

BEFORE THE  
CALIFORNIA BUREAU OF STATE AUDITS (BSA)

In the matter of

Citizens Redistricting Commission (CRC)

Applicant Review Panel (ARP) Public Meeting

555 Capitol Mall, Suite 300  
Sacramento, CA 95814

TUESDAY, August 10, 2010

12:59 P.M.

PM SESSION

Reported by:

Peter Petty

## APPEARANCES

### Members Present

Nasir Ahmadi, Chair

Mary Camacho, Vice Chair

Kerri Spano

### Staff Present

Stephanie Ramirez-Ridgeway, Panel Counsel

Diane Hamel, Executive Secretary

### Candidates

Vincent P. Barabba

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ITEM 5. Applicant Interviews

MR. JAMES VIDAL

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1 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: It is 12:59.

2 I wanted to let the panel know that we have an  
3 applicant for tomorrow at 1:00, Maria Blanco, who is ill  
4 and does not believe she will be able to attend tomorrow's  
5 1:00 interview. We will make every effort to reschedule  
6 her for sometime in September. She's not really able to  
7 speak, because she's got such a bad virus.

8 CHAIR AHMADI: Sorry to hear that.

9 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: We do, however, have an  
10 applicant here today, James Vidal.

11 And, Mr. Vidal, are you ready to begin?

12 MR. VIDAL: Yes, I am.

13 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Secretary, please start  
14 the clock.

15 What specific skills do you believe a good  
16 Commissioner should possess? Of those skills, which do  
17 you possess? Which do you not possess and how will you  
18 compensate for it? Is there anything in your life that  
19 would inhibit or impair your ability to perform all of the  
20 duties of a Commissioner?

21 MR. VIDAL: Okay. First of all, I believe any  
22 member must have the ability to listen, put aside  
23 personal biases and not be judgmental. Have the ability  
24 to assume responsibility, complete assigned tasks, and  
25 prioritize them in order of importance. Know when to ask

1 for clarification, assistance, as needed.

2           Have the ability to interpret and follow  
3 directives, rules, federal and state laws, government, and  
4 regulations.

5           Must be adaptable, know when to change course  
6 during this process.

7           They must have the ability to persevere, work  
8 with others as a team through difficult circumstances. It  
9 sounds like initially a lack of information needed in the  
10 decision-making process.

11           I believe they must have the ability to be  
12 creative, make suggestions, accept criticism, and the  
13 ability to defend your position and be able to accept  
14 other member's positions. Must have patience with  
15 himself and others.

16           I believe it's also important they have a sense  
17 of humor, smile once in a while, be friendly,  
18 professional.

19           Commissioners are representative of the people of  
20 the state of California. They must have some trace of  
21 honesty, integrity, dependability, and good judgment.

22           The second part of that I believe based on my  
23 background and work history, personal experiences, I  
24 believe I possess most of these skills. For example, at  
25 the age of 18, I joined the Navy to get away from my

1 parents who were always telling me what to do. But that  
2 did not work as planned. In boot camp, I learned  
3 discipline, how to follow orders. I attended electronic  
4 technician school when I was stationed for three years on  
5 a destroyer in San Diego and could not wait to get home on  
6 weekends.

7           After I was discharged, I was first hired as a  
8 correctional officer at the California Institution for  
9 Mendocino. On my third day of orientation, I was directed  
10 to the (inaudible) central. And there I was given two  
11 keys to do a housing unit where I relieved the first  
12 officer, graveyard officer, who had not been relieved as  
13 of yet. This was close to 9:00. And there I had to  
14 supervise 180 inmates, feeding schedules, run the sick  
15 call, account for interviews, and maintain security and  
16 safety of the institution and the inmates and that housing  
17 unit. So it was quite a shock to me.

18           Later on in my career, I was assigned as a  
19 background investigator and later as a special agent for  
20 the Office of Internal Affairs. I assumed new duties and  
21 training. I had to learned investigative techniques, how  
22 to manage my time effectively. I learned how to interact  
23 with the public, other law enforcement agencies, present  
24 administrators, and maintain a professional attitude at  
25 all times. I was expected to produce a minimum completed

1 number of investigations per month. And we had to follow  
2 prescribed Penal Code sections, State Personnel Board  
3 rules, and other regulations.

4           So I think this shows that I can be adaptable. I  
5 can assume responsibility, adjust to new work environments  
6 and conditions, and meet deadlines in each of these  
7 examples.

8           And the second part -- the third part -- I'm  
9 sorry. I need to be more patient with others as well as  
10 with myself. I've always completed investigations or  
11 assignments and I go that extra mile. I do the extra work  
12 where I felt it was needed. As a result, I expected the  
13 same of co-workers and those I supervised. And I had to  
14 be more tolerant of other co-workers and their work habits  
15 and expectations. Sometimes I tend to think, well, this  
16 is not how I would do it or I would do it this way. But  
17 each individual has their own way of conducting their  
18 business I guess.

19           The last part: Is there anything in my life that  
20 would prohibit me or impair me? Not at present. I'm  
21 retired. I'm able to travel. I have done that in my  
22 career. Willing to work with others. I have done that.  
23 I just recently passed my physical at the Loma Linda  
24 Veterans' Administration Hospital. So I'm physically  
25 pretty good. I could lose a little bit of weight.

1 I have no pending legal actions, civil or  
2 criminal, no outstanding warrants. I have a valid  
3 California driver's license. The reason I bring this up,  
4 because I think it's important that a member of this  
5 Commission not be an embarrassment to this process or to  
6 those that voted for and support this proposition. I'd  
7 hate to have a member make the headlines in a negative  
8 way. And I think that would look bad on the Commission  
9 and the process. So I think that's very important.

10 I don't know if you've done excessive  
11 backgrounds, but I would hope they would be fingerprinted,  
12 LifeScanned or something. I would think maybe something  
13 like that could be done.

14 I think that's all.

15 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Describe a circumstance  
16 from your personal experience where you had to work with  
17 others to resolve a conflict or difference of opinion.  
18 Please describe the issue and explain your role in  
19 addressing and resolving the conflict. If you are  
20 selected to serve on the Citizen's Redistricting  
21 Commission, tell us how you would resolve conflicts that  
22 may arise among the Commissioners.

23 MR. VIDAL: Okay. From 1984 until 1989, I was a  
24 background investigator. I conducted, oh, gosh, 4', 500  
25 investigations during that time period. From 1989 to

1 1997, I became a senior background investigator and I  
2 supervised between 15 and 18 correctional sergeants,  
3 background investigators and had a clerical support staff  
4 of about nine or ten that worked along with us. We  
5 conducted background investigations on peace officer  
6 applicants, correctional officers, parole agents,  
7 correctional administrators, and other special  
8 investigations as assigned.

9           We had to follow State Personal Board rules,  
10 government codes, Penal Code sections, and of course our  
11 operations manual. So we had a strict line where we had  
12 to follow.

13           As a supervisor, I was responsible for the final  
14 determinations, clearances for hire, or withholds from the  
15 eligibility list.

16           I reviewed all completed investigations and I had  
17 to sign off on that completed investigation. And I felt  
18 that during my review of a file, I would look at it as  
19 something that I produced, that I did. And I expected --  
20 here I go. I expected the same results based on the  
21 information gathered that I felt that were clear for that  
22 individual.

23           Nearly one-third of our case loads were  
24 withholds. That means they were withheld from the  
25 eligibility list. The other third were clearance

1 hire. And the third were wobblers. They could go one way  
2 or the other. I usually would discuss these wobblers with  
3 the investigator who had to mitigate the questions I had,  
4 areas of concern I had. And he or she had to convince me  
5 that that person should be cleared or withheld.

6           And then we discuss all aspects of the case and I  
7 resolve my concerns, because my signature was on that  
8 product, too, for withholding or clearing the applicant.

9           For training purposes, we had weekly meetings and  
10 we would bring up these cases for discussion amongst the  
11 other investigators. And some of these had been around  
12 for quite a while. Some of the investigators had been  
13 quite a while. So they had some expertise, some  
14 experience in dealing with these files, these areas of  
15 concern. And we discussed them openly. We put that  
16 investigator on the hot seat: Defend your action. Why  
17 are you recommending this way or that way? And that  
18 person had to back up his reasonings and show why he was  
19 doing the final recommendation that he had.

20           And if the investigator continued to feel that  
21 this person should be withheld for clearance or cleared, I  
22 would say, well, you know what? You need to bring me  
23 additional information. You need to develop additional  
24 information that would sustain your position or develop it  
25 or bring me this, this, this, this. And that's how w

1 resolve the conflict.

2           Now resolving conflicts that may arise among the  
3 Commissioners, I think all should be on board as to the  
4 duties and directives of the Commission, the law, the  
5 propositions. It's the Voters Right Act. We should all be  
6 well aware, well informed and have an understanding of our  
7 specific duties. Then we can discuss the issue or the  
8 conflict within the Commission or with the individual  
9 members.

10           Is it a legitimate concern?

11           What final resolution is acceptable to the entire  
12 Commission and to the person or persons that have the  
13 conflict?

14           How will it impact the Commission's work and  
15 final recommendation?

16           Is it a personal bias or preconceived notion or  
17 position?

18           Is it a personality conflict?

19           I'm sure that may happen in groups like that.  
20 The conflict must be mediated to satisfy all members  
21 quickly so as not to interfere or impair the Commission's  
22 work and responsibility. And by vote, majority rule if  
23 necessary.

24           MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: How will the Commission's  
25 work impact the state? Which of these impacts will

1 improve the state the most? Is there any potential for  
2 the Commission's work to harm the state? And if so, in  
3 what ways?

4           MR. VIDAL: I believe the Commission may change  
5 some or all districts or maybe none at all, depending on  
6 the Census results, the data received respecting  
7 population shift, growth, movements, geographical  
8 concerns. This could impact change in the communities of  
9 interest. Could create more easily identifiable  
10 districts. It may lead to new representatives being  
11 elected.

12           May encourage new voter participation. Give them  
13 a sense of identity as a member of the community that they  
14 have a voice, that they know this person that they're  
15 voting for and not someone that's separated from them that  
16 they really had no contact with.

17           And it may affect -- it probably will affect  
18 special interest groups, lobbyists, as well as political  
19 parties, political action committees, PAC. It's going to  
20 change the relationship within the district, the  
21 population, the voters they represent. I think you'll  
22 probably see a change or an adjustment that will happen.

23           Which of these impacts will improve the state the  
24 most? I believe that it would encourage more  
25 participation in the people in the district. I think it

1 would of course create a larger voting block. Maybe those  
2 that weren't well represented and who have a concern for  
3 their special concern and interest and these they can  
4 direct to their representative, whereas maybe in the past  
5 they hadn't that opportunity or weren't considered by the  
6 representative.

7           It would create a more knowledgeable voting  
8 public of the political process. More activism in their  
9 common interest, in their goals in the sense of how to  
10 achieve their desired results.

11           And I think it might encourage more participation  
12 by younger eligible voters. I see my daughter's 19 and a  
13 lot of her friends, a lot of them I know didn't vote.  
14 They have no interest or some haven't even registered to  
15 vote, you know. And that's a shame. And I think the  
16 numbers of voting public is very, very small, you know, on  
17 all our state and local and federal elections.

18           Also, it would lead to more effective  
19 representation and legislation as the elected politician  
20 would be more responsive to the district if he or she  
21 wanted to be re-elected.

22           Is there any potential for harm? I don't know if  
23 that's a known. That's an unknown to this point I think.

24           Some districts might not be changed at all. Some  
25 very little. A change in district boundaries may lead to

1 initial confusion at first between maybe some other  
2 politician -- well, some other districts that may have a  
3 concern or an interest in that district. It could confuse  
4 the politicians in office or running for office. It would  
5 change their priorities, I believe.

6 That's all.

7 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: We've got about five  
8 minutes left.

9 Describe a situation where you've had to work as  
10 part of a group to achieve a common goal. Tell us about  
11 the goal. Describe your role within the group, and tell  
12 us how the group worked or did not work collaboratively to  
13 achieve this goal.

14 If you are selected to serve on the Citizen's  
15 Redistricting Commission, tell us what you would do to  
16 foster collaboration among the Commissioners and ensure  
17 the Commission meets its legal deadlines.

18 MS. HAMEL: Five minutes.

19 MR. VIDAL: In 1997, like I said earlier, the  
20 Department of Economics created a new Office of Internal  
21 Affairs. Prior to that, the wardens did their own  
22 investigations in-house. This led to favoritism,  
23 complaints of those that received punitive action against  
24 them, whereas maybe a co-worker was never investigated.

25 We as a group traveled to each institution, each

1 prison, and met with the wardens and their staffs,  
2 explained the process, that we were there to help them  
3 conduct these investigations where they could free up  
4 manpower and the personnel to concentrate on their duties,  
5 safety and security of inmates and officers. And we met  
6 with records people, personnel as to how to review files,  
7 serving witness subpoenas.

8           In other words, I think -- well, ultimately, we  
9 established a good working relationship with all the  
10 prisons. And when I left, I think we had maybe 12, 15  
11 special agents. Now since they merged with the Youth  
12 Authority, there's about 30-plus special agents that  
13 service those nine institutions now. So they've really  
14 grown.

15           Fostering cooperation, I hope the panel -- the  
16 Commission members would meet informally if at all  
17 possible and just have a clear discussion about our  
18 backgrounds, strengths, weaknesses, and what we each  
19 individually can achieve. Some normally would assume a  
20 more leadership position, and others would probably be  
21 happy to take a lesser supportive role.

22           But we need to get all our -- discuss informally  
23 what we intend -- get to know each other and discuss what  
24 we intend to do.

25           MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: A considerable amount of

1 the Commission's work will involve meeting with people  
2 from all over California who come from very different  
3 backgrounds and very different perspectives. If you were  
4 selected to serve on the Commission, tell us about the  
5 specific skills you possess that will make you effective  
6 in interacting with the public.

7 MR. VIDAL: I also was a correctional sergeant.  
8 I was a correctional sergeant assigned to a transportation  
9 unit. At that time, there were only nine prisons. But we  
10 transported inmates on bus between all the institutions.  
11 I also conducted over 100 -- approximately 100  
12 extraditions in state, out of state, flying to pick up a  
13 parolee or escapee on an air carrier and bring them back  
14 to California.

15 So I had a wide range of variety of people that I  
16 had to interact with. So I think I'm capable of doing  
17 that now. It's just something that you learn and you keep  
18 and you never forget.

19 I think my background and history has exposed me  
20 to a great variety of people, one not normally that -- a  
21 variety of people that normally most people are not have  
22 not experienced in their daily lives. I've had to adapt  
23 to different and difficult situations and circumstances to  
24 complete my assignments. I believe my 34 years of State  
25 employment makes me an excellent candidate for this

1 Commission.

2 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Thank you.

3 CHAIR AHMADI, would you like to begin your 20  
4 minutes?

5 CHAIR AHMADI: Yes, thank you.

6 Good afternoon, Mr. Vidal.

7 Let me start off with a question about your  
8 motives or if I can ask you why did you vote for Prop. 11?  
9 What are some of the concerns that you have?

10 MR. VIDAL: That was 2008, I believe?

11 CHAIR AHMADI: Yes.

12 MR. VIDAL: 2008. In my application, I noted  
13 that I read about it and I heard about it -- well, I got  
14 the voters pamphlet and I read about it. And it seemed  
15 like a good proposition to me, because looking at my  
16 district -- I had at the time I lived in Chino, and we had  
17 a district that went from -- if you're familiar with  
18 southern California -- from Norwalk and narrowed down to  
19 maybe two or three, four, five miles. Then it expanded  
20 out to a different area population. And it was always  
21 curious to me what do I have in common with this  
22 representative from Norwalk when I'm here in Chino? To  
23 me, it was just entirely different concerns and interests.

24 And then I read about this in the paper again the  
25 beginning part of this year that you were accept

1 applications. So I said I'll give it a try. Why not?  
2 Luckily, I've gotten this far. And I've enjoyed it so  
3 far.

4           But I'm interested to improving the process of  
5 legislation, the representative and the Legislatures. I  
6 think they sometimes forget a lot about the small people,  
7 those in rural areas. They have a vote, too. They need  
8 to be represented and their concerns and interests should  
9 be looked after or taken into consideration in any  
10 legislation.

11           CHAIR AHMADI: What do you mean by "small people"?

12           MR. VIDAL: Well, I mean in rural areas. I mean,  
13 the labor. The ones that work in the field. That's what  
14 I mean, I'm sorry.

15           CHAIR AHMADI: That's okay.

16           MR. VIDAL: All they do is work. That's all they  
17 know. And they don't have -- maybe they feel  
18 disenfranchised that their voice doesn't really matter  
19 because no one has really come to them and asked. Maybe  
20 that it was a problem. And I think they're taxpayers,  
21 too.

22           CHAIR AHMADI: Okay. Thank you.

23           Let me take you back to your response to question  
24 number one. If I heard you correctly, you mentioned  
25 something about the lack of information as the Commission

1 starts its work, if I heard you correctly.

2           At the beginning when the Commission starts its  
3 work, how do you envision the first few days in the life  
4 of the Commissioners in terms of their responsibility,  
5 their focus and what they need to do?

6           MR. VIDAL: First of all, I think, like I said  
7 earlier, there has to be probably a spokesperson or  
8 Chairman elected. And then I would like to see some  
9 responsibility spread out amongst the Commission members,  
10 sub-groups, responsibility for media, advertising, others  
11 for logistics, travel, that type of thing. So each one  
12 would may be require two or three members to follow up on  
13 that.

14           And then the data, from what I understand, will  
15 not be available until April from the Census Bureau. So I  
16 think they need to start mapping out areas where they're  
17 going to be holding these meetings throughout the state.

18           And training, that's going to be a big part of  
19 it. And getting all on board as to what the  
20 responsibilities are and what legally we have to do, what  
21 the Commission has to follow. That's a big part of it  
22 too.

23           CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you, sir.

24           Going back to another part of your response, I  
25 believe this was a response to question number four. You

1 indicated that you hope that the Commission will meet  
2 informally. As you know, there are certain laws that  
3 prohibit that. But nonetheless, can you share with me  
4 some details about what do you mean by that?

5           MR. VIDAL: Well, if at all possible, I think the  
6 Commission needs to get to know each other. In other  
7 words, not to set any guidelines or agenda, that type of  
8 thing, but just to meet informally, get to know each other  
9 and the strengths and weaknesses of each one on a personal  
10 level.

11           I think you can't just go straight into a meeting  
12 and not know anybody and have open meetings. Somewhere  
13 you have to get to know each other; for dinner, some type  
14 of a social gathering where it's just those Commissioners  
15 to discuss amongst them who they are, what I am. What do  
16 you do? What can you bring to this? In other words,  
17 that's what I meant.

18           CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you, sir.

19           So from your application and from your  
20 descriptions today in responses to those questions, you've  
21 had a long career with the Department of Corrections. And  
22 you worked in different areas.

23           MR. VIDAL: Yes

24           CHAIR AHMADI: I believe you started with ground  
25 level positions.

1 MR. VIDAL: Correctional.

2 CHAIR AHMADI: I'm interested to know what are some  
3 of the thoughts that you have on the prison population of  
4 the state and how valuable those thoughts might be to you,  
5 should you be selected as a Commissioner?

6 MR. VIDAL: The population of the state?

7 CHAIR AHMADI: The prison population.

8 MR. VIDAL: The prison population?

9 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Prison.

10 MR. VIDAL: Oh, prisons. Oh, well, first of all,  
11 they're convicted felons. They can't vote.

12 But I understand there is some talk of passing --  
13 I think it's a federal law where they are given the right  
14 to vote. Absentee ballot, of course.

15 But right now I know they're probably counted on  
16 the Census. And I don't know if that's -- well, they have  
17 to count them if they're in a certain area. They can't  
18 vote, but yet there's some prisons that have five, 6,000  
19 inmates. And that's a considerable amount, especially in  
20 some of these prisons that are out in isolated areas, like  
21 in Blythe. You have two prisons out there in the middle  
22 of the desert. So two or three percent, five percent of  
23 the population. So that has to be taken into  
24 consideration.

25 CHAIR AHMADI: In what ways?

1           MR. VIDAL: Well, needs, water, the power supply.  
2 Who's paying for the power for those prisons. Their  
3 needs, their food, representation. I don't -- I've never  
4 seen an assemblyman come to the prison to visit and talk  
5 to inmates. So you never see them. You know, they're  
6 always in Sacramento.

7           But that's a difficult question. What do you do  
8 with them? They're counted and made part of the area, but  
9 they're isolated. And what do you do with that group? I  
10 don't know at this point. If they get to vote, that's a  
11 different matter because then you'll see politicians in  
12 the prisons passing out literature. But at this point, I  
13 don't know.

14          CHAIR AHMADI: Okay. Thank you, sir.

15          It appears that you have lived most of your life  
16 in southern California.

17          MR. VIDAL: Yes.

18          CHAIR AHMADI: What are some of the issues you  
19 think are important to the southern Californians that  
20 would not be so important in the northern part of the  
21 state and vice versa?

22          MR. VIDAL: Well, the state is so large. We have  
23 people living alongside the beach that are trying to block  
24 beach access to people. You have northern California, you  
25 have logging concerns, loss of jobs. In the central part

1 of the California in the southern part of the state,  
2 there's issue about water, growing food, jobs. So there  
3 is a variety of different issues and concerns and  
4 interests that specific group has.

5           If you're familiar with the city of Bell, you  
6 probably heard about their concerns about their  
7 administration, their city administration. And you know,  
8 now you see activism amongst that group.

9           Where were the checks and balances? Just now  
10 they're being posted by the State Controller on a website.  
11 Prior to that, who knows how many other cities have  
12 undergone the same problem.

13           But this has to be taken into consideration by  
14 the Commission when you divide these districts up, because  
15 their concerns are just as valid as the people in the  
16 south as it is in the north. And it can be difficult, but  
17 it has to be done to draw up these districts. And it may  
18 not be acceptable to some, but I think we need to balance  
19 out the population and people with special interests. And  
20 to answer their concerns and to get the appropriate and  
21 needed representation that would speak up for those  
22 concerns.

23           CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you.

24           So let me just follow up on that part of your  
25 response. Let's say that you're traveling to the north

1 part of the state and meeting with a group of people who  
2 are not happy about some of the issues. They're not  
3 welcoming. How would you handle that? How would you go  
4 about handling that situation?

5 MR. VIDAL: Well, if I'm made a member of this  
6 Commission -- we'll probably run into that problem  
7 throughout the state.

8 The community -- that community say, for  
9 instance, like northern California, first of all, when you  
10 set up the meeting, hopefully we would have the means to  
11 notify these people that we are going to be at a certain  
12 time and place and to bring all their concerns.

13 But I think first of all, we have to let it be  
14 known this is what the proposition says we must do. This  
15 is what we will do. But we will listen. We will listen  
16 to your concerns and take that into consideration. You  
17 have to be open and accept all the concerns about what  
18 they have about their own -- because it's going to effect  
19 their lives and their livelihoods. So we just have to  
20 listen and take that into consideration.

21 Whether or not we can accommodate them, that's  
22 another matter.

23 But each one, each group probably is going to  
24 be -- different groups are going to be vying for that  
25 interest, that acknowledgement that, yes, you have a

1 concern, but, you know, so do these other people. And  
2 that's going to be the difficult part, to satisfy and  
3 accommodate both groups of people within a certain  
4 district.

5           CHAIR AHMADI: Not only to accommodate that, but  
6 maybe perhaps in terms of the time line and the deadlines  
7 that are set in the law for the Commission's work. So  
8 given that we have a very short period of time, do you  
9 have any -- in your mind, do you have any ideas about how  
10 to manage that part of the responsibility?

11           MR. VIDAL: Well, first of all, of course,  
12 logistically you set up your meeting days and times. But  
13 I think we can utilize those existing entities that  
14 already exist, the League of California Women's voters,  
15 Chamber of Commerces, some organizations within that  
16 community, contact them and let them know this is what  
17 you're going to do. We're going to meet. Let your people  
18 know we're going to meet at this time, this place. So  
19 bring your concerns and show up. And discuss with us --  
20 tell us what you want, what you need.

21           But I think we need to set those up probably very  
22 quickly throughout the state and somehow where you can  
23 encompass a greater amount of people in a specific area.  
24 Some people might have to drive a little further than  
25 others, but hey, this is their opportunity initially. I

1 don't know if we would have time to do a second hearing,  
2 have a second meeting. But it's within I would say within  
3 the first couple two or three months you should be on the  
4 road holding these meetings at the very least. The second  
5 month maybe, depending on the training and getting  
6 everybody on Board and looking at voter what information  
7 do we need from these people.

8 CHAIR AHMADI: Okay. Thank you, sir.

9 I have a quick question, like a follow-up  
10 question based on the response on your application. And  
11 I'm just curious to know. You're talking about your  
12 recognition of racial problems between inmates. That  
13 was part of my question when I asked you the first one  
14 about the values and all that. Could you tell me more  
15 about that, what you mean by that, just clarification?

16 MR. VIDAL: Oh, of course. Always you had racial  
17 concerns. We had the black population, the white,  
18 Hispanic, and very few Asians. But there was always that  
19 tension existing. It was always there. At that time, we  
20 segregated inmates by race in specific cells. Now they're  
21 trying to mix those. And that's not always possible.

22 MS. HAMEL: Five minutes.

23 MR. VIDAL: But that was always a concern, racial  
24 problems, fights. And that was new to me at that level  
25 and that extreme. So I quickly became aware of that fact

1 in prison.

2 CHAIR AHMADI: Okay. Thank you, sir.

3 Since I have only five minutes, let me ask one  
4 more question. So this last question, who, if anyone  
5 encouraged you to apply for this position or for the  
6 position of the Commission?

7 MR. VIDAL: No one. I did it myself. I saw it  
8 and I said that might be interesting to do, to take part  
9 in this.

10 CHAIR AHMADI: Okay. Thank you, sir.

11 MR. VIDAL: Sure.

12 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Ms. Camacho.

13 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Hello, Mr. Vidal.

14 Kind of building upon what Mr. Nasir asked you,  
15 there is a tension within the prison population and it's a  
16 serious issue. How are those tensions between the  
17 incarcerated similar or different from the racial tensions  
18 that exist outside the prison walls?

19 MR. VIDAL: Well, in prison, they don't have that  
20 much access to weapons. They make their own weapons. But  
21 as far as guns and that type of thing, they don't have  
22 access to it. So it's easy on the streets for one gang  
23 member to assault another on another street.

24 But it's the same -- you have these prison gangs  
25 now and within the prison gangs themselves there's even

1 some conflict between from block to block. Even though  
2 maybe they might be Hispanic, you might have two or three  
3 areas within a couple mile radius where you have two or  
4 three, four different succinct groups. This is my  
5 territory.

6           So it's always difficult. Even though you may  
7 have a community like Hispanics, it's always difficult to  
8 tell who is representing what group, what neighborhood,  
9 what area. And on the streets it's more defined. They  
10 know exactly where they stand, where they are. They're  
11 cognizant of the fact this is my street. And if I go over  
12 here, you know, I could assault this person.

13           In prison it's ongoing -- sometimes until the  
14 inmate gets to know different -- his people, his friends.  
15 So that's a difference.

16           VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Okay. In your application, you  
17 describe the inequities of the current redistricting  
18 approach. Could you describe characteristics of an  
19 improved system?

20           MR. VIDAL: Well, as I mentioned earlier, it  
21 would maybe be more reflective of the areas. If we make a  
22 change in a district of boundaries, it would take into  
23 consideration more areas where special interests lie and  
24 seek out those areas and try for the representative to be  
25 more answerable to those specific needs, concerns, issues.

1           A perfect district, I don't know if it exists.  
2 There will be, can be one. People are people. And  
3 they're going to want to protect their own.

4           But it has to be done. And some people may not  
5 get what they desire. Hopefully, they'll get some of what  
6 they want. But it's going to be very difficult. And some  
7 people are not going to be happy with the process. But  
8 you know, the Commission has to do the best they can.

9           VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Do you think this system will have  
10 issues or do you think this system that is going to be  
11 implemented if you get on to the system will be adequate?

12           MR. VIDAL: There may be after a while -- until  
13 the next Census, there might have to be some adjustments.

14           But legally I don't know if that can be done.  
15 That would probably require new legislation to change  
16 districts after they've been set by the Commission. Based  
17 on results or from the votes taken and registration of  
18 voters, that's an unknown.

19           But legally, I think it can be done in concert  
20 with the Legislature, State Legislature. I don't know if  
21 the provision if that can be adjusted, but I'm sure there  
22 will be some concerns there and some changes might have to  
23 be made in the future.

24           VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Okay. You talked about these areas  
25 of interest, these communities of interest. In your mind,

1 you've kind of provided us an idea of what some of these  
2 communities of interest might have. Can you kind of  
3 say -- kind of elaborate in the sense of our communities  
4 of interest involving racial or ethnic commonality more  
5 important than other kinds of communities of interest?  
6 Why and why not?

7           MR. VIDAL: Well, it's not -- it should be well  
8 known there are -- especially in the city of Los Angeles,  
9 South Central, you have a mix of Hispanic and black and  
10 white, communities that are in conflict. At schools you  
11 have almost daily race riots. So those will have to be  
12 addressed one way or the other.

13           Whether or not we can ever change that, I don't  
14 know if that's possible. But an attempt must be made to  
15 maybe include those small isolated communities into  
16 another group, change boundaries so they can be -- feel  
17 like they're more of a community. They're not isolated.  
18 They're not divided from the main stream core of voters.  
19 So that attempt will have to be made by the Commission and  
20 looked at and based on the data received from the Census,  
21 where those issues lie.

22           Now, it's probably -- you have a big influx of  
23 Hispanics coming across the border legally, illegally,  
24 that are populating a lot of these communities. And  
25 that's going to have to be looked at as well. I know

1 there's a big influx in Los Angeles County. And those are  
2 going to have to be looked at as well, dealt with.

3 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: With these communities of interest,  
4 there is also you have to take into consideration the  
5 Voting Rights Act. How do you think when you're  
6 redistricting how the public comments that you're  
7 receiving from when you go throughout the state and the  
8 Voting Rights Act, how will you integrate those and ensure  
9 that those are met?

10 MR. VIDAL: Well, first of all, you have to tell  
11 that public that during that meeting federally this is  
12 what we have to do. We can't -- we have to follow this  
13 law. Like it or not, that's just the way it is. It's the  
14 law and that's what the Commission will follow. And go  
15 from there, you know. This is what we must do. And  
16 whether or not these people like it or not, that's just  
17 the law. That's the way it, and they have to accept it.

18 But we can try to -- I don't know. We could try  
19 to deal with their concerns or fears. Maybe they feel  
20 that if you change our boundaries, you're going to bring  
21 this other group, this minority group and lump them with  
22 us. I mean, what is that going to do to our neighborhood,  
23 that type of thing. We have to somehow get passed those  
24 fears and get them talking to each other somehow. Utilize  
25 those community organizations that they could help out

1 with the process.

2 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Thank you.

3 Looking through your application, you've spent a  
4 majority of your career within the correctional facilities  
5 and those people can be pretty frightening, at least to  
6 me. What has your experience taught you about humanity in  
7 general in working in that environment?

8 MR. VIDAL: Well, working in prison is nothing  
9 like you would imagine. People really don't understand.  
10 There is a saying it's the toughest beat in the state.  
11 Yeah, I guess so.

12 My two younger brothers work for the Los Angeles  
13 Police Department, and they used to kid me because they  
14 got to carry guns and all I had was a whistle when I first  
15 started. So that was a difference. Now, of course,  
16 they're better trained. They got more equipment to deal  
17 with.

18 But I learned that if you give them respect, show  
19 them respect, they in turn will give you that respect. I  
20 didn't ask any -- I never really had any problems because  
21 I addressed them as "sir. Yes, sir. What can I do for  
22 you? What can I help you with?"

23 Of course, you had those inmates that were  
24 aggressive, but you know, I showed them respect. And I  
25 dealt with them in that manner. And I got that respect

1 back.

2           So I think if you have to -- they're still human  
3 beings. Of course, you know, their maybe a little more  
4 different than you and I in some aspect, culturally,  
5 socially, but you just have to accept them for what they  
6 are. And you go from there and try -- I just try to keep  
7 them from fighting amongst each other or attacking me.  
8 But that's how I dealt with them. Just gave them some  
9 respect, help them as much as I could. Explained to them  
10 why I couldn't do something for them. And they seemed to  
11 understand that, because they accepted that.

12           I keep thinking when I was on transportation, we  
13 pick them up at Chino and load them up at 4:30 in the  
14 morning. And I would give a speech to the inmates. There  
15 was a lot of old timers and you could look at felons and I  
16 told them what was going to happen. It would take one  
17 inmate, and I'd take the handcuffs off them. And I would  
18 give them all the lunches. And I would say, "This is your  
19 best friend. He's going to give you lunches. Show him  
20 some respect."

21           And I told them the radio belongs to the driver.  
22 Anybody doesn't like the radio, what we're listening to,  
23 you loss the radio. And of course some of the guys like  
24 country western, and they all loved to listen the country  
25 western after a while.

1           But after a while, they got to know me on my  
2 route, because of course we were transporting them  
3 throughout the state for several years. I was on there  
4 six years. And they got to know me. They know what to  
5 expect.

6           One time coming from Vacaville the air  
7 conditioner went out on bus. I stopped at an AM/PM,  
8 Circle, whatever and got two bags of ice. I said, "This  
9 is for you. Keep cool. I'm sorry." I explained the  
10 situation, adapted to it. Help yourself to ice, but don't  
11 overdo it, but spread it out amongst yourself. And keep  
12 cool. I said, "I'm sorry. This is all I can do for you."

13           VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: In your application, you also  
14 performed various other duties. And one of them was  
15 background checks on candidates from all over California  
16 in all walks of life. What have you learned from that  
17 work?

18           MR. VIDAL: Well, most of our applicants came  
19 from Los Angeles County, San Bernardino County, Inland  
20 Empire. Then we started to do recruitment in the southern  
21 part of the state because they were going to built prisons  
22 in Santa Nella and then Blythe. In Blythe, four prisons.

23           So not only naturally we went out into those  
24 communities, El Centro and Blythe to recruit for this job.  
25 And you know, pay was real good. The benefits were

1 outstanding. So we had a lot of farm workers, a lot of  
2 guys that were flipping burgers. So we did the same  
3 background and then also from L.A. County where you had a  
4 little different type of applicant.

5           So you know, you just can't -- you have to look  
6 at each individual individually and look at him. Will he  
7 meet the minimum qualifications? Some have different  
8 experiences. You have to take those into consideration.  
9 So there is a wide variety in the southern part of the  
10 state, well, throughout the state, but especially in  
11 southern California.

12           And then we start recruiting in the central  
13 valley, Bakersfield, Fresno for those prisons. And there  
14 again you had a different type of worker, more  
15 agricultural, dairy farmers. So a lot of them didn't  
16 really know what the job was. They just saw the pay  
17 scales. So we had to explain to them. We recruited in  
18 that area, too. And there again, you had a different --  
19 not a sophisticated candidate as you did in the Los  
20 Angeles area from the Kern County area or from the  
21 southern California, El Centro, and Blythe area. So you  
22 had two different areas with three distinct type of  
23 differences and candidates. But a lot of them became good  
24 correctional officers and promoted up. Some became  
25 wardens.

1           VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Thank you.

2           MS. HAMEL: Five minutes.

3           VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Thank you.

4           As a Commissioner, you'll be required to speak at  
5 public meetings and open meetings. And I notice that in  
6 your application there's not a lot of public speaking  
7 information on there. Will you be comfortable being in an  
8 open situation like this? Because as a Commissioner, you  
9 have the Bagley-Keene that you have to follow and you're  
10 going to be talking at meetings and communicating. Can  
11 you tell me or explain to me or give me some examples  
12 where you've been put into that situation?

13           MR. VIDAL: I think I'd be comfortable in open  
14 meetings like that. I normally sit on that side of the  
15 table as opposed to this side in my past experiences.

16           But if I -- I'm willing to learn and understand  
17 what has to be accomplished. I think that's -- you have  
18 to lay a foundation as to what we're going to do, what we  
19 will do. We work from there. Be very knowledgeable when  
20 they get on that side of the table in telling, explaining  
21 the process to the individual communities where we meet.

22           And I have to adopt it. I can do that. Once I  
23 learn what has to be -- trained, the information we have  
24 to learn and disseminate, I'll be able to do that.

25           VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Okay. In your mind, what are the

1 fundamental principles or philosophies each Commissioner  
2 needs to develop in maps that will not be overturned on  
3 the legal challenge?

4 MR. VIDAL: Well, is it -- are these boundaries,  
5 these districts, these maps, are they legitimate? Do they  
6 meet the requirements? Do they take into consideration  
7 the different group, the special interest groups? Do they  
8 answer or discuss or encompass their concerns, their  
9 interests to be legitimate or legal boundary, district?

10 But like I said before, there's some people that  
11 won't like the map, will not be happy with it. But that's  
12 just the way -- as long as we meet our goals, our legal  
13 responsibilities, that's just going to have to be our  
14 recommendation.

15 And I don't know if we could probably look at the  
16 previous Census data from -- well, ten years ago and look  
17 at the boundaries and see the differences as to what  
18 happened and what that data showed ten years ago, what  
19 this new data shows, and what districts were developed as  
20 a result of that old data and see if changes would either  
21 harm or improve that district meeting those concerns being  
22 answering those communities of interests.

23 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Thank you. That's all the  
24 questions I have.

25 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Ms. Spano.

1 MS. SPANO: Thank you. Good afternoon.

2 MR. VIDAL: Hi.

3 MS. SPANO: In your corrections experience, you  
4 mention that you encountered different types of racial  
5 problems that you may have supervised. And I was  
6 interested in knowing how you were able to remain  
7 fair-minded in resolving these situations and in your  
8 decision making?

9 MR. VIDAL: Well, first of all, it's pretty  
10 obvious I'm Hispanic. So I could identify with some of  
11 their concerns. And I think that helped me with a lot of  
12 the Hispanic and black inmates.

13 But I didn't wear it on my sleeve. I just tried  
14 to be myself and earn their respect. And I think I earned  
15 their respect.

16 I know I didn't put it down on my application,  
17 but I understand Spanish and I can carry on a  
18 conversation. But you know, I was trained to be an  
19 interpreter for the State. You had to pass a test. I  
20 never passed a test. I never really for the state an  
21 interpreter. But I would carry conversations with inmates  
22 all the time in Spanish. I can understand that.

23 I think that's one of my shortcomings. I wish I  
24 spent more -- be more proficient in an official Spanish  
25 language skills. But I'm not -- I didn't major in

1 Spanish. So I'm lacking there. But I can carry on a  
2 conversation pretty good in Spanish. But I was just me.  
3 I don't know how to explain it, but I earned that respect  
4 and I carried on that respect.

5           When I was a supervisor in the background unit, I  
6 made sure that -- of course, back then we still had  
7 affirmative action before it was done away with. But my  
8 group of people, we had a good mix of black, Hispanic,  
9 white, and I recruited some Asian-Filipinos because there  
10 was none there. And some of these turned out to be some  
11 of the best investigators I had. But I always made sure I  
12 had a good mix to meet that criteria at the time. But  
13 even when it was done away with by the State, I still  
14 wanted to see that good mix of racial balance. And I  
15 tried to keep eight women and eight men, keep it even.  
16 Whether or not that was kosher, I don't know. But that's  
17 what I do.

18           MS. SPANO: It sounds like Corrections began to  
19 recruit from El Centro, Blythe, and L.A. County and this  
20 diverse pool. And did you see any dynamics in the work  
21 group environment that changed? And how did you handle  
22 it? Was there a lot of racial tension not only with  
23 correctional inmates but among your staff as well?

24           MR. VIDAL: Among my staff, it was never really  
25 part of -- I didn't witness anything amongst my staff

1 members.

2           Inmates, of course, yeah. There is that racial  
3 divide and that tension.

4           But the workforce, I think it's even gotten worse  
5 as far as candidates, the people, the kids we have to hire  
6 nowadays. At one time, they couldn't smoke marijuana for  
7 five years. Now it's within one year. Illegal --  
8 controlled substances, any use was automatic withhold.  
9 Now it's within the last ten years. So we've had to  
10 adjust our minimum qualifications to the population  
11 otherwise you wouldn't be able to hire anybody, basically.

12           But the work ethic has suffered. And we saw that  
13 a lot and a design in that. And unfortunately, we had to  
14 adjust -- I hear we had to adjust -- our entrance  
15 examination had to be adjusted to the incoming because so  
16 many people were failing. So they had to adjust the  
17 questions and make them easier for the new work group. So  
18 there was a change in work ethic and the knowledge that  
19 some of these people, here you're going to make them piece  
20 officers and they don't know how to spell, write a report,  
21 and it was frightening. But some became good officers,  
22 good administrators.

23           So I know the warden at CIM, the new warden, he's  
24 immigrated. He went to night school and got his GED and  
25 now he's a warden. He went on and got his Masters. I

1 think he's working on his Doctorate now. So it is  
2 possible. Depends on the person if they want to improve  
3 themselves. So it is possible.

4 MS. SPANO: Knowing they lowered the  
5 requirements, and at the time you applied as a  
6 correctional officer, I imagine those requirements are  
7 pretty high, how does that make you feel when they have to  
8 reduce the requirements and knowing that you have a strong  
9 work ethic?

10 MR. VIDAL: It upset me a little bit, because if  
11 you lower the requirement, you're going to have an  
12 increase in withholds, people that you take out off of the  
13 eligibility list. So if you dumb down the test, well  
14 you're going to get more problems. The racial clearance  
15 and withholds is going to shift tremendously.

16 And here they want X number of -- at the academy  
17 wants X number of applicants, 200 to fill the academy.  
18 But maybe you only have 100 good applicant. Where are you  
19 going to get the rest of them?

20 So the administrators would come down to my  
21 office and we put out the word bring all the wobblers, and  
22 our chief would just sign off. If you look good -- of  
23 course, the sergeant would have to put down certain  
24 points. They meet this, this, this. And our chief would  
25 just have to sign off and hope they pass.

1           So that was a little disheartening. It's a lot  
2 easier than what I first started. But that's just the way  
3 the business is.

4           MS. SPANO: What similarities and differences do  
5 you foresee working on the Commission versus your  
6 experience as a lieutenant special agent with the CDCR?

7           MR. VIDAL: Well, I've looked at some of the  
8 demographics or the pool of applicants and you have quite  
9 a few lawyers, doctorates in education and whatever. And  
10 that's a little -- not intimidating, but I said, okay.  
11 But I can work with those type of people. If I'm in a  
12 supportive role, if they want to take the helm, be my  
13 guest. But I'm willing to support whatever needs to be  
14 done.

15           And there's some people that have more talents  
16 than others. But with my experience, I think I can help  
17 out tremendously in various areas. So I'm not that  
18 intimidated. But yes, it is a little -- when you're  
19 surrounded by lawyers and Doctorates, but here I have just  
20 a bachelor's. But I think I can deal with that and show  
21 that I can do the job and am willing to do the job.

22           MS. SPANO: Thank you.

23           You mentioned that in your application after you  
24 became aware the Voters First Act, you studied the state  
25 and federal district boundaries. Tell me what your

1 thoughts are about the impact the lines have made and how  
2 it impacts the work of the Commissioner.

3           MR. VIDAL: Well, it's going to be difficult. If  
4 we take the boundaries now, like I said earlier, and look  
5 at the data from the last Census and then compare it to  
6 what -- we're going to see a shift in population,  
7 especially with these economic -- this economic climate.  
8 You're going to see a lot of shifts in population groups,  
9 and then some people will be more isolated than others.  
10 So it's going to have to take considerable amount of work  
11 to try to make them include all those different groups  
12 within that district.

13           Like I said earlier, the district I was from, you  
14 know, I wonder why it was within -- I don't know, 15, 20  
15 mile radius and then it just seemed to bottleneck down to  
16 a two, three mile area, and then expand out to another.  
17 This doesn't seem right. I mean, are they reaching out to  
18 this group of Republicans or Democrats because, you know,  
19 they've expanded here in this area as much as possible?  
20 And then they want those people so this person can be  
21 elected? That's not right. I don't think it's right.

22           Both should be equally balanced in that specific  
23 area. Because some areas may have considerable amount of  
24 interest and differences in their interest, concerns.

25           Like I said earlier, you have people living in

1 Malibu. What do they have to do with people living in  
2 South Central? I mean, you have a world of difference,  
3 Beverly Hills -- so you have quite a bit of difference.  
4 So those groups should be need to be probably divided,  
5 equalized within that boundary.

6 MS. SPANO: How would you ensure that you would  
7 remain impartial and set aside any personal beliefs or  
8 opinions when conducting Commission work?

9 MR. VIDAL: I've done that -- I've attempted that  
10 during my entire career. I just accept people as they  
11 are, what they show me. Of course, I have to earn their  
12 respect as well. But I give them that respect.

13 But I'm adaptable. I think I can accept that  
14 each one of us is different that brings different traits,  
15 our abilities to the group. And we just have to deal with  
16 that.

17 Was there another part of that question?

18 MS. SPANO: In your previous work experience,  
19 describe how you were able to remain impartial.

20 MR. VIDAL: Oh. Well, I had to be. If I was a  
21 supervisor, I couldn't show any favoritism to any specific  
22 sergeant or agent. You know, I laid down my expectations  
23 this is what we will do. If you want to get any work past  
24 me, this is what needs to be done and go from there.

25 But if I see someone that is having difficulty,

1 would bring them in and talk to them and find out what the  
2 problem was; lack of training, a lack of initiative and  
3 deal with that person individually. That's how I always  
4 attempted to help those that needed the help, extra help.

5           And some people are just not made out to be  
6 investigators. They can't manage their time, complete X  
7 number of cases per month. So some people are just not  
8 capable of doing that. And that's okay. Maybe they can  
9 do something else at the prison. But normally they would  
10 return back to the prison.

11           MS. SPANO: During public hearings, the  
12 Commission hears testimony from concerned citizens that  
13 the Census data includes prisoners from the local prison  
14 and migrate farm workers who do not reside in the area and  
15 are not reflective of their community. The citizens are  
16 asking that this minority data not be counted in the  
17 formation of their district. How would you respond to  
18 those concerns?

19           MR. VIDAL: Well, the Census counted these  
20 people. So we have to take that into consideration.  
21 There's no way to get around that. Of course, some of  
22 these inmates can't vote yet. Farm workers, some may  
23 vote. I don't know.

24           But they have to be spoken to. They have to be  
25 represented. And that's just the way the law reads. And

1 we have to follow those directives. We have no other way  
2 we can deal with it. And we have to look address their  
3 concerns as well. Because I'm sure, you know, they have  
4 needs. So we have to address those issues as well.

5 MS. SPANO: Do you believe they should be  
6 counted?

7 MR. VIDAL: Well, they have been. So yeah, we  
8 have to take their needs into consideration as well.

9 MS. SPANO: And why do you believe that? How  
10 does it impact your decisions on, say, redistricting?

11 MR. VIDAL: Well, it's going to be tough to work  
12 around. Because like I said, the migrant workers might be  
13 held in travel. They may have been in a certain area  
14 picking this fruit and then bam, they're gone. They're  
15 working another area, another state. Inmates are isolated  
16 for a specific reason and so you have to deal with them,  
17 what you have, what the data shows. It may change. Those  
18 numbers may change. But we have to address those numbers  
19 and try to deal with them individually as individual  
20 groups and look at their concerns and needs. Make it part  
21 of the district.

22 MS. SPANO: Okay. Are you comfortable knowing as  
23 a Commissioner if you're selected that the decisions you  
24 make will impact California for the next ten years? How  
25 comfortable are you with that?

1           MR. VIDAL: Well, if the Commission does a good  
2 job. If we feel -- I'm on the Commission. If the  
3 Commission does a good job to the best of their abilities  
4 following the law, the regulations of the Voters Rights  
5 Act, that's what you're left with. You just have to do  
6 your best you can based on what you were given in the law  
7 and in following those directives.

8           And you know, so like I said earlier, some people  
9 may not like it. They may not like the new district, but  
10 that's just the way it is based on the data we received.

11          MS. SPANO: Are you comfortable being scrutinized  
12 in public, making decisions in a transparent manner?

13          MR. VIDAL: Not at all. I have nothing to hide.

14          MS. HAMEL: Five minutes.

15          MS. SPANO: Do you have any experience with the  
16 media, interacting with the media?

17          MR. VIDAL: On occasion, we would have some cases  
18 where special interests would contact us, the media, on a  
19 candidate, and we were told to refer everything to  
20 Sacramento. But I would try to deal with as much, give  
21 out as much information as I could to that reporter, that  
22 news station. But try to accommodate them as much as I  
23 could. But if they went beyond what I was allowed to them  
24 give, I would just refer them up to legal or headquarters  
25 office, Sacramento.

1 MS. SPANO: Describe the issues of concerns  
2 affecting the citizens of Inland Empire region where you  
3 live. Which of these issues do you foresee the Citizens  
4 Redistricting Commission hearing about?

5 MR. VIDAL: You're going to talk about jobs,  
6 first of all. The Inland Empire is -- well, personally  
7 the value of my home has dropped considerably. But you  
8 have a lot of foreclosures. And there's still to come  
9 more foreclosures in the future.

10 So you're talking about jobs, economic growth,  
11 whether or not we can -- the districts we draw up, whether  
12 they can help reflect that. But can we create jobs? I  
13 don't think so. That's not our job. We have to address  
14 the data and draw the district based on the information we  
15 have. But that's one of the main concerns is jobs and  
16 economic development. And that's it really.

17 MS. SPANO: How will you approach hearing from  
18 diverse groups in different regions of the state about  
19 their areas of concern?

20 MR. VIDAL: Well, you just have to be open and  
21 accept their concerns, listen to their concerns, take  
22 those into consideration. Look at the data if it reflects  
23 their concerns, then you deal with that individually -- or  
24 with that community. And try to resolve the issues that  
25 they bring forth and by drawing these districts.

1 MS. SPANO: What do you expect to be the more  
2 challenging duties and responsibilities of the Commission?

3 MR. VIDAL: Probably dealing -- drawing the maps  
4 themselves, dealing with the public. If we follow all the  
5 directives of the proposition, all we can do is do the  
6 best job we can and go from there. But it's going to be  
7 difficult to address some issues, some people, their  
8 concerns, but we have to take into consideration these  
9 other isolated groups and include them in the process as  
10 well.

11 MS. SPANO: What kind of demands on your time do  
12 you foresee as a Commissioner?

13 MR. VIDAL: Oh, right off -- in January 2011, I  
14 think the Commission needs to meet and start hit the  
15 ground running. And it's going to be very intensive. I'm  
16 used to working I've worked up to 10, 15, 16 hours days --  
17 I've done that. I'm a little older, but I can still do  
18 that if required. But that's going to be the big  
19 question, the big --

20 MS. HAMEL: One minute.

21 MR. VIDAL: -- problem is what do we do now?  
22 Here you are as the Commission, a member. You're going to  
23 have to make some hard decisions quickly and hope for the  
24 best.

25 MS. SPANO: How do you see the role of

1 Commissioner impacting your current lifestyle?

2 MR. VIDAL: I'm going to be busy away from home.

3 I realize that. My wife realizes that.

4 Like I said, I'm retired. I have the time  
5 available. I was working as a retired annuitant with the  
6 background unit until the Governor laid us off. But I was  
7 back working as a retired annuitant with the background  
8 unit helping train new sergeants. And like I said, until  
9 we were laid off.

10 MS. SPANO: Sure. Thank you.

11 MS. HAMEL: Five seconds.

12 MS. SPANO: Five seconds, yeah.

13 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: I have several questions.  
14 I don't know if the panel has follow-up questions?

15 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: I just have one.

16 Mr. Vidal, you were saying that you can speak  
17 Spanish. At these meetings you're going to be going out  
18 to various locations. Would you feel comfortable if at a  
19 meeting to speak Spanish if somebody wanted that?

20 MR. VIDAL: Well, that's -- I can see a problem  
21 there, because you can have other people in the group  
22 maybe that are saying, wait a minute. What are you  
23 saying? So I don't want to show any favoritism.

24 But if we get addressed with issues and have an  
25 interpreter someone -- interpreter from the crowd or from

1 the audience, you know, "Would you please interpret what  
2 I'm saying, what I'm answering, so there's no other --  
3 there's no question as to what's being said between us?"

4           But yeah, I would feel comfortable doing that.  
5 But the problem is what does it appear to this person that  
6 does not speak Spanish? How are they going to feel about  
7 this? So I think that has to be taken into consideration.

8           I don't know if we could meet -- we probably  
9 couldn't meet after the meeting and speak to them  
10 individually. But hey just ask someone to interpret for  
11 us, for the other group, those that don't speak Spanish.

12           VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Thank you. That's my only  
13 question.

14           MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Assume that you're on the  
15 Commission and you're at a hearing in an area that is  
16 known for pretty high levels of gang participation. Over  
17 the course of the hearing you hear from several  
18 individuals who, because of their appearance or demeanor,  
19 you recognize as being either a gang affiliated or former  
20 inmates. What perception will you have of those  
21 individuals and their community?

22           MR. VIDAL: Excuse me. What perception?

23           MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Correct. What perception  
24 will you have of those individuals and their community?

25           MR. VIDAL: Well, you have to be very careful how

1 you speak to these people. They want and demand respect.  
2 So you have to show that respect, because they don't want  
3 to be belittled in front of their hommies, their family.  
4 So you have to show that level of respect as well.

5           Beyond that, you just have to accept them as  
6 individuals. Whether or not they can vote, I don't know  
7 because they are convicted felons. But you just have to  
8 address them in a professional manner. You can't talk  
9 down to them. You just don't do that.

10           MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: I shouldn't be concerned  
11 that their voice would count any less with you?

12           MR. VIDAL: No. I would listen to them. I mean,  
13 you have to. You have open meetings. That's what they're  
14 for. They may have some legitimate concerns. So you have  
15 to take that into consideration, even though they're gang  
16 members. And after a while, you can spot them. I mean  
17 with my experience I can -- not always right, but you have  
18 a fairly good idea and can you spot them. But you just  
19 have to accept them and listen to them and if they have a  
20 legitimate concern, you have to take note and take note of  
21 that and deal with that.

22           MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: It's my understanding that  
23 certain minority groups have a difficult time engaging  
24 with people they see as part of the established power  
25 group, particularly law enforcement. Do you have any

1 concerns that your presence on the Commission that the  
2 citizens would have a difficult time coming to you? They  
3 would perceive you as law enforcement and have a difficult  
4 time coming and speaking openly to you?

5 MR. VIDAL: Do I look like a cop? I don't know.  
6 I think it's the way I carry myself, maybe, yeah, it would  
7 appear to some people they can tell because they've been  
8 around. But if I'm open and they see I'm open to their  
9 concerns, I communicate to them, I show respect, I think  
10 that will fall by the wayside.

11 Now, I understand when you have a lot of  
12 immigrants that come across the border, they're used to a  
13 different political system and, yeah, they look at law  
14 enforcement as a problem because there's so much graft and  
15 other problems with law enforcement in other countries.  
16 And, yeah, they would be more suspicious of me, of the  
17 Commission. And they may not be as forthcoming.

18 But I think if we publicize these committees,  
19 these meetings in these communities and we get the word  
20 out that we're open, we want to listen to their concerns  
21 and utilize some of these organizations locally, make it  
22 known that we will listen to you and we will take you into  
23 consideration, that may ease their concerns, their fear of  
24 speaking out.

25 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: What is your vision for

1 how the Commission should go out and solicit information  
2 from the public? You've talked a little bit about  
3 meetings and partnering with certain outreach groups. But  
4 I wonder if you could tell me in a little more detail  
5 where you think these meetings should occur and your sort  
6 of vision for how the meetings should be held and when and  
7 where?

8           MR. VIDAL: Well, in a certain area in a certain  
9 city that has a community building, a meeting place, a  
10 high school, elementary school auditorium, something  
11 they're all familiar with, that would be a good place to  
12 hold a meeting.

13           Like I said, it should be well publicized in  
14 using these different local organizations to put the word  
15 out we are going to have a meeting. What we want and will  
16 accomplish, what we want to hear from them about their  
17 concerns and have something like this set up.

18           And I would hope it would be recorded in some  
19 manner like we are today for the record. I think it's  
20 very important it be recorded so there's no  
21 misinterpretation of anything that is said or done,  
22 because there may be allegations brought against the  
23 Committee. But if it's on tape, it's been recorded and if  
24 there is no evidence of that, they can't criticize the  
25 Commission. So I think that's very important.

1                   But you know, we can't drag people to the  
2 meetings. They have to show up. And we may have a good  
3 response with the cities; areas we may not. But we just  
4 have to deal with what we have and go from there.

5                   MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: How do you think the race  
6 and ethnicity of California's residents impact their  
7 representational preferences when they participate in the  
8 political process?

9                   MR. VIDAL: Well, I think it has a big factor. I  
10 know in one district in the Inland Empire we have a  
11 Hispanic representative and he always wins the Latino  
12 vote. So I think they identify with that person and they  
13 think that person can do something for them. They're  
14 familiar with the name, Hispanic name, and I think they  
15 have a tendency to vote for that person.

16                   Right now there's some divisions now even amongst  
17 the Democratic organization in the Inland Empire and you  
18 see a division -- because I like to read the letters to  
19 the editor. And some people are voicing concerns about  
20 why are we having these divisions amongst the Latino  
21 organizations? And they're heavily democratic, of course.  
22 But they see a division and they're questioning why is  
23 this happening. I don't have the answer. I don't know  
24 why those leaders are divided over some areas. But I  
25 think it has to do a lot with money.

1           But I think, yeah, it -- well, you have the same  
2 thing in South Central, Watts, they usually elect black  
3 leaders because they identify with that person. I think  
4 that's just human nature I think. Because you want that  
5 person, that elected representative to do something for  
6 you. What can you do for me? And who are they going to  
7 go after? Who are they going to vote for? Someone  
8 they're familiar with. Someone that has the same cultural  
9 experiences, racial experiences that you do. And I think  
10 they tend to vote that way.

11           MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: As you probably know,  
12 we'll be drawing names -- the State Auditor will be  
13 drawing names randomly on November 18th, I believe. And  
14 thereafter, the first eight Commissioners get to choose  
15 the final six. How important will diversity be to you if  
16 you are charged with selecting your six final colleagues?

17           MR. VIDAL: Well, first of all, I'm going to have  
18 to look at the make up of the Commission, the eight  
19 members. And if there's any deficiency there I think that  
20 has to be addressed and it should be pointed out, because  
21 if you get -- you have a presentation of this is going to  
22 be your Committee. And they're all -- three-fourths of  
23 them are a certain ethnic background, wait a minute.  
24 Right off the bat, people are going to think you're  
25 prejudiced already. They're going to be thinking a

1 certain way.

2           So it has to be racially representative of the  
3 make up of the state of the voters. And certain  
4 percentages should be white, Hispanic, and other. I think  
5 that's very important --

6           MS. HAMEL: Five minutes.

7           MR. VIDAL: -- to get over the appearance of  
8 favoritism. I think that's very important. If I'm  
9 elected the first eight, I think my background as a  
10 background investigator, as special agent, I can look into  
11 the remain six candidates and make a good determination  
12 based on the information they provided and whatever other  
13 information is given by the State Auditor as to what the  
14 final six will be.

15           MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Very good. I don't have  
16 any additional questions.

17           Panelists?

18           MS. SPANO: I just have a follow-up. What  
19 demographic characteristics such as race, ethnicity,  
20 gender, sexual orientation, or economic status or other  
21 appear to contribute most heavily to the widest gaps and  
22 interest between the groups and individuals that you  
23 worked with?

24           MR. VIDAL: That I worked with in my profession?

25           MS. SPANO: In your profession or in you

1 personal experience.

2 MR. VIDAL: Well, initially when I first started  
3 with the department, majority were white. And I was told  
4 that if I would promote, I couldn't even take the  
5 sergeants exam until I was there six, seven years. I  
6 said, "Why? You're eligible after three or four years."  
7 They said, "No, that's just the way it is." I said -- and  
8 then I was called when I became a sergeant. I was told I  
9 had to join this Latino organization for correctional  
10 officers. I said, "We're all correctional officers. Why  
11 do I have to join your union?" There's no white  
12 correctional officer organization. There was a black one.  
13 I didn't see that. We were all one group, which they are  
14 now. They have the Correctional Officer Peace Officers  
15 Organization, one union. There's still sub-groups that  
16 meet socially and to promote their interests.

17 But I saw that I witnessed that and I went  
18 through that as well. But you know, I got to where I was.  
19 I retired as a senior special agent, because I just did my  
20 job. I was thorough and I did my job and I looked at  
21 everybody -- I accept everybody for what they were. I had  
22 no qualms about doing that. And I worked with them. And  
23 I built up a pretty good reputation I believe.

24 MS. SPANO: Thank you.

25 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: If there are no further

1 questions from the panel, you've got just over two minutes  
2 if you care to make a closing statement.

3 MR. VIDAL: Excuse me. I suffer from sinus  
4 problems.

5 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: We're all in that boat  
6 these days.

7 MR. VIDAL: But I bring a varied somewhat  
8 different experience to this Committee, to this applicant  
9 pool, but I still -- I think I could make a very good  
10 candidate. I've had a varied number of experiences in  
11 state, working in the state, up and down the state, out of  
12 state, conducting extraditions. I've never been  
13 reprimanded. Never received any adverse action. So I  
14 have a real good working history. I've a good work ethic.  
15 And I have a lot to give to the panel.

16 I don't see myself as a spokesperson or the  
17 Chairman, but I think I can contribute a lot as a  
18 supportive staff member. I'm not afraid to step in and do  
19 the work. That's about all I have to say.

20 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Thank you so much for  
21 coming to speak with us. We can recess until 2:44.

22 MS. SPANO: Thank you.

23 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you.

24 MR. VIDAL: Thank you.

25

1 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Let's go back on record.  
2 We have with us Gregory Beyrer. Mr. Beyrer, are you ready  
3 to begin?

4 MR. BEYRER: I'm ready.

5 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Wonderful. First  
6 question: What specific skills do you believe a good  
7 Commissioner should possess? Of those skills, which do  
8 you possess? Which do you not possess and how will you  
9 compensate for it? Is there anything in your life that  
10 would prohibit or impair your ability to perform all of  
11 the duties of a Commissioner?

12 MR. BEYRER: Beyond the three skills that were  
13 covered in the written application, ability to be  
14 impartial, analytical skills, and appreciation for a  
15 geographic and demographic diversity, I think there are  
16 four additional skills that the successful Commission will  
17 have overall.

18 One is a vision. The Commission has got to know  
19 what the impacts will of their decisions, how California  
20 will be made better by the new maps that they'll be  
21 drawing.

22 I think it's important that the Commission have  
23 time management, because there is a legal deadline when  
24 the maps have to be drawn by. So they have to plan  
25 backward from that and be sure they get all the tasks done

1 on time.

2 I think a third skill or attribute is the legal  
3 and technical knowledge to make sure that the Commission  
4 understands how the federal Constitution and Prop. 11 and  
5 the Voting Rights Act, all the system interact with each  
6 other and the laws.

7 And finally, the fourth and probably the most  
8 important is communication. Commission members need to be  
9 able to listen both to each other. They need to be able  
10 to listen to the experts they work with. And most  
11 importantly to the voting public and the comments on their  
12 proceeding. And of course part of the communication,  
13 being able to speak, to make sure their fellow Commission  
14 members can hear them, understand what they're saying and  
15 make sure the public of course understands the decisions  
16 made by the Commission.

17 I think my strengths are in analytical skills, my  
18 ability to be impartial. And I think my communication  
19 skills are a strength as well.

20 In terms of what I'm missing or where I need to  
21 compensate, I do feel that my appreciation for demographic  
22 diversity is good. My geographic appreciation is good. I  
23 have lived both on the coast. I lived in the valley now.  
24 I've lived in northern, southern California.

25 What I don't have though is I don't have the

1 experience of living in a small town of a rural community.  
2 And I cannot get that of course even in the next couple  
3 months before the Commission starts work. So I'm hoping  
4 that there be members of the Commission who come from  
5 those communities, because the agriculture in particular  
6 is so important to California.

7           And then also I don't have the legal and  
8 technical expertise. I'm not a lawyer. I have worked  
9 with data and done research with data, but I'm not a  
10 trained statistician. And I believe the compensation of  
11 that will come from the expert that the Commission itself  
12 is allowed to hire.

13           And then the last part of the question, the  
14 answer is no. I've worked with -- talked this over with  
15 my employer and my spouse and they're all supportive and  
16 happy I'm here to be an applicant.

17           MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Very good.

18           Describe a circumstance from your personal  
19 experience where you had to work with others to resolve a  
20 conflict or difference of opinion. Please describe the  
21 issue and explain your role in addressing and resolving  
22 the conflict. If you were selected to serve on the  
23 Citizen's Redistricting Commission, tell us how you would  
24 resolve conflicts that may arise among the Commissioners.

25           MR. BEYRER: We have a system called an LMS, or

1 Learn Management System. It's the software we use to  
2 support our online web enhancement structure in our  
3 district. And I'm part of the team that makes the  
4 decisions regarding policies for the system. So we decide  
5 which things users can and cannot do. And we often have  
6 spirited discussions about what tools we want to turn on  
7 and what not to turn on. So that's the conflict I'd like  
8 to focus on.

9           I come from a particular college. I represent  
10 the student and faculty in my particular college. And I  
11 have counterparts in the other colleagues in our district.  
12 And how we work with our conflicts is we work through our  
13 shared interests. We all want a system that is stable,  
14 that will help our users, particularly our users achieve  
15 learning objectives in their classes and we talked to our  
16 differences. I like persuade when possible, compromise  
17 when necessary. And we end up always as long as we're  
18 working from that shared interest having a stable system.  
19 We end up working out what's best for our users.

20           In terms of how I would apply conflict management  
21 at the Commission, I would start with establishing  
22 productive relationships with my fellow Commissioners.  
23 Because after all, it will be 14 Commissioners and we'll  
24 be responsible for the decisions. And see if I can start  
25 by establishing those shared interests. We all want the

1 maps to make California a better place and so I think that  
2 there is a good place to start from there.

3           And, of course, listen to the perspectives that  
4 the others bring if there's any decision, any conflicts.

5           MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: How will the Commission's  
6 work impact the state? Which of these impacts will  
7 improve the state the most? Is there any potential for  
8 the Commission's work to harm the state? And if so, in  
9 what ways?

10           MR. BEYRER: Well, I think the Commission's work  
11 will overall be a strong positive for the state.

12           I think what I like best about this idea is that  
13 the districts will be drawn so that the voters share  
14 something in common more than which party they supported  
15 in the election or the previous few elections. I think  
16 that means the successful candidates in those elections  
17 will appeal to voters with something in common besides  
18 which party they support in the previous election. And as  
19 a result, the voter will feel a connection to the  
20 legislators. There won't just be members of a particular  
21 party, but they will be representatives of their  
22 districts.

23           And I believe that the laws of the Legislature  
24 writes will therefore be better and better meet the needs  
25 of the voters and better meet the needs of their

1 constituents.

2           I think that at the end of this, in a couple of  
3 years, there will be less need for initiatives and fewer  
4 people gathering signatures at the grocery store. So I  
5 think the negative impact will be of folks that will be  
6 out of work who are getting paid collect signatures for  
7 those initiatives.

8           MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Describe a situation where  
9 you've had to work as part of a group to achieve a common  
10 goal. Tell us about the goal, describe your role within  
11 the group, and tell us how the group worked or did not  
12 work collaboratively to achieve this goal.

13           If you are selected to serve on the Citizen's  
14 Redistricting Commission, tell us what you would do to  
15 foster collaboration among the Commissioners and ensure  
16 the Commission meets its legal deadlines.

17           MR. BEYRER: I'm going to stick with my  
18 professional experience. I recently in our sticking with  
19 the LMS, our district transitioned from one LMS to  
20 another. And I was part of the team doing my job that  
21 managed that transition.

22           We had a goal that was to make this transition,  
23 to make it smooth without disrupting the districts  
24 instructional mission. We had thousands of courses to  
25 move. We had tens of thousands of student users to teach

1 the new software that would perform the same role.

2           My role was again representing my faculty and  
3 student users from my college. There were other people on  
4 a team that had the same job as me from the other  
5 colleges. And we also had our technical experts. We had  
6 the IT staff, because they're the ones setting up the  
7 servers and installing the software and those types of  
8 things. We had our district management who were providing  
9 us with fiscal support.

10           And at each decision point how we managed this is  
11 that we made sure everyone's voice was heard. We listened  
12 to all who represented the student faculty and student  
13 users. We listened to of course the technical experts.  
14 And we communicated all those decisions broadly to the  
15 district community as much as possible. We ended up  
16 having a very smooth transition. It went very well. And  
17 I believe it's a testament to the careful planning we did  
18 and also the continuous and effective communication we did  
19 with our users.

20           In terms of how I would do this on the  
21 Commission, I mentioned earlier in terms of conflict  
22 management, I would try to establish some productive  
23 relationships with the other Commissioners initially. I  
24 think that would be the first thing we could do I get to  
25 know each other.

1           And also in terms of meeting the deadline, try to  
2 come up together with a planning guide or process map and  
3 say there's so many decisions we have to make along the  
4 way. And then periodically as we go through and make  
5 those decisions as we reach those milestones, take the  
6 opportunity to do some type of self assessing how our work  
7 is going and of course conspicuous in regular  
8 communication of the public.

9           MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: A considerable amount of  
10 the Commission's work will involve meeting people from all  
11 over California that come from very different backgrounds  
12 and very different perspectives. If you are selected to  
13 serve on the Commission, tell us about the specific skills  
14 you possess that will make you effective in interacting  
15 with the public.

16           MR. BEYRER: I think I've got three skills that  
17 will help make me effective.

18           And one is I have experience communicating with  
19 the public both professionally because I'm a professor  
20 through my professional development. I've of course  
21 presented at conferences and I do some statewide work with  
22 the Faculty California Communities Colleges.

23           Also, personally I was -- for a few years I  
24 served on my neighborhood association's Executive Board.  
25 And so I know I mentioned this in my application that that

1 often involved communicating with the public, setting up  
2 public meetings, collecting input from members of our  
3 neighborhood on various issues.

4 I think a second skill I bring to that is my  
5 listening. And that both is a habit of mine when I'm  
6 talking with people is to make sure that I check my  
7 understanding of what they're saying, especially if it's  
8 an issue where there's some contention or an important  
9 issue.

10 And then finally, I would -- I think that I have  
11 an effective ability to explain or decode jargon or other  
12 types of language, something I have a lot of experience  
13 with through my work and teaching teachers how to use  
14 software and in my previous experience teaching business  
15 people how to use software, because the software manuals  
16 are often not as effective at teaching people how to use  
17 them.

18 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Very good.

19 CHAIR AHMADI, would you like to give your 20  
20 minutes?

21 CHAIR AHMADI: Yes, thank you.

22 Good afternoon, Mr. Beyrer. I'm going to start  
23 with the response to the last question.

24 You mention about teaching at the colleague. Do  
25 you currently teach?

1           MR. BEYRER: Yes, I do. I teach a class. The  
2 regular class I teach is how to be a successful online  
3 student. It has been a couple years since I've taught a  
4 history class, but I do have history teaching experience  
5 as well for college.

6           CHAIR AHMADI: Okay. The reason I ask is it was  
7 not referred on your application I believe. So thank you.

8           In regards to your description of the skills  
9 needed for the Commission's work, question number one, you  
10 mention about vision. It's important to have a vision.  
11 No doubt. Can you tell me a little more about what is  
12 your vision of the Commission's work and what that vision  
13 should be and what would cause you to say that you're  
14 successful in reaching that goal?

15          MR. BEYRER: My vision I think that the short  
16 kind of bumper sticker or bullet point version is the  
17 voters feeling a connection to their legislators that you  
18 know when they see their legislators at the grocery store  
19 or in the neighborhood or whatever, that they know that  
20 legislator is working on behalf of that community.  
21 Because they will share something besides who they voted  
22 for at the last election.

23          In terms of how will I know that vision is  
24 successful? I would love the percentage of eligible  
25 voters who vote in an off-year election to approach what

1 they do in a presidential election. I think that would be  
2 a very clear metric.

3           And then I think I mentioned when I answered the  
4 question about impact, frankly I would like to see fewer  
5 paid signature gatherers at my grocery store, because we  
6 send people to the legislators to write laws. And I'm  
7 a citizen. I appreciate having a voice. But I thought I  
8 exercised my voice when I voted for my legislators. And  
9 this constant barraging of participation is something  
10 that's again good to have, but I think that when there are  
11 fewer of those, that will mean that the voters will  
12 believe their legislators are acting on their behalf.

13           CHAIR AHMADI: You actually answered the next  
14 question I was going to ask in terms of follow up to what  
15 you responded.

16           And just to make sure that I heard you correctly,  
17 so do you think that the redrawing of the maps will solve  
18 all the issues that will probably come up within the next  
19 ten years?

20           MR. BEYRER: I think by the year 2020 and the  
21 second half of this decade every single budget in the  
22 state will be passed on time because of this. Because I  
23 think the legislators will be that responsive to their  
24 voters.

25           CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you.

1           Could you tell me about -- you mention about  
2 milestones as an important factor to consider. What kind  
3 of milestones do you envision?

4           MR. BEYRER: I can imagine that there will at  
5 least be things like hiring or technical experts, creating  
6 a rough schedule for how often you'll be holding public  
7 meetings to discuss our work. You know, not having gone  
8 through a redistricting process before, I can imagine what  
9 it's like to draw on a map, but I know it's more detailed  
10 than that.

11           So I imagine there will be a series of steps that  
12 we need to do to go through before we actually get to the  
13 drawing the maps. You know, getting the report that has  
14 the Census data, making sure that the data reflects the  
15 information that we are asking for, and you know, and then  
16 we have the deadline in the law as well as the time for  
17 public comment making sure that those things are covered.

18           Basically what I'm saying is that there will  
19 be -- my assumption is that heading into the work of the  
20 Commission, the milestones will reveal themselves that  
21 will be things that will say we need to get this done  
22 before we get that done and so forth. And then starting  
23 with that deadline next September and working backwards to  
24 make sure that we have adequate time to get each of the  
25 milestones done.

1 CHAIR AHMADI: Okay. Thank you.

2 You mention that one area that you feel that you  
3 need to gain some experience in that area is living in a  
4 small town or small rural area. Why do you think that's  
5 important to the work of the Commission as a whole?

6 MR. BEYRER: Well, I think that if you have a  
7 group of people who are all made up of urbanites and  
8 suburbanites, there's no way -- there will be legislators  
9 who will represent -- because as big as all the population  
10 centers there are, there will be plenty of districts that  
11 will cover broadly rural areas. And if you have people on  
12 the Commission who are trying to represent the entire  
13 state who don't include that incredibly important  
14 demographic, I think that the Commission's work will not  
15 be thorough.

16 It will be possible for us to represent -- I  
17 mean, we can try of course to represent the interested  
18 people we don't know. But I think that it will be harder  
19 to get public buy-in of the Commission's work in the  
20 public. And if there are people that with say, oh, how  
21 could you possibly draw a district like that, you don't  
22 you realize that the farms here typically go over here to  
23 do their work or sell their goods. And it would be nice  
24 to have that perspective on our Commission.

25 CHAIR AHMADI: Okay. So looking at the flip side

1 of your experience living in major towns, San Francisco,  
2 Bay Area, Sacramento, and I believe you have also lived in  
3 Los Angeles --

4 MR. BEYRER: Uh-huh.

5 CHAIR AHMADI: What values that experience brings  
6 to the work of the Commission in terms of your  
7 understanding of the issues and needs?

8 MR. BEYRER: My experience living in urban  
9 communities is only enhanced my appreciation for  
10 demographic diversity. I know that there is plenty of  
11 demographic diversity in rural communities. But I think  
12 that's when you're living cheek by jowl. People that have  
13 different geographic differences, that only increases the  
14 opportunity to appreciate those differences.

15 I think that at the same time that I mention and  
16 I want the rural perspective to be reflected, I also think  
17 that the majority of California -- I know that the  
18 majority of Californians live in big cities. So  
19 therefore, of course, you have to have that perspective.  
20 It's the same logic that applies to the rural perspective  
21 that we've got to have the urban and the suburban  
22 perspective on the maps that we draw and the work that we  
23 do.

24 I think also that the living space, the  
25 geographic space, how the geography fits into our mind is

1 not the same for people who live in different areas. And  
2 so that's why I think it's important to have those  
3 different perspectives presented.

4 CHAIR AHMADI: Can you give me some examples of the  
5 issues in the major cities?

6 MR. BEYRER: Issues that would draw -- that would  
7 be important for the work of the Commission?

8 CHAIR AHMADI: Correct.

9 MR. BEYRER: Well, certainly I think how we  
10 decide what makes a district and what the people that live  
11 in that district have in common is I think it's going to  
12 be hard I suspect everywhere, but I think in a density  
13 populated area it's going to be harder. Because if you  
14 have a city like Los Angeles with so many millions of  
15 people and there will be X number of Senators or Assembly  
16 districts, those people will be eligible to elect, I think  
17 it's going to be harder to identify where those boundaries  
18 are.

19 I know from my own experience living in Los  
20 Angeles that I lived and I attended school in the west  
21 side for a year and then I moved to downtown. But I still  
22 went to school on the west side. These are two very  
23 different parts of town, yet I felt a member of both  
24 communities. So someone were to look at me as a potential  
25 voter and to decide where would my district be, would i

1 be more important that I elect someone close to where I  
2 live, of course, but also include that where I spent my  
3 time?

4 I think that that urban -- the urban populations  
5 where people live and where people work, they criss-cross  
6 so many different ways it's going to be hard to kind of  
7 unpack that and make distinctive communities that will  
8 make a more -- make for better representation.

9 CHAIR AHMADI: By communities I believe you mean  
10 communities of interest?

11 MR. BEYRER: Yeah.

12 CHAIR AHMADI: So can you elaborate on that in  
13 terms of what other factors are contributing to that  
14 distinction between different communities?

15 MR. BEYRER: Well, we all have -- for each of us,  
16 what makes up identity comes from a variety of sources.  
17 And for some people, their racial background is very  
18 important to their identity. So for those people, they  
19 want to have -- their community will make sure that people  
20 who share that racial background serve or represent them  
21 in the state Legislature.

22 I think for other people it's the line of  
23 business they're in. It's the way it could be whether  
24 they are employees of a particular industry or whatever.

25 I think for some people it will matter that their

1 physical environment will matter more to them. This will  
2 not be easy, I can't imagine, for the Commission to create  
3 these districts that will -- I can't imagine that out of  
4 120 plus four that any one of these will be 100 percent  
5 cohesive for everyone that lives in them. But to the  
6 extent that the Commission can respect how people view  
7 their lives and their identities and those types of things  
8 that it will be an important thing to consider.

9 CHAIR AHMADI: Okay. So should you be selected as  
10 a Commissioner, how would you go about meeting that  
11 challenge? What are some of the steps that you think that  
12 Commissioners should take?

13 MR. BEYRER: Talk to the people. Get input from  
14 the voters. After all, this is all being done for the  
15 voters so they can feel better about the people who are  
16 representing them here in Sacramento. And I think that  
17 through our public consultations, through the work that's  
18 already been done on the previous redistrictings and  
19 taking a look at hopefully the Census data will reveal the  
20 communities as well when we do our analysis of the data.  
21 I think that those things will come out.

22 CHAIR AHMADI: Okay. Thank you.

23 Going back to one of the responses on your  
24 application to the essay questions, I came across this  
25 phrase that you say you must rely on legal guidance when

1 appropriate. Could you clarify when do you think the  
2 Commission should or should not rely on the legal advice  
3 or guidance?

4 MR. BEYRER: I think the Commission will best be  
5 served by getting an overall kind of a big picture of the  
6 legal limits. That's what they do. Again, that refers of  
7 course to the federal civil rights legislation and of  
8 course to Prop. 11 itself as well as the Constitutions,  
9 the federal Constitution in terms of equal protection.  
10 I think getting that type of general legal advice at the  
11 beginning would be good.

12 What I mean when I say when appropriate is as we  
13 go through our work, you know, will we need to be checking  
14 with a lawyer for every single decision. I don't imagine  
15 that will be a good use of our time or an attorney's time.  
16 That we will periodically, you know, get legal advice as  
17 we feel appropriate.

18 And of course, at the end it's not going to go  
19 anywhere unless it's -- the maps aren't going anywhere  
20 unless they're combed over. And we'll be getting the  
21 federal approval I assume. So I'm not worried about our  
22 failure to apply for legal advice. I think those  
23 opportunities will be there as well.

24 But when appropriate is as we go through if we  
25 are not sure about something, then of course we'll make

1 the decision to get legal advice. But it doesn't mean  
2 that we should be drawing maps willy-nilly and just hope  
3 it all works out and that the lawyers will miss some  
4 particular things that we do. It doesn't mean that.

5 CHAIR AHMADI: Okay. So leading to the next  
6 question based on your response again, could you tell me a  
7 little bit about what role will the Voting Rights Act play  
8 in the Commission's work?

9 MR. BEYRER: It's my understanding because  
10 California is subject to the Voting Rights Act because we  
11 have some counties in the states that were identified as  
12 areas where people's voting rights were limited back when  
13 the Act was first passed or it was amended when this  
14 happened, that we will need to get federal approval,  
15 because every time the maps are redrawn, it constitutes a  
16 change in structure of voting in this state, even if it's  
17 just those counties. So therefore we need to have  
18 approval from the Federal Civil Rights Division of the  
19 Justice Department. I may have my departments incorrect.  
20 But that we do need to have that before we can make a  
21 change, because California is subject to that law because  
22 it passed lost civil rights.

23 CHAIR AHMADI: Okay. Thank you so much.

24 You mention that race is politically the most  
25 important measure of demography. But other factors such

1 as geography is also important. Can you name a few others  
2 in addition to those two what other factors are important?

3 MR. BEYRER: In mean in terms of demography?

4 CHAIR AHMADI: Yes.

5 MR. BEYRER: Well, race and geography, obviously  
6 gender is important. I think that social class, income,  
7 socioeconomic status is important --

8 MS. HAMEL: Five minutes.

9 MR. BEYRER: -- to -- I happen to believe that  
10 sexual orientation is important. That's something is that  
11 currently in the news. And you know --

12 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you so much. No questions at  
13 this point.

14 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Ms. Camacho.

15 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Hi.

16 MR. BEYRER: Hi.

17 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: There we go. I'm so loud it just  
18 can't tell.

19 When I was looking through your application, I  
20 saw that in your application you describe your  
21 responsibility as a distance education coordinator and  
22 that you also mention being a history professor, but you  
23 say you're not a history professor at this time; correct?

24 MR. BEYRER: Yeah. I'm in the adjunct pool. For  
25 those folks who spend any time as an adjunct faculty

1 member, you know it can be a long time between when you  
2 get classes. Yeah. So yes, I am. If they give me a  
3 class. No, I'm not. I haven't taught in many years.

4 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: And then you're also a private  
5 educational consultant. So you have a lot of many things  
6 on your plate. If on the Commission, how would you manage  
7 all of your activities?

8 MR. BEYRER: Great question. I think that  
9 obviously I won't be pursuing any adjunct faculty work  
10 because the Commission would take the priority.

11 You know, my job as distance education  
12 coordinator, I teach faculty how to work with their  
13 students at a distance. That works is asynchronous. So  
14 it's not exactly at the same time. They're watching  
15 videos or we're responding to discussions online. And I'm  
16 confident that if I teach faculty how to do their jobs  
17 asynchronously, there will be opportunity for me to do  
18 parts of my job asynchronously as well. So I'm confident  
19 that the Commission won't interfere with my work.

20 At the same time, I happen to have a supportive  
21 employer. And I happen to have a supportive boss. And I  
22 mentioned this to him when I applied that -- in fact, he  
23 wrote one of my letters of recommendation that I would  
24 be -- if I get this it will be a big time commitment. He  
25 said we'll work it out. If it happens, we'll work it out.

1           And then the part-time consultant, that's  
2 entirely asynchronously. So I'm not worried about being  
3 able to fit the time in.

4           My spouse is supportive, which is very important  
5 to me. And so you know, she knows what time commitments  
6 are and being able to work that out. So I'm not worried  
7 at all about that. And if I need to make adjustments to  
8 get the Commission's work done, of course I can do that.

9           VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: With all these different  
10 responsibilities and knowledge that you have, how relevant  
11 is that to the Commission?

12           MR. BEYRER: Oh, I think it's extremely relevant.  
13 I think my full-time job where I serve as the  
14 coordinator -- and I mentioned a couple times now with  
15 working with a small group of people who has to make  
16 decisions about how to allocate resources with deadline, I  
17 think that is a thumbnail description of what the  
18 Commission is doing. We're allocating resources. We're  
19 dividing the map into these districts. We have a  
20 deadline. We have to -- there are limits on what the  
21 Commission will be able to do because there's the legal  
22 limit.

23           This group that I work with at work, we have  
24 limits because we have a fiscal limits of course. We  
25 don't have a lot of money in the district.

1           We have time limits as well, because we're  
2 consistently working with the rhythm of the semester and  
3 when to turn on new futures and when to do those types of  
4 things.

5           And then taking small group of people who all  
6 have an equal voice who come from different perspective on  
7 the same issue, working through any divisions that we  
8 have, coming to agreements, that's all again my own not  
9 having been on a Commission yet I don't know what it will  
10 be like. But I can't imagine it's going to be  
11 conceptually that much different than what I do now.

12           VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Also, I see in your application  
13 that you wrote a dissertation on California geography.  
14 And one of your undergraduate degrees is in ethnic  
15 studies. How will that knowledge help you as a  
16 Commissioner?

17           MR. BEYRER: Great question. I want to make sure  
18 I clarify that. I did not finish my dissertation. I do  
19 not think I said I did.

20           VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Okay.

21           MR. BEYRER: I was in the process of writing it  
22 when I got my full-time job. It's hard to turn down a  
23 tenured track position when you're a graduate student,  
24 regardless of the field. And also I should say it was a  
25 hobby. So hobbies become my career, so I'm very happy to

1 say that.

2           Anyway, how my ethnic studies degree helps me is  
3 it increases my appreciation for demographic diversity.  
4 You know, studying the structures of how -- studying how  
5 racial issues are structured in societies all around the  
6 world, including California, and it will only help me when  
7 I come to look at -- as I believe that race is so  
8 important in terms of political demographics as those  
9 issues come up, I with have had experience studying that  
10 issues because that was part of my education.

11           And I think that's the subject of my dissertation  
12 is also important because I think that there is a -- it's  
13 not necessarily everywhere and it's not necessarily that  
14 deep. But there is a sense of difference among different  
15 parts of the state, you know there's more than people who  
16 share a lot of other things in common like race,  
17 socioeconomic status, even their political perspective.

18           The people who live in the south and live in the  
19 north are not necessarily the same. There is something  
20 different about different parts of California. I know  
21 that it's always been that way in California history from  
22 the days of Gold Rush at least. And California itself has  
23 always even going back through the native California times  
24 has always contained a tremendous amount of diversity  
25 within it.

1           It's a unit that we look at the map and say this  
2 is the state of California. It encompasses a lot of  
3 different groups. That's come through loud. I grew up  
4 with it in some ways, but I also studied it throughout any  
5 Ph.D. program. And that's what led me to pick the topic  
6 for my dissertation.

7           VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: With this background of your ethnic  
8 studies and preparing part or almost completing or --

9           MR. BEYRER: All I had to do was write the  
10 dissertation. So I like to think I almost got it.

11          VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: So gathering the California  
12 geography, how will that help you when you go out to the  
13 communities of interest and talk to them? How will you  
14 use that and how will that be beneficial?

15          MR. BEYRER: Well, the first thing is I will go  
16 into any meeting not assuming I know anything about the  
17 community of interest, whoever the people might be  
18 representing. And because I know that I don't know that  
19 much about -- again, through the study -- I started my  
20 graduate program with a lot of assumptions.

21          One of the things that I've done is unlearn a lot  
22 of things. So I think that starts it. At the same time,  
23 I can say, hey, you know, at such and such a time it was  
24 an issue at this time. I think that will help give me a  
25 little bit of entry into communicating with people because

1 it's hard not to be -- it's hard to be general but to say  
2 I studied.

3 I know my California history. I know this,  
4 whatever. You know, what was it like? Do you have memory  
5 when such and such thing happened? It's hard to be  
6 general here.

7 But I feel I will have some knowledge of the  
8 general areas because of my study of history that will  
9 help me kind of start that communication.

10 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Do you think your knowledge that  
11 you have with the history of California, would that help  
12 other Commissioners? Do you feel that would be a unique  
13 skill that you could bring to the Commission?

14 MR. BEYRER: Yes, I think so. Again, I'm hoping,  
15 as I mentioned, before that the first thing I would do is  
16 start to create those productive relationships with fellow  
17 Commissioners. We get to know each other. We know the  
18 backgrounds. We know the strengths that we bring to the  
19 Commission.

20 I don't claim to be an expert by any means. I  
21 think that's the first thing I learned was not to claim  
22 you're an expert when I started my graduate program.

23 But if I can help illuminate any discussions that  
24 we're having because of the knowledge that I have, yes, I  
25 think that will be a strength.

1           VICE CHAIR CAMACHO:  When you were talking about that  
2 you just -- the only thing that you didn't do for your  
3 Ph.D.; correct --

4           MR. BEYRER:  Yeah.

5           VICE CHAIR CAMACHO:  -- was your dissertation.  In your  
6 application you noted -- I saw that from UCLA that you  
7 received a C. Phil.  Is that what it is?  Can you  
8 explain -- I don't know what that means.

9           MR. BEYRER:  I think the C. Phil -- I won't tell  
10 a joke.  C Phil is candidate in philosophy.  And what  
11 happened in my program is I passed my written exams.  I  
12 wrote a prospectus, and I defended it.  I passed the oral  
13 exam.  So in a sense, I already have an outline for my  
14 dissertation.  The next thing I needed to do were to  
15 collect the data and to write it.  I'm still collecting  
16 data.

17           VICE CHAIR CAMACHO:  Okay.  That helps clarify that.

18           I notice that in your application you are aware  
19 of the software and you're kind of one of the people that  
20 kind of helps with interpreting software and how  
21 individuals understand the use of that.  What role do you  
22 see yourself playing with your fellow Commissioners  
23 regarding the technology that will be used?

24           MR. BEYRER:  I think that I will be able to  
25 help -- when the -- we're going to have reams and reams of

1 data, right, from the Census. We will be responsible for  
2 analyzing the data. But a lot of prep work has to be  
3 done. The data has to be massaged before it is  
4 analyzable. And I think my strength will be in that prep  
5 work and making sure the prep work -- in terms of how the  
6 software is being used to collect the data, making sure  
7 that the software is -- excuse me -- make sure the  
8 software is reliable. And I don't mean reliable in terms  
9 of it will break, but in terms of being fair. Is it  
10 fairly representative data. I have no doubt of being able  
11 to take a look at the raw data, take a look at the  
12 finished analyzable data and say, okay, this is fair  
13 representation of what's there in the raw data.

14 I think that's -- also I will be helpful with the  
15 Commission in making -- to the extent that we can outreach  
16 to the public online and communicate with the public  
17 online, and make sure that is part of what we do. And I'm  
18 very comfortable taking that on as part of my  
19 responsibility.

20 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Okay. As you know, the Commission  
21 has the authority to hire and contract for consultants,  
22 staff and legal services. If you were selected to serve  
23 on the Commission, what role do you expect those  
24 consultants, staff, and attorneys will play in the  
25 Commission's work?

1           MR. BEYRER: I think that the staff, the  
2 attorneys will help the Commission with some of the --  
3 will help the Commission answer the technical questions  
4 about the work that they do. So I can't -- if I'm a  
5 Commissioner and I say, okay, I have this data. I need --  
6 I would suspect I would hire a consultant to say take this  
7 city of 500,000 and split it in half. And you help me  
8 with -- help me find a tool that will help make this easy  
9 for me as the Commissioner, you know.

10           When we have a preliminary draft of our maps or  
11 any of the documentation I would expect a lawyer that  
12 we've hired to help us make sure that it passes legal  
13 muster, you know. Is the language of the report fit for  
14 public consumption? Is the -- what in your judgment is  
15 this particular map, this line right here? Is this going  
16 to be okay with the civil rights -- with the civil rights  
17 review? And I think these are the types of questions that  
18 I expect those experts to help us with.

19           In terms of other staff we might hire, I mean, I  
20 would assume that we would be get help with scheduling  
21 venues for public meeting. So we'll be meeting with folks  
22 all across the state. Do I need to be getting my phone  
23 call out or my phone out and calling conference centers  
24 and public meeting rooms to schedule -- I imagine that --  
25 assuming that will be those types of things that the staff

1 will help with.

2           VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: As a Commissioner, you will be  
3 receiving information from consultants, various type of  
4 data that will be provided or information that is given to  
5 you or statistics. How would you feel of just receiving  
6 that data and what would be your thought on the  
7 consultant's work?

8           MR. BEYRER: I would want to -- I think that I  
9 would feel comfortable analyzing the data as well as  
10 the -- the raw data, as well as the output from the  
11 consultants to make sure that I think it's fair,  
12 represents the raw data.

13           And also communicate that with the other  
14 Commissioners. I obviously don't know who the other  
15 Commissioners will be, if there will be other people who  
16 have -- I know there are other applicants who experienced  
17 serving on recent redistricting commission. So if any of  
18 those applicants were on the Commission with me, obviously  
19 they'll be a help in this area as well as because they're  
20 used to or at least have experience in doing the similar  
21 type of thing.

22           But I would want to spend some time -- both  
23 looking at the raw data as well as looking at the  
24 consultants' reports again just to make sure that it's  
25 fair, that it represents what's in the data, and help my

1 fellow Commissioners interpret the report and critique the  
2 report as well as the original data to make sure that  
3 their understanding is being met as well.

4 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: I heard you talking about that you  
5 have or it appears that you looked at the Voting Rights  
6 Act. Did you ever during your schooling or gathering the  
7 information for your dissertation have to analyze the  
8 Voting Rights Act?

9 MS. HAMEL: Five minutes.

10 MR. BEYRER: No. That was not part. The timing  
11 of my dissertation was early 20th century. So that  
12 happened much later.

13 I think that you know, I had to focus on -- they  
14 don't let you write on everything. You're writing a  
15 dissertation. So I had to focus on a very narrow people  
16 and they frankly didn't care. I shouldn't say they didn't  
17 care. Their focus was on promoting San Francisco and Los  
18 Angeles for tourists, not voting or even boosting the  
19 political status of these two cities.

20 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Is there any instances where you've  
21 had to use or understand the Voting Rights Act other than  
22 for this Commission?

23 MR. BEYRER: Yeah. In my teaching now, I've  
24 taught the post civil war United States history class.  
25 That's the class I've taught the most. And of course the

1 Voting Rights Act and civil rights is a very important  
2 part of that class. It's more focused on the south  
3 though, because that's where the civil right -- where the  
4 initial focus of that activity was and the legislation.

5           So yes, it is in the sense about -- I understand  
6 why it was passed and why it's necessary to review the  
7 voting habits and the voting statistics from these certain  
8 areas of the country.

9           VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Since you have a familiarity as it  
10 deals with the south for the Voting Rights Act, do you  
11 still feel it's applicable in today's time?

12           MR. BEYRER: Oh, absolutely, yeah. I think that  
13 the federal Constitution which guarantees us all the  
14 rights that we have, including the rights to participate  
15 in state governments and voting and all that, not all of  
16 us unfortunately apply the federal Constitution equally.  
17 And we have a system that that's why we have a national  
18 government is to enforce the Constitution.

19           So there are times it's appropriate. And yes, I  
20 still I know it's under periodic review and it was -- I  
21 can't remember the years. But it was last -- renewed for  
22 35 years or something back in the early 80s or something,  
23 whenever the timing is. So I know that there is a review  
24 process built into it.

25           I would love for us to get to a time where we

1 don't need the Voting Rights Act, where we don't have to  
2 have federal monitors on certain parts of the country. I  
3 don't think we're there yet.

4 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: That's all the questions I have,  
5 thank you.

6 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Ms. Spano.

7 MS. SPANO: Thank you. Good afternoon. You  
8 mentioned conducting -- you suggested conducting online  
9 outreach. How important is it to you to conduct outreach  
10 one on one in person face to face to get an understanding  
11 of the shared interests in the community?

12 MR. BEYRER: It's absolutely important. You  
13 know, when I mentioned the online outreach, I think I said  
14 as appropriate. I don't assume and I would never  
15 privilege that type of outreach over in-person outreach.  
16 The most important thing will be to go visit the parts of  
17 the state to get feedback, to get comments directly from  
18 communities of interest, directly from the voting public.

19 You know, I don't know what broadband penetration  
20 rates are in the state of California, but it's not 100  
21 percent. Even if it were 100 percent, it would not excuse  
22 any lack of face time basically. Not the iPhone for face  
23 time. But face time, breathing the same air, I like to  
24 say when I'm talking about this with my teacher students.  
25 So I can't imagine that not being the most important

1 thing.

2 I think that the online at the very minimum as  
3 you will be using it through the review process is making  
4 sure the record is there, the public record of everything  
5 we do is there for everyone to see. And it's so  
6 convenient when it's online, because you can go watch  
7 previous meetings or do whatever, streaming of live I  
8 think will be an important thing to do. But not at the  
9 expense of being out there in the community and make sure  
10 that the public has an opportunity to see the  
11 Commissioners in person.

12 MS. SPANO: How would you propose -- you said you  
13 had limited knowledge on rural communities and the  
14 understanding of their communities of interest. How would  
15 you go out there and reach to them to understand their  
16 issues?

17 MR. BEYRER: Well, I hope there will be other  
18 members of the Commission who represent -- who have that  
19 lived experience and relying on other Commissioners as we  
20 will rely on each other to provide the gaps that we have.  
21 Certainly spending time in rural communities and spending  
22 time holding our meetings not just in the big cities but  
23 again in rural communities and small towns. I think that  
24 will be a big part of it.

25 I can tell you if I'm selected as Commissioner, I

1 know the kind of reading I'll be doing over the however  
2 many weeks or months I have until the Commission work  
3 starts. I'll be studying up on California in general  
4 trying to fill in all the little gaps that I have in terms  
5 of my knowledge. And that will include reading about --  
6 as much as I can reading about life in other parts of the  
7 state that I'm not familiar with.

8 MS. SPANO: Would you say when you try to prepare  
9 for a new task or job that you really just gather the  
10 background information? You read as much as you can and  
11 get informed as much as you can in that manner versus  
12 going out and talking to others interviewing others?  
13 What's your style in approaching a new task and learning  
14 about it?

15 MR. BEYRER: Well, doing research and doing as  
16 much research as I can before I start a new task, whatever  
17 form the research takes -- ready is easy because the  
18 Internet is there with a lot of stuff that's available --  
19 whatever. There's lot of junk on the Internet, too. But  
20 doing as much reading as I can.

21 And then to the extent that I can talk to other  
22 people about those experiences, I will. But if I'm  
23 selected and if I have these weeks or months before the  
24 Commission's work starts, I'm not going to be spending  
25 time driving throughout the state meeting people at random

1 saying hey, what's it like living in this part of  
2 California? That's not something that I'll be doing.  
3 I'll be talking to people that I know who have those  
4 experiences.

5           But it won't be the same as actually we're  
6 actually on the Commission holding those meetings. It  
7 won't be the same as talking to a Commissioner who not  
8 only has that experience, but who is part of this team  
9 that has this shared somewhat shared vision about where  
10 we're going.

11           MS. SPANO: What was the most difficult decision  
12 that you had to make in your professional and personal  
13 life and what were the circumstances and the solution?

14           MR. BEYRER: I had a really hard time deciding  
15 not to finish my dissertation. I was in -- I completed  
16 all my course work, as I mentioned, and I completed the  
17 exams and even had my proposal approved and ready to do  
18 the work. And I was having a hard time -- honestly, I had  
19 a hard time with motivation with doing, because it's a lot  
20 of work to do that -- the research and the writing. And I  
21 was recently married and it was -- we had moved because we  
22 were living in Los Angeles and we moved up here to  
23 Sacramento because my wife got a job.

24           And what happened was I taught a class at  
25 Sacramento City College, a history class. That same

1 semester I got a part-time job providing this type of  
2 technical how do you teach over the Internet support and  
3 that's my full-time job now. And the experience that I  
4 had working with community college student and faculty  
5 that semester completely turned my mind around about the  
6 value that I could derive from that experience.

7           I had gone to Cal and to UCLA, so my career  
8 trajectory was going to be a research professor at a  
9 four-year university and doing a lot of research in  
10 addition to doing some teaching. And that teaching  
11 experience -- again not just with students, but working  
12 directly with faculty, really turned my mind around and  
13 made me realize how much value there was in that part of  
14 it.

15           So I remember that my wife went to China for a  
16 week with her friend and so I was alone. And that was to  
17 be my week to get a lot of work done. My dissertation I  
18 had was going to be organized. I thought to myself I said  
19 what would it feel like if I just decided not to do it?  
20 And I felt the weight lift, and that's when I realized  
21 it's the right decision. Hard to do because of course I  
22 had laid all this groundwork and put all this work in.

23           But having made the decision, I haven't looked  
24 back. And I'd like to say I have this job; it used to be  
25 a hobby, but now it's a career.

1           And it's been -- to answer your question, the  
2 process I went through was a lot of reflection. And it  
3 was -- you know, also having had these other experiences  
4 helps a lot because I realized I could gain a lot of  
5 professional joy out of teaching lower division classes  
6 which is all we have at community colleges and at the same  
7 time providing the support to my faculty peers and helping  
8 them use the technology effectively.

9           MS. SPANO: Were you inspired at providing  
10 services for others and helping others in other faculty  
11 more than anything?

12           MR. BEYRER: Oh, yeah. In fact, it was even --  
13 it was -- I remember the moment that I realized that the  
14 community college benefit and why I have the professional  
15 joy there is my students at Sacramento City College there  
16 was such a range of their academic preparation. And so  
17 therefore there was this range of what I could teach them  
18 and help them achieve. For some of them, it was learning  
19 how to read a book critically. For others, it was making  
20 sure they get a grade because they want to transfer to  
21 U.C. Davis or Cal or whatever. And compared to students  
22 at UCLA who had a much narrow realm. They were already  
23 empowered at UCLA.

24           But at Sac City and some city college where I  
25 teach my online success class, these are students who need

1 to be empowered in some way or another. If I can help  
2 them just a little bit, that's good.

3           When I do my work with the faculty, it's the same  
4 thing. I'm empowering them. I'm helping them kind of,  
5 you know, learn how to help themselves and to use the  
6 technology or to do whatever it is they're doing.

7           MS. SPANO: Thank you.

8           Being multi-racial, tell us about your experience  
9 and how, as you describe it, enables you to share the  
10 complacency of the culturally empowered?

11           MR. BEYRER: Well, I was taught by -- my mom's  
12 parents were both immigrants from Mexico. My grandma was  
13 a cannery worker, and my grandfather had worked in the  
14 copper mines in Arizona. And my grandmother was a cannery  
15 worker here in Sacramento. And my mom taught me to be  
16 proud of being Mexican, to be proud in face of the  
17 potential of not necessarily discrimination, but in terms  
18 of being looked down on. Oh, you're just a Mexican or  
19 whatever.

20           And what happened to me was when I went to  
21 college -- now I lived in Fremont. It was an excellent  
22 high school, and it was a wonderful experience, but it was  
23 sheltered because I did not live in Los Angeles, parts of  
24 Los Angeles or Berkeley or whatever. I went to college.  
25 And at Cal, I encountered students from all over the

1 world, but from California from these different parts of  
2 California. And I was all excited about being, yeah,  
3 proud to be Mexican.

4           And I remember my first meeting at MECHA I was  
5 told I was not Mexican enough. And was because my last  
6 name, which is not Mexican. It's German. And I didn't  
7 speak Spanish. And I wasn't from the barrio. I wasn't  
8 from the right places. And that had a profound effect on  
9 me, because it was a moment of alienation. Because I  
10 had been suddenly cut off from this community that I had  
11 been raised to be a part of, at least told, you know what?  
12 You're going to be a Mexican and all that.

13           And that's when I kind of had my undergraduate  
14 years were the years of self-discovery about what it meant  
15 to be multi-racial, because I realized I could be both  
16 proud of being Mexican-American at the same time being  
17 proud of being German-American and having this other  
18 heritage.

19           And I think that that helps me when I talk to  
20 people. First of all, it helps me by not making any  
21 assumptions about their experience. I can't look at  
22 someone and say, oh, because your skin is a certain color,  
23 oh, you must be angry or complacent or whatever the  
24 stereotypes I might have. I don't have any of those  
25 experiences myself. I'm not a stereotypical anything.

1 And I even tried to be stereotypical to the extent I was  
2 politically inspired and empowered and all that.

3 And I think that's the help that it gives me is I  
4 have a hard time making assumptions about the perspectives  
5 that other people bring to the discussion.

6 MS. SPANO: How do you think these experiences  
7 will impact your decision making on the Citizen's  
8 Redistricting Commission?

9 MR. BEYRER: I think I will -- I will not make  
10 assumptions about how a particular group of people may  
11 vote or may wish to vote because they happen to share  
12 certain characteristics.

13 And -- yeah. I think that's basically it.

14 That I won't think looking at the Census data and  
15 say, oh, we've got a group of people who are particular --  
16 make up a group and say they're martians and say we have  
17 to have a martian representative in the Legislature to  
18 make sure this district is 80 percent martian by  
19 ethnicity. And I won't -- I won't make the assumptions  
20 that just because they're all marshals they're all going  
21 to vote for someone that has green skin. I think that  
22 what I'll bring to the Commission.

23 MS. SPANO: Okay. Thank you.

24 The Citizen's Redistricting Commission will be  
25 required to hear from groups and individuals from highly

1 diverse views and backgrounds. Describe your experience  
2 working with diverse groups.

3           MR. BEYRER: I think the best answer to that is  
4 my work with the faculty both on my campus and throughout  
5 the state and the tremendous diversity that they bring to  
6 my interactions. I work with them through a fairly  
7 limited lens in that I'm focused on helping them use  
8 technology. But they bring this incredible array of  
9 expectations and experiences to that.

10           And it has been hard at times for me. Like when  
11 I'm, say, giving a presentation I have a group of 30  
12 people. I'm going to teach you how to tie your shoes  
13 using the Internet. And I have some people who will be  
14 like, "Okay. Yeah, I want to do it double slip knot."  
15 And I've got other people who are like, "What's the  
16 Internet?"

17           And it's hard. I mean, I don't want to -- I may  
18 joke about it, but I don't mean to make light of it.

19           And so what I have found in terms of my  
20 experience is that with these interactions, which is a  
21 fairly small group of people compared to the entire state  
22 of California, who ought to be interested in  
23 redistricting, is to make time where I can with those  
24 individuals. And if it means I'm falling off with a  
25 particular person because I know -- "you know what? I

1 notice that you're dropped off during the second half of  
2 my presentation." Or I may go to a department chair and  
3 say, "you know what. I haven't seen a lot of your faculty  
4 at my workshops. Tell me what's going on? How does the  
5 department of underwater basket weaving -- how does the  
6 department feel about technology? Or is there some  
7 resistance there I can help you overcome?"

8 I find myself in my position wanting everyone to  
9 see the benefits of what I can offer, but at the same time  
10 running into people or not running into people in cases  
11 who see no value in what I have to offer. And having to  
12 convince them that what we do, my team does, that what we  
13 do matters and can help them is at times a hard thing to  
14 do.

15 MS. HAMEL: You're approaching five minutes.

16 MS. SPANO: Excuse me. I'm sorry. I'm going  
17 through my notes.

18 Describe for the panel the issues and beliefs you  
19 feel strongly about and why you have strong feelings about  
20 them.

21 MR. BEYRER: I'm sorry which?

22 MS. SPANO: Describe for the panel the issues and  
23 beliefs you feel strongly about and why you have strong  
24 feelings about them.

25 MR. BEYRER: Issues and beliefs that I feel --

1 well, aside from loving my family which I feel strongest  
2 about, about anything.

3           In terms of more closely related to work at the  
4 Commission, I believe very strongly in giving people the  
5 opportunity to be what they want and to become what they  
6 can be. And that's why I'm a teacher, because I help my  
7 students become empowered. That's why I have this  
8 technology job, because I believe I'm empowering my  
9 faculty.

10           And I believe that the -- in the vision that I  
11 described earlier, the impact in terms of the answer to  
12 that question if it's true that the successful candidates  
13 in these new districts will be those who -- will be those  
14 who can appeal to a group of people based on something  
15 other than which party they voted for at the last  
16 election, I think that will empower the voters well. And  
17 frankly empower the legislators, because the legislators I  
18 hope would view their job, view their prospects for future  
19 employment based more on what their voters think of the  
20 job they're doing and less on what their caucus leaders  
21 think of the job they're doing.

22           So I think that that in serving others to help  
23 them better themselves, I guess another way to say it is  
24 that core of -- that core of my beliefs.

25           MS. SPANO: In what areas of the Commission's

1 work do you see your personal beliefs playing a part?

2 MR. BEYRER: Oh, I think -- well, encouraging the  
3 other Commissioners to participate, frankly. That will be  
4 a big part of it. I'm assuming the 14 selected will all  
5 want to be. We're all excited about this. Therefore,  
6 there will be lots of energy and participation. And that  
7 people won't have to be drawn out to participate in the  
8 process. But if that's there, if that's needed, I would  
9 be happy to do that.

10 I think encouraging the public to participate in  
11 the work of the Commission, coming to meetings and  
12 commenting and sharing their thoughts on where the  
13 districts could be and what they share in common with  
14 their fellow constituents or fellow voters. That's where  
15 I think that would come.

16 In terms of the work, I've already described I  
17 think what the final outcome of where I think my values  
18 are in terms of the maps and all this.

19 But in the work of the Commission itself, if I  
20 can encourage the public to participate, then I think that  
21 will be a good thing. I'm frankly -- I mean, I'm not  
22 surprised I guess you -- I wish you all had hundreds of  
23 thousands of applications to read through and not just the  
24 4,000 that you did to get to us. Because I don't see why  
25 don't more people care enough to want to participate in

1 something like that?

2 MS. SPANO: How do you feel about being  
3 scrutinized by the public and the media if you are a  
4 Commissioner?

5 MR. BEYRER: Well, one of the things I've  
6 realized in my relatively sheltered life is that if you  
7 live your life honestly, you know who you are, then you  
8 have nothing to worry about. And so I don't pretend to be  
9 anything other than what I am.

10 MS. SPANO: Have you participated in any social  
11 political causes?

12 MR. BEYRER: I vote, so that's I think a big part  
13 of it. But in terms of participating, I did -- boy, this  
14 is back in 1994. I actually participated in a phone bank  
15 to call people to encourage them to vote. That was the  
16 one thing I did.

17 MS. HAMEL: One minute.

18 MR. BEYRER: This was about as exciting as it  
19 was.

20 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Members of the panel, do  
21 you have a follow-up questions? I have a few, if you do  
22 not.

23 CHAIR AHMADI: I do not. You can go ahead.

24 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: I have a question I'd like to ask  
25 you. Mr. Beyrer, you were talking about spending time in

1 the rural communities and getting their opinions also to  
2 look at time lines. How would you fit all these meetings  
3 that are necessary into the time line that is going to be  
4 available for the Commission?

5 MR. BEYRER: I don't know yet. I don't know how  
6 many meetings we'll feel are necessary. And I don't know  
7 how much other work in terms of the writing and the  
8 production and the reading and all that stuff, the  
9 analyzing part of it, I don't know how much of that we  
10 will need to do.

11 I cannot imagine doing the work of the Commission  
12 without spending at least some time in all of the  
13 various -- as many communities as we can I guess is the  
14 right way to say it to do it as many north, south, east,  
15 west, urban, rural all the different ways that we can  
16 divide the state in terms of where we actually go to our  
17 meetings.

18 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Thank you.

19 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Mr. Beyrer, you're a  
20 history professor. What events from our history should  
21 every Commissioner understand before they begin work for  
22 the Citizen's Redirecting Commission?

23 MR. BEYRER: Well, they ought to understand the  
24 very first -- where we got the origin of the word  
25 "gerrymander": from Massachusetts in the 18th century.

1           I think understanding the circumstances, the kind  
2 of general political history of the past, oh, 30, 40, 50  
3 years, in California, in particular, that has led to the  
4 voters being willing to pass this initiative, because  
5 after all, the voters -- this initiative, we're all here  
6 because the voters voted yes on Prop. 11. And  
7 understanding the circumstances of that.

8           I think understanding why the Voting Rights Act  
9 was necessary I think will be a good thing for  
10 Commissioners to understand and frankly why it's necessary  
11 in California. Because I imagine there will be people who  
12 would be surprised to know that we cannot make these types  
13 of changes in California. We can do it in Oregon and  
14 other states, but not in California. We're not in the  
15 south. We didn't have slavery here, yet we are still  
16 subject to this law that is attached in many people's  
17 minds directly to the south. I think that's part of it.

18           And I think it would be helpful for Commissioners  
19 to understand why term limits were enacted. Because I  
20 think that is a part of -- I think that's the idea that a  
21 particular seat is attached to a party is one of the  
22 consequences of term limits, because of course the  
23 legislators are termed out after so few years. And so the  
24 parties there, of course, they want to keep their power.  
25 There's nothing surprising about that. So I think that

1 will be part of that.

2 I assume that Commissioners all have a solid  
3 understanding of American history and circumstances within  
4 which California joined the union and the civil war and  
5 the 14th amendment. Maybe that's too much to assume, I  
6 know. But I would assume that those are there as well.

7 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Where do you think the  
8 Commission will need to hold the most meetings or the most  
9 hearings and why?

10 MR. BEYRER: I think that where I will be  
11 interested in getting the most public comment will be in  
12 those areas of the state where we are proposing the  
13 greatest change.

14 So if we are going to take -- I just was  
15 reading -- I can't remember where it was -- some other  
16 applicant who made a comment about why does this Senate  
17 district have to stretch from the Imperial Valley all the  
18 way to Kern? And not wanting to make any decisions of  
19 course ahead of time, but if we were to chop up that  
20 district in a major way, I would expect that I will be  
21 most interested in making sure that the people who are  
22 being affected the most will have the most to say and will  
23 want to hear that.

24 If we take a district -- I'm going to make up a  
25 name in some city. That if there is a city that happens

1 to be the exact number of people to fit in a district and  
2 it happens to be spread far away from other cities so  
3 there is no confusion and it's already that way and we're  
4 not going to change it, then sure, opportunity for public  
5 comment absolutely from that group. But I think they will  
6 be less interested in the work because there will not be  
7 as much change.

8 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: If you were presented with  
9 facts that permitted but did not require you to create a  
10 majority/minority district, would you do so? And why or  
11 why not?

12 MR. BEYRER: If I was presented with facts  
13 that -- tell me that --

14 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Presented with facts that  
15 permitted but did not require you to create a  
16 majority/minority district, would you do so? And why or  
17 why not?

18 MR. BEYRER: I don't know how to do that, because  
19 it would depend on the context of the surrounding  
20 districts and it would depend on which criteria we  
21 Commissioners felt were being respected and were being  
22 considered as we do those.

23 I would see I would have no objection to creating  
24 majority/minority district, not at all. I would -- and  
25 certainly folks who share something in common other than

1 or besides who they voted for in the last election, that's  
2 obviously something those folks share in common. That  
3 would be one reason among many I think to construct the  
4 district.

5 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: The Commission is going to  
6 be comprised of sub-groups who are chosen in part on their  
7 party affiliation. Do you have thoughts about the role  
8 that partisanship will play in the Commission's work and  
9 whether that's a good thing or bad thing?

10 MR. BEYRER: I hope that Commissioners do not  
11 leave their party identification at the door when we have  
12 these meetings. I think I expect that Commission  
13 members -- we are members that are being -- there is a  
14 quota based on party membership for the Commission and  
15 certainly I think the -- we shouldn't forget who we are.  
16 And I expect that to be a part of our discussions.

17 But I think that that ought to -- what ought to  
18 be more important to us is making sure that the districts  
19 reflect this -- the people in the district share more than  
20 who they voted for at the last election. If we wanted it  
21 to be purely partisan, we had that already. And we're  
22 there to undo a little bit of that. So again, it could be  
23 part of who we are. We can't separate that out. But it  
24 should not be the most important factor.

25 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: You likely are aware that

1 the first eight Commissioners choose the next six. And  
2 based upon a couple of your comments, we talked about  
3 using the time after you're selected to do some reading  
4 and that sort of thing. I'm just wondering whether you're  
5 available to begin full-time work potentially on November  
6 19th and continue through September if you're selected.

7 MR. BEYRER: Yes, I am.

8 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Panelists, do you have  
9 additional questions?

10 CHAIR AHMADI: No, I don't.

11 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: I don't either.

12 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: You've got about 13  
13 minutes if you'd like to make a closing statement.

14 MR. BEYRER: Okay. I've got a short closing  
15 statement.

16 I'm grateful for the opportunity to participate.  
17 Seldom have average ordinary people been able to  
18 participate directly in developing part of the governing  
19 structure of the public. And I feel fortunate to be in a  
20 place and time where things like this can occur. And it  
21 makes me proud to be a citizen of California.

22 CHAIR AHMADI: Thank you, sir.

23 VICE CHAIR CAMACHO: Thank you.

24 MS. SPANO: Thank you.

25 MS. RAMIREZ-RIDGEWAY: Thank you so much for

1 coming to see us.

2 We do not have an afternoon or a 4:30 applicant  
3 today to interview. So we'll reconvene tomorrow morning  
4 at 9:14.

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6 (Whereupon the hearing was recessed)

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