



bringing community home

April 16, 2010

Applicant Review Panel
c/o State Auditor
555 Capitol Mall, Suite 300
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Applicant ID# 3622

Dear Members of the Applicant Review Panel:

I take great pleasure to recommend Dr. Gabino Aguirre for appointment to the California Redistricting Commission. In my 32 years as a housing developer, political campaign organizer and community volunteer, I've had the pleasure of working with Dr. Gabino Aguirre in a great variety of projects aimed at community engagement and community betterment. Through the almost four decades that I have known Dr. Aguirre he has remained true to his principles of fairness and equality for all. He has continued to hone his skills through practice, education and policy development. He is a true champion for inclusiveness and access and I wholeheartedly believe his appointment to the California Redistricting Commission will enhance the work of the Commission.

I first met Dr. Aguirre in 1973 when he moved to Santa Paula while still an undergraduate at UCLA. He was a volunteer for a farmworker education project and was selected to take over as Executive Director when the position became vacant. He immediately began strengthening the core services of the organization and, acting on a request from migrant parents groups in three local school districts, set about organizing the Adelante Summer Education Program. He proceeded to meet with district administrators and successfully negotiated a school site, license for curriculum development and delivery, control over hiring of (veteran) bilingual teachers and thirty farm worker background college students to serve as teacher assistants. Adelante sought strategic engagement of parents in home-based instructional support as well as involvement with their local schools and

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districts. Over the several summers of its existence, this program hired more than one hundred college students and impacted over a thousand families with a program that was linguistically and culturally relevant and sowed the seeds of a better future for children based on meaningful education. Years later, some of the college students who worked with the project and are now successful professionals have expressed how this participation helped guide and motivated their college studies. During this time, Dr. Aguirre also wrote the foundation grant (and was awarded \$250k) for what evolved into Clinicas del Camino Real, a community clinic system that serves over 50,000 low-income county residents annually with a variety of medical and health maintenance programs. His efforts also helped establish several county organizations. One of these, El Concilio del Condado de Ventura, is one of the primary social service agencies serving Latinos and other low-income groups in Ventura County.

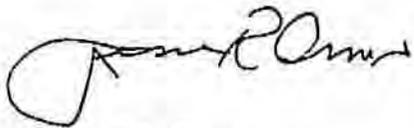
Besides this social organization aspect of his work, I worked with him on a variety of projects aimed at political empowerment. Some of these included voter registration, get-out-the-vote campaigns, supporting and/or opposing various state initiatives, and supporting political candidates, etc. Along the way Dr. Aguirre continued his education and ultimately received his Ph.D. from the University of California Los Angeles where he immersed himself in social science theories, comparative/international education and development models that helped sharpen his analytical and policy development skills. With his Ph.D. and skills under his arm, he re-engaged with community issues using sophisticated paradigms to guide his understanding and practice.

Eventually in 2002, he ran for City Council and was elected overwhelmingly by a broad cross-section of the community. He still serves on the Council and is a tireless advocate for the under-represented and disenfranchised. He has determinedly address issues that include homelessness, hunger, health and safety, affordable housing, resource allocation, recreation, economic development and many other related municipal matters. He has worked with a broad cross-section of the population that include faith-based organizations, seniors, the disabled, veterans, and other groups regardless of religious beliefs, gender, age or ethnicity or racial background. He is fair in his consideration of issues and problems that come before him and he

always endeavors to serve the total community equitably and respectfully.

For almost four decades, I've worked closely with Dr. Aguirre and am proud to have him as a friend and colleague. He is honest, trustworthy, committed, a team player and, in my opinion, is a great example of what a human being should be. He is unselfish with his time and is always ready to help out in any way he can. He has received numerous awards from a variety of organizations but these somehow don't do justice to the breadth of his work, the depth of his impact or the commitment exemplifies each and every day. For these and other reasons, I enthusiastically nominate and recommend Dr. Gabino Aguirre for the California Redistricting Commission. I will gladly respond to any queries about the content of this recommendation or Dr. Aguirre's character. I can be reached at **Redacted** or at **Redacted**

Sincerely yours,



Jesse R. Ornelas
Real Estate Development Deputy Director/
Property and Asset Management Division Supervisor