

December 1, 2020

California Citizens Redistricting Commission
721 Capitol Mall, Suite 260
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Community of Interest Tool

Dear Commissioners:

Please accept this note as part of an on-going discussion of how to provide the Commission with the resources needed to accomplish the goals envisioned by the initiatives that created the Commission. Before the Commission adjourns this week, we feel it is important to correct an impression left at Tuesday's meeting of our communications with the Executive Director regarding language access and the Community of Interest (COI) Tool.

At the end of the presentation on the morning of November 16, the conclusion was to proceed with the 13 largest languages, and for the Statewide Database to work with the COI Tool Subcommittee to determine the costs and feasibility of adding two additional languages (Hmong and Thai). Later in the afternoon, when neither Legislative nor Statewide Database staff were on the call, the Commission voted to request six additional languages.

Here is what we communicated to Mr. Claypool: "We should check with the Statewide Database, but our understanding is that we are *beyond the point to add new languages for the initial deployment*. We should also check with them about the cost and implementation implications of adding them for later – we mentioned the need for details on that in our email to you yesterday."

We also know that some Commissioners expressed surprise that the Legislature believes the process of translating output from the COI tool is the Commission's responsibility. Neither of us were involved 10 years ago in the redistricting process nor in the initial discussions about the COI tool. However, we have been told that legislative staff raised the issue with Commission staff as early as August of this year before Mr. Claypool joined the Commission. The reason for this was to ensure testimony is translated consistently regardless of how it is submitted and that any subjective decisions about how to interpret testimony is made only by the Commission and those who work for it.

As we told Mr. Claypool, we believe the Legislature remains open to advancing suggestions to fund this important work. Indeed, it was in that spirit we initially discussed both the number of languages and the testimony translation issues with Mr. Claypool, to ensure there was an accurate assessment of all potential costs.

We'd like to continue the discussion regarding the Commission's overall concern about funding for the year ahead. The Legislature did look at this issue once already for this cycle and provided significant additional funds above the base amount, but we are also aware that the Commission may have additional needs now to fulfill its vision.

We have already asked Mr. Claypool for the kind of specific detail that is normally needed to support budget augmentations for all state agencies. We gather that he has begun that process with the Department of Finance (DOF), but would like to have legislative support if possible. Obtaining details like that provided to DOF is key for our offices' budget staff to evaluate the Commission's augmentation request.

We look forward to continuing to work with the Commission and its staff in the months ahead.

Diane Griffiths
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Stacey Reardon
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Speaker Anthony Rendon