal and you will be
10 stronger as a group, because of it.

11 And, you know, to get out there in order to meet
12 people, meet differences of opinion, I would approach that
13 as an honor. I believe that meeting people of different
14 backgrounds opens up my mind.

15 A lot of times, you know, you feel that sometimes
16 you live within a bubble and it's always great to get
17 outside that bubble and get exposed to different things.

18 COMMITTEE MEMBER RUIZ: Thank you.

19 MR. STARR: Thank you.

20 MS. NEVILLE: Mr. Ahmadi, your 20 minutes.

21 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you, Donna.

22 Good afternoon, Mr. Starr.

23 MR. STARR: Hi.

24 CHAIR AHMADI: I have some follow-up questions in
25 regards to your responses to these standard questions.

1 MR. STARR: Uh-hum.

2 CHAIR AHMADI: First off, let me try to answer
3 your question about the time commitment.

4 MR. STARR: Yeah, please do, because that's going
5 to be more of an interaction.

6 CHAIR AHMADI: And, Counsel, please interfere if
7 I'm not correct.

8 I believe, if I can put it in a proper phrase, it
9 would be extremely demanding. And I say that based on my
10 limited understanding of what they are charged to do
11 within a short period of time.

12 So, but again, that's my own perception in trying
13 to answer your question, I believe the time commitment
14 will be very high.

15 MR. STARR: And this is one of the issues that I
16 really wanted to kind of find out today, as far as the
17 time commitment. Extremely demanding, that's still left
18 for a lot of interpretation.

19 Is it something that you're like a jury and
20 you're sequestered for weeks at a time, is that something
21 that all of you have been doing for --

22 (Laughter.)

23 CHAIR AHMADI: I'd like to ask the Counsel for
24 help.

25 MS. NEVILLE: So, one of the reasons is it's so

1 hard for us to tell you and to answer your question, and
2 believe me, we appreciate the question, is that we're not
3 the Commission. Once the Commission is fully formed, the
4 Commission is going to really set out to decide how it's
5 going to do its work.

6 We can't dictate how that will happen. All of us
7 clearly recognize that it has a very, very ambitious task
8 before it that's clearly going to be very intensive.

9 How -- just specifically how it goes about
10 structuring its work, when it meets, what time of day, how
11 often, where, whether it uses telecommuting meetings, so
12 that the 14 members all of the State can participate in
13 meetings without necessarily having to travel, we don't
14 know any of that and that's why it's hard for us to answer
15 your question.

16 We know it's going to be a very involved
17 endeavor. We don't want to underplay the amount of work
18 involved. But we don't know the specifics of the
19 commitment or just how it's going to be.

20 MR. STARR: Right. And that's -- and from my
21 perspective, and that's what I've thought this far, you
22 want to set it to where people expect it's going to take
23 this much time, rather than have them expect it's going to
24 take this much, a lot less time, and have people surprised
25 by how much time it's going to take.

1 Because of that, with my job being in
2 agriculture, from about the middle of May to the middle of
3 August, my time is more limited. To say that I can't work
4 on it at all, that's not true at all.

5 It's the hours. I have so much work that I have
6 to do in a week's time, yet I'm very flexible in how I can
7 get that done.

8 So, to say that I would have no time in there
9 would not be correct. I could spend -- I don't know how
10 much time, it depends on the year.

11 MS. NEVILLE: Well, I know we appreciate this
12 bringing this up, and because this the only chance you'll
13 have to really meet the Panel and for them to talk with
14 you, I appreciate your concern. I know that we just can't
15 give you a definitive answer about it.

16 MR. STARR: Right, right.

17 MS. NEVILLE: I can see that you're very
18 pragmatic about it, which is a good thing.

19 MR. STARR: Well, I just wanted to make you well
20 aware of my situation and, please, if I'm not articulating
21 it well enough, please ask me more in-depth questions
22 about it.

23 However, I believe, you know, as this came up
24 that you asked for applicants that aren't just retired
25 folks out there, and that there are people that do have

1 jobs and people, such as myself, that work for a two-man
2 company, that when I'm not there I can't just pawn it off
3 on somebody else.

4 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you. Thank you, Donna.

5 So, let me ask you a question about that. How
6 many hours can you put during May through August for the
7 Commission's work, just the best estimate based on --

8 MR. STARR: To be honest with you, I cannot
9 answer that question directly right now. I have no
10 problem working weekends. I don't have a problem fitting
11 in times during the day. I don't have an 8:00 to 5:00
12 job.

13 CHAIR AHMADI: Okay.

14 MR. STARR: I can fit it in the mornings, I can
15 fit it in the evenings, I can maybe even fit it in the
16 middle of the day and work in the mornings and evenings.

17 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you, sir, appreciate it.

18 So, as I mentioned, I have a few follow-up
19 questions on your responses to the standard questions.

20 The first one, you mentioned that -- in response
21 to question number one, you mentioned that having a good
22 geographic knowledge of the State is a skill that the
23 Commissioners must have.

24 MR. STARR: Uh-hum.

25 CHAIR AHMADI: In what ways will that knowledge

1 help the Commissioners in performing their duty?

2 MR. STARR: Well, I'll use myself as an example,
3 if I never got outside of Lodi, I would never know the
4 State. And I believe that getting out, getting outside
5 your bubble, like I've talked about before, is crucial.

6 Having a good kind of all around knowledge of the
7 State, getting that 60,000-foot elevation view of the
8 State to know that the Central Valley is very different
9 than the coast, which is very different than the Sierras,
10 and why it's different, I believe that's important in
11 understanding the people and the communities within those
12 geographic regions, and attempting to understand what
13 their issues are within those geographic regions.

14 CHAIR AHMADI: Okay. Thank you, sir.

15 Kind of like expanding on that a little bit, so
16 in your mind what role will the State's demographic
17 characteristics play in the Commission's work?

18 MR. STARR: I don't know how else to answer that
19 question, except it will play a large role in it. The
20 State is made up of demographics and you have to
21 incorporate all of those into the decision making process.

22 CHAIR AHMADI: Okay.

23 MR. STARR: Can I answer that farther for you? I
24 don't know if you want to ask a follow up on that, if that
25 answers your question?

1 CHAIR AHMADI: Sure, let me -- well, you answered
2 the question. But what I mean by demographic, of course,
3 you know, the differences or diversity of the people
4 living in the State and how that diversity will have an
5 impact on the decisions that the Commission will make?

6 MR. STARR: Yeah. You know, as far as the word
7 "diversity" and, you know, that's -- ultimately, diversity
8 is differing from one another, and we're a diverse group
9 sitting here, everybody is different.

10 And you have to take into account everybody's
11 differences. And this State is made up of those people
12 with all those differences, there is not a group of us out
13 there that are necessarily the same.

14 If you want to pigeon hole everybody as far as
15 males and females, you can do it that way.

16 However, if you want to start getting down to
17 more details, such as types of industry, such as that, or
18 things such as that, you know, it kind of whittles its way
19 down farther and farther.

20 I believe you have to have an open, conscious
21 mind to listen to everybody out there. And if there are
22 groups within the State that make an extreme impact upon
23 the State, you have to take them into account.

24 CHAIR AHMADI: So, should you be selected as a
25 Commissioner, given that, as you stated, that there are

1 numerous factors of diversity within the demographics --

2 MR. STARR: Right.

3 CHAIR AHMADI: -- which one of those diversity
4 elements would you consider first in your decisions as
5 part of the Commission's, you know, work? I mean, where
6 do you draw the line?

7 Obviously, you cannot draw a district for each
8 individual in the State so --

9 MR. STARR: Right, right. That would be even
10 chopped up more than it is now.

11 I can't answer that question right now because I
12 don't know, there's not one specific that I would focus on
13 as being a dividing factor.

14 CHAIR AHMADI: Do you think diverse -- political
15 diversity is important than racial diversity?

16 MR. STARR: You're getting into some pretty large
17 topics here of -- pretty large ideas to ponder.

18 I believe it is important to have both and you
19 can't exclude neither. You know, political diversity is
20 very important because that represents the ideas that
21 those people have. I mean you make up your political
22 affiliation based upon the ideas and beliefs and you can't
23 discard that as a group.

24 As far as race, there's -- we are made up of all
25 different races here, within California, and I look at

1 that as a real strength, and it's something that needs to
2 be objectively looked at, and within making the decisions
3 of the district boundaries.

4 CHAIR AHMADI: Okay, thanks.

5 Moving on to your response to question number
6 two, and if I heard you correctly, you mentioned something
7 about your personality, or based on your personality, you
8 always try to avoid conflict and, therefore -- I don't
9 think you have to share a life -- kind of an experience
10 where --

11 MR. STARR: Where I've had conflict?

12 CHAIR AHMADI: Where you had conflict. And
13 that's fine, I just want to make sure that I heard you
14 correctly.

15 But question is, or follow-up question is could
16 you share with the Panel your philosophy or approaches
17 that you would take to avoid conflict once you are
18 assigned to the Commission?

19 Avoid conflict in terms of, you know, within the
20 Commission or in terms of your decisions on the
21 Commission?

22 MR. STARR: So, if I understand your right, if
23 there's conflict within the Commission, obviously, people
24 come -- approach it with different ideas. And if my idea
25 differs from yours, we would have conflict.

1 Well, my idea's different than yours, we may not
2 have conflict, we may have differences of opinion and at
3 that point I come into it with an open mind, as I hope
4 other people would, and to see both sides, get the issues
5 out in the open, see both sides and come to a consensus as
6 a group.

7 As far as conflict outside the Commission, I
8 believe some of that stuff has to be put in the rearview
9 mirror. If I understand you correctly in that one, if you
10 come up -- the Commission comes up with a proposal for
11 boundary lines and it gets presented, I guess, within the
12 public and to get public opinion on it, and there's
13 conflict that arises there, if that's the direction that
14 you're kind of asking me --

15 CHAIR AHMADI: Uh-hum.

16 MR. STARR: -- then you would definitely have to
17 take -- you're never going to make everybody happy, number
18 one, so you can't go into it saying that you're going to
19 start this process and end it, and everybody's going to go
20 away, walking from the table happy.

21 I can almost tell you now if people -- if
22 everybody's upset, you've probably done something well
23 because --

24 (Laughter.)

25 MR. STARR: But you have to take into account, I

1 mean, you don't want to go out there and be in conflict
2 with the people or groups out there, and take into account
3 what they have to say, and don't shut them down, you have
4 to be open minded and listen to what they have to say.

5 CHAIR AHMADI: And is there -- in your mind, is
6 there a difference between having a difference of opinion
7 versus conflict?

8 MR. STARR: Yes, in my mind there is a very big
9 difference there. Conflict really seems to me like
10 there's really butting heads and it's, you know, real
11 conflict, and that conflict is a lot harder to work
12 through than differences of opinion.

13 CHAIR AHMADI: So, can you share with us, now,
14 any examples of situations where you've had differences of
15 opinion and you resolved it?

16 MR. STARR: I can tell you where there's not been
17 any real major differences of opinion, I can tell you like
18 with -- let me take an example of like the Research
19 Committee, where research should be going in one
20 direction, versus someone else thinking it should be going
21 to another.

22 And how that gets resolved is not being shy, not
23 being timid and expressing my opinion to the other side,
24 as well as opening my ears up and listening to their
25 opinion. And if there's still not -- if there's still no

1 way to come to a consensus verbally, like I said with the
2 research priority list, it was a good tool to use in order
3 to get kind of an unbiased consensus.

4 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you.

5 Could you expand on -- as part of your response
6 to question number three, which was about the impact,
7 could you please expand on you mentioned something about
8 the potential for boundaries not to be in favor of some of
9 the communities.

10 MR. STARR: Excuse me, say that again about no
11 being in favor of some of the communities, is that what --

12 CHAIR AHMADI: Did I hear you correctly? I could
13 be wrong, and I apologize if I am.

14 MR. STARR: I don't -- no, I believe, actually,
15 communities should be set within the boundaries, I think
16 communities should be preserved.

17 CHAIR AHMADI: Okay. Okay, thank you for
18 clarification.

19 MR. STARR: Yeah.

20 CHAIR AHMADI: You also mentioned that you don't
21 see if the Commission fails to produce the kind of maps
22 that the citizens will be happy with, you don't see any
23 harm in that.

24 Could you share with us your thoughts about why
25 Prop. 11 passed, or those who supported Prop. 11 what was

1 their rationale for supporting it?

2 MS. HAMEL: Five minutes.

3 MR. STARR: Yeah, I believe that, you know, I
4 can't speak as far as others but for myself I'll say that
5 you look at the system and how my own boundaries are
6 drawn, and seeing my representation, that the people that
7 I see don't really, necessarily, represent my area. And
8 that we need to -- we need to come about it at a different
9 way than letting the Legislators draw their own lines,
10 because I think that's kind of letting the fox guard the
11 henhouse.

12 CHAIR AHMADI: Okay, thanks again.

13 Okay, no more questions, thanks.

14 MS. NEVILLE: Okay. Ms. Camacho?

15 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Thank you. Hello, Mr.
16 Starr.

17 MR. STARR: Hi.

18 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: I have a few clarifying
19 questions, I just want to get a better understanding, to
20 make sure I understand.

21 Mr. Ahmadi asked about what you would consider
22 first, political diversity and race, what's your
23 understanding or what's your interpretation of political
24 diversity?

25 MR. STARR: I mean, the easy route of that is

1 Republican versus Democrat versus Independent. I mean, to
2 make it to the most raw form.

3 And every -- you know, there is that constituency
4 out there for each one of those groups, as well as others,
5 and I believe that each one of them has a voice.

6 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Do you see any commonality
7 of Republicans and is that why you're saying Republicans
8 at this forum?

9 MR. STARR: Yeah, see, I have a hard time really,
10 to be honest with you, grasping and wrapping my head
11 around the whole diversity issue because I can't put
12 myself into any single -- any single peg out there. And
13 to say that there's -- we're divided on politics I don't
14 think is necessarily the whole picture because there's
15 people within those groups that certainly overlap and
16 you've got to take them as a voice as a whole, and to see
17 within those groups what is the common ground and work
18 towards that common ground, instead of keeping them
19 divided.

20 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Can you tell us some of the
21 similarities that you might see in some of these political
22 groups and some of the dissimilar items?

23 MR. STARR: Right now I'd only be guessing.

24 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: That's fine.

25 MR. STARR: I don't know. In order to make a

1 better, more informed decision, that would be me going out
2 and actually putting the boots on the ground, and talking
3 to people, and getting their opinions on it, rather than
4 me just guessing what they believe is important to them.

5 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: How about you, do you see
6 things similar and different -- you're in San Joaquin.

7 MR. STARR: Uh-hum.

8 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Do you have the same needs,
9 wants, understanding, experience than somebody, maybe, in
10 the Bay Area?

11 MR. STARR: Well, it depends, certainly on what
12 issue. If you want to talk about the issue of, say,
13 water, we come about it from very different angles. And,
14 yeah, there is going to be some varied differences of
15 opinion there.

16 And given the opportunity of being involved with
17 the Leadership Farm Bureau Group and touring the State,
18 exploring the different -- exploring the water issues
19 within the State, I got to see that firsthand as far as
20 how such a subject like that would be from somebody here,
21 even upper end of the valley versus somebody in the south
22 end of the valley.

23 So, even though that you could say that we're all
24 in agriculture and water's all important for all of us,
25 even within that group there's real big differences.

1 So, to say that there's a real difference between
2 somebody in San Joaquin Valley and someone in the Bay
3 Area, yeah, there's going to be differences. And there's
4 going to be differences as far as, you know, their
5 solutions.

6 And you have to go about it with an open mind
7 because someone has got the right answer. And you can't
8 go into it already with a biased opinion because you might
9 not come up with that right answer.

10 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Do you -- you talked about
11 the agriculture and something that you're familiar with,
12 with the water, and the needs, and the different needs
13 within the agriculture.

14 MR. STARR: Right.

15 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Can you kind of give me a
16 better understanding, because you probably know it better
17 than I do, some of the similarities and differences
18 between the agriculture needs of water?

19 MR. STARR: Well, some of the similarities is we
20 all need it. And some of the differences is we all don't
21 have enough of it. And who gets it, and where it goes
22 and, you know, those are kind of the biggest issues out
23 there.

24 I mean, that issue is such a large issue, we
25 could sit here and talk about that problem until tomorrow,

1 and still probably just scratch the surface on that issue.

2 So, I mean, it really sounds simplified, but
3 that's really the answer is the fact that, you know, the
4 similarity is in order to grow a crop you got to have
5 water.

6 And, you know, the differences there is how we
7 all get it, because we all don't have, necessarily, a
8 river going through our backyard.

9 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Okay. One of the questions
10 that you -- how you answered was you find it an honor to
11 meet people from different backgrounds.

12 MR. STARR: Uh-hum.

13 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: What have you learned when
14 you meet these people from different backgrounds?

15 MR. STARR: I learn how much I really don't know.
16 Whenever you talk to somebody with a different experience,
17 a different life experience, a different background it
18 kind of just blows my mind to think that, you know, there
19 is that out there, there is that element that I have not
20 experienced, yet.

21 And, you know, there's never a moment where you
22 can't talk to somebody and get out of them something new,
23 a new perspective.

24 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: With that in mind, and if
25 you were a Commissioner and you went out to these

1 communities of interest, how would that help you talking
2 to these various individuals?

3 MR. STARR: I believe as far as talking to those
4 individuals, you got to try to put yourself into their
5 position the best possible way. I mean, you want to be
6 able to understand their position and their point of view,
7 and in order to do that you kind of got to put yourself
8 there and really try to become intimate with their
9 situation, and try to understand where they're coming
10 from.

11 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Throughout your travels have
12 you experienced the inner city's understanding or feeling
13 from these people that you've met, or through your travels
14 and what they might need?

15 MR. STARR: I've had some experience there, with
16 the program I mentioned to you before, it was the
17 Leadership Farm Bureau, we spent a day working at St.
18 John's Women's Shelter and that was definitely exposed to
19 an area that I was not familiar with.

20 And the struggles that those women go through by
21 themselves, and as far as raising the children, got to
22 tell you it's a pretty eye-opening experience. And that's
23 something that I still think about today, when there's
24 issues coming up that I think it's important to me, it's
25 like, well, let's step back for a second and let's realize

1 what it would be from somebody in that position and how
2 would it affect them.

3 And that is one of the -- that was probably
4 the -- in my mind, that jumps to mind, that that was the
5 most -- the closest experience that I've had dealing with
6 something that is out of my element.

7 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: At this Women's Shelter,
8 correct?

9 MR. STARR: Uh-hum, yes.

10 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Is there a diverse
11 population that comes in there, are they located in the
12 San Joaquin or various other areas?

13 MR. STARR: Yeah, I would have been the St.
14 John's Women's Shelter here, in Sacramento. So, I mean,
15 as far as diversity, but again we get into the whole
16 diversity discussion, is they were all women. But,
17 certainly, they come from different areas. You know,
18 children, don't have children, have jobs, looking for
19 jobs, yeah, they're all in their own different situations
20 and working to improve their lives.

21 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: So, some of these women
22 might be of higher socioeconomic groups, some from lower
23 socioeconomic groups, some that have higher education,
24 some that have minimal education; is that kind of what you
25 saw there or that's something that never really came

1 about?

2 MR. STARR: You know, really, that's not
3 something that I really put my finger on to really look at
4 as -- I mean, when you can kind of go into it and looking
5 at somebody, and trying to judge them right away on all
6 those things, or you can step back and kind of go, wow,
7 what's your story, and try to understand it directly from
8 them.

9 So, to say that I can tell you exactly what the
10 diversity was amongst everybody there, I can't tell you.

11 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: So, when you were there,
12 that wasn't a factor, it was more to help these
13 individuals?

14 MR. STARR: Yeah, it was part of a process within
15 that Leadership Farm Bureau to go out and get exposed to
16 something that you weren't exposed to ever before. And as
17 a group from agriculture, getting exposed to a women's
18 shelter in downtown Sacramento is certainly out of
19 their -- out of our element. So, that was the purpose of
20 it.

21 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Okay. Can you tell me how,
22 in your personal or professional experiences have given
23 you the skills that you would need as a Commissioner?

24 MR. STARR: Yeah, I believe, you know,
25 professionally I have a pretty technical job. I got to

1 look at and being involved in research committees, and
2 actually two different research committees, you got to
3 have a pretty solid technical and analytical background in
4 order to make -- in order to understand what's going on
5 and make decisions.

6 I've also, in pursuit of educating myself, I've
7 gone back, recently, and completed a GIS certificate, a
8 geographic information systems certificate, and I believe
9 that also gives me some of the -- a technical skill to
10 bring to the table.

11 Now, that doesn't necessarily say that I'm going
12 to be the one sitting at the computer doing this, but at
13 least it allows you a background to know what's going on
14 and what goes into it.

15 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: With that GIS certificate
16 that you were talking about, how would that help or how
17 would that knowledge that you have, if you were a
18 Commissioner, help?

19 MR. STARR: I mean, it would help me, personally,
20 by understanding kind of how they're coming up with some
21 of the numbers, because it's not going to be just as easy
22 as going out there and drawing some lines on a piece of
23 paper.

24 What goes into that would be information brought
25 up, mined from the census, and there is a lot of

1 information mined from the census that you can then create
2 analytical maps, and analyze the maps, and come up with
3 output maps that you can use in order to make a better --
4 a better, more rational, informed decision. That's for
5 myself, personally.

6 As far as from the group I could have that and I
7 could also bring that to the table as far as ideas to
8 bring up with the group to possibly better understand
9 what's going on in some of this stuff.

10 You know, I don't know, and that's tough to say
11 since I don't know exactly how that's going to be set up,
12 yet, with the Commissioners, whether there's everybody
13 sitting behind, you know, in a locked room and saying you
14 guys got to get this done before you come out, and I say
15 that jokingly.

16 But, or if it's going to be more like the
17 teleconferencing, stuff like that. So, you know, that
18 part I don't know but I believe that -- and I can also
19 answer questions by other people that might not have that
20 type of background.

21 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Okay. As you know, as a
22 Commissioner, the Commission work is probably going to be
23 transparent.

24 MR. STARR: It is thus far, also, yes.

25 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: What does transparent mean

1 to you?

2 MR. STARR: Transparent means wide open, for
3 anybody to be able to look in and see what's going on.
4 There doesn't want to be a perception that something is
5 being conspired behind closed doors, so everything has to
6 be outright and within the open.

7 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: And with that in mind,
8 obviously, there's going to be open meetings, going out to
9 the public, and getting public input. Have you ever had
10 that experience in your personal or professional life?

11 MR. STARR: Not to the degree that this would be,
12 no.

13 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Have you had anything, you
14 know, maybe to a lesser degree and can you kind of
15 elaborate on that?

16 MR. STARR: Not necessarily -- not necessarily to
17 that degree. And even to a lesser degree, I should say.
18 I mean, everything that I've been involved in is pretty
19 much within the private industry, so things are fairly
20 closed, I guess. But that's never to say that someone
21 ever has a question, that I'm not just an open book to say
22 what's going on.

23 I can also tell you that I've never been involved
24 in anything that's necessarily been closed off to anybody,
25 it just hasn't been a need to be so open and outright.

1 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: How about at some of your
2 meetings or even at -- I think it was -- sorry, let me get
3 back to -- for your grapes and laying out a plan, and all
4 the various individuals that come together?

5 MR. STARR: Uh-hum.

6 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Are those large groups and
7 do you have to take -- are you taking input for them or is
8 it kind of like a give and take, where you are a
9 participant, just as much as an information gatherer?

10 MR. STARR: Yes, that would be mostly something
11 that, you know, you come together as a group of, say,
12 eight people, with probably some of the largest groups. I
13 mean, information gather, also, I'm one that has to
14 execute within the field as well, so you kind of take on
15 both roles there and it's not necessarily as cut and dry
16 as, you know, just one thing or the other.

17 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Thank you, that was my last
18 question.

19 MR. STARR: Thank you. Thanks.

20 MS. NEVILLE: Ms. Spano.

21 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Good afternoon.

22 MR. STARR: Hi.

23 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Hi.

24 MR. STARR: Getting down to it here.

25 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: You've got two more of us.

1 Can you tell me what that committee was where you
2 went to the women's shelter?

3 MR. STARR: Yeah, that was part of a Leadership
4 Farm Bureau program that the California Farm Bureau puts
5 on, and takes a group of around 12 people and runs them
6 through a leadership program.

7 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Okay, thank you.

8 Do you know why the women's shelter was selected
9 in Sacramento?

10 MR. STARR: The fact that was somewhere local,
11 since at that time that class was being done in
12 Sacramento, here, and that it's something that we, as a
13 group, could give back to the community as far as getting
14 us exposed to something that we're not exposed to, kind of
15 getting outside the box.

16 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Are there any other groups
17 that you've gone to during this Leadership Farm Bureau on
18 an annual basis or is it --

19 MR. STARR: That program is concluded, so I'm no
20 longer involved in that.

21 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Okay.

22 MR. STARR: That was a year-long program.

23 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Oh, okay.

24 You mentioned earlier that you believe your lines
25 aren't drawn properly. Can you tell me why?

1 MR. STARR: By looking at -- just by looking at
2 the map and seeing how our area is, and seeing where those
3 lines stretch from north to south, I don't think that's
4 necessarily representative of, necessarily, our community
5 of interest. I believe even the City of Lodi is broken up
6 there within three different districts. And that's a
7 small city, a small city -- just the small City of Lodi.

8 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Three districts. And why do
9 you believe that it shouldn't be broken up or it looks
10 funny? What are the communities of interest concern that
11 make you believe this?

12 MR. STARR: As far as what are the -- what are
13 the communities of interest as a whole, is that what
14 you're asking --

15 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Well, a concern, because you
16 believe that these --

17 MR. STARR: -- or Lodi, itself?

18 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Lodi, itself, yeah, that
19 contributes to this odd formation?

20 MR. STARR: Well, you know, Lodi's number one
21 industry is agriculture, and right there it breaks it up
22 and don't necessarily even have representation of -- good
23 representation, excuse me, of agriculture. You know,
24 that's the first thought right off the top of my head.

25 It's also somewhat different when I go to a

1 friend's house that lives not that far away, less than a
2 mile away, and they have a different representative, and
3 to talk about, you know, upcoming officers or, you know,
4 upcoming elections, you know, who you going to vote for
5 type of talks.

6 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Uh-hum.

7 MR. STARR: We come from totally different
8 angles, yet we're both in the same group. And group
9 meaning we're both in the same geographic area, you know,
10 are interests are the same for that group or for that
11 area.

12 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: How do you believe
13 redistricting efforts statewide can address this issue?

14 MR. STARR: You know, going back and I've done a
15 little bit of research getting ready for this and seeing
16 that, you know, back in the 1970-71 redistricting, where
17 it was the California Supreme Court elected the three
18 masters to come up with the lines, and they based it on
19 geographic integrity of cities, counties, and geographic
20 regions. And right there I think is a good starting point
21 to start from.

22 It keeps the cities united, try to keep counties
23 united, those are already boundaries that we already have
24 established, there's no reason to go in and try to bust
25 those up. That's my initial thought.

1 Of course, like I said, there's always room to
2 change your mind.

3 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: What's the term
4 gerrymandering mean to you?

5 MR. STARR: When you see on a map where the lines
6 goes around a block, cuts a block out, or maybe goes in
7 through a real thin sliver to go up to reach another
8 cluster of blocks in a certain city, because it would be
9 politically expedient at the time when they drew those
10 boundaries, that when they drew them they'd have zero
11 political turnover in the following election.

12 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: I'm going to ask you a few
13 questions about the North San Joaquin Water Conservation
14 Advisory Board.

15 MR. STARR: Okay.

16 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Why were you appointed?

17 MR. STARR: That was actually something that
18 wasn't necessarily an appointed position, per se, it's
19 something that was asked of the Board, because the Board's
20 kind of going through turbulent times, because of the fact
21 that we have 20,000-acre feet allotted to our district,
22 and State Water Resources has come and said we are going
23 to basically take those water rights away because you guys
24 aren't using them.

25 Well, there's a lot of history that goes into why

1 they're not using them and there's a lot of different
2 ideas out there as far as, you know, how we should solve
3 this problem.

4 And because it was becoming quite a polarizing
5 position, and quite a polarizing issue within the
6 community, the Board asked people to volunteer, to kind of
7 create, kind of give -- you know, give them a public ear
8 more directly, and that's where I volunteered for the
9 position and been involved ever since.

10 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: How long has this been?

11 MR. STARR: That's been over a year.

12 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Okay.

13 MR. STARR: I know, time flies when you're having
14 fun.

15 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Yes. Were the discussions
16 and debate ever contentious on this Board?

17 MR. STARR: No, no, not on the Board. I should
18 say there was -- you know, I always say there wasn't
19 conflict, as we got to earlier, but there was certainly --
20 there's difference of opinion.

21 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: How strong were they?

22 MR. STARR: Ultimately, what it comes down to,
23 everybody can pretty much come on the same consensus when
24 everyone's informed. A lot of the problems that we have,
25 that I see, was not everyone was informed fully on the

1 subjects.

2 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: And on this Board you didn't
3 hear from any interested groups or individuals, from the
4 public?

5 MR. STARR: You know, the Board, we're all made
6 up of the public and everybody there -- I mean, there are
7 other citizens from the public, but it's a rather -- it's
8 not a large group, I'd say there's no more than 20,
9 anywhere from 10 to 20 per meeting, and it's open to
10 anybody and everybody to come and express their opinion or
11 just sit down and learn.

12 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Nothing crazy going on at
13 these meetings, huh?

14 MR. STARR: Not at the Advisory Committee
15 meetings, but at the Board meetings, for sure there is
16 conflict at the Board meetings.

17 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Okay. But nothing that
18 couldn't be resolved, everybody kind of got informed on
19 the issues and --

20 MR. STARR: Yeah, nothing that can be resolved
21 without police intervention.

22 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Well, that's interesting.
23 What got you interested in viticulture pest
24 control?

25 MR. STARR: You're kind of just -- it goes back

1 to being what you're exposed to. My parents got into the
2 wine grape industry when I was younger and that was
3 something I was exposed to and I liked it. And, well, I
4 liked it later in life. When I was smaller, it was
5 certainly something I certainly didn't want to go back to.

6 But you get older and you kind of go back to the
7 things that you're used to.

8 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: How has this year been for
9 the growers in your region?

10 MR. STARR: Economically, we've seen better days.
11 As far as the growing season, we've seen better seasons.
12 This year has not been a good year. And that's why the
13 time thing has been such a concern of mine from this
14 point, because this year has been a rather -- one of the
15 more difficult years as far as the time-wise because we've
16 been -- we've been dealing with a lot of problems within
17 the field and problems take time.

18 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: What kind of problems, like
19 pest control issues, new pests?

20 MR. STARR: Yeah.

21 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: New pests that were
22 discovered?

23 MR. STARR: All of the above.

24 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Okay.

25 MR. STARR: All of the above. Just this past

1 week there's been powdery mildew mites and we've had two
2 European grape moth finds within our county and we're now
3 under quarantine.

4 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Do you ever get to sample
5 the wines from these grapes that you've saved?

6 (Laughter.)

7 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Just curious.

8 MR. STARR: Yes.

9 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: That's great.

10 How is this problem affecting the viability and
11 the economic growth in this region?

12 MR. STARR: Well, you know, a lot of that, you
13 know, a lot of it just comes down to supply and demand.
14 And I don't know if that's something that, you know, we're
15 looking at here is being solved by politics, per se.

16 I believe that there's certainly issues within
17 agriculture that can be -- can be, I guess, resolved with
18 the politics out there. And, you know, some of that
19 economic strain is due to policies and laws, new policies
20 and new laws. And those that are at the Capitol, making
21 those, need to have a firm understanding of how that
22 necessarily impacts our industry.

23 And that's something where it could be where we
24 are, right now, economically pinched for a number of
25 reasons, and different laws coming down the pike do have,

1 also, economic impact on us as well.

2 You know, just for example, the overtime bill
3 that got vetoed last week, two weeks ago, that would have
4 had -- that would have had an actual direct economic
5 impact within our area and within our industry. And
6 having good representation from our area, you know, would
7 be something that would be beneficial to us for issues
8 such as that.

9 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Between May and August, how
10 many hours do you work?

11 MR. STARR: You know, it's certainly more than
12 the 40-hour workweek. I've never counted my hours. It's
13 something that, to be outright, we're a two-man company
14 within our consulting group, and I have an office out of
15 my house and we get -- we have our lists of fields that we
16 know we're responsible for, and we go back and we work as
17 a team to get everything covered.

18 It's certainly more than 40 hours. Other times
19 of the year it can be certainly less.

20 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Thank you.

21 How has agriculture in your region changed over
22 the last ten years?

23 MR. STARR: Boy, that's certainly not a question
24 I was necessarily anticipating here. I can --

25 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: In your best belief?

1 MR. STARR: Yeah, I mean, I can see that that's
2 something that we actually need to sit down and taste more
3 wine, and discuss because it's --

4 (Laughter.)

5 MR. STARR: I've seen, I have seen changes. I've
6 seen -- I don't know if it's necessarily drastic changes
7 over the last ten years, but I've seen changes enough to
8 where you can start to look in the future and see where
9 those changes may be headed.

10 For example, of wine grapes, themselves, on the
11 most basic level, wine grapes, themselves, were truly
12 considered as a specialty crop. Now, with the economy and
13 with, you know, foreign demand or foreign supply put upon
14 us, we're starting to see it go from a specialty crop to
15 more of a commodity. And that's certainly difficult for
16 the industry since, you know, it's not something you plant
17 in the ground every year.

18 You know, and that's a long-term investment that
19 you put into the ground. So, to see it kind of become
20 more of a commodity type item, that trickles down to a lot
21 of different changes that we see in the field as far as,
22 you know, even going down to the way we're farming this
23 year is different than we were farming ten years ago.

24 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Which are the most -- of the
25 factors you mentioned, is this one of most concern to you?

1 MR. STARR: Say that one again?

2 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Of the factors you
3 mentioned, with the grapes, and the issues, and how it's
4 going from specialty to a commodity, is this one of the
5 areas that are of most concern to you?

6 MR. STARR: I mean it is a concern to me based
7 upon, you know, my career, I guess, you should say. That,
8 you know, in the future what is this going to look like,
9 can our area survive as a wine grape growing region if
10 that is a commodity item?

11 So, to that level, yeah, it is a concern to me.

12 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Which are of the most
13 concern to the farmers and growers in that region?

14 MR. STARR: You know, right now it all comes down
15 to the price and the price they're getting for their
16 commodity, and a lot of it goes into that. You know, for
17 example, water, where we're going to get water?

18 And right now we're going down a path that is not
19 sustainable as far as water, we use more water than what
20 we get. And meaning that we're pumping -- a lot of our
21 area's pumping water out of the ground and, simply, we are
22 pumping more water out of the ground than mother nature
23 puts back in, so that is a major concern of growers within
24 the area.

25 The economy as a whole is a major concern. Wine

1 is a luxury item and when times are bad you see,
2 certainly, it decline in that market.

3 You know, another large issue is the whole
4 immigration issue, itself. We do demand -- we do depend
5 on a lot of, you know, immigrant work force. So, what's
6 going on as far as the issues out in immigration, it's
7 also -- that's also of concern.

8 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Right. Thank you.

9 California regulations implementing Prop. 11
10 define diversity as the variety of the racial, ethnic,
11 geographic, economic and gender characteristics of the
12 population of California.

13 What does this definition mean to you?

14 MR. STARR: That sounds like a pretty good
15 definition of diversity, it pretty much nails -- nails
16 everything in there. And it kind of put in -- I don't
17 know if that's necessarily put into rank as far as what,
18 you know, is race the first dividing factor amongst
19 everybody? I don't know. I mean, that sounds like
20 certainly a viable definition.

21 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Do you believe it should --
22 diversity should have been defined in this way in relation
23 to redistricting, or should it have been defined more
24 broadly or narrowly?

25 MR. STARR: That's a good question. I really

1 don't know. And I don't know quite how to answer that, I
2 should say, because when I go out I don't necessarily
3 focus on what divides us. To be honest with you, it
4 doesn't even really, necessarily, come across my mind, at
5 least it certainly doesn't consciously.

6 And to go out and say this is -- these are areas
7 that we are going to divide ourselves on, I don't think
8 that's ever helpful, I don't think that ever gets us
9 anywhere.

10 We need to come together as a group in order to
11 achieve the goal, rather than dividing ourselves in order
12 to reach that goal.

13 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Sure. What criteria do you
14 believe is important in the determination of the State
15 boundaries?

16 MR. STARR: Excuse me, say that again?

17 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: What criteria do you feel is
18 important when the Citizens Redistricting Commission has
19 to make their decision on deciding on the boundaries?

20 MR. STARR: What criteria?

21 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Yeah.

22 MR. STARR: You know, I think to kind of put it
23 to the most broad, the broad sense, it's the geographic
24 integrity and it's, you know, trying to get the geographic
25 regions and keeping cities and communities together,

1 instead of dividing them.

2 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Do you believe there are any
3 critical laws that should be observed?

4 MR. STARR: Yes. Number one, yes. I can't speak
5 to them as far as necessarily knowing them intimately.
6 But if you're trying to go down the path of the Voters --
7 the Voters Act --

8 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: The Voting Rights Act?

9 MR. STARR: The Voting Rights Act, something for
10 example such as that, then to be honest with you I don't
11 have enough background on it. I mean, I have a peripheral
12 view of what it is, but that certainly has to be put into
13 the fold and be considered, certainly be considered.

14 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: I think that's it for me
15 right now, I'm going to look at my notes first. Thank
16 you.

17 MS. NEVILLE: Okay, I have just a couple of
18 questions and then we'll circle back, unless Panelists
19 have follow ups right now?

20 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: I don't.

21 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: I can wait for you.

22 MS. NEVILLE: Okay, I just have a couple things.
23 Maybe you'll be happy to know I have a couple of questions
24 about water before I go back to redistricting.

25 MR. STARR: Okay.

1 MS. NEVILLE: Just a question, because we've
2 touched a little bit on issues related to water. Do you
3 think that the various laws in California, whether federal
4 or state, that regulate water quality are good or bad
5 laws?

6 MR. STARR: Water quality? I believe --

7 MS. NEVILLE: Say, for example, the Porter-
8 Cologne Act, which is the law that's requiring the State
9 Water Resources Control Board to say, hey, you can't hoard
10 as much water anymore. Is that a good law, a bad law, or
11 maybe neither?

12 MR. STARR: I believe there's probably -- there's
13 some real benefits that come as a result of it and there's
14 probably, also, it impacts people negatively.

15 For me to say right away that it's a good or bad
16 law, I don't know. I'm not familiar enough with the law.
17 I can say that there are laws out there that have to do
18 with water quality that, you know, impact -- that impact
19 everybody. And maybe they might not like it, originally,
20 but as far as looking into the future are those laws
21 making it so we have a better place for our children and
22 our children's children?

23 If that's the case, if what laws are enacted
24 today are ultimately beneficial for us in the future,
25 well, then it's a positive.

1 MS. NEVILLE: And I'm sure as you know -- I mean,
2 as a grower, you probably experience the ongoing tension
3 in water rights all the time.

4 MR. STARR: Yes.

5 MS. NEVILLE: Between the desire to have more and
6 the desire of others to have -- you know, to divert more
7 for other purposes.

8 MR. STARR: Right.

9 MS. NEVILLE: But a question I have related to
10 that is, and you've touched on this a couple of times, as
11 someone who works in the Lodi area, where you're dealing
12 with growers and you're working in an agricultural area,
13 in your experience do -- does this concern about having an
14 adequate water supply, is that one that potentially
15 unifies various individuals who might not necessarily come
16 together on an issue, does it bring together Republicans
17 and Democrats, does it bring together people of different
18 socioeconomic classes, does it unite people of different
19 ethnic backgrounds so that they all share a common view
20 and a common interest in water? Do you see that happening
21 or not?

22 MR. STARR: Yeah, I do and I do believe that's --
23 you know, of those examples that you just stated, I can
24 see that firsthand that, you know, people of different
25 political minds come together because they see the overall

1 problem.

2 And it might affect me differently, as a wine
3 grape grower, it might affect, you know -- excuse me, I
4 should say it affects me, as a wine grape grower, the same
5 as it would affect, you know, just a regular citizen in
6 Lodi, that has nothing to do with agriculture, it affects
7 them both the same because we both need water to drink.

8 I just need it, in addition to, you know, what my
9 industry and my commodity.

10 MS. NEVILLE: So, now I want to just sort of turn
11 back a little bit more to redistricting and the work of
12 this Commission. It's definitely, as our discussion here
13 has indicated, it's a very technical process, there's a
14 lot of data, there's the use of GIS systems, it's also an
15 intensely legal process.

16 It's governed by the U.S. Constitution, by the
17 Federal Voting Rights Act, and by State law.

18 And one of the things that -- one of the
19 requirements that these Commissioners are going to have to
20 meet is that they are going to have to go out and travel
21 around California, and identify these things called
22 communities of interest, which are basically communities
23 where people share some common interest that influences
24 they way they vote.

25 MR. STARR: Uh-hum.

1 MS. NEVILLE: It can be an interest in water, it
2 could be a neighborhood interest, it could be
3 socioeconomic status, or it can be race, it can be
4 ethnicity, it can be a lot of things.

5 Under certain circumstances, under the law, these
6 Commissioners are going to really have to -- may have to
7 draw district boundaries in a way that really takes race
8 or ethnicity very much into account, so that they ensure
9 the right of individuals in that group to elect a
10 candidate of their choice.

11 Sometimes that means the boundaries look really
12 irregular, they don't really neatly line up with city and
13 county boundaries. And that's one of the things where
14 sometimes people look at a map and say, well, it looks
15 funny. Well, it looks funny because it's achieving some
16 other legal goal.

17 MR. STARR: Right. Right.

18 MS. NEVILLE: And so, my question to you is are
19 you comfortable knowing that's something you might have to
20 do as a Commissioner and to be comfortable applying that
21 legal requirement?

22 MR. STARR: Yeah, that's no problem, it's a
23 requirement. So, just with that being said, it's going to
24 have to be done. And, you know, that's -- you can't get
25 around that part of the process, that's the rules, you got

1 to work within those rules and within those guidelines.

2 MS. NEVILLE: What would you do to acquire an
3 understanding of this whole area of law, how would you get
4 your arms around it?

5 MR. STARR: Can I get your --

6 MS. NEVILLE: And you will have a lawyer.

7 MR. STARR: Can I get your name and number?

8 (Laughter.)

9 MS. NEVILLE: One of the things about the Voters
10 First Act is it actually requires these Commissioners to
11 hire someone who is absolutely an expert in this area of
12 law, so you'll have that resource.

13 But how would you go about it? Would you just
14 listen to their guidance, would you want to roll up your
15 sleeves and read the law, yourself?

16 MR. STARR: Well, it wouldn't be certainly that I
17 wouldn't want to get into micromanaging and, really, the
18 area of law would be a specific skill that a Commissioner
19 would have. And to go back to probably what would be the
20 first question, that area isn't something that's not my
21 strong suit. So, I would have no problem going about
22 asking people for direction, and asking counsel for
23 direction, and take the time to understand whatever it is
24 that I don't quite understand.

25 It would be pretty dangerous to take on a subject

1 and not have a full grasp of what's going on with that
2 subject. And if that means sitting down with one, two,
3 three, ten people in order to get through and have a good
4 understanding, well, that's what it would take.

5 MS. NEVILLE: Okay, thank you. I have nothing
6 further.

7 Mr. Ahmadi?

8 CHAIR AHMADI: I don't have any other questions.

9 MS. NEVILLE: Okay. Ms. Camacho?

10 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Mr. Starr, like our counsel
11 was saying, there is various different laws and
12 regulations that have to be followed. One of them is the
13 Voting Rights Act, and that requires the Commission, that
14 they have to abide to.

15 One of the rules is to ensure that minorities
16 have a voice, if there is adequate individuals in a
17 certain area.

18 How would you feel drawing district lines to
19 ensure that that voice is heard?

20 MR. STARR: So, how would I feel as far as giving
21 them the opportunity to voice their opinion or their
22 issues?

23 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Correct.

24 MR. STARR: Well, like you said, if it's a group
25 out there that's large enough, that has a large enough

1 voice for a specific issue, you have to be able to listen
2 to them on that issue and take it into account because
3 they are part of the fold of what goes into California and
4 their voice needs to be heard.

5 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Okay, that was my only
6 question.

7 MS. NEVILLE: Thank you. If you'd like to make a
8 closing statement, you may, you have about 19 minutes.

9 MR. STARR: Okay, plenty of time.

10 MS. NEVILLE: You don't have to use all 19, you
11 can do whatever you like.

12 MR. STARR: You know, I just wanted to kind of
13 reiterate and not get off on the wrong foot as far as the
14 time and time commitments, and to revisit that issue. I
15 do believe it's something that, you know, if you just
16 wanted people that were retired to come and do this, you
17 could have gotten a target market of people that apply for
18 social security, instead of doing the process that you
19 have done.

20 So, with that being said, I understand the
21 responsibilities that it would take to go into being a
22 Commissioner and I would not take that lightly, by any
23 means. And if there is times where there is a crunch and
24 you have to work whatever hours, you have to work whatever
25 it is, I don't live based upon a time clock, I live based

1 upon if you need to get things done, you need to get
2 things done.

3 And so, I just wanted to kind of clarify that,
4 you know, to you and to clear it off my own head that, you
5 know, it's not necessarily something that I'm looking at,
6 saying, oh, my Lord, this is something that I will not
7 have time for and I will not do, because I believe that I
8 can set aside the time in order to do it.

9 However, that's not fully understanding exactly
10 what the commitments are, yet, as well. But, you know,
11 it's something that I don't take lightly and would
12 certainly do my best in order to accommodate it.

13 That being said, I wanted to thank you. I know
14 you guys, just looking on the peripheral, looking at what
15 you guys have been doing has been tremendous, and a
16 tremendous time put into it.

17 So, with that being said, I won't actually take
18 up anymore of your time and you guys can split out of here
19 and go get some dinner. Thank you.

20 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you, sir.

21 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Thank you.

22 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Thank you.

23 MS. NEVILLE: Thank you for coming to see us.

24 CHAIR AHMADI: We will recess until 9:14 tomorrow
25 morning. Thank you.

1

(Recess at 5:45 p.m.)

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