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**From:** Sara Blicharz [mailto: ]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 08, 2010 1:02 PM  
**To:** Voters First Act  
**Subject:** Commission Applicant: Maria Blanco

California's Citizen's Redistricting Commission

Office of the State Auditor

555 Capitol Mall Suite 300

Sacramento, CA 95814

To the Members of California's Citizen's Redistricting Commission:

I write to discourage you from selecting Maria Blanco as a member of California's Citizen's Redistricting Commission. I have reviewed the applications of the remaining 28 applicants and do not believe that Ms. Blanco should be a part of the Commission. My concern stems from her employment as both Regional and National Senior Counsel for the Mexican American Legal and Education Fund (MALDEF). In this position she "worked on redistricting in Sacramento in 2002, drew maps and met with legislators, and litigated employment and education cases and a major redistricting case." Her position as an attorney in a prior redistricting lawsuit is a conflict of interest with the position of Redistricting Commissioner—a position that requires one to be neutral and objective regarding redistricting issues in our state.

Moreover, commissioners are required to be impartial. A simple Google search of Ms. Blanco demonstrates that she is quite political. She frequently speaks out publicly on issues such as

undocumented students' rights, Proposition 8, immigration policy and various other contentious political issues. Additionally, Ms. Blanco played a key role on President Obama's transition team. If she were chosen, her role as an outspoken public political figure would undermine the objectiveness and unbiased nature of the Redistricting Commission.

It may be true that Ms. Blanco would be able to set her political views aside. Similarly, Ms. Blanco may be able to set aside the views she formed during her prior advocacy in the redistricting lawsuit. However, to avoid any appearance of impropriety and to uphold the appearance of fairness and legitimacy of the Commission, Ms. Blanco should not be selected. There are several other qualified applicants who do not have a conflict of interest and who are far less political. Consequently, I urge you to choose one of them over Ms. Blanco. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
Sara Blicharz

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