

**AGPA01**

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**From:** Rob Gutierrez [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 14, 2010 5:16 PM  
**To:** Voters First Act  
**Subject:** Public Comment Regarding the Final Six Commissioners

Attached is a joint-letter from the California Taxpayers Association and the California Manufacturers and Technology Association regarding the final six commissioners, please submit this to the redistricting commissioners.

Thank you,

**Rob Gutierrez**  
Research Analyst  
California Taxpayers Association





December 14, 2010

Commissioner Chair Peter Yao  
Commissioner Vice-Chair Cynthia Dai  
Commissioner Vincent Barabba  
Commissioner Jodie Filkins Webber  
Commissioner Stanley Forbes  
Commissioner Connie Galambos Malloy  
Commissioner Elaine Kuo  
Commissioner Jeanne Raya

California State Auditor, Bureau of State Audits  
555 Capitol Mall, Suite 300  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Subject: Comments on Proposed Slate of Six Final Members**

Dear Members of the California Citizens Redistricting Commission:

The California Manufacturers and Technology Association (CMTA) and the California Taxpayers Association (CalTax) write to express concern regarding the selection of the final members of the California Citizen's Redistricting Commission. Specifically, we are concerned that one of the finalists, Ms. Maria Blanco, would not meet the commission's goals of ensuring political neutrality and providing fair representation for the people of California.

During the December 10 meeting, the commissioners had two applicants with prior redistricting experience to select from – Mr. Paul McKaskle and Ms. Maria Blanco. As you are aware, Mr. McKaskle participated in the 1990s redistricting process, while Ms. Blanco participated in the 2000 redistricting effort. By all accounts, the districts that are in existence today and that Ms. Blanco helped draw are highly partisan districts designed to safeguard incumbent law makers. CMTA and CalTax believe Ms. Blanco's involvement in the 2000 redistricting process evidences partisan and incumbent bias that contradicts the goals of political neutrality and fair representation.

Ms. Blanco's volunteerism also shows that she is more partisan than other applicants, as she was actively involved with a political organizing group that rallied voters in support of a 2008

presidential candidate. Because Ms. Blanco's political activities contradict the commission's goal of non-partisan work, we recommend that she be removed from the slate of the six finalists.

In raising similar concerns regarding Ms. Blanco, *Sacramento Bee* columnist Dan Walters questioned her neutrality. In a December 14 column, Mr. Walters wrote: "If McKaskle is not chosen, it would leave one appointee, Democrat Maria Blanco, as the only member with hands-on experience with past state redistricting efforts, having once represented the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund's efforts to affect the Legislature's plans. But she's scarcely a neutral in California redistricting wars." This indicates that the public may perceive the commission's final product to be tainted by partisanship if Ms. Blanco participates.

We share the commission's concern and belief that a commissioner with prior experience would add great value to the commission's resources. We therefore recommend that commissioners reconsider Mr. McKaskle for the proposed slate. The 1990 districts that Mr. McKaskle helped draw were fair, independent, non-political and representative of California's population. Mr. McKaskle has an impressive knowledge of the Voting Rights Act, California's demographics, and the redistricting process. While both Mr. McKaskle and Ms. Blanco have lived and worked in the San Francisco Bay Area for the past several years, Mr. McKaskle's former residency in Los Angeles and his wife's property in Humboldt County also will help in his familiarity with Northern and Southern California regions.

As supporters of Proposition 11 and Proposition 20, CMTA and CalTax greatly appreciate how California State Auditor Elaine Howle and her staff made the Citizens Redistricting Commission a reality. They have done a remarkable job of ensuring that the selection process thus far has been open, transparent and non-partisan, and that the pool of applicants is representative of California's unique and diverse population. As the commission moves forward and selects the final members, we hope the commission will ensure that the voters receive what they voted for – a redistricting process by the citizens that reflects California communities, not politics.

For the forgoing reasons, we ask the commission to eliminate Maria Blanco from the proposed slate and add Paul McKaskle.

Sincerely,

Teresa Casazza  
President  
California Taxpayers Association

Jack Stewart  
President  
California Manufacturers and Technology Association