

REPORT ON INFORMATION COLLECTED CONCERNING APPLICANT

Under section 60835 of title 2 of the California Code of Regulations, the Bureau of State Audits is responsible for collecting information concerning applicants for the Citizens Redistricting Commission that is needed by the Applicant Review Panel to perform its responsibilities. This is a report by Bureau staff in compliance with that responsibility.

Name of Applicant: Cynthia M Dai

Information: In her first essay answer on the supplemental application regarding why she wants to serve as a member of the Citizens Redistricting Commission, Applicant stated that one of the three reasons why she wants to be a member of the Commission is “to give the underrepresented a voice.” In response to questioning by Bureau staff, Applicant stated that she believes there are several reasons why certain people feel disenfranchised. Based on her experience trying to register people to vote, she found individuals felt disenfranchised because they were recent immigrants to the United States, were not engaged in the political process, were new voters (because of recently attaining the age of 18), were not moved to register, were not culturally in tune, or did not appreciate what it means to vote. Applicant thinks the following groups are underrepresented: younger potential voters, immigrants, persons who are not highly educated and therefore intimidated by the political process, and persons who are disengaged from politics due to feeling no connection with candidates or the political process. When asked how she envisions meeting her goal of drawing the underrepresented into the political process if selected to serve on the Commission, Applicant stated that she is excited about the opportunity for public outreach. Applicant discussed the importance of public hearings and centers that will allow the public to participate in the redistricting process. She feels this is a “huge opportunity to get people who might not think this is important to realize that it is, and to give their opinions about their districts.”

Staff found that Applicant was the co-leader of the “Free Jude Shao” campaign (led by former Stanford classmates and friends of Chinese dissident Jude Shao, who seek to obtain his release from a Chinese prison.

Applicant stated on her supplemental application that she has been the Vice Chair of the governing board of the Lyon-Martens Women’s Health Services. According to its website, this organization has as its mission providing health care to women and transgender people in a safe and compassionate environment with sensitivity to sexual and gender identity.

In the Financial Contributions section of the supplemental application, Applicant reported making substantial contributions of her services to several organizations that may not be recognized readily:

The TMC Development Working Solutions. According to its website, this is a nonprofit organization committed to serving start-up and existing businesses

throughout the nine San Francisco Bay Area counties.

The Bernal Heights Neighborhood Center. According to its website, this organization works to preserve and enhance ethnic, cultural, and economically diversity of the Bernal Heights neighborhood of San Francisco and surrounding neighborhoods with a focus on helping low and moderate income residents by: (1) developing affordable housing; (2) providing linguistically and culturally responsive services to the community's most vulnerable adults, seniors, youth, and families; and (3) developing community leaders.

The Idea Village. According to its website, this is a nonprofit organization having as its mission to identify, support, and retain entrepreneurial talent in New Orleans by providing business resources to high-impact ventures.

Frameline. According to its website, this is an organization that is working to strengthen the diverse LGBT community and further its visibility through film.

Staff contacted Ms. Alison Elliott, author of one of Applicant's letters of recommendation, to confirm the information provided in the letter and receive any additional information that may be relevant. Ms. Elliott confirmed that she wrote the letter of recommendation. She stated that Applicant is a strong group facilitator, and many who work with her find her leadership in group activities to be valuable. Ms. Elliott said that Applicant has great organizational skills and her methods are taught to future entrepreneurs. Ms. Elliott added that one of Applicant's strengths is including "all voices in the discussion" to ensure that all viewpoints are brought to light. Ms. Elliott noted that Applicant certainly will support diversity on the Commission.

Recommendation: None.

Name and title of person submitting response: Steven Benito Russo, Chief of Investigations

Report Date: September 2, 2010