

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

MONDAY, AUGUST 30, 2010

9:14 A.M.

Reported by:

Peter Petty

CALIFORNIA REPORTING, LLC  
(415) 457-4417

APPEARANCES

Members Present

Nasir Ahmadi, Chair

Mary Camacho, Vice Chair

Kerri Spano, Panel Member

Staff Present

Stephanie Ramirez-Ridgeway, Panel Counsel

Diane Hamel, Executive Secretary

Interviewees

Patrick Ricardo Perez

Suzanne P Levy

## INDEX

	PAGE
Patrick Ricardo Perez	4
Suzanne P. Levy	56

1 PROCEEDINGS

2 9:14 a.m.

3 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Good morning. It's 9:14.

4 We have a full list of applicants to meet this morning,  
5 and our first applicant is here. His name is Patrick  
6 Perez. Good morning, Mr. Perez.

7 MR. PEREZ: Good morning.

8 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: As you are aware, we get  
9 started right away. You have 20 minutes to answer the  
10 standard five questions, and then each panelist will spend  
11 some time with you.

12 Are you ready to begin?

13 MR. PEREZ: I am ready.

14 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Please start the clock.

15 What specific skills do you believe a good  
16 Commissioner should possess?

17 Of those skills, which do you possess?

18 Which do you not possess and how will you  
19 compensate for it?

20 Is there anything in your life that would  
21 prohibit or impair your ability to perform all of the  
22 duties of a Commissioner?

23 MR. PEREZ: First, I'd just like to start out by  
24 saying thank you for having me here today. It's a true  
25 honor and a great privilege to be sitting here.

1           In terms of the skills required of the  
2 Commission, I believe there are two skills that encompass  
3 and utilize all of the other skills and prerequisites that  
4 are required to execute the Commission's duties  
5 effectively. These two skills are an ability to learn and  
6 learn quickly and perseverance.

7           Learn and learn quickly, this skill requires  
8 somebody to employ all of their analytical abilities. It  
9 also requires a person to employ all of their people  
10 skills, their speaking skills, and all of their  
11 communication skills. I believe the Commission is going  
12 to be required not just to listen, but to really hear what  
13 the constituents are telling the Commission in terms of  
14 feedback and perspective. And they're also going to have  
15 to speak to those people to help educate them on the  
16 process.

17           Perseverance, I believe perseverance is sitting  
18 through long meetings, putting in raw, long hours. But I  
19 think it's more than that. It's my sincere hope and  
20 belief that every candidate who sits in this chair at this  
21 point in the process is willing and able to put in the  
22 hours and sit through the meetings.

23           Perseverance also encompasses in my view the  
24 ability and the patience to wade through very large data  
25 sets. It's a willingness to entertain different potential

1 solutions without ruling out possibilities prematurely.  
2 And to do this not just at the beginning of the process,  
3 but throughout the process. It's having an appreciation  
4 and the fortitude to devote attention throughout  
5 appointment to those items that are crucial but not  
6 interesting. Perhaps above all, it's maintaining the  
7 ethics and integrity, again not just at the beginning of  
8 the appointment, but throughout the ten-year life of the  
9 Commissioner's duties with unwavering ability.

10 I know of nothing in my life that will prohibit  
11 or impair my ability to perform the duties of the  
12 Commission.

13 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Describe a circumstance  
14 from your personal experience where you had to work with  
15 others to resolve a conflict or difference of opinion.  
16 Please describe the issue and explain your role in  
17 addressing and resolving the conflict. If you are  
18 selected to serve on the Citizen's Redistricting  
19 Commission, tell us how you would resolve conflicts that  
20 may arise among the Commissioners.

21 MR. PEREZ: In my current professional capacity,  
22 I work as a finance manager for AT&T, responsible for the  
23 construction and engineering force and expense budget that  
24 cover the entire state of California and Nevada.

25 One year ago, this month, actually, I received a

1 call from corporate headquarters from my boss explaining  
2 that we had a very significant budget overrun on the  
3 national level. He was asking us to cut our budget here  
4 in California. In essence, taking resources away and  
5 giving money back to the national organization so that we  
6 can be successful and aggregate as a group on the national  
7 level.

8 I immediately assembled the operational leaders  
9 to whom I support and explained the situation. There was  
10 immediate conflict in the room over two issues: Number  
11 one, how much money we could feasibly cut from the budget  
12 without sacrificing the operational objectives of the  
13 organization; and number two, where those specific cuts  
14 should be made.

15 I quickly took the role in this group as  
16 facilitator. I decided immediately that it was best not  
17 just to make a flat cut across the state of California to  
18 all the district that would be impacted, say, ten percent  
19 across everyone. I decided that we needed to literally  
20 review the budget district by district looking for the  
21 risks and opportunities that would be important. Amongst  
22 that team, we literally reviewed the budget from the  
23 Oregon border down to San Diego, sometimes looking within  
24 specific districts city by city, garage by garage. In  
25 doing that, we were very successful at giving back more

1 money than we ever thought we would be able to.

2           The key to our success throughout that exercise  
3 was an open policy establishing a culture within the group  
4 of decision makers that allowed people not just to express  
5 and communicate the opportunities, the "good news," but  
6 also to communicate and express the bad news, the risks.

7           We developed an expression throughout these  
8 meetings, an informal expression that we called cuss and  
9 discuss. This was our slang term talking about frankness  
10 and tolerance that, in order to be successful, we had to  
11 employ frankness and tolerance.

12           I think on this Commission there's going to be  
13 many times where we're going to have to look back to that  
14 term, cuss and discuss, frankness and tolerance, an open  
15 culture where people feel sharing their concerns, voicing  
16 their opinions, and expressing their points of view even  
17 if that might create conflict within a group.

18           MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: How will the Commission's  
19 work impact the state?

20           Which of these impacts will improve the state the  
21 most?

22           And is there any potential for the Commission's  
23 work to harm the state? And if so, in what ways?

24           MR. PEREZ: First of all, I strongly believe that  
25 this Commission is going to have a very significant impact

1 on the state of California. I can honestly tell you if I  
2 didn't think this Commission was going to have a large  
3 impact, I wouldn't be in this chair today.

4 I'm optimistic this Commission is going to  
5 significantly improve the political landscape of the state  
6 of California. I'm a young man. I look forward to one  
7 day raising a family in California. I look forward to  
8 continuing my career here. I look forward to many long  
9 and happy years in this state. I have a very large vested  
10 interest in making sure that this is a success.

11 Because of that, I have to have hope. I have to  
12 have optimism that the work we are doing here today is  
13 going to have a very good improvement to the people of the  
14 state of California.

15 The area where I think this Commission has the  
16 ability to impact the state the most and perhaps the most  
17 positively is in defining -- helping to define the level  
18 of value that people are going to place in being engaged  
19 in the discourse and sacrament.

20 I was having dinner two weeks ago with a very  
21 good family friend whose name is Paul. Paul has a  
22 beautiful wife and two children. He's very successful in  
23 his career. He's involved in his community in every way  
24 that you would expect a pillar of the community to be  
25 involved. He's involved with the local karate. He's

1 involved in his church. He is truly a pillar of the  
2 community. Yet, when I asked him who his representation  
3 was in Sacramento, he had no idea. He had no idea which  
4 Assembly district or Senate district he was in.

5 I believe that this initiative is unique in that  
6 it is not simply trying to elect different political  
7 leaders; rather, it has the power to inspire both citizens  
8 and politicians to be better by having better discourse  
9 and to work more effectively together.

10 In short, this initiative in my opinion has the  
11 power, the very unique power to make the Pauls of the  
12 state of California once again see value in being involved  
13 in the political discourse within the state of California  
14 at that level in Sacramento.

15 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Describe a situation where  
16 you've had to work as part of a group to achieve a common  
17 goal. Tell us about the goal, describe your role within  
18 the group, and tell us how the group worked or did not  
19 work collaboratively to achieve this goal. If you're  
20 selected to serve on the Citizens' Redistricting  
21 Commission, tell us what you would do to foster  
22 collaboration.

23 MR. PEREZ: Prior to joining AT&T, I accepted a  
24 full-time position running the Stanford Directory. The  
25 Stanford Directory looks like any normal telephone book

1 that you'd see in your day to day lives. It has listings  
2 for people in the community, organizations, resource  
3 groups. It also has comprehensive yellow pages.

4 The appointment that I accepted was a  
5 year-and-a-half appointment. And I was charged with  
6 updating the entire book, selling all of the  
7 advertisements, having the book published, produced,  
8 printed, and delivered in a time period beginning April  
9 1st and commencing on December 1st.

10 In talking with the constituents that use the  
11 book, everybody from the advertisers that relied on the  
12 yellow pages for their business to the community members  
13 that use the book to actually find resources within the  
14 community, I decided very early there was significant  
15 value to the community at large in moving this deadline 20  
16 days forward to November 10th. When I announced this  
17 decision to my staff of 20 plus people, there was a few  
18 gasps in the room. Twenty days in the world of publishing  
19 might be equivalent to an eternity, depending on the  
20 circumstances.

21 I decided very quickly that with rigorous project  
22 management, this was an achievable goal. I also realized  
23 as we got into the production of the book that there were  
24 times that I needed to rely on the technical expertise of  
25 my staff. There were times that I needed to step back and

1 let others with more knowledge than me on a particular  
2 subject at times take the leadership role that I was  
3 charged with.

4           If you've never seen 30,000 phone books, I can  
5 tell you, it's quite a sight. They fill from floor to  
6 ceiling an entire 64-foot tractor-trailer on pallets. We  
7 got the books on time. But when I saw that  
8 tractor-trailer, I can tell you I was a little taken aback  
9 at the tasks ahead of us in terms of distribution.

10           But again through rigorous project management and  
11 knowing when to rely on my staff, we were successful in  
12 achieving our goal.

13           Translating this into the work of the Commission,  
14 I have a philosophy in situations like this. And that  
15 philosophy is it's extremely important to play to people's  
16 specific strengths, rely on the technical expertise of the  
17 staff when that expertise is greater than my own, and  
18 employ rigorous project management with preliminary  
19 deadline, a series and a sequence of preliminary deadlines  
20 that allow you to make the target comfortably.

21           Growing up, my father also told me inch by inch,  
22 anything is a cinch. That's something I felt near and  
23 dear to my heart my whole life. I think it's very, very  
24 important in situations such as these. And also knowing  
25 when to step up and when to step back. And by employing

1 these principles, I strongly believe a person can be  
2 successful at just about anything, regardless of the  
3 stringent deadlines that might be facing the task.

4 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: A considerable amount of  
5 the Commission's work will involve meeting with people  
6 from all over California who come from very different  
7 backgrounds and very different perspectives. If you're  
8 selected to serve on the Commission, tell us about the  
9 specific skills you possess that will make you effective  
10 in interacting with the public.

11 MR. PEREZ: One of the most valuable life  
12 experiences I've had was being a part of the uniform  
13 volunteer program at Henry W. Coe State Park just east of  
14 Morgan Hill. I was a member of the program from 1996 to  
15 1999, and I joined the program really with two goals in  
16 mind. The first was I wanted to give back to the  
17 community in a meaningful way. The second was I wanted to  
18 take part in a formal training program, the volunteer  
19 group administered once every fall. This training program  
20 was specific to interacting with the public. It taught us  
21 everything from first aide, but not just caring for  
22 somebody that might be in need, actually learning what to  
23 do when you encountered somebody who is, say, having heat  
24 stroke 30 miles out in the back country. It encompassed  
25 how to answer people's questions and basic visitor

1 interpretation which might be teaching somebody what a  
2 particular type of wild flower might be or what type of  
3 oak tree was on the corner of the parking lot.

4 I think most importantly, it was educating the  
5 public in such a way that would calm their fears and  
6 reduce the potential hazards of park dangers, such as  
7 poison oak or rattle snakes.

8 And in doing this, we were charged with the task  
9 of instilling an appreciation for the environment into the  
10 public that involved the public in such a way it gave them  
11 a vested interest in conservation.

12 I use the example of a rattle snake. Somebody I  
13 can assure you is much less likely to kill a rattle snake  
14 that they find on a trail if they know what to do when  
15 they encounter it. They're also much less likely to get  
16 bitten and encounter a serious safety situation.

17 I think looking at the Commission's work, this  
18 first Commission specifically, these 14 people are going  
19 to be the leaders responsible for guiding what I would  
20 consider a very weary public through this specific  
21 redistricting process for the very first time.

22 Paramount to the success of this Commission I  
23 think is working with the public to educate them in such a  
24 way that calms their fears and reduces the potential  
25 hazards, but doing so in a way that instills an

1 appreciation for the work of the Commission so that the  
2 public doesn't just feel but truly knows they are involved  
3 and that they have a vested interest in the work that  
4 we're trying to accomplish here today.

5 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Mr. Ahmadi.

6 CHAIR AHMADI: Yes, thank you.

7 Good morning, Mr. Perez.

8 MR. PEREZ: Good morning.

9 CHAIR AHMADI: In response to standard question  
10 number one, I just have a few follow-up questions.

11 You mentioned that it's important to hear the  
12 public, to listen to them, and hear them. How would you  
13 go about doing that?

14 MR. PEREZ: Well, in my view, it's relatively  
15 simple. It's simple, but difficult to execute.

16 I think it begins with bringing people to the  
17 table and allowing people to express their views, to  
18 express their opinions. The difficult part comes in  
19 making people believe that they are being heard. And I  
20 think this begins with the sincerity of the Commissioners  
21 themselves in really wanting to hear differences of  
22 opinion that knowing that an opinion that might be  
23 different than the ones the individual Commissioners bring  
24 to the table are not wrong, they're just different. And  
25 it's necessary to entertain those ideas, entertain those

1 potential solutions without dismissing them.

2 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you, sir.

3 Could you share with us in your mind an example  
4 or two differences in opinion that you would expect to  
5 hear should you be selected as a Commissioner?

6 MR. PEREZ: Uh-huh.

7 CHAIR AHMADI: In more realistic terms, like in  
8 California?

9 MR. PEREZ: Uh-huh. Just thinking about actual  
10 examples of the districts themselves, you know, there's a  
11 lot of different ways that you can divide up the state  
12 obviously.

13 You know, one example that's near and dear to my  
14 heart, I recently moved out of the town of Dublin. The  
15 town of Dublin sits in what's known as the Tri Valley area  
16 of California that consists of the towns of Danville, San  
17 Ramon, Dublin, Pleasanton, and Livermore. The current  
18 districts are drawn in such a way that divides the Tri  
19 Valley area literally in half. I believe this was  
20 probably done for good reason at one point.

21 If you brought the necessary parties to the  
22 table, I imagine there's some people that might be happy  
23 with the way the district is currently drawn. My initial  
24 point of view sitting down at the meeting would be that  
25 you need to reunify perhaps the Tri Valley area. But

1 again, without entertaining the reasons why the district  
2 is drawn the way it is now or without entertaining the  
3 different points of view that come to the table on how you  
4 might divide this particular area of the state, I think  
5 you would jump to conclusions perhaps.

6           So in that specific circumstance, I think it  
7 would be very important to listen and to hear what people  
8 bring to the table and what they have to say.

9           CHAIR AHMADI: Okay. Thank you, sir.

10           Another follow-up question in response to  
11 standard question number one. When you were discussing  
12 the importance of perseverance, I believe you stated that  
13 there might be or there are some crucial but not  
14 interesting tasks that the Commission has to deal with.  
15 And I know nobody has done it before, so I'm sure you have  
16 some idea about the crucial but not interesting tasks.  
17 Can you share with us what you mean by that?

18           MR. PEREZ: I do. I think one of the easiest  
19 examples that's employed in literature about bureaucracy  
20 and organizations is the example of a military operation.  
21 Everyone looks at the actual combat operation as exciting.  
22 People are fighting. They're in uniform. But in order to  
23 allow the soldiers to be successful, you have to have  
24 supply chain management. You have to have logistics. You  
25 have to make sure they're fed. And these types of tasks

1 are crucial but not interesting.

2 I think looking at the work of the Commission,  
3 the exciting part might be the public hearings, might be  
4 interacting with the public, meetings such as this. But  
5 the not interesting part is painstakingly reviewing the  
6 data, reviewing the statistics, going through the  
7 spreadsheets, reading the history, trying to understand  
8 the text of the laws that are governing what we are doing,  
9 so on and so forth.

10 CHAIR AHMADI: What kind of data do you expect to  
11 use, come across?

12 MR. PEREZ: I think it will be very, very  
13 important to use demographic data. It's going to be very  
14 important in my view to use the Census data in the work  
15 that's being completed by the national government through  
16 the Census Bureau currently as outlined in the  
17 proposition. So those types of reports.

18 CHAIR AHMADI: Okay. Thank you, sir.

19 In response to question number three, when you  
20 were discussing the impact and the positive impact, I  
21 could have just missed that part. But did you talk about  
22 the harm, or can you tell us a little more specific about  
23 the harm?

24 MR. PEREZ: Uh-huh. I think the harm -- it gets  
25 to the same bullet point that I was talking about, about

1 the ability to improve the state in that I really truly  
2 believe that this initiative is going to help set the  
3 environment, help set the tone for the potential level of  
4 value that average citizens place in being engaged in the  
5 political discourse.

6           Right now what I see when I talk to people,  
7 whether this be through work or just people in the  
8 community, people aren't necessarily happy about what's  
9 going on in Sacramento, but they're not engaged either.  
10 They're not writing letters. They don't know who their  
11 representation is. So they're very frustrated, but  
12 they're disengaged.

13           With this specific initiative, I think it has the  
14 power to go both ways. I think it has the power to make  
15 people feel more engaged. And I think so far we've been  
16 successful at the few meetings like this and involving the  
17 public. The fact you have over 30,000 initial applicants  
18 in this process I think says that people are ready and  
19 willing and they want to be engaged.

20           I think if the Commission doesn't hold that  
21 sacred when they get into the work that is going to be  
22 required here, that this also has the power to further  
23 disengage, disenfranchise the average citizen. Like I  
24 said, I'm very optimistic that won't happen. But I think  
25 it has the potential to.

1           CHAIR AHMADI: In your mind, what do you think  
2 the Commission has to do or follow to make sure that it  
3 doesn't fail?

4           MR. PEREZ: Again, I think this is going to be  
5 something that the Commission is going to have to decide  
6 once it's assembled. You know, I think outreach programs  
7 much like the ones that you guys had and the State  
8 Auditor's had in terms of getting so many applicants  
9 initially, but that's one idea. Holding public meetings  
10 but not just holding public meetings. Making sure that  
11 there's a genuine effort to make sure that people know  
12 what the meeting are about and trying to make the public  
13 feel at all steps along the way we have a vested interest  
14 in taking part and coming to the meeting and speaking.

15           CHAIR AHMADI: Is there anything else you want to  
16 share besides hearing the public in terms of making sure  
17 that the Commission is successful?

18           MR. PEREZ: In relation to the public  
19 specifically, I did have an idea that was actually derived  
20 from the proposition itself. There is an amendment in the  
21 initiative to the Government Code -- to Section 8253 of  
22 the Government Code entitled "Citizen's Republican Party  
23 Districting Commission Miscellaneous Provisions." There  
24 is a paragraph that states that all steps -- that we take  
25 all steps necessary to ensure that a complete and accurate

1 computerized database is available for redistricting and  
2 that procedures are in place to provide the public ready  
3 access to redistricting data and computer software for  
4 drawing maps.

5           One of the ideas that I had to allow the public  
6 to feel engaged in what was happening would be something  
7 similar to programs that you've seen various nonprofits or  
8 some newspapers around the state of California employ in  
9 helping to facilitate the budget discussion where you can  
10 actually go on a website and play around with the  
11 different budget levels in the department to see how you  
12 might as an individual citizen balance the budget if it  
13 was your own responsibility.

14           In talking to people, my peers, co-workers, the  
15 general public loves these programs, not just because it's  
16 kind of cool to play around with the different levels, but  
17 in my view, these programs make people feel invested.  
18 They make people feel part of the process. And they're  
19 more educated because of them. And I think in the spirit  
20 of that revision to the Government Code that I read, if  
21 the Commission employed something of that nature, we could  
22 have real success in helping to allow the public to really  
23 feel a vested interest in what we were doing.

24           CHAIR AHMADI: What factors do you think  
25 constitute a community of interest?

1           MR. PEREZ: A community of interest to me, again,  
2 I have to fall back on the actual text of the law. In the  
3 findings and purpose of the proposition itself, it  
4 outlines communities that have been divided.  
5 Specifically, I think it uses the example of Long Beach,  
6 San Jose, and Fresno. And if you were to ever look at how  
7 the districts are drawn in these areas, it almost seems as  
8 though the people who drew the districts in these three  
9 areas of the state paid absolutely no attention to the  
10 notion that there are towns, cities, groups of people that  
11 are working and living together as a cohesive -- what I  
12 would call even a micro-society really.

13           And I use the example that's very near and dear  
14 to my heart, which is the Tri Valley area. If you talk to  
15 anybody in one of the communities in the Tri Valley area,  
16 Dublin, Pleasanton, Livermore, most people identify as  
17 being part of the Tri Valley area. This, to me, would be  
18 a community of interest. I think you can have a lot of  
19 diversity within a community of interest economically,  
20 socially, racially. But that to me again looking at the  
21 spirit of what was written into the actual text of the law  
22 is how I define personally a community of interest.

23           CHAIR AHMADI: Okay. Thank you.

24           In your application and also you mentioned I  
25 believe today that you're part of a migrant farm worker

1 heritage.

2 MR. PEREZ: Correct.

3 CHAIR AHMADI: In your application, you know, you  
4 describe that as -- and I agree that's significant  
5 background in terms of your understanding of a unique  
6 segment of the population in California. Share with us  
7 your thoughts about that segment of the population in  
8 California and what issues do they have and how would you  
9 consider that in your decisions, should you be selected as  
10 a Commissioner?

11 MS. HAMEL: Five minutes.

12 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you.

13 MR. PEREZ: I think first of all, you know,  
14 having this background, looking at that segment of the  
15 population, I think it's very easy for us to  
16 disenfranchise them from conversations such as these. In  
17 my personal experience, there are certain barriers.  
18 Sometimes they're economic. Sometimes they might be  
19 social. Sometimes they might be as simple as just not  
20 understanding the English language, that prevents this  
21 subset of the state of California from actively feeling  
22 like they're welcome in meetings such as these, welcome in  
23 the process of government at all.

24 I think one of the very severe challenges this  
25 Commission is going to face is trying to make that subset

1 of the population feel that they are welcome, that we do  
2 want to hear what it is that is on their mind, the  
3 challenges that they're facing.

4           If you look through large areas of the state, I  
5 think this particular subset of the population faces  
6 extreme challenges that might not be seen in other areas  
7 of the state.

8           I was raised in the Bay Area. Very affluent.  
9 But you know, my travels have taken me throughout the  
10 central valley as well. And we might have ten percent  
11 unemployment in the Bay Area; there are large communities  
12 within the central valley that have upwards of 20 percent  
13 unemployment. And unfortunately, I think a lot of the  
14 times it's this particular subset of the population that  
15 is faced with dealing with those very severe and sometimes  
16 unique challenges. I think it's very easy to turn a blind  
17 eye to that and sometimes maybe even to pretend it doesn't  
18 exist. But it does exist, and I think it's very important  
19 to make sure those people who have as large a stake in  
20 this as anybody else making sure that they feel welcome  
21 and taking the steps necessary to make sure that they can  
22 effectively participate in the process.

23           CHAIR AHMADI: What would be the most effective  
24 approach to do that?

25           MR. PEREZ: Well, I think that's part of the

1 challenge of the Commission. In my mind, it might be as  
2 simple as making sure that we advertise meetings, for  
3 instance, or have a community outreach in maybe  
4 publications or radio perhaps. You know, when this  
5 Commission was getting going, when you were looking for  
6 applicants, for instance, heard a lot of advertisements on  
7 the radio, people were talking about it on talk shows. I  
8 think one of the most effective things that we could do  
9 would be making sure that we all utilized media in the  
10 outreach programs that encompassed the people that fall  
11 into this particular demographic. Just an idea.

12 CHAIR AHMADI: How did you find out about the  
13 Commission? Just curious.

14 MR. PEREZ: I was voting actually. I believe it  
15 was last June. And there was a blurb that the county  
16 register had put advertising that this Commission would be  
17 created. And so I sent a note to the address that was on  
18 the sheet. I think it may have been an e-mail requesting  
19 to be put on the interested person's list. And now a year  
20 and a few months later --

21 CHAIR AHMADI: Here you are.

22 MR. PEREZ: -- I'm here talking with you fine  
23 people.

24 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you, sir. No more questions  
25 at this point.

1 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Ms. Camacho.

2 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Thank you.

3 Hello, Mr. Perez.

4 MR. PEREZ: Good morning.

5 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: In your application, you  
6 describe using quantitative approach with emphasis of data  
7 called a forced load model.

8 MR. PEREZ: Correct.

9 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: How does this model help in  
10 data analysis and is there applicability to the  
11 Commission's analysis activity?

12 MR. PEREZ: Yes. I believe there is -- it's  
13 directly applicable to the Commission's duties.

14 Just to describe the exercise in a little more  
15 detail, what I was doing in that specific task, I was  
16 charged with being the lead liaison to work with a group  
17 of technical staff that we had assembled to help us  
18 complete the project. There was a group of consultants  
19 that we had. And what we had to do was there's a system  
20 that we use internally in the company that records all of  
21 the productive hours of our technicians and engineering  
22 that are charged with actually completing the work out in  
23 the field. When I saw work out in the field, this is  
24 defining and building telephone plant. So you know,  
25 you've all seen telephone poles out in your neighborhood.

1 The group that I help budget actually installs and  
2 maintains those poles and the cables on them and the  
3 facility underground and so on, so forth.

4           For quite a long time, we've struggled because of  
5 the nature of work with how to appropriately staff the  
6 organization so that we're not overstaffed, but that we're  
7 not understaffed. The nature of the work, it doesn't lend  
8 itself to completing those types of forced load models  
9 easily. Every widget, if you want to think of it that  
10 way, is different. Sometimes a job might entail removing  
11 or installation of two or three poles that are above  
12 ground on a city street. Sometimes it might be  
13 underground facilities on the side of a hill in a rural  
14 area.

15           And each situation is so unique, it's difficult  
16 to quantify the number of widgets that you need to  
17 complete from an operations perspective and translate that  
18 into a number of people that are required to actually  
19 produce the work.

20           In this particular exercise, what we were charged  
21 with was reviewing the hours data that we had and the way  
22 that the dollars were related to those hours to try to  
23 come up with a comprehensive model where we could input  
24 the different levels of work that we would be completing,  
25 whether it be installing new telephone cable, whether it

1 be removing telephone poles, et cetera, et cetera.

2 There's a laundry list of work tasks that we have to  
3 complete.

4           And using that comprehensive model where we could  
5 input very simple budget levels to come out with an  
6 appropriate force level, we were successful at completing  
7 the model. The model was completed. I think translating  
8 this to the work on the Commission, the heart of this task  
9 that we were charged with completing and the work on this  
10 model was reviewing extremely large data sets. And by  
11 extremely large, literally, two million lines of data.  
12 And translating that into something that was manageable  
13 and meaningful on a daily basis in planning for the  
14 long-term success of the organization, increasing the  
15 efficiency of the operations by not having too little or  
16 too many people on the books.

17           I think the Commission -- it's my view and  
18 hope that the Commission will be doing something similar  
19 at times. We're going to have to review large sets of  
20 data in terms of the Census data, in terms of the  
21 demographics that cover particular areas of the state.  
22 We're going to have to take all this data and we're going  
23 to have to chew it down into something that's manageable  
24 and workable, something that we can communicate to the  
25 public effectively so that they understand, so that

1 somebody who comes to a meeting can look at a summary and  
2 understand the key issues and be part of the discussion in  
3 a meaningful way.

4           And that's really what this exercise that I  
5 completed was about. It was about creating something that  
6 we could use to effectively communicate to upper  
7 management, to the operations staff, to financial staff in  
8 corporate planning. Taking all this data and making it  
9 manageable. And I really think that's applicable as part  
10 of the Commission's duties. But that was the nature of  
11 the exercise.

12           VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Now, with this data, you  
13 were talking about maybe providing this information at  
14 public hearings or meetings. What information exactly  
15 would you provide at these meetings to the public?

16           MR. PEREZ: I think it would be very important  
17 for the public to be able to see the specific bullet  
18 points, the specific metrics, if you will, that are being  
19 looked at and utilized to draw the boundaries. Obviously,  
20 within the law, within the constitutional revision that  
21 sets this Commission, we're charged with the task of  
22 maintaining the integrity of the districts in such a way  
23 that the number of people within each districts is  
24 relatively equal.

25           I don't imagine this is a very easy task. You

1 know, just driving through the state, I mean, you can  
2 drive an hour and you can literally go through a city of a  
3 million people and a town of a thousand people and, you  
4 know, acres and acres of farmland all in the course of  
5 that same one hour period. So how you divide up the  
6 state, it's going to be incredibly intricate. And I think  
7 the Commission's going to be required to look at different  
8 metrics to make those tough decisions again in compliance  
9 with the constitutional revision and the proposition  
10 itself. And in my view, it's very important for the  
11 public and all the constituents involved to be able to see  
12 what those data points are.

13 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: These data points that you  
14 were talking about, if you were in Sacramento providing  
15 information to the public, would you provide them the same  
16 information about these data points if you're trying to  
17 collect information about communities of interest and  
18 their input on mapping as you would to, say, the Bay Area?

19 MR. PEREZ: It's just my philosophy, my belief --  
20 and I think it's also in the spirit of the law. That all  
21 data be made available to the public. I think it's very  
22 important to be able to refine large data sets into  
23 meaningful chunks. And I think in terms of communicating  
24 to the public, it's important to provide we as a  
25 Commission reduce as those meaningful bullet points to

1 everybody, to all constituencies that might be involved.  
2 I think it's also important to allow the public the actual  
3 raw data that we would be going through.

4           In response to your specific question, I think  
5 it's really important that everybody be allowed full  
6 access to all the data, regardless of their background,  
7 regardless of their interest. You know, everyone is going  
8 to have a slightly different take on what we're looking  
9 at. And everyone might be able to pull different things  
10 from the specifics of what we're reviewing. I think it's  
11 very important that everyone have access to those  
12 materials so that they can form their own opinion and  
13 bring those insights and viewpoints to the Commission for  
14 consideration.

15           VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: So do you think when you go  
16 to a meeting in Sacramento that you might get input for  
17 communities of interest in the Bay Area and vice versa?

18           MR. PEREZ: I think it could be possible. You  
19 know, I use the example earlier of how the Tri Valley was  
20 divided between districts. In fact, in Pleasanton, if you  
21 are on the west side of Santa Rita Road -- if you're not  
22 familiar with the area, that's quite literally the main  
23 drag in Pleasanton -- you're in the 18th district. If  
24 you're on the east side of that road, you're in the 15th  
25 district.

1           Now, if you talk to anybody in Pleasanton,  
2 they're going to tell you they live in the Bay Area.  
3 What's interesting is the 15th district covers an area  
4 that goes all the way to the east edge of -- sorry -- the  
5 west edge of Stockton and all the way up to Elk Grove. So  
6 if we are in Sacramento specifically and we're talking  
7 with the public, I think it's very reasonable to expect  
8 there might be people there from the suburb just south of  
9 town here in Elk Grove. What we're doing in terms of  
10 redrawing these boundaries also includes the Bay Area as  
11 part of that very same district that might impact them  
12 personally.

13           So looking at that, you know, there are going to  
14 be areas where we really have to look at all of this in  
15 concert. Bay Area, valley, Sacramento, southern  
16 California, you know as well I think has districts that  
17 are drawn in this manner currently.

18           So I really do think it is important to make all  
19 the information available.

20           VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Are you thinking that you  
21 might be using the historical data to help you draw new  
22 district lines if you were a Commissioner?

23           MR. PEREZ: That's a really good question. I  
24 think the historical data is important in the context of  
25 the changes that might be encountered or felt in the

1 political landscape of different areas.

2           Beyond understanding what changes this might  
3 bring about and making sure that communities of interest  
4 have a chance to weigh in on their personal perspectives  
5 on how those changes might impact them on a personal and  
6 local level, I really believe in the spirit and the  
7 interest of again the proposition. And I keep going back  
8 to the actual constitutional revision, because I think  
9 it's very important to comply with the law, that you have  
10 to look at the most current data available. You know, the  
11 demographic landscape of the state, especially at the  
12 local level, I think is undoubtedly changed in the last  
13 ten years. I think it's very important to use that most  
14 current demographic data in drawing the actual districts  
15 themselves through this particular process and the  
16 revision.

17           VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: You talked a little bit  
18 about your volunteer work and talking to the public there.  
19 Do you have any other public meeting experience that would  
20 help prepare you for the Commission's public activities?

21           MR. PEREZ: Yes. There was a period of time --  
22 I'd have to look at my notes -- but I believe it was 1999  
23 I served as a member of the Performance-Based Budget  
24 Committee that was charged with making a comprehensive  
25 budget recommendation to the School District Board of the

1 Morgan Hill Unified School District. We held meetings  
2 very similar to this. It was a group of people that was  
3 charged with literally looking line by line at the budget,  
4 holding public meetings, and hearings and listening.

5 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Thank you.

6 MR. PEREZ: And listening to all the constituents  
7 that might be impacted. You know, it was a local  
8 initiative, but people took it very, very seriously,  
9 because it impacted the community in a very large way.

10 Do we have that extra yard duty in the elementary  
11 schools? How many teachers can we feasibly afford? What  
12 does the ADA funding look like next year considering that  
13 there is a new private elementary school opening up on the  
14 edge of town? These types of questions, very emotional  
15 for the community.

16 But yes, it was experience in holding public  
17 meetings and being involved in a process such as this.

18 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: How many public meetings did  
19 you hold for that Performance Budget Committee, and how  
20 did you handle contentious issues that the public may have  
21 raised?

22 MR. PEREZ: In terms of how many meetings we  
23 hold, I'll be honest, I don't remember. It was a few. We  
24 tried to hold meetings. I believe it was every week for a  
25 period of several months in reviewing line by line the

1 budget. But in terms of the actual schedule and how many  
2 meetings we held, I honestly just don't remember.

3           There was many very emotional and somewhat  
4 contentious issues. You know, representatives from the  
5 teachers union, very, very concerned parents, and people  
6 just from the general community that felt they had a  
7 vested interest in having a strong public educational  
8 system even if they didn't have a student themselves going  
9 through the process.

10           And what I found was that trying to maintain and  
11 foster a culture that welcomed people's issues, even if  
12 they were emotional, even if they were going to create  
13 conflict and again, making sure that people understood  
14 that there was a personal commitment from the people who  
15 were sitting on that Committee to really understand where  
16 it was they were coming from as individuals and to take  
17 their concerns to heart. You know, I found that really  
18 helped us to be successful and helped us not just to  
19 educate the public or the hear concerns, but to make sure  
20 that people understood that we believed in them having a  
21 vested interest in the process and that we valued their  
22 presence.

23           VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: That's my last question for  
24 this time.

25           MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Ms. Spano.

1           PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Good morning. You mentioned  
2 earlier in your response to question four of the standard  
3 questions that it's important that you have a rigorous  
4 project management, know when to rely on staff. Can you  
5 tell me a little bit more about your belief on a rigorous  
6 project management?

7           MR. PEREZ: Uh-huh. Again, I think it's a very  
8 simple concept, but one that's very difficult to actually  
9 execute. I think it's simple in that good project  
10 management sets a series of preliminary deadlines. In my  
11 current line of work, the operational managers are often  
12 trying to explain to me that there's a process through  
13 which a large project needs to get completed. And you  
14 can't do every step in that process all at once. There  
15 are some steps that you can do in concert, meaning that  
16 you can do maybe steps one and step three at the same  
17 time. But maybe in order to complete step two, you have  
18 to have completed step one in its entirety to move on.

19           I think it's important in a situation such as  
20 this or really in any large project to look at the  
21 objectives that you're trying to achieve and to create an  
22 outline for that pipeline of work.

23           And I think paramount to the success of that  
24 endeavor is two-fold. First is understanding what  
25 specific tasks need to be completed in order to achieve

1 the overall objective. Two -- and I'm going to add a  
2 third here. But two is understanding which of those tasks  
3 you can do at the same time and which you have to do in  
4 sequence. And three, and perhaps most importantly, it's  
5 outlining a schedule in the very early stages of the  
6 process for completion of each of the steps in such a way  
7 that allows you to comfortably achieve the target in  
8 total.

9 I'll be honest with you, watching the work of  
10 this review panel, I think you've set a really wonderful  
11 example of how this can work. I mean, over 4,000  
12 secondary applications needed to be reviewed. There were  
13 some things that you guys could do at all once. You could  
14 start diving into the different poolings. There were some  
15 things that you had to do in sequence. You know, that's  
16 what I think really defines good project management,  
17 rigorous project management.

18 I think that's going to be really paramount to  
19 the success of this Commission, given that some of the  
20 time lines and deadlines involved.

21 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: How do you propose doing  
22 that when you know you haven't met -- if you were selected  
23 as a Commissioner and you haven't worked with your fellow  
24 Commissioners before, how would you propose to try to  
25 balance the personality issues, the level of expertise

1 people bring, the lack of maybe specialty areas that they  
2 have?

3           You've been at AT&T for quite a long time. And I  
4 know this example was referring to your Stanford  
5 Directory, but having an idea of the organization itself  
6 really helps, and just the one of management, going into  
7 redistricting and on the Commission is going to be  
8 brand-new.

9           So how do you feel this achieving good project  
10 management on this Commission will be done? Have you  
11 given it any thought?

12           MR. PEREZ: Well, I've given it a lot of thought.  
13 My personal belief is that -- and I think I've seen this  
14 in the interviews that you've conducted so far. The  
15 people who have come to sit before you here like I'm doing  
16 today, I think unanimously one of the things that we all  
17 bring to the table is a passion, is a passion for what we  
18 are doing here and an understanding of the importance of  
19 what we're doing here. And I strongly believe that even  
20 with all of the diverse backgrounds that will undoubtedly  
21 be assembled on the Commission that that passion that  
22 everybody brings to the table and the understanding of the  
23 importance that's going to set the tone for the  
24 Commission.

25           And I think it might not make it easy, but I

1 think it will certainly facilitate what it is we're  
2 talking about. People are going to want to talk about  
3 their strengths and I hope that they're also willing to  
4 talk about some of their weaknesses.

5 I'll be honest with you, I'm not a legal expert,  
6 for instance. I bring a lot of analytical skills, project  
7 management skills. You know, I'm hoping there might be  
8 somebody on the Commission that has more of a legal  
9 background that we can rely on. It's those types of  
10 things I think we can discuss and put out on the table in  
11 the very beginning stages that will allow us to play to  
12 the strengths of the individuals involved. So I'm very  
13 optimistic.

14 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Have you given it some  
15 thought about in your description of project management  
16 the specific tasks that you need to be done initially and  
17 the sequence and the timelines at all?

18 MR. PEREZ: Yeah, I have. I think this is  
19 something that the Commission is going to have to decide  
20 together. I do have some ideas. I think, you know,  
21 looking over at everything that is going to be required of  
22 the Commission, it's my view that number one is meet the  
23 Commissioners. That's going to be relatively quick.  
24 Hopefully painless.

25 Number two I think is figuring out what staff and

1 specific technical expertise the Commission is going to  
2 have to employ in order to assemble all the relevant data  
3 and to be successful as a group.

4 I use the example of the Stanford Directory. The  
5 first thing that I had to do when I took that appointment  
6 was to assemble a staff of people, sometimes people that  
7 had vastly different backgrounds and technical expertise  
8 than myself, you know, perfect example, I had to go out  
9 and hire a graphic designer. I absolutely know nothing  
10 about graphic design. But I had to bring somebody to the  
11 table that brought that technical expertise so we could be  
12 successful as a group. And I think that's going to be the  
13 very first task, once the Commission is assembled, is  
14 getting that technical expertise to the table and making  
15 sure that they're fully engaged in outlining the  
16 priorities that the Commission was going to set for those  
17 people.

18 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: How did you go about finding  
19 the critical people to formulate your team when you were  
20 doing the Stanford Directory?

21 MR. PEREZ: Well, I put out a job listing on a  
22 bulletin board and started talking to people that I knew  
23 that might know people that had experience in that field.  
24 And in doing that, I was able to get a list of candidates  
25 that thankfully all met the qualifications that we needed.

1 And I was very successful in hiring two -- what I would  
2 consider very professional excellent graphic designers.  
3 And we were successful at that task.

4 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: How did you know when --  
5 because you have a strong technical background. How did  
6 you know when to rely on your staff's technical ability?

7 MR. PEREZ: Well, for me it was relatively  
8 simple. It was when I had more questions than answers.  
9 And you know, I'll tell you, going into the process, I  
10 didn't think that was going to be as often as it ended up  
11 being. But there was many, many times where I quite  
12 literally had more questions than answers. And when that  
13 happened, I knew that I had to rely on their expertise. I  
14 had to listen to their input to advise me on the  
15 appropriate path forward that we should take as a group.

16 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Have you given it any  
17 thought -- because I know the Commission is going to have  
18 to hire some consultant of a technical area. Have you  
19 given it any thought as to what value and input you can  
20 provide the Commission with your background in determining  
21 a really good solid consultant in redistricting or mapping  
22 or any of that?

23 MR. PEREZ: Yeah. Again, I think we all have to  
24 play to our individual strengths, and I think that as  
25 Commissioners, the 14 people are going to have to rely on

1 each other to provide that feedback and input. I use the  
2 example of legal expertise. I probably wouldn't be the  
3 best person to talk to about bringing on legal expertise.  
4 I would have to defer to fellow Commissioners to provide  
5 advise and recommendation and to rely on that.

6 I can, however, provide very relevant input on  
7 what might make a good analyst in terms of reviewing  
8 numbers. As a finance manager, I'm a numbers guy. So I  
9 think I have a pretty decent aptitude at looking at those  
10 types of relevant skill sets that might be involved in  
11 analyzing and compressing data sets.

12 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Do you feel the qualitative  
13 aspect of the Commission work is just as important as the  
14 quantitative in the sense of gathering the human element  
15 behind gathering the data?

16 MR. PEREZ: Yeah. I think that's a very easy  
17 answer, and that answer is a resounding yes. I think in  
18 certain circumstances it might even be more important. I  
19 can tell you from my own personal professional experience  
20 I can recommend any budget that I choose to recommend to  
21 the operational leaders of the organization that I  
22 support. That doesn't mean that they're going to go out  
23 and execute it. It's very important to employ the  
24 qualitative skills along with the quantitative to achieve  
25 the objective. People have to understand what it is

1 you're doing, why it is you're doing it, and why the  
2 recommendations are what the recommendations are. If they  
3 don't, you're not going to establish a sense of vested  
4 interest from the various constituencies that we'll be  
5 interacting with. So, yes, I think it's very, very  
6 important.

7           PANEL MEMBER SPANO: In your example of the Tri  
8 Valley area, how difficult do you see in gathering input  
9 from the Dublin, Pleasanton, San Ramon, Livermore, and  
10 their interest in how their district is divided and  
11 whether it should stay that way or not while you try to  
12 balance equal population and all the other criteria?

13           MR. PEREZ: I think the actual process of  
14 redrawing the line would be very difficult. I think  
15 Dublin specifically is blessed to have a very vibrant,  
16 active small town environment with very active local  
17 leaders. I think it will be quite easy to bring those  
18 types of people, to bring the pillars of the community,  
19 maybe even to bring others that might not normally get  
20 involved into something like this to the table. So I  
21 think getting people into the room in Dublin specifically  
22 would be fairly easy. I think it's a blessed community  
23 that way. Actually, redrawing the line I think is a  
24 different story. As I think all the lines will be in the  
25 state of California.

1           PANEL MEMBER SPANO: How would you ensure you  
2 meet and gather the input that you need that is absolutely  
3 necessary in making those decisions as you draw the lines?  
4 You mentioned Dublin is pretty much easy to get a group  
5 formed and maybe listen to your interests. What about the  
6 other remaining areas in the Tri Valley area? What  
7 difficulties do you see?

8           MR. PEREZ: I think each community is its own  
9 unique distinct town. But I also believe that all the  
10 communities in that area identifying themselves as being  
11 part of the Tri Valley would all be equally willing to  
12 come to the table and participate.

13           I think the easy part will be getting the people  
14 in the room that normally would come to something like  
15 this. The difficult part is getting people in the room  
16 that might not normally come to something like this. And  
17 I think that's going to be a challenge for the Commission  
18 throughout the state.

19           I would mention, I talk about Dublin being very  
20 blessed as a community to have lots of involvement and  
21 people that might come to something like this. I think  
22 every town across the state is different. And I think in  
23 every area of the state -- I know I was asked earlier  
24 about my background as the great grandson of a migrant  
25 farm worker and how I might work with those types of

1 communities. If we area in the central valley, if we are  
2 in a small town in the central valley, I think it's going  
3 to be a much different process getting people in that  
4 room. We might employ some of the same techniques,  
5 utilizing local media, whether that be newspaper or radio  
6 broadcast to make sure the word got out, but the types of  
7 radio shows or the breadth of the different types or  
8 grouping of media that we might use might be slightly  
9 different. I think that's something the Commission is  
10 going to have to look at once they're assembled.

11           PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Have you thought of how to  
12 get disengaged people back in the process of redistricting  
13 and get them involved and how important it is to them?

14           MR. PEREZ: I have. And you know, I think this  
15 process is very refreshing to a lot of people. People  
16 that I've spoken to are excited about this process. So  
17 you know, the people of the state of California, they know  
18 we're doing this. They're watching us here today and  
19 seeing how this plays out. And so I think that in part  
20 might make the job a little easier. I think the challenge  
21 for the Commission isn't going to be in trying to make  
22 people interested. I think we have people's attention. I  
23 think it's going to be in making sure that the  
24 constituencies involved know that they're welcome and that  
25 we proactively want them to be in the room, to be involved

1 in setting that tone at an early stage.

2           And you know, I use the 30,000 example. I can  
3 almost guarantee you that there are people in that initial  
4 applicant pool of 30,000 that previously had written off  
5 State government. But because we're doing this  
6 initiative, because the State Auditor went out in the  
7 spirit of the law and asked for interested persons to  
8 become involved, we got a showing that far surpassed any  
9 of the expectations that I think many people, myself  
10 included, had for this process.

11           So again, I come to the table with -- I'll say it  
12 again -- optimism. I'm very optimistic, and I have a lot  
13 of faith in the people of California.

14           PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Thank you.

15           MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Panelists, do you have  
16 follow-up questions?

17           CHAIR AHMADI: Not at this point.

18           VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: No.

19           MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: I just have a couple for  
20 you.

21           How do you think that minority communities will  
22 be impacted by the Commission's work?

23           MR. PEREZ: You know, minority communities  
24 specifically, I use the example of the central valley and  
25 how there are many communities across the state that might

1 be much different than, say, the urban areas or the Bay  
2 Area or in southern California. And what I see when I  
3 drive through the central valley when I talk to people out  
4 there, I think they are currently disengaged, not  
5 necessarily because they want to be disengaged, but maybe  
6 because they don't feel welcome at the table as much as  
7 maybe some other groups in the state.

8 I think this Commission truly has the power to  
9 change that. You know, even if it's in a small way,  
10 trying to make those minority communities feel that  
11 they're welcome at the table and that the Commission  
12 genuinely wants to hear their input, I think that can have  
13 a resounding impact on the future level of involvement  
14 that those communities have in statewide politics. And I  
15 think that could have a real positive impact on the state  
16 of California.

17 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: In what ways can it have a  
18 positive impact on the state of California?

19 MR. PEREZ: Well, you know, it's my personal  
20 belief that the more people are educated and involved in  
21 what government is doing, the better the discussion will  
22 be involving what the state government is doing. So I  
23 think if we can reinvigorate some of the communities of  
24 interest that are out therein the state of California, we  
25 can have a positive impact in that way. Again, you know,

1 it's not about electing different political leaders. It's  
2 not about changing the laws. This proposition to me is  
3 really about improving -- improving the level of discourse  
4 that's being had in relation to our government here in the  
5 state of California.

6 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: You have familiarity at  
7 all with the Voting Rights Act of 1965?

8 MR. PEREZ: Vaguely, yes, I do.

9 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: And you know one of the  
10 things that federal law requires is that in certain  
11 circumstances district lines have to be drawn a particular  
12 way, very specific way to give a racial or ethnic group an  
13 opportunity to elect a candidate of their choice. How do  
14 you feel about having your work directed in that manner?

15 MR. PEREZ: Well, you know, I'll be honest with  
16 you, regardless of how I might feel about it personally,  
17 it's the law. And it's the supreme law of the land. You  
18 know, the Voting Rights Act was enacted specifically as  
19 enforcement of the 15th amendment of the United States  
20 constitution. You know, it's my hope and belief and I  
21 think it's written into the spirit of the constitutional  
22 amendment that we're discussing here today that the  
23 United States Constitution really needs to be held first  
24 and foremost as the supreme law of the land.

25 So as that, I think it's part of the environment

1 we're working in. And I really hope all the Commission  
2 that's assembled will respect that first and foremost. So  
3 it's something that we're going to have to work with. And  
4 I respect that very, very dearly.

5 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Do you see any value in  
6 having to respect that law, any value for California?

7 MR. PEREZ: Uh-huh, I do. You know, the 15th --  
8 I would even say the 19th and the 26th amendments to the  
9 United States Constitution as part of that. These  
10 amendments to the U.S. Constitution were not enacted  
11 lightly. And I think we need to uphold the views,  
12 opinions, and the challenges that went into enacting those  
13 laws. Again, the supreme law of the land. And you know,  
14 I think they really do need to be held sacred. I think  
15 there's a lot of value in doing that. I strongly believe  
16 in the spirit; the 15th amendment talking about voting  
17 rights for people of all colors and races; the 19th  
18 amendment guaranteeing the right to vote for women, even  
19 though we don't have something similar to a Voting Rights  
20 Act; to enforce it with the same level of attention as a  
21 15th amendment; and also the 26th amendment guaranteeing  
22 the right to vote for everyone 18 and older. I'm strongly  
23 in favor of these amendments and I think they need to be  
24 respected, like I said, as supreme law of the land. So I  
25 find a lot of value in adhering to those rules and

1 regulations.

2 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: I don't have further  
3 questions.

4 Panelists?

5 CHAIR AHMADI: I do have a quick follow-up.

6 I ran out of time. I would have asked you the  
7 first time. But on your application, you mentioned that  
8 you're a member of the Pine Ridge Association.

9 MR. PEREZ: Correct.

10 CHAIR AHMADI: What kind of organization is that?

11 MR. PEREZ: Yes, well, this is a good opportunity  
12 for me to plug the PRA as we call it I suppose. The Pine  
13 Ridge Association is the nonprofit organization that works  
14 to support Henry W. Coe State Park. They are the  
15 organization in concert with the State Parks that holds  
16 the uniform volunteer program training that I discussed  
17 earlier. They're also the ones that administer the  
18 volunteer program. But they provide volunteer support,  
19 fundraising efforts for Henry W. Coe State Park. So it's  
20 an excellent organization. Does a lot of good in the  
21 community.

22 CHAIR AHMADI: And you are a volunteer member?

23 MR. PEREZ: I'm not currently a volunteer with  
24 the State Parks any more as part of the PRA. I'm just a  
25 rank and file member of the nonprofit organization.

1           CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you, sir. What about --  
2 there is another organization that you list California  
3 Waterfall Association.

4           MR. PEREZ: Uh-huh. Again, great time for me to  
5 plug another wonderful nonprofit organization. Again, my  
6 involvement with California Waterfowl Association is  
7 extremely limited. I'm just a member of the organization.  
8 And what the California Waterfowl Association does is it's  
9 a conservation group that promotes the preservation and  
10 restoration of California's wetland resources. So we are  
11 blessed to have marsh throughout the state of California  
12 and a marsh is a marsh. It's an area of land that's  
13 basically covered in water is how you can think of it.  
14 But vital, vital to the ecosystem of the state of  
15 California. And so this organization works to promote,  
16 like I said, the restoration and conservation of those  
17 specific resources.

18           CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you, sir.

19           One last one. One of your letters of  
20 recommendation is from an attorney James Crossen. And you  
21 know when I read that letter, I didn't see the  
22 relationship. So how is this a friend? A colleague?

23           MR. PEREZ: That's a very good question. Mr.  
24 Crossen has been a long-time family friend. I've known  
25 Mr. Crossen literally just about my entire life. He's an

1 active member of the community that I grew up in Morgan  
2 Hill, California. And I've had the opportunity to  
3 interact with Mr. Crossen on numerous occasions throughout  
4 the years. So that's the relationship.

5 CHAIR AHMADI: Great. Thank you very much.

6 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: I have a question. In your  
7 other relevant others section, you received an award from  
8 the White House Communication Agency Certificate of  
9 Appreciation. Can you tell me what this award was for?

10 MR. PEREZ: Oh, sure. There was a very short  
11 period of time that I was working in Dallas and it was a  
12 rotational assignment. I was the supervisor over a group  
13 of technicians that worked in an office and we were  
14 responsible for testing and certifying special services  
15 circuits during the installation process. When a special  
16 services circuit is -- all you can think of it is any type  
17 of communication circuit that's more than just a  
18 traditional phone line.

19 I was filling in for my boss one weekend, and I  
20 received a call at 1:00 in the morning on a Friday from  
21 work. And the call instructed me to install a group of  
22 what we term ISDN circuits, large data circuits that you  
23 can run most of communications technologies over into a  
24 hotel in St. Louis. And my first reaction was, it's 1:00  
25 on a Friday. How do you expect me to assemble a crew?

1 You don't understand. It's a matter of national security.  
2 There's been a security breach at the hotel the President  
3 was going to be staying in St. Louis.

4           So last minute, the White House security people  
5 basically mandated that the location of the President's  
6 stay be moved. So I got on the phone at 1:00 in the  
7 morning and started calling people's cell phones. And I  
8 was able to have a crew assemble in the local area in St.  
9 Louis, and we literally stayed on the phone together. I  
10 was able to get a tester into the office last minute. Had  
11 to wake them out of bed and get them into the office. But  
12 we worked through the night.

13           By the time the President arrived the next  
14 morning, the services were up and running and the White  
15 House Communications Agency was able to effectively  
16 communicate with the rest of the world. They quite  
17 literally have a traveling White House essentially and the  
18 President has full communication capabilities wherever  
19 they travel. And so in recognition of the efforts that we  
20 put forth that night, the White House was very gracious to  
21 provide us with a Certificate of Appreciation.

22           PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Who presented this award to  
23 you?

24           MR. PEREZ: It wasn't presented. It was mailed.  
25 But no, I received a personal phone call from the Director

1 of White House Communications at the time and they also  
2 sent the certificate. So it's something I'm very proud  
3 of.

4 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Thank you.

5 MR. PEREZ: You're welcome.

6 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Any further questions,  
7 panelists?

8 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: No.

9 CHAIR AHMADI: No.

10 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: No.

11 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: We have just over three  
12 minutes remaining, if you'd like to make a closing  
13 statement, Mr. Perez.

14 MR. PEREZ: I will say one thing. And I'll tell  
15 you, when I initially filed my application and became part  
16 of this process, I wasn't sure what to expect. I don't  
17 know that anyone was, given that this is a brand-new  
18 process.

19 I can tell you the work of the State Auditor's  
20 Office and the work of the people in this room  
21 specifically has re-invigorated my faith in the notion  
22 that government can work and work very well when you  
23 assemble the appropriate team of people and they take  
24 their responsibilities very seriously.

25 So you know, I mentioned before but I sincerely

1 believe this, we have the attention. You specifically  
2 have the attention of the people of the state of  
3 California. They're watching and I can tell you myself  
4 included, we're very hopefully -- I don't mean to sound  
5 condescending when I say this. But as citizens, I think  
6 we're very proud of what you've accomplished here.

7           So I would give you however this turns out a  
8 very, very sincere thank you for the dedication that you  
9 guys have demonstrated throughout this process. I think  
10 it's admirable. And I think you should be very proud of  
11 this accomplishments.

12           CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you, sir.

13           PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Thank you.

14           MR. PEREZ: With that, thank you very much.

15           MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Thank you for coming to  
16 see us. Let's recess until 10:59.

17           (Thereupon the panel recessed at 10:44 a.m.)

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

1 11:00 AM

2 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: It's 10:59. So we'll go  
3 back on record.

4 We have with us Ms. Suzanne Levy. Welcome,  
5 Ms. Levy. Are you ready to begin?

6 MS. LEVY: Yes, I am.

7 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Wonderful. Please start  
8 the clock.

9 What specific skills do you believe a good  
10 Commissioner should possess?

11 Of those skills, which do you possess?

12 Which do you not possess and how will you  
13 compensate for it?

14 Is there anything in your life that would  
15 prohibit or impair your ability to perform the duties of a  
16 Commissioner?

17 MS. LEVY: Thank you very much.

18 Of course, there are three skills that you were  
19 looking for in the application process. The ability to be  
20 impartial is vital. It's really important that every  
21 Commissioner not only is impartial but really reflects  
22 that to everybody that we meet with.

23 Analytical skills is important, because we will  
24 be looking at a lot of data and people need to be able to  
25 understand that data and how to process it. And the

1 appreciation for the diversity in the state is obviously  
2 very important.

3           But I also feel there's four other skills that  
4 are really important. First one is integrity, not really  
5 skill, a quality. I really want to know that my fellow  
6 Commissioners are people that I can trust what they say  
7 and that they're going to say what they really mean, that  
8 they're going to be honest with this whole process to  
9 everyone they meet with, and that they're not going to  
10 really be taking things personally, that they'll be able  
11 to work with as one team, one group of people that are all  
12 equal.

13           I want everyone to be a good communicator in that  
14 they have really good listening skills, but also will  
15 speak to people directly and honestly. They don't always  
16 need to be the one to do the talking. But they need to  
17 make sure that they are always present in a situation.  
18 And that they can be a negotiator or problem solver as  
19 they need to be.

20           Also we have to have the ability to do research,  
21 because there is going to be a lot of information that we  
22 are going to have to read through, get familiar with it  
23 quickly, know where to ask questions if we don't have the  
24 information that we need, know where to get it or where to  
25 ask to get it.

1           And finally, we will need organizational skills,  
2 because this is a very fast process. So we need people  
3 who are going to be able to stay on task, are going to be  
4 able to accomplish specific tasks in a timely manner and  
5 stay on topic during discussions.

6           MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Describe a circumstance  
7 from your personal experience where you had to work with  
8 others to resolve a conflict or difference of opinion.  
9 Please describe the issue and explain your role in  
10 addressing and resolving the conflict. If you are  
11 selected to serve on the Citizen's Redistricting  
12 Commission, tell us how you would resolve conflicts that  
13 may arise among the Commissioners.

14           MS. LEVY: I would love to answer that question,  
15 but I just realized I missed three parts of the previous  
16 one. I'll start with those and then continue.

17           Of the skills I possess, high analytical skills.  
18 I do have a background in math and computer science. And  
19 in addition, I do have research skills. I have had lots  
20 of opportunity to be impartial. And one of the things  
21 that I'm really proud of, if I've had quite a few  
22 opportunities to do things with quick time constraints,  
23 I've always accomplished those on time.

24           The ones that I'm probably the least proficient  
25 at is if someone is talking off topic, I will tend to lose

1 my train of thought as well and not really listen to what  
2 they're saying. Wishing that whoever is running the  
3 meeting will get that person back on topic. And I think  
4 the way I'll need to overcome that is really to be taking  
5 copious notes whether they're on topic or not. Many times  
6 in what they are saying, they are getting to the question  
7 at hand. And that will keep me focused as well.

8           And to anything in my life to impair my ability  
9 is simply I do have plans to be out of the country from  
10 December 21st to January 3rd. I have a daughter who lives  
11 in Nepal. I will be visiting her.

12           Now regarding a circumstance from my personal  
13 experience when I was on the School Board in Santa  
14 Barbara, we had to redraw the boundary lines between our  
15 two school districts. And this was a process that we  
16 started about in February or March, and it was going to  
17 take effect when school started in the fall.

18           We identified five neighborhoods that were in  
19 between the existing boundary lines that currently existed  
20 that we could possibly move. And it was very interesting,  
21 because parents were reacting as if we were going to be  
22 sending their children to the moon. They had strong  
23 feelings about their children changing schools. In  
24 addition, I was the only person on the School Board who  
25 was going to be personally affected by this decision.

1           So our issue was to determine how many of these  
2 neighborhoods and which of these neighborhoods were going  
3 to be moved and I could tell during our public meeting  
4 that discussion was getting kind of contentious among the  
5 School Board members. So when it was my turn to give  
6 input, I went up to the white board and I said let's talk  
7 about numbers here. And I started writing down the  
8 neighborhoods we were considering. And I'd write  
9 neighborhood C and D together are this many students. And  
10 neighborhood C and neighborhood E together are this many  
11 students. And about that point, someone from the audience  
12 yelled out to me, "Well, of course, you're not circling  
13 your own neighborhood." And I said circled the letter C  
14 and said, "No, this one is my neighborhood," anticipating  
15 that might happen and knowing I needed to be forthright  
16 with that immediately.

17           So that in the end, everybody had real numbers to  
18 look at to help our decision. And when I came to vote, of  
19 course, I had recused myself from the voting. And my  
20 neighborhood was one of those that was moved. But that  
21 was fine with me, because you know, I had done what I can  
22 in the process and I was okay with the decision.

23           So when there are conflicts among Commissioners,  
24 first I think it's really important that we look to see  
25 are we basing our conflicts based on the same information

1 or are we maybe looking at different information that we  
2 don't realize we're looking at different information. And  
3 then we need to say where are we in common and where do  
4 the conflicts really exist. It's really a much narrower  
5 focus of information than when we originally look at it.

6           When there is disagreement, then other people can  
7 have input on the specifics of a disagreement and perhaps  
8 take a vote if we have to take a vote. But I think in the  
9 end we all realize that we sometimes will agree to  
10 disagree. We are all working as a team. We need to trust  
11 each other that we've all reviewed the information and we  
12 need to respect each other's feelings regarding the  
13 information.

14           But not to let it get personal. Everyone has to  
15 know their input is important. But it's not your personal  
16 feelings that's really at stake. It's what's best for the  
17 state that's at stake.

18           MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: How will the Commission's  
19 work impact the state?

20           Which of these impacts will improve the state the  
21 most?

22           And is there any potential for the Commission's  
23 work to harm the state? And if so, in what ways?

24           MS. LEVY: I think the way it will impact the  
25 state is it will resolve conflict of interest for

1 legislators because they will have to base their decisions  
2 on the needs for their district and not think so much  
3 about whether or not it's going to gain them a vote. It's  
4 going to really serve the interests of the communities as  
5 opposed to the interest of the legislators. And I think  
6 it's going to allow people, especially people who aren't  
7 Republican or Democrat, to feel like they have more of a  
8 stake in an issue, is a more equal vote, as well as all of  
9 our various communities of interest that I'm sure we're  
10 going to be talking about.

11           And I think the fact we're doing this work is  
12 going to let people see that we really care about the  
13 input from everybody. Everybody's voice matters. And  
14 they're going to have a much more vested interest in the  
15 outcome and hopefully in the end in voting. So ultimately  
16 it would be wonderful if this will increase voter turnout  
17 because people will realize that their input is considered  
18 and is valued and will continue to be valued by the  
19 legislators.

20           The potential harm has to do with the fact that  
21 as it seems like everything in the world is this day, our  
22 decision has a good chance to be contested. And we  
23 already have Proposition 27 on the ballot. Might not  
24 going into effect before we do anything.

25           So if we are not really careful on what we do

1 following the letter of the law, dotting every I, crossing  
2 every T, making sure that everything is public, that  
3 people's voices are heard and that everything is done in  
4 the right way, we might end up costing the State a lot of  
5 money, delaying the entire process for this Commission,  
6 perhaps doing the work all over again. And worse case,  
7 having the people of California just lose faith in the  
8 entire process.

9 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Describe a situation where  
10 you've had to work as part of a group to achieve a common  
11 goal. Tell us about the goal, describe your role within  
12 the group, and tell us how the group worked or did not  
13 work collaboratively to achieve this goal. If you're  
14 selected to serve on the Citizens' Redistricting  
15 Commission, tell us what you would do to foster  
16 collaboration.

17 MS. LEVY: When my son was in elementary and I  
18 went to the principal of the school one day and said,  
19 "Hey, I've had School Board experience. If you need  
20 anyone to serve on a Committee, I would love to do it."  
21 He said, "As a matter of fact, we're looking for parent  
22 representation on a brand-new grant we got," which was  
23 called Goals 2000. And the grant was awarded to our  
24 school district and a neighboring school district. Ours  
25 being a predominantly white school district and the

1 neighboring one is a Hispanic school district. Because  
2 when these two elementary school district populations  
3 joined together in high school at the same high school,  
4 there was quite a bit of racial tension. So the purpose  
5 of the grant was to find ways for the two communities to  
6 come together, particularly the students pre high school  
7 to reduce the racial tension that was occurring at the  
8 high school.

9           So I was one of the three parent representatives  
10 on a Committee that consisted of superintendent, School  
11 Board members, faculty, and staff at the schools. And  
12 they asked me to serve as the Chair of the Activities  
13 Committee, which was the Committee that was actually going  
14 to decide specifically how to bring the two communities  
15 together.

16           So first thing I did is I, with the group,  
17 identified what the grant would allow us and not allow us  
18 to do. And then we had a brainstorming session as to  
19 activities that we could do. One of the things I think is  
20 very important during brainstorming is not to let anyone  
21 yell out, "that's not going to work," "it's too much money  
22 or "we've tried that before." It's really important just  
23 to let everyone get all their ideas out on the table,  
24 because the idea that one person over here might have that  
25 doesn't work might stimulate an idea in somebody else over

1 here that will work. And once everything is out there on  
2 the table and we establish our criteria, then we can go  
3 through and cross off the ones that don't meet the  
4 criteria that we have set and decide what will work.

5           We had a superintendent in particular who kept  
6 trying to drive the activities towards ones that would  
7 benefit his school district. He would bring more money  
8 into his school district. And I had to stop him and let  
9 him know that we needed to discuss this according to the  
10 entire group, according to the criteria that's on the  
11 table. And quite a few people were impressed I was  
12 willing to stop this superintendent from speaking. But I  
13 looked at him as just a fellow Committee member. We were  
14 all equal, and was able to limit him to the discussion  
15 that was on the table.

16           So to foster collaboration among the  
17 Commissioners, one of the things I really would love to  
18 see to foster collaboration is some sort of team building  
19 event at the very beginning like the first week in January  
20 7, 8, 9. I've participated where they're simply team  
21 building. Don't discuss any of the topics that pertain to  
22 the Commission. But the purpose of the activity is to let  
23 us all get to know each other, let us know where each  
24 other's strength and weaknesses are, who are the people  
25 who are really good at problem solving. Who are the

1 people that are a little shy about speaking in front of a  
2 group. Who are the likely leaders. So that we really get  
3 a chance to know each other. I'm not sure if that's  
4 possible, but I would love to see that happen. I'd love  
5 to see -- I'd like everyone to know their input is  
6 important and vital and everybody has a chance to say what  
7 they need to say.

8           To meet deadlines, whenever there is a hard  
9 deadline, I like to put a soft deadline far enough before  
10 the hard deadline so we have enough time to check on the  
11 people's work and follow up that they're doing what they  
12 need to do without them really feeling undue pressure.

13           I once had a project manager on a grant I was  
14 directing where I had to turn in reports to the federal  
15 government every three months. So I asked my project  
16 managers to give me monthly reports as to the progress of  
17 their work and how much they had spent, so I would be on  
18 top of what they were doing and would get a head start on  
19 writing my quarterly report. And this project manager was  
20 not turning into his monthly reports. And of course, I  
21 was sending him -- e-mailing and phone calls and all that.  
22 And finally I walked into his office one day and said  
23 "Let's sit down and talk." And he started coming up with  
24 a billion excuses. I said, "That's not a problem. Let's  
25 just answer these questions." I had him orally give me

1 his report and had to do this like one more quarter. And  
2 then he realized that's all you wanted from me? That was  
3 so easy. And I did not have a problem with him after that  
4 of getting the reports from him.

5           So I really feel like I was to make things as  
6 easy for the other person as possible, which means when  
7 we're working with consultants, I want to make sure to  
8 give him all the information and to even try to anticipate  
9 the questions they have, make it clear that when they have  
10 questions about what they're doing, get to us we'll get  
11 back to them in a timely fashion so that we work together  
12 well. Thank you.

13           MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: A considerable amount of  
14 the Commission's work will involve meeting with people  
15 from all over California who come from very different  
16 backgrounds and very different perspectives. If you're  
17 selected to serve on the Commission, tell us about the  
18 specific skills you possess that will make you effective  
19 in interacting with the public.

20           MS. LEVY: I thought about this question a lot,  
21 and for about three weeks was going through a lot of  
22 different answers. And it suddenly dawned on me one day  
23 that I never voluntarily joined a homogeneous  
24 organization. I never belonged to like a Jewish group  
25 outside of my temple or a group of women, like the League

1 of Women Voters or the AAUW or a Republican group. I've  
2 always tended to go for diverse groups. I think I've been  
3 really comfortable and enjoyed working in a very diverse  
4 environment.

5           And so the grants I've led, I've led three  
6 different grants that were all regarding diversity and  
7 serving the underserved groups. And every single Board of  
8 Directors I've been on has been with a very diverse group  
9 of people. So something I really welcome dealing with  
10 people from all walks of life.

11           I was a teacher. And I was a teacher in two  
12 different communities in California. The one I'm in now  
13 is 60 percent Hispanic. And I'm really comfortable  
14 talking to people from very many backgrounds. I've  
15 specifically sought out training to help me deal with  
16 different cultures and specifically to how these students  
17 might act within a classroom. But I wanted to be trained  
18 to know how to make my students feel comfortable in a  
19 classroom setting. So that would extend to the work of  
20 the Commission as well.

21           I also have a scientific empirical background.  
22 So I will be able to look at the data, help other  
23 Commissioners understand the data. I'm very good at  
24 rewording things with analogies, with pictures, just  
25 rewording so that people can understand what they're

1 looking at.

2 I've chaired many, many groups of people.  
3 Sometimes having up to 30 Committee members with and  
4 without public input. So I'm very comfortable with the  
5 fact that I need to be as a Chairperson biased and  
6 impartial in that setting or if I'm leading a public input  
7 of course being biased and impartial, I need to be  
8 encouraging and supportive of people.

9 I'm good at reading body language of people. And  
10 if they're uncomfortable talking to us, I would encourage  
11 them to write down their viewpoint or get someone else to  
12 communicate for them.

13 And I really feel comfortable in the role of what  
14 computer scientists call systems analyst. We've got the  
15 Commission on one side as you might have a publishing  
16 company or an insurance company and you've got your  
17 computer people or your experts, your consultants on the  
18 other side. And the systems analyst is the person in the  
19 middle, the go-between who knows enough about the language  
20 of the experts to talk to them in language they understand  
21 but understands what the Commission's doing.

22 When I was president of the Children's Museum, we  
23 built a new museum. We had worked with consulting firm to  
24 determine if our museum was going to be feasible. We  
25 worked with an architect, with a design firm, with the

1 city and county regarding permitting. So I was the  
2 go-between for all of these processes. And it is a role I  
3 feel comfortable with. Thank you.

4 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Mr. Ahmadi.

5 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you.

6 Good morning, Dr. Levy.

7 MS. LEVY: Levy.

8 CHAIR AHMADI: I'm sorry.

9 MS. LEVY: That's okay.

10 CHAIR AHMADI: I'm bad with names.

11 You mentioned that you have been on many, many,  
12 many committees. Are any of these committees appointed by  
13 the State, Governor, or federal --

14 MS. LEVY: No.

15 CHAIR AHMADI: Okay. Thank you so much.

16 In describing your response to question number  
17 one, you mentioned that a Commissioner will have to know  
18 where to get the data that they need. Could you elaborate  
19 on that, please, and help us understand the details of  
20 what's your vision of what type of data you will get and  
21 from which sources you're get it?

22 MS. LEVY: First of all, I do know we'll be  
23 getting Census data. But that Census data is a lot of  
24 numbers. It's going to tell us where the people live,  
25 what party they are, and what their cultural background is

1 and their age and their gender. But of course, we're  
2 going to be looking at other information such as the  
3 communities of interest.

4           And there's lots of places to go to get this kind  
5 of information. Some of it will be voting records. For  
6 example, Prop. 8 will give us a lot of information where  
7 community's interest lie as far as the gay and lesbian  
8 community. There's going to be groups within communities  
9 that represent other communities of interest that will  
10 give us information why where they lie within communities.  
11 We have communities of interest that are related to  
12 culture and ethnicity, but we also have communities of  
13 interest such as senior citizens or maybe even are more  
14 geographically located, such as the central valley of  
15 California where they're dealing with the water issues. I  
16 think that represents a community of interest.

17           So I think there's lots of places we're going to  
18 have to look. And my answer was not that we necessarily  
19 need to know where to get the information, but we need to  
20 know how to find out where to get the information. So we  
21 need to know who to ask, whether we ask local government  
22 officials or local organizations that exist. I think they  
23 will be a big help in getting us the information that we  
24 need. So we might not know where to get it, but we need  
25 to know who to ask to help us get it.

1           CHAIR AHMADI: In regards to the voting records  
2 that you mentioned, would your use of that data be limited  
3 to identifying communities or do you see any other use for  
4 that data? I believe you mentioned that you would be --

5           MS. LEVY: Right. Yeah, I do understand your  
6 question. As of right now, I don't see any other use of  
7 that data. I'm certainly open to what we are allowed to  
8 do legally and other Commissioners might have ideas. But  
9 that's all I can envision at this point.

10          CHAIR AHMADI: Okay. Thank you so much.

11          You also mentioned that you would be out of the  
12 country from December 31st to --

13          MS. LEVY: January 3rd.

14          CHAIR AHMADI: January 5th?

15          MS. LEVY: Third.

16          CHAIR AHMADI: That's the Christmas week of  
17 course. I might be out, too. If there is a need for you  
18 to be here, would you be willing to be here? I don't know  
19 if there will be a need.

20          MS. LEVY: That's a difficult question.

21          CHAIR AHMADI: Sorry.

22          MS. LEVY: It's all the way in Nepal. I suppose  
23 I could perhaps cut the trip short and come back earlier.  
24 I'm going with my mother and my daughters and so I can  
25 leave my daughters with my mother over there if I have to.

1 So I suppose if that's absolutely necessary --

2 CHAIR AHMADI: I hope you don't have to, but as  
3 you know, the time frame is so short, the decisions are  
4 from that point on --

5 MS. LEVY: I can tell you I will have ample  
6 access to the Internet and other communication devices  
7 because of my daughter's employment. That wouldn't be a  
8 problem at all.

9 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you so much.

10 In your example in response to question number  
11 two when you were describing this conflict, if I heard you  
12 correctly, you mentioned that the parents were thinking  
13 that the children would be sent to the moon, their  
14 reaction. Do you think they were overreacting?

15 MS. LEVY: Absolutely, I felt they were  
16 overreacting. And what concerned me about their  
17 overreaction was that they didn't come directly to us and  
18 ask questions.

19 I had a neighbor who lives two doors down to me.  
20 That night after the decision was made, she wrote a very,  
21 very nasty letter that she hand delivered to the  
22 superintendent and the superintendent hand delivered that  
23 to each of the School Board member's homes. When I got  
24 home from work, I had her letter in my mailbox and I had a  
25 phone message from her saying she'd like to talk to me.

1 And it was very nasty letter.

2 But I went over to her house as if I hadn't seen  
3 it because she didn't know the superintendent had hand  
4 delivered it. And I was very upbeat, polite, was able to  
5 address her concerns in a very positive way without making  
6 her feel uncomfortable at all because I had already read  
7 that letter. But you know she in the end had admitted,  
8 "Oh, my goodness, I hadn't thought of that." And I  
9 thought, why didn't you just knock on me door and ask me  
10 instead of writing such a nasty letter?

11 CHAIR AHMADI: That was very nice. Thank you.

12 In response to question number three, if I heard  
13 you correctly, you mentioned something about there may be  
14 delays in the process --

15 MS. LEVY: If it's contested.

16 CHAIR AHMADI: That's what you mean?

17 MS. LEVY: Yeah. If there ends up being a legal  
18 challenge to it, then that obviously will delay the  
19 process.

20 CHAIR AHMADI: Oh, okay. But you did not mean to  
21 extend the deadline.

22 MS. LEVY: Oh, no. That's absolutely not --

23 CHAIR AHMADI: That's not possible. When you  
24 mentioned along the same lines do it again, you mean --

25 MS. LEVY: If it's contested.

1 CHAIR AHMADI: If it's contested.

2 MS. LEVY: If it's contested legally because we  
3 didn't do something right and, you know, the work of the  
4 Commission is thrown out, if -- I don't know what the law  
5 would say to this right now, but maybe you'd have to all  
6 happen all over again. That's why it's so important that  
7 the Commissioners make sure to follow the letter of the  
8 law.

9 CHAIR AHMADI: You mean by the special masters  
10 maybe when you say there might be a need to do it all over  
11 again?

12 MS. LEVY: Well, if for some reasons what the  
13 Commission decides these are the boundaries and that's  
14 contested legally and the boundaries are thrown out  
15 because the law wasn't followed.

16 CHAIR AHMADI: I got you.

17 MS. LEVY: Then we might have to do it again or  
18 someone might have to do it again.

19 CHAIR AHMADI: Okay. Thank you.

20 As you mentioned in your responses today and also  
21 in your application, when you were on the School Board,  
22 you work with the communities to redraw the school  
23 boundaries.

24 MS. LEVY: Yes.

25 CHAIR AHMADI: What was your role in that effort?

1 Were you just a Committee member?

2 MS. LEVY: Oh, no. I was a School Board member.

3 CHAIR AHMADI: A School Board member?

4 MS. LEVY: Yeah. I was on the School Board,  
5 which meant I was part of the decision-making process,  
6 which meant I helped to identify the five neighborhoods  
7 initially that we then brought to the public at a public  
8 hearing. We only had one public hearing regarding the  
9 five neighborhoods and we got the community input  
10 regarding those neighborhoods and then we made the  
11 decision about which neighborhoods to move. But because I  
12 was in one of those neighborhoods, I did not vote in the  
13 process.

14 CHAIR AHMADI: How much time did you guys have to  
15 do this?

16 MS. LEVY: Very short, unfortunately. I think  
17 the superintendent came to the School Board about in  
18 February. So we started the process in March. Our public  
19 hearing was probably in April or May, because we had to  
20 start the new school year with the new lines. So very  
21 short.

22 CHAIR AHMADI: And you guys had only one public  
23 hearing?

24 MS. LEVY: Yes. It was a very small school  
25 district though. It was sufficient.

1           CHAIR AHMADI: What was the nature of the  
2 community's input in this process?

3           MS. LEVY: Mostly the community was against us  
4 redrawing at all. And the people from those five  
5 neighborhoods were coming up with reasons why their  
6 neighborhood should not be redrawn. And my neighborhood  
7 in particular, the reasons they were coming up with was  
8 because we were currently on the same side as the freeway  
9 our kids would go to. And if we were redrawn to the other  
10 school, the kids would have to cross the freeway.

11           And I had the opportunity to point to them that  
12 there was a different way to get to the school that was  
13 not involving the freeway. Because we had no bussing in  
14 our school district, so kids had to get to school via  
15 their parents or some other means. But we did have a way  
16 that did not involve going through over a freeway overpass  
17 for them to get to school. So it was those kinds of  
18 concerns.

19           CHAIR AHMADI: Okay. So if selected as a  
20 Commissioner, in what ways do you think this experience  
21 will help you on the Commission?

22           MS. LEVY: Well, one thing I've learned is no  
23 matter how much you try to get the word out, you're not  
24 going to reach everyone, which is unfortunate, but it's  
25 realistic. People are going to come back to you later and

1 say, "Why didn't I know about this? Why didn't I have any  
2 input." And you just need to say, you know, we did the  
3 best we can and we need to do the best we can, obviously  
4 to get the word out to everyone.

5           And I think that there's going to be times when  
6 there's going to be some public input where it might not  
7 be nice or pleasant, but we always have to put on our  
8 welcoming attitude that we want all of your input whether  
9 it's not nice or pleasant input. We can't take it  
10 personally as Commissioners. Just people will sometimes  
11 want to say what they have to say and their way of doing  
12 it is not always the best way to say it to us.

13           And it's also really important that we keep the  
14 process totally open and transparent and not let anyone  
15 ever get the feeling that anything has been decided behind  
16 closed doors or that we are having any kind of side  
17 discussions, whatever, with anybody.

18           CHAIR AHMADI: So as you mentioned from your  
19 previous experience, there have been some people who have  
20 not had a chance to input in the process. And how would  
21 you go about ensuring that that is eliminated if not  
22 completely prevented?

23           MS. LEVY: I don't think there is going to be any  
24 way to completely prevent it. I think what we need to do  
25 though is use every means we can to get the word out about

1 doings and every means to get input. Not just rely on  
2 television and radio, but also the community groups we've  
3 established partnership with outreach partners with those  
4 groups and make sure everybody knows we are having our  
5 hearings. And when we have our hearings, do it in such a  
6 way that people that don't live by geographically far away  
7 or maybe we're having the hearing in the middle of the Bay  
8 Area and people don't want to drive two hours to hear us  
9 can have input. Perhaps we can set up teleconference  
10 mechanisms at some community colleges or whatnot. So that  
11 people who live really far away still have a chance to be  
12 part of the process.

13 CHAIR AHMADI: So despite all these outreach  
14 efforts, do you think that some people may still not be  
15 willing to input?

16 MS. LEVY: There's always going to be people who,  
17 because of distrust in the system, they're not going to  
18 care what I have to say anyways, or insecurity within  
19 themselves, my input doesn't matter or they're too shy or  
20 don't feel like they have the right to get the input. I  
21 think, yes, there will be people.

22 CHAIR AHMADI: So what are specific ways are at  
23 the Commission's disposal to mitigate that?

24 MS. LEVY: Well, I think again relying on  
25 partnerships such as the outreach partners and other

1 organizations that are already in the community, perhaps  
2 if possible they can be a clearinghouse for input where  
3 people can write down their concerns and then those groups  
4 share their concerns with us. And so they're going to be  
5 much more comfortable in some cases going to the  
6 neighborhood group and telling them what their concerns  
7 are, than coming to a hearing that might have 500 people  
8 in the room. But if someone comes to us and similarities  
9 I represent this neighborhood group and our neighbors have  
10 these ten concerns, then we've essentially heard from the  
11 individual.

12 CHAIR AHMADI: How would you make sure that you  
13 get firsthand information from the individual citizens or  
14 residence of the state?

15 MS. LEVY: Would love to try to tell everyone via  
16 a mailing or something, gee, we want your input. But I  
17 realize how impractical that can be and how many people  
18 just throw away stuff like that.

19 I don't know if there is a way I can absolutely  
20 assure to get firsthand input. But certainly the  
21 neighborhood organization can give us the names of people  
22 who want input and we invite them to our hearings. Ones  
23 who want to give input, we invite them and say here's  
24 going to be your opportunity to give input. Then we can  
25 at least reach a few more people that way.

1           CHAIR AHMADI: I need to make sure I understand,  
2 because when you say -- when you said you're going to be  
3 relying on the community organizations, which may  
4 represent a number of people who otherwise may not be able  
5 to share their thoughts or input into the process, how  
6 would you go about judging what is firsthand information  
7 from the community at large versus what is intended to be  
8 for the benefit of the organization?

9           MS. LEVY: I understand what you're saying. I'm  
10 not a fan of anonymous information. So if we were to get  
11 input, we'd have to make sure that we have a name, phone  
12 number, address. And we can always call up people and  
13 talk to them personally and verify that this was the input  
14 they had given so we can make sure that it's come from the  
15 individual and not just one person who runs the  
16 organization saying these were a lot of individuals that  
17 gave me information. So we could verify it in that way.

18           CHAIR AHMADI: Okay. Thank you.

19           In your application you mentioned that you  
20 created opportunities for children of migrant workers.

21           MS. LEVY: Yes

22           CHAIR AHMADI: What prompted you to do that?

23           MS. LEVY: It was a grant that the school  
24 received and because it was related teachers. It was the  
25 opportunity for children of migrant workers to work within

1 the teaching profession. And what we wanted to do was to  
2 give these students -- they were college students -- the  
3 children of the migrant workers exposure to the teaching  
4 profession.

5 As a teacher, I think this was really interesting  
6 and exciting, but I also know how important it is that the  
7 faces in the classroom are reflectant among the teachers.  
8 And that's something I've always been a proponent of,  
9 making sure that everyone is represented.

10 And so I thought this was really important,  
11 because I'm in a community that's 60 percent Hispanic and  
12 certainly 60 percent of the teachers were not Hispanic.  
13 So I felt this was a really interesting opportunity to get  
14 more people into the classroom that our children would be  
15 able to identify with.

16 I also thought it would be a lot of fun getting  
17 together the activities between the teachers and the  
18 children, which it was.

19 CHAIR AHMADI: Okay. Thank you.

20 With the little bit of time I have left, one of  
21 the public comments indicated that you've been serving as  
22 the President of Academic Senate --

23 MS. LEVY: I had served.

24 CHAIR AHMADI: Can you tell me what was the  
25 responsibility --

1           MS. LEVY: The President of the Academic Senate,  
2 it's a faculty group that exists to advise the  
3 administrator as far as anything related to actual  
4 classroom instruction and academia is concerned. It's  
5 often a very contentious group in that we've got many  
6 people serving on the Committee, many different interests.  
7 And certainly the interests of the English department are  
8 very different from the interests of the science  
9 department, which are very different from the interests of  
10 the physical education department.

11           So a lot of times we had to come to some sort of  
12 consensus on what information they wanted me to then pass  
13 onto the administration, which I did through weekly  
14 meetings with the president and vice president of the  
15 college. And I always did a presentation at the School  
16 Board meetings to the Board of Trustees.

17           CHAIR AHMADI: Okay. Thank you very much. No  
18 more questions at this point.

19           MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Ms. Camacho.

20           VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Thank you.

21           Hello, Ms. Levy.

22           MS. LEVY: Hello.

23           VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: I'd like to ask you just a  
24 few clarifying questions.

25           On your redistricting for the schools, it wasn't

1 clear -- and you could have already explained this  
2 already -- but why were the schools redistricted?

3 MS. LEVY: You're right. I didn't make that  
4 clear.

5 We had one school that was just becoming totally  
6 over-enrolled and another school that was becoming totally  
7 under-enrolled. So we needed to balance the enrollment at  
8 the schools in the district. That was the need.

9 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Were there other  
10 considerations taken into account on which groups were  
11 going to be going to which schools?

12 MS. LEVY: Yeah. Actually, there was, because  
13 one school district had an over-abundance of students who  
14 were lower economically and we wanted to balance that more  
15 among the two schools as well. So some of the  
16 neighborhoods we identified were neighborhoods that these  
17 students lived in particular.

18 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Okay. Also, just to ask a  
19 few other questions about your grant with the bringing the  
20 students for those two communities together. You talked  
21 about you were a part of the Activities Committee to kind  
22 of unify these two groups. How did you help to relieve  
23 the racial tensions with this Activity Commission? And  
24 how would the skills used and learned be useful on the  
25 Commission?

1           MS. LEVY: Well, I'll tell you about the one  
2 activity that I just was the most excited about. I  
3 thought it would be a lot of fun to be a part of. But I  
4 didn't get to attend it.

5           We realized that all of our junior highs that  
6 were feeder schools into the high schools all had student  
7 councils. And some of the sixth grade schools -- some of  
8 the elementary schools had six grade student councils as  
9 they fed into the junior high. And the high school had a  
10 student counsel.

11           So we created a summer camp program for all the  
12 student council members from sixth grade to ninth grade to  
13 teach them leadership skills. And first of all, the  
14 students were inter-mixed working together. And then they  
15 were learning leadership skills on top of it. And what  
16 was really exciting about that is that these students  
17 being the leaders of their group were bringing back to  
18 their fellow students the information that they were  
19 learning at the camp, but also the information about oh,  
20 gee, those students over at that junior high are really  
21 cool. And I can't wait to be in high school with them  
22 because they got to know each other. They got to work  
23 together. So those were the kinds of activities that we  
24 put together. And I think what I learned from it is we're  
25 all just people and we have different backgrounds and

1 different needs. You know, in the end, we all have the  
2 same wants and desires. And therefore you know, we've got  
3 to take each other equally.

4 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: With this summer camp  
5 program, how many kids do you think were involved in that?

6 MS. LEVY: I'd like to say we invited probably  
7 between eight and ten from each school. So that would  
8 mean three junior high, one high school, and I don't know  
9 how many elementary schools. Probably 80 to 100.

10 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Okay. Your doctoral studies  
11 focused on online education.

12 MS. LEVY: Yes

13 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: That is a very emerging type  
14 of educational endeavor.

15 MS. LEVY: Yes.

16 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Are there any technological  
17 implications that could help the Commission reach more  
18 Californians? And if so, how?

19 MS. LEVY: Well, absolutely in that especially  
20 that was seven years ago. So some many things have  
21 improved since then. There's a lot of technicians out  
22 there that help people that are visually impaired or  
23 hearing impaired to get information when a website is  
24 designed for them. Little things such as when there is a  
25 link to something, you just don't highlight the link or

1 underline the link, because visually we can see that. If  
2 the page is being read to a blind person, you know to put  
3 the words "click here" before the link so the blind person  
4 knows when to click. So there's a lot of adaptive  
5 technologies. There's also technology out there that will  
6 translate information. Yahoo itself I use it all the time  
7 is a translator. So lots of things to help us to reach a  
8 lot of people. Yes.

9           VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: With this knowledge -- and  
10 you were talking about maybe even having some online  
11 public meetings. How effective do you think that will be  
12 and why?

13           MS. LEVY: I think it's very effective to reach  
14 out to people in the communities where they live. And  
15 undoubtedly, we cannot physically visit every single  
16 community. I'm not sure we'll make it to every single  
17 county. So people in those outlying areas, if they can  
18 come to a room that has a television screen and a camera  
19 and we have the opportunity to have them go up to the mike  
20 and talk to us as if they are physically there, I first of  
21 all -- It'll give them some sense of not being as nervous  
22 because they're not in the room we're in that might have  
23 500 people attending. They might be in a room that has 50  
24 people. And so they'll feel comfortable in that sense.  
25 But they also will know that we are really willing to

1 listen to what they say. They have the opportunity to  
2 address the Commission. So I think that it's going to  
3 make people feel more a part of the process, because we  
4 are not saying come to us where we are. We're going out  
5 to where they are and getting their input.

6 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: And you would suggest this  
7 more interactive procedure so you can get that public  
8 input from these various areas?

9 MS. LEVY: Yeah. You've taught using this  
10 procedure. And it's worked very, very well because when  
11 students have wanted to stay something, you know, I could  
12 just turn to the camera and say, "Are there any questions  
13 from you?" And I was addressing the students at the other  
14 campus. And they were totally a part of the discussion as  
15 we were having it. And it worked really well.

16 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Okay. You served on the  
17 college's Multi-Cultural Committee that designed the  
18 multi-cultural education requirement. What did the  
19 Committee do to implement this requirement and what was  
20 the outcome?

21 MS. LEVY: Well, the first thing, this was  
22 mandated by the State that we had to have a multi-cultural  
23 component. There is a number of different components that  
24 a person needs in order to get a degree, like an  
25 analytical one, which means so much math and a language

1 one, which means so much English. This was a little  
2 vaguer. And there wasn't a particular class to identify.

3           So the first thing we did is we did identify  
4 classes that existed in themselves that met the  
5 requirement from the State. But then we also identified  
6 classes that could build into them a component, such as an  
7 English class where the readings they were doing were from  
8 authors from other cultures. And that would fulfill both  
9 the English requirement of the class, but the  
10 multi-cultural requirement as well.

11           So we had to look at every class and college  
12 basically and say which ones could we have them work in a  
13 multi-cultural component. And then that meant that the  
14 faculty of that department had to rewrite their entire  
15 curriculum, which ultimately gets approved by the State.  
16 So it's really a big process to go through. But we did  
17 get a lot of faculty cooperation so that students would  
18 have a variety of courses they could take to fulfill this  
19 multi-cultural requirement while they were fulfilling  
20 their history requirement or their English requirement.

21           VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Can you elaborate a little  
22 bit on this multi-cultural requirement. Why did the State  
23 implement it and what was it to help?

24           MS. LEVY: I think it was really to show an  
25 appreciation for the diversity of California and to make

1 sure that people who were going to get a college degree  
2 albeit an Associate degree were going to have an  
3 appreciation for this diversity because they would be  
4 working with people from all sectors of the state some  
5 day. So that's -- I don't know specifically what the  
6 legislators' intent was. But I'm certain that had a big  
7 deal to do with it.

8 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: So those requirements were  
9 to fulfill that understanding that you just described?

10 MS. LEVY: Yes. Yes.

11 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Thank you. That was my last  
12 question.

13 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Ms. Spano.

14 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Good morning.

15 MS. LEVY: Hello.

16 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Hi.

17 Regarding Goals 2000, you said there was a lot of  
18 racial tension between these two groups, right, the  
19 Caucasians and Hispanics. And you said --

20 MS. LEVY: Uh-huh.

21 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: They had this leadership  
22 camp they went to. And based on that, they were able to  
23 bring cohesion back to these two?

24 MS. LEVY: It was an attempt.

25 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: It was --

1 MS. LEVY: The grant had a finite time limit. So  
2 that camp is gone.

3 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Okay.

4 MS. LEVY: So it's not ever-lasting  
5 unfortunately.

6 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Were there other actions  
7 that the Committee or the schools took to get these groups  
8 to --

9 MS. LEVY: Oh, yeah. We did things such as  
10 community picnics which were based around a theme because  
11 we wanted the parents to also interact together. So other  
12 opportunities to get them together. I remember discussion  
13 of dances. I don't remember if they happened or not.

14 But, yes, we looked at different levels of  
15 getting the students together, be it just the students or  
16 students and parents or the communities at large.

17 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: And exactly I imagine this  
18 didn't happen overnight.

19 MS. LEVY: No.

20 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: It took a while; right?

21 MS. LEVY: Yes.

22 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: How did it get to a level  
23 where it was managed well? These people could get  
24 together. They could interact, the students, without  
25 these tensions occurring?

1           MS. LEVY: Well, you know, whether or not the  
2 goals of the grant were actually achieved, I don't have  
3 the statistics for that in the sense that my role in it  
4 was to design the activities and implement the activities  
5 but not to measure the outcomes. That was other people's  
6 roles. And this all happened prior to the year 2000. It  
7 was probably around '98, '99. So to be honest, I really  
8 don't remember how successful the outcomes were, except  
9 that I know a lot of excitement among the student council  
10 members that I remember.

11           PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Is this the example you  
12 provided where the superintendent was suggesting  
13 options --

14           MS. LEVY: Yes.

15           PANEL MEMBER SPANO: -- that only benefit his  
16 district?

17           MS. LEVY: Yes.

18           PANEL MEMBER SPANO: And you were able to address  
19 his concerns that they weren't relevant to the criteria?

20           MS. LEVY: Yes.

21           PANEL MEMBER SPANO: How do you convince a  
22 superintendent that his options may not be the best?

23           MS. LEVY: Well --

24           PANEL MEMBER SPANO: That would be pretty  
25 difficult.

1           MS. LEVY: I reminded him we have established  
2 criteria here and we're going to stick to the ones that go  
3 according to our established criteria. And we're going to  
4 also stick to the activities that meet as many of the  
5 criteria as possible.

6           And then at this point, if there's still money  
7 and, you know, still a need and his needs or his wants is  
8 still there, you know, perhaps we can meet it. But at  
9 this point, we're going to try to do the activities that  
10 meet as many of the criteria as we can accomplish.

11           PANEL MEMBER SPANO: You talked about the  
12 President Academic Senate that you served on.

13           MS. LEVY: Yes.

14           PANEL MEMBER SPANO: And you advised the  
15 superintendent on that as well. You said it was very  
16 contentious group among the departments at this college.

17           MS. LEVY: Yes.

18           PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Can you tell me a little bit  
19 more about that and what your role is?

20           MS. LEVY: Well, I can give you a specific  
21 example. The vice president of our college had gone to a  
22 conference where she came back with an idea for a way for  
23 the college to capture more money via lab classes. If you  
24 were in a biology class, you had one hour of lecture and  
25 three hour labs. According to the State formula, the

1 school could capture money for all four hours. If you're  
2 in a class such as mine, computer science, you may or may  
3 not use the lab on campus. You may have a lab at home or  
4 you may need -- a computer at home or you may use the  
5 computer lab on campus.

6           So the idea that the vice president of the  
7 college came back was something we called a zero unit lab,  
8 which is a way the capture money from students such as  
9 mine capture time in the lab. So I worked really closely  
10 with her to design a model that fit everything we needed  
11 to do according to the Education Codes. I got really  
12 familiar with the Education Code and rewrote my classes  
13 and the description of my classes and established all the  
14 procedures whereby the college could monitor the amounts  
15 of time my students were spending in the lab and could  
16 verify it was time spent on my class opposed to time spent  
17 surfing the Internet and could submit it to a State to get  
18 a portion of the money back.

19           When this then went before the Academic Senate  
20 for approval, people were really against it. They felt it  
21 wasn't a fair way to capture money, because the students  
22 weren't getting tested, for example, on just my lab time.  
23 But that was a part of the class and some of it was they  
24 didn't want to have to rewrite their classes to do the way  
25 I had rewritten mine. And there was a lot of reluctance

1 to work this into their curriculum. So they voted as an  
2 Academic Senate they were not going to support this idea.  
3 And I as the Academic Senate President had to bring this  
4 forward to the Board of Trustees that their vote was no  
5 that I was such in favor of it. But I didn't say that. I  
6 just went up to the Board and I said, you know, this is  
7 how the Academics Senate feels about this proposal and  
8 here's the input. And I gave it to them and I sat back  
9 down and remained entirely impartial to it within their  
10 eyes.

11 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: So they didn't change it?

12 MS. LEVY: Actually, they did vote to do it and  
13 it ended up being very successful. I was happy about  
14 that.

15 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: How many votes later?

16 MS. LEVY: I think they saw the possible benefit  
17 at that meeting. So the Board of Trustees or whoever said  
18 yes let's go forward with that. We did it slowly. We  
19 didn't make every faculty member change her curriculum  
20 overnight. There was two departments that had computers  
21 in particular. They started and then the English  
22 department that had a writing lab, added it, and the  
23 foreign language department and the physical education  
24 department. Slowly they came on board.

25 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: How hard was it for to you

1 remain impartial on --

2 MS. LEVY: Actually, I don't have a problem with  
3 that at all, because when I'm representing a group, I need  
4 to say what the group wants me to present. And I don't  
5 have any problems, even though I might feel a different  
6 way, when I'm running a meeting even though I might have  
7 very strong feelings about which way the discussion goes,  
8 if it's my job to be a facilitator of the discussion. So  
9 it's not difficult for me at all to say to hold back my  
10 own feelings.

11 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Thank you.

12 You mentioned earlier about the Multi-Cultural  
13 Committee and how they had to design the multi --  
14 implement the multi-cultural education requirement.

15 MS. LEVY: Did this involve you working -- you  
16 know, you worked with faculty to get their curriculum  
17 changed. Did you work with students with multi-cultural  
18 backgrounds or their families in any way?

19 MS. LEVY: No. The only way we work with  
20 students is there is student representation on some of our  
21 committees. The college's students council would have a  
22 representative at the faculty Senate meetings. But that  
23 was the only direct input to students.

24 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Mostly faculty?

25 MS. LEVY: Yes.

1 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Going back to the school  
2 boundaries --

3 MS. LEVY: Yes.

4 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: You mentioned that there was  
5 an over-enrolled district versus an under-enrolled  
6 district.

7 MS. LEVY: Yes.

8 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: And that was the --

9 MS. LEVY: Main concern.

10 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Was there -- were there --  
11 you said the over-enrolled were an over-abundance of  
12 students from under --

13 MS. LEVY: There was a large -- not a large part.  
14 Most of the economically disadvantaged people in a school  
15 district as a whole were at this one particular school,  
16 because this one particular school captured a great big  
17 deal of the community that had subsidized housing and that  
18 kind of living arrangement. So they had a majority of the  
19 economically disadvantaged students within the district.

20 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Was there -- what was their  
21 race and ethnicity?

22 MS. LEVY: Oh, very.

23 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Across --

24 MS. LEVY: Varied.

25 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: What was it for the

1 under-enrolled district?

2 MS. LEVY: More there was definitely an  
3 economically disadvantaged. There was more of a minority  
4 population. Yes.

5 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Okay. Was there more  
6 concerns about the under-enrolled district individuals  
7 concerned about minorities?

8 MS. LEVY: You know, if they felt that way, they  
9 didn't express that to us. No, they didn't. That never  
10 really came up to us about the types of students you're  
11 sending to our district. It was more about the  
12 convenience of their kids getting to school since we  
13 didn't provide bussing within the district.

14 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Okay. You mentioned in your  
15 application that having districts that are as equal as  
16 possible, culturally, socioeconomically, and politically  
17 is the only way for everyone in the state to be truly  
18 represented in a method that is as fair as possible. Can  
19 you tell me what you mean by equal culturally,  
20 socioeconomically, and politically?

21 MS. LEVY: Well, ideally, we want everybody to  
22 feel that they have fair representation. It doesn't mean,  
23 for example, that we have the exact same number of  
24 Republicans in every single district or Democrats in every  
25 single district, because if we did that, the state is

1 mostly democratic, that means every single district would  
2 have a majority of Democrats.

3           But what I mean is that we want districts that  
4 are not obviously biased to favor a majority, a cultural  
5 majority or obviously biased to favor an economic position  
6 or some other kind of special interest group. We want our  
7 districts to be a reflection of the people who are in the  
8 state so that people are treated as fairly as possible  
9 without -- don't want to give them the opportunity to say  
10 my vote is not going to calculate because all those other  
11 people are going to vote their way. My vote doesn't  
12 matter. That's what I am looking at as far as fairness  
13 goes.

14           PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Thank you.

15           Taking the region of California where you live,  
16 the Santa Maria, Santa Barbara County, describe the  
17 different issues and concerns that bind together the  
18 members of that community.

19           MS. LEVY: We have environmental issues because  
20 we are coastal region and we do have oil off our coast,  
21 and quite a few concerns regarding different populations  
22 of endangered species that prohibit access to beaches at  
23 certain times of the years, things like that.

24           We're also a community that has a big farming  
25 rural component more in the north county Santa Maria where

1 I am from than the south county Santa Barbara. There is  
2 some down there.

3           The north county, as I've said before, is 60  
4 percent Hispanic. That's not the same racial as in south  
5 county. And it's even at one time we had a vote to split  
6 us into two counties, because people felt there was such  
7 disparity between the south county where Santa Barbara is  
8 and the north county where I live. The vote did not pass.  
9 But there was a lot of concerns with the difference  
10 between the two counties. So I think that is an issue as  
11 well.

12           PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Do you think that's going to  
13 play a big impact as the Commissioners go out and hear  
14 these groups have a voice as an electoral in their county  
15 issues?

16           MS. LEVY: I don't think no more than any other  
17 that encompasses different populations of different people  
18 in different sections. It's going to have an impact, of  
19 course. But it's going to be that way throughout the  
20 state.

21           PANEL MEMBER SPANO: How do you feel about your  
22 own district that you live? Do you feel like it's fairly  
23 represented?

24           MS. LEVY: Well, what's really interesting is  
25 Santa Maria is a pretty compact community, but we have two

1 isolated populations. One, there is a lot of farm fields  
2 in between. And one of them there is a highway. I'm in  
3 the part that's on the other side of the highway. So when  
4 the boundary lines were redrawn ten years ago, my  
5 neighborhood -- not the other one -- was taken out of our  
6 district. And I was put into a district where I vote with  
7 people from the south of me, Santa Barbara and Ventura and  
8 Thousand Oaks, while the rest of all of Santa Maria votes  
9 in a block. That's very interesting. Santa Maria County,  
10 San Luis County, Monterey County and a little finger into  
11 Santa Clara and Santa Cruz County. So there was so me  
12 obvious gerrymandering going on.

13           It's just frustrating for me, because I cannot  
14 vote for the person who represents the rest of my  
15 community. In fact, one of the people who ran for office  
16 once, his kids were at the same school as mine, but I  
17 couldn't vote for him because I was in a different  
18 district.

19           PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Thank you.

20           Because you're a resident, you feel that this is  
21 obvious gerrymandering and that you can't vote for your  
22 representative?

23           MS. LEVY: Right.

24           PANEL MEMBER SPANO: How do you propose these  
25 lines be redrawn in that area maybe?

1           MS. LEVY: We can't take small isolated  
2 populations and just arbitrarily throw them in with  
3 another group if culturally and economically the people in  
4 those communities identify with a different group. So we  
5 need to see what group they really work in and go to  
6 school in and where their friends are, where their  
7 churches are. And those are the groups they should be  
8 combined with.

9           PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Do you feel that this  
10 redistricting effort is going to help with that?

11          MS. LEVY: Absolutely. Because I think we're  
12 going to be looking at many more issues than what the  
13 legislators have looked at. I think the legislators have  
14 really stuck to Census data and we're going to be looking  
15 far beyond that.

16          PANEL MEMBER SPANO: And by other issues, did you  
17 mean shared interests of a community to try to  
18 determine --

19          MS. LEVY: Yes.

20          PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Some commonality.

21          MS. LEVY: Right.

22          PANEL MEMBER SPANO: What do you expect to be the  
23 more challenging duties and responsibilities of the  
24 Commission's work?

25          MS. LEVY: Obviously, we have a time line. And

1 it's a very short time line. And we have to work with  
2 lots of the lawyers to make sure the law is fulfilled. We  
3 have to submit the things to the government that show that  
4 we're complying with Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act.  
5 We have to work with the legislators. So we have to  
6 consider all their time lines along with our time lines.  
7 So to me, that is the biggest challenge.

8 But also getting out to the communities because  
9 we really want to let everyone know that we want to hear  
10 from them. And so being able to set up those meetings,  
11 get 14 Commissioners all around the state, and meeting  
12 with all the communities is also going to be a big  
13 challenge within the time line.

14 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Yes. Yes. And in what way  
15 do you feel like you're going to be working with the  
16 Legislatures?

17 MS. LEVY: I know according to the law we need to  
18 meet with them to get their input about what's important  
19 as far as redrawing the boundary lines. But the details  
20 of that I'm not really familiar with.

21 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: You read that in the  
22 proposition?

23 MS. LEVY: I read that -- yeah.

24 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: What similarities and  
25 difference do you foresee working on the Commission and

1 your experiences in your Committee work and other  
2 activities?

3 MS. LEVY: I'll start with the differences.  
4 Obviously, this is much larger. Much larger group of  
5 people to be working with and many, many more factors to  
6 consider.

7 But the similarities is I had accomplished a few  
8 things on a very short time line. So I'm used to working  
9 under pressure. I've worked with all different types of  
10 people. So getting public input or getting input from  
11 many different people, sometimes it was just a matter of  
12 getting input from everybody at the college. But  
13 considering we have a college with 700 staff and faculty  
14 member, sometimes that was a lot of input. And so I think  
15 the similarities there is that I'm used to working with  
16 groups of people. And used to dealing with budgetary  
17 issues and data, analytical data and definitely time line.

18 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Have you had experience  
19 working in a brand-new group setting and trying to  
20 formulate --

21 MS. LEVY: Oh, absolutely, yes.

22 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Okay. I'm going to go over  
23 my notes. I think that's it for me for right now.

24 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Follow-up questions,  
25 panelists?

1 CHAIR AHMADI: No.

2 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Not at this time.

3 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Ms. Levy, you directed the  
4 migrant education teacher preparation grant.

5 MS. LEVY: Yes, I did.

6 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Tell me a little bit about  
7 that grant.

8 MS. LEVY: The purpose of that grant was to reach  
9 out to children of migrant workers who were college  
10 students at the time to encourage them to become teachers.  
11 Many students that were at the college didn't really think  
12 they were going to go onto a four-year school. We were a  
13 two-year community college. And they also didn't know  
14 what they wanted to do when they got out of college. So  
15 our goal was to get the students together with teachers so  
16 that they would have a chance to learn more about teaching  
17 and learn it was doable. And in particular, I tried to  
18 get them together with teachers who represented the  
19 minority populations with our community so that they could  
20 have role models for them.

21 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: How did you identify those  
22 students?

23 MS. LEVY: The students were self-identifying in  
24 that they were either taking early childhood study classes  
25 or education classes. So though we put the message out in

1 the school newsletter. I was able to go to these  
2 particular classes and get a lot of students from them.

3 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: You just asked them were  
4 they the child of a migrant worker?

5 MS. LEVY: Actually, anybody was welcome to come.  
6 But we made it clear that this is what the grant is about,  
7 but everybody is welcome to come. Because a lot of times  
8 it was more comfortable for some of these students who  
9 thought I'm not going to go onto a four-year school to  
10 have a friend with them who might not have been a child of  
11 migrant worker, but who was like let's do this. We can do  
12 this. It will be fun.

13 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: What was the breakdown in terms of  
14 the demographic in terms of how many of your students were  
15 migrant farm workers?

16 MS. LEVY: The majority were. I would say 10 to  
17 20 were not.

18 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: What did you learn from  
19 those students that you think could be helpful to you on  
20 the Commission?

21 MS. LEVY: Well, I know that in a lot of their  
22 homes they were not expected to get educated and did not  
23 have a lot of support within their homes. In the Hispanic  
24 culture, a lot of the students get married early, have  
25 children early, and the families don't value education for

1 a lot of their daughters. And we were here to encourage  
2 them and support them and just say you know, of course we  
3 want you to respect your parents, but we want you to let  
4 your parents understand that there are opportunities here  
5 that you might not have had otherwise and that we're going  
6 to give you help and support to achieve your goals that  
7 might be a little different than the goals of your family.

8 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: How would that experience  
9 help you as a Commissioner?

10 MS. LEVY: As a Commissioner, recognizing that  
11 different cultures have different values and different  
12 needs and are going to approach the Commission in  
13 different ways. Some people don't want to speak up in  
14 front of authority figures at all. And if they feel we're  
15 an authority figure culturally, they're not going to be  
16 willing to come up to a microphone and talk to us. So if  
17 we were going to write down their concerns and have a  
18 forum for them to do it in writing, they might be much  
19 more willing to talk to us.

20 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Do you have thoughts about  
21 how the Commission can avoid looking like an authority  
22 figure?

23 MS. LEVY: That's a really good question, because  
24 I think any time you put people in front of people and put  
25 names in front of them, they're going to look like

1 authority figures. And because everything we have to do  
2 has to be out in the open and in public, we can't have  
3 one-on-one meetings or you know go to lunches with people.  
4 So I don't have the answer to that question. Hopefully  
5 fellow Commissioners would.

6 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: I saw that you also  
7 worked -- in your application you talk about having worked  
8 to eliminate bias from various questions in the math  
9 competitions. How will that work assist you as a  
10 Commissioner?

11 MS. LEVY: Certainly, the vocabulary we use,  
12 because a lot of times just using words that are -- words  
13 that not everybody will know, not everybody will  
14 understand whether they're just obscure vocabulary or  
15 words that you are just too big, that will intimidate  
16 people.

17 So I think really talking to them, talking to  
18 everyone at a level that everyone can understand, all the  
19 printed materials, making it as user-friendly as possible,  
20 and putting as much out therein other languages as we can  
21 will certainly help us work with the various community.

22 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: You received the Woman of  
23 the Year Award in --

24 MS. LEVY: 2001.

25 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Who gave you the award?

1 MS. LEVY: This was from Santa Barbara County.  
2 And a friend actually recommended me, because he said I  
3 was in a profession that was usually not women, being a  
4 computer scientist. And when I got my Master's degree,  
5 there were only four women in my class at the time. He  
6 said I've been serving female pursuing untraditional  
7 female careers. And he felt I deserved that get this  
8 award.

9 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: You talked a little bit  
10 about how it's possible that the Commission could end up  
11 being sued over its work. And I wondered how would you  
12 feel about being a defendant in a lawsuit?

13 MS. LEVY: I don't have a problem defending  
14 anything I've done. I'm the type of person who's always  
15 honest and upfront and kind of say what I need to say and  
16 will certainly do whatever I need to do to benefit  
17 Commission.

18 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: What are some of the most  
19 important groups for the Commission to reach this first  
20 time functioning redrawing the lines?

21 MS. LEVY: I think it's really important that we  
22 reach any of the groups that consider themselves  
23 minorities within the state, because I think that every  
24 single minority group in the state at one point or another  
25 feels that they have not been listened to. They have not

1 been heard. And we want them to see that things are about  
2 to change.

3 I think the rest of the country is looking at us  
4 as well and seeing how we handle this. And when we go out  
5 specifically to communities that haven't been necessarily  
6 involved in the political process or haven't felt that  
7 their input was welcome, they're going see that we're  
8 changing the way things are going to be in the future.

9 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: How many public hearings  
10 do you think the Commission should hold?

11 MS. LEVY: A lot. But what is practical and  
12 ideal, I don't know. I think it's really going to depend  
13 on our time line. But I would expect we would have two to  
14 three every single week at the minimum. But for a period  
15 of how long, will really be a time line. I envision maybe  
16 only having two months or so to have public hearings. So  
17 that will determine how many we hold.

18 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Are you able to do that?

19 MS. LEVY: Absolutely. I have a husband who's  
20 self-employed and has a flexible schedule. And I've got  
21 teenage kids who are pretty much on their own. He just  
22 needs to drive them around.

23 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Does the shape of a  
24 district indicate whether it's been gerrymandered?

25 MS. LEVY: Well, I know according to the law we

1 need to try to make the districts as geographically  
2 compact as we can. No, the shape does not indicate  
3 gerrymandering specifically. There's going to be times  
4 when -- there's going to be natural boundaries that make  
5 sense but that natural boundary may be a river that goes  
6 in and out and in and out, but it makes sense because  
7 nobody lives on 50 miles either side of that river. So  
8 no.

9 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: You talked a little bit I  
10 think with Ms. Spano about wanting districts that don't  
11 favor any particular group, be it racial or socioeconomic  
12 or political. Explain to me how that view can be  
13 implemented given the requirements of the Voting Rights  
14 Act of 1965. I don't expect a legal answer, but sort of a  
15 lay answer.

16 MS. LEVY: I think what I really meant to say by  
17 that is we can't obviously eliminate that in any one  
18 district. But we don't want to make it where we have a  
19 whole lot of districts that favor one political group or  
20 one cultural group or something like that. Each  
21 individual district is going to end up being unique when  
22 you look at the big picture. You don't want it to seem  
23 like some group was obviously preferred.

24 One of the things you can't do according to the  
25 Voting Rights Act is you can't put a population all within

1 one district or maybe all within two or three districts  
2 thereby they're totally represented by this one  
3 representative but that totally dilutes their influence  
4 when it comes to the whole state. So we need to make sure  
5 we don't do that where we have too much of a majority in  
6 one district and yet they're not going to have enough  
7 influence in other districts within the state.

8 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: So how did you feel --  
9 because you have to do your work one by one and you work  
10 through the state and you get a map and then you look back  
11 on a whole. And everything looks perfect individually,  
12 but you look back on a whole and you say we favored  
13 Republicans or we favored Democrats. How will you feel  
14 about that?

15 MS. LEVY: I think that's absolutely going to  
16 happen. But as long as it's not obviously like a whole  
17 section of the state is one is favored or something that  
18 makes it look like we've done something on purpose. If it  
19 happens, it happens. It's just part of the process. And  
20 undoubtedly this is a learning process. And we're going  
21 to learn something that the next Commission in ten more  
22 years is going to be able to use to make their boundary  
23 lines even better than ours were.

24 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: What role do you think  
25 partisanship either should or may play in the Commission's

1 work?

2 MS. LEVY: Ideally, it should not play any role.  
3 But it's going to be somewhat of a checks and balances,  
4 because everyone is going to be looking at, you know, in  
5 the end, is the party on part of fairly represented, check  
6 especially for the minorities. Is there a representation  
7 for our parties? So in the end those people are going to  
8 be checking the work of people who are from a major party  
9 like I am to make sure that we've been fair. And that's  
10 the way it should be.

11 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: I don't have any further  
12 questions. Do you, panelists?

13 PANEL MEMBER SPANO: No.

14 CHAIR AHMADI: I don't.

15 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: We have just over twelve  
16 minutes remaining on the clock if you'd like to make a  
17 closing statement.

18 MS. LEVY: Well, first of all, I do really  
19 appreciate the work you've done. I've been on a number of  
20 interview committees, and the most I've ever had to  
21 interview one session was maybe 20 people. And you guys  
22 are doing, what, six times that. So I do understand what  
23 you're doing and I really appreciate it.

24 I also wanted to share with you in the interest  
25 of transparency, I have been contacted by one of our

1 community outreach partners and I was really surprised at  
2 this point they asked me to contact them, which I did not  
3 do. But I do want to share the information that they gave  
4 to me with the Commission.

5           And I just want to thank you for your time today.  
6 I really appreciate it.

7           CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you.

8           VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Thank you.

9           PANEL MEMBER SPANO: Thank you.

10           MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Thank you so much for  
11 coming to see us. Have a safe trip home.

12           Let's recess until 12:59.

13           (Thereupon the panel recessed at 12:19 a.m.)

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25