

April 12, 2010

Dear Applicant Review Panel:

Having known Cynthia Dai for over 25 years as a classmate, business colleague, and engaged citizen, it is my distinct pleasure to strongly recommend her to serve on California's new Citizens Redistricting Commission. I am familiar with the duties of the Commissioners, having been Program Director at Next Ten where I led the creation of the California Budget Challenge, an online educational tool that allows people to create their own state budget. At Next Ten and at the California Center for Regional Leadership, I organized town hall meetings with local leaders in every region of the state to raise awareness and knowledge about the structural imbalance in the state budget in 2003 and 2004. Although I recently relocated to Washington, D.C. to take the position of Associate Director of Economic and Employment Policy at the National Council of La Raza (the largest Latino civil rights and advocacy organization in the country), I am a native Californian having spent the first half my life in San Diego and second half in the San Francisco Bay Area. I am heartened to see Californians organizing for change and engaging its diverse citizens to fix a broken governance system that is at the root of many state problems.

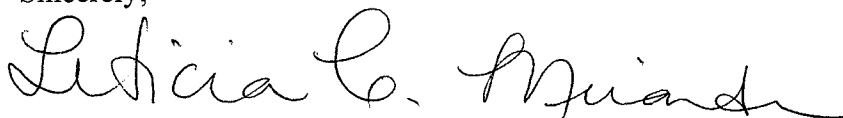
I met Cyn when we both served as student senators at UC Berkeley during the 1980's. We reconnected again when we both wound up in the same business school class at Stanford University. Since then we have collaborated on numerous consulting projects over the past 15 years. In addition, each year for the past *umpte*en years I have done my voting research with Cyn. Together we have researched every local and state initiative to come before us as voters, because she also reads the full texts of every proposition. She always does her own hard analysis, informed by input from people with multiple perspectives, never relying just on party or organizational endorsements. This demonstrates the type of impartiality that the Redistricting Commission is seeking and would find in Cyn.

Cyn also demonstrates an appreciation of the diversity of California. Nothing could be more diverse and complex than the student senate at UC Berkeley in the 1980s. As a precocious freshman, Cyn was elected to represent the Science and Engineering Coalition (SEC). The SEC was a small party with just a few Senators who functioned as key swing votes. Other major parties included Cal-Serve, composed primarily of students of color representing a more liberal perspective, as well as the Bears party, composed of students from the Greek system who were considered conservative at Cal. These student Senators came from all parts of the state, and were extremely diverse in terms of race and ethnicity as well as class background. Cyn thrived in the midst of this extremely vocal and diverse set of student leaders that included all parts of the political spectrum. She was a well-liked, well-respected leader of the SEC party and a consensus-builder among Senators on matters ranging from budget decisions to our decision to influence the University to divest from companies doing business in South Africa.

Cyn's strongest skill is her analytical ability. Her educational background in engineering and business prepared her to be a first-rate analyst of information from both quantitative and qualitative sources. What always impressed me about Cyn in her work as a strategy consultant to technology businesses is her ability to compile information from a wide variety of sources, yet distill the most salient pieces that demonstrate key trends, threats or opportunities for her clients. Cyn and I worked together to develop a key part of the internet strategy for a large financial services client. We interviewed internal stakeholders, industry experts, summarized industry articles, anticipated technology directions, and analyzed competitive and cost issues. I watched her organize a client team, which included senior managers from many different departments, to assess their lines of business with this new online channel of distribution in mind, and develop a cross-functional vision and strategy for the company. We educated them about the technology and its benefits, presented case studies from outside their industry, and applied a strategic framework to help them leverage opportunities for growth and profitability. Our findings galvanized the client to invest significantly in their online capabilities. I am confident in her ability to grasp complexity and to guide decisions in a group of people, based on strong research.

I would like to reiterate my strong support for Cyn Dai to serve as a member of California's new Redistricting Commission because I believe she meets all the qualifications to serve in this important role: impartiality, second-to-none analytical skills, clear appreciation for California's diversity, and the ability to excel and reach consensus in a diverse group of decision-makers. This has been consistent throughout our friendship over the years. Moreover, Cyn is a perfect representative of California in the 21st Century. She is a product of California's public school system, an active volunteer and leader in her community, and as a Chinese-American daughter of immigrants, she *herself* contributes to the wonderful diversity that is California. Selecting Cynthia Dai to be Redistricting Commissioner would be a great choice for California.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Leticia C. Miranda". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Leticia Miranda

Former Program Director, Next Ten, Co-Creator of the California Budget Challenge