

AGPA02

From: Gina Simas [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, December 10, 2010 4:53 PM
To: Voters First Act
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Public Comment from Gina Simas to the Commissioners

To the Members of the Commission:

I'd like you to reconsider me as a member of your proposed six person slate. There are several reasons warranting this reconsideration. First, I am very geographically diverse. I was born and raised in the San Joaquin Valley, specifically Stockton. My Mom and extended family continue to live there. Both my parents are native Stocktonians, and my surname is well-known in this community. I go back to Stockton for holidays and family visits quite often. This past year, I was there for at least five weeks. During college, I worked two summers for an Assemblyperson who represented the 17th Assembly district. This district includes San Joaquin, Merced and Stanislaus counties. Consequently, I know and understand the issues presented by these counties. San Joaquin County is the state's top agricultural producing region and an integral area of our state. As such, it deserves adequate representation; I believe my ties to this community would benefit the Commission.

In addition to my San Joaquin Valley ties, I attended college in San Diego. Therefore, I have ties to this community as well. I lived and worked in San Diego for five years. Since college, I have lived in Los Angeles and Santa Monica. My geographic diversity would strengthen this Commission in areas that are currently underrepresented.

Second, I am Hispanic. As the proposed slate exists currently, there are no Hispanic Republicans. While I understand the Commissioners' desire to select a Pacific Islander and an American Indian, Hispanics represent a much larger population of California. I believe that because Hispanics represent such a large and growing population in our state, it would be advantageous to have Hispanic representation in the Republican pool. On December 9, 2010, the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials sent you a letter recommending four Hispanic applicants. I was included in this recommendation. I urge you to read NALEO's letter and to consider their recommendation.

Third, the proposed slate currently has four male Republicans. I agree with your views that gender equality is not necessary. However, because there are four women remaining in the Republican pool, I encourage you

to select one more female Republican for the slate.

Fifth, I believe that both my legal and life experience would truly contribute to the commission. This past year, I have closely watched this process and have done everything I can to prepare myself should I be selected. I am now quite knowledgeable about redistricting law. In addition to watching all of the training you received, I spent countless hours reading and studying redistricting issues. I believe this knowledge would assist the Commission. Moreover, I continue to believe that age is a relevant criterion to consider when evaluating commissioners. Twenty two percent of Californians are between 21 and 35 years old. During the selection of the final six, Chairman Peter Yao stressed the importance of having the Commission reflect the population of California. Similarly, Mr. Stanley Forbes stated: "It's important that the public see themselves in the commission. Part of this process is that we develop trust and faith in the community and therefore I think it's important we look like the community." I completely agree with these sentiments and believe that I would help to represent younger Californians. I am very involved with various social organizations geared toward younger people. Consequently, I believe that I could assist in providing outreach to this particular demographic (a demographic that is sometimes difficult to engage in the political process).

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, I am easy to get along with and am a team player. It is difficult to assess these qualities on paper. Ms. Jeanne Raya, as well as other commissioners, repeatedly emphasized the importance of adding someone who can get along with the current 8 commissioners and who is a consensus builder. My letters of recommendation demonstrate that I am this person. I have watched the 8 commissioners during the training process and during the creation of the proposed slate. I am impressed by your collegiality and respect for one another. I know that I would fit right in.

Please review my application and letters of recommendation. If you have any questions or need any additional information, I am more than willing to provide it. Rest assured that if you do reconsider and decide to add my name to the slate, I will do everything in my power to make the commission a success. Thank you for your hard work. I understand that this is a difficult process.

Sincerely,

Gina Simas

