

**Professor Ian I. Mitroff
510 Mountain Boulevard
Oakland, CA 94611**

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To Whom It May Concern:

I can think of no one more qualified than Vince Barabba to be on the Citizens Redistricting Commission.

I have known Vince Barabba for thirty-six years. Vince and I first met in 1973 when I was at the University of Pittsburgh. Our professional relationship has continued through my 26 years in the Marshall School of Business at USC and my current appointments at The Marshall Goldsmith School of Management at Alliant International University in San Francisco and The Center for Catastrophic Risk Management at UC Berkeley.

Over the course of these years, Vince and I have worked together on developing and applying collaborative decision-making processes for complex problems. These include: (1) the decision not to adjust the 1980 Census Count; (2) the design of market information and decision support systems at the Xerox Corporation and Eastman Kodak. We have also collaborated on a book and several academic journal articles.

Our work at the Census Bureau contributed greatly to an improved understanding of how to encourage a large organization facing extremely difficult decisions to open up and to engage people with multiple perspectives so that it could gain a better idea as to what the true problems were. In doing so, the Census Bureau was able to devise solutions that were accepted even by those who would not necessarily benefit from them. The experience contributed to a book co-authored with Richard O. Mason: *Challenging Strategic Planning Assumptions, Theories, Cases and Techniques*.

Vince excels at identifying extremely complex problems that are typically ignored because others have found them too difficult to solve. Throughout his career, Vince has excelled in trying new approaches to problem solving when it became apparent that old ideas would not work,

One of Vince's most outstanding qualities is his ability to communicate effectively with a wide variety of people across different disciplines, professions, and political viewpoints. Although Vince may not have in-depth knowledge of many of the specialized techniques used by the people he supervised, his skill lies in determining when and where a particular technique is appropriate.

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Vince and I have been extremely fortunate to have been mentored by Russell Ackoff, one of the founders and pioneers of Systems Thinking. Vince's relationship with Ackoff is indicative of his ability to change someone's mind.

When Vince was first nominated to be the Director of the Census, several professional organizations took action to block his nomination feeling that his qualifications were not adequate. Russ Ackoff was one of the more vocal critics. Vince and Russ Ackoff eventually developed a relationship that was so strong that Russ took great joy in stating; "Vince was one of my greatest mistakes... by that I mean I should have supported his nomination." Over the three decades that Vince worked with Ackoff, he became knowledgeable in the concepts and practice of Systems Thinking. He has been able to transfer the ability to think and act more systemically to both public and private enterprises.

In sum, I have spent over 45 years of my life in being educated, teaching, and consulting in the State of California. I cannot think of anyone more qualified to be on the Citizens Redistricting Commission than my fellow Californian and colleague, Vincent Barabba. Indeed, I recommend him with great enthusiasm.

Very sincerely yours,



Ian I. Mitroff

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