

## 1 PROCEEDINGS

2 8:59 a.m.

3 CHAIR BELNAP: It being 8:59 a.m., we'll  
4 get started and call this meeting out of recess.

5 For those in the room, and also for those  
6 that are participating remotely, I want to remind  
7 you to silence all cell phones and other electronic  
8 devices.

9 For those in the room, the restrooms are  
10 out here in the hallway. Follow CSA staff  
11 instruction in case of an emergency.

12 I want to welcome Alicia Fernandez to her  
13 interview today.

14 And we'll going to turn the time over to  
15 Mr. Dawson for the standard five questions.

16 MR. DAWSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

17 Ms. Fernandez, I'm going to ask you five  
18 standard questions that the Applicant Review Panel  
19 has requested that each applicant respond to. Are  
20 you ready?

21 MS. FERNANDEZ: Yes.

1           MR. DAWSON: First question: What skills  
2 and attributes should all Commissioners possess?  
3 What skills or competencies should the Commission  
4 possess collectively? Of the skills, attributes,  
5 and competencies that each Commissioner should  
6 possess, which do you possess? In summary, how  
7 will you contribute to the success of the  
8 Commission?

9           MS. FERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you. In  
10 terms of the skills and attributes that all  
11 Commissioners should possess the first one would be  
12 to be a good listener. I think a big majority of  
13 what we'll be doing is listening to -- is to listen  
14 from the community members in terms of what their  
15 values, hopes for their communities are.

16           Also, a major skill would be to be open,  
17 open to differing opinions. We have to realize  
18 that we're just one of millions of people in  
19 California and everyone has differing opinions, we  
20 come from different backgrounds, so we have to open  
21 to that. We have to open to what their positions  
22 are, what their values are.

1           And we also have to empathetic to  
2 their -- they're very passionate about their  
3 opinions, their wants, their desires, their goals.  
4 And we need to ensure equity, as well, not -- I  
5 mean equality but also equity.

6           Also, the Commissioners should have an  
7 analytical capacity. I don't want to say  
8 background because I would hope that everybody  
9 does. But you will be reviewing different data,  
10 maps, numbers from the census, whatever other data  
11 you gain.

12           And, also, you need to be resourceful, to  
13 not only rely on the information you get but, in  
14 today's world with technology, we're able to  
15 actually reach out to other states to see how they  
16 do things. We're able to get other information.  
17 So we just need to be resourceful. Not only that,  
18 also resourceful with people that we know and  
19 people that we may not know but will get to know if  
20 we just reach out and become better informed.

21           We also need to be leaders, leaders at  
22 times, and sometimes not leaders. We need to know

1 when we need to lead and when we need to let others  
2 lead.

3           Also, we need to be team players.

4 Obviously, we're a group of 14. We can't all be  
5 the leaders. We'll all part of a team. We're 1 of  
6 14. And we're all there to serve each other, not  
7 one person to serve -- not 13 to serve 1.

8           Communication. We need to be good  
9 communicators, both verbally and in writing. I'm  
10 assuming we'll be writing some documents at the end  
11 of this.

12           And we also need to be unemotional. We all  
13 come with different values, as I mentioned, and we  
14 need to be open to that. We need to not hold so  
15 strong to whatever. If our opinions do differ then  
16 our opinions differ. It doesn't mean that it's  
17 good or bad, it just means that it's different. So  
18 we just need to be unemotional.

19           What would also be helpful is to have  
20 interviewing skills. We'll be asking lots of  
21 questions, I'm hoping, so we need to be able to  
22 attempt to develop rapport when we can, use

1 different investigative skills if you can. I've  
2 been an Investigator for many years. And with  
3 that, you approach each interview differently based  
4 on the person, based on the information that you  
5 have, and you just need to know how -- which method  
6 to use.

7           The capacities that are -- you also need  
8 to be able to learn, not think that you know it  
9 all. We don't all know it all. We don't even know  
10 close to it all, so we just need to be able to  
11 learn, take in new information, be able to  
12 interpret that information.

13           Oh, organizational skills. You definitely  
14 need organizational skills. We'll be, as I  
15 mentioned earlier, we'll be reviewing lots of  
16 documents. And we need to make sure that we're on  
17 task, that we have all the information that we  
18 need. And, obviously, it needs to be organized in  
19 some way because then that leads to better  
20 communication as well.

21           And integrity. We do need to be honest  
22 people. We need to move forward in the best

1 interests of all, not just of myself, but we need  
2 to be honest about it.

3 And one thing that I like is I hope that  
4 all of us can at least laugh once in a while.  
5 Let's not take ourselves so seriously but this is a  
6 serious venture. But we also need to be able to  
7 maybe sit back once in a while and just reflect.

8 And in terms of -- the other part of the  
9 question was, let's see -- which skills do I  
10 possess well? Well, of course, I possess all of  
11 them. I'm not going to tell you any skills and  
12 attributes that I wouldn't possess. But I don't  
13 say that lightly. As my application has shown, as  
14 I mentioned earlier, I've been -- or as I mentioned  
15 in my application, as well as earlier, I've been an  
16 Auditor, so -- and many of you are auditors, as  
17 well, so as you know, you have to read education --  
18 well, for me I had to read Education Code, Penal  
19 Code, Government Code sections. And from there,  
20 you develop your audit plan or your investigative  
21 plan. You collect your evidence, your resources.

1           And then if you're an Auditor, you  
2 actually go out and you actually audit the specific  
3 program area. And from there, you're talking with  
4 people, you're learning processes. You're trying  
5 to understand what their internal controls are. As  
6 an Investigator, we're out there collecting  
7 evidence, be it video recordings, be it  
8 surveillance, be it documentation that's at the  
9 facilities. And then, after that, you conduct your  
10 interviews.

11           And as I mentioned earlier, being able to  
12 interview and adjust your style to whoever you're  
13 interviewing is very important. Sometimes you have  
14 to be the soft person and just talk lightly and  
15 just kind of let them tell their story. Other  
16 times, you just have to present them with the facts  
17 and it's more of a here's what we have and let them  
18 respond. So you really just need to be able to  
19 determine what type of approach you're going to  
20 use.

21           And in terms of being a good listener,  
22 that's what we do. As an Investigator, as an

1 Auditor, you do need to listen because, again, we  
2 don't know it all.

3           And I feel just, also, my background as a  
4 School Board member for the last 13, 14 years, I  
5 can't remember, that's a group of seven, all of us  
6 from different areas coming together for the common  
7 goal of our students. And, fortunately, we've been  
8 rather successful. We have all educated each other  
9 on our different communities. We've been open to  
10 that which has been a benefit to not only the board  
11 but also the students that we serve.

12           So in terms of -- that's how I feel that  
13 my skills and my experience and my attributes will  
14 contribute to this Commission.

15           MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

16           Question two: Work on the Commission  
17 requires members of different political backgrounds  
18 to work together. Since the 2010 Commission was  
19 selected and formed, the American political  
20 conversation has become increasingly polarized,  
21 whether in the press, on social media, and even in  
22 our own families.



1           What characteristics do you possess and  
2 what characteristics should your fellow  
3 Commissioners possess that will protect against  
4 hyperpartisanship? What will you do to ensure that  
5 the work of the Commission is not seen as polarized  
6 or hyperpartisan and avoid perceptions of political  
7 bias and conflict?

8           MS. FERNANDEZ: In terms of the  
9 characteristics that I possess, which I feel all  
10 Commissioners should also possess in order to  
11 protect against the hyperpartisanship, is we need  
12 to be open. We need to be able to take in new  
13 information.

14           And we need to be respectful of one  
15 another. We need to also be professional and leave  
16 our biases at home.  
17 We all have biases. And if someone says they don't  
18 have biases, well, I guess I'd have to question  
19 their integrity. But we have to acknowledge that.  
20 And with that -- and it's okay because we have our  
21 biases. That's -- it's based on our families, our  
22 environment, our experiences. But what we need to

1 do is we need to also -- we need to recognize that  
2 that's the first step, and then we also need to be  
3 able to set that aside and be open to what we --  
4 the 14 Commissioners have to say, as well as what  
5 the public has to say.

6           It's amazing, when you actually sit back  
7 and listen and really try to take everything in,  
8 that at some point in time you think that you're  
9 educating someone on whatever the topic may be but,  
10 at the end of the day if you listen, they're  
11 actually educating themselves. That's, in my  
12 opinion, that's what we really need to be as  
13 commissioners, is we really need to be open and not  
14 come with any preset plans or opinions or whatever  
15 we think the end game is going to be. We don't  
16 know what the end game is going to -- well, we know  
17 what the end game is going to be, is redrawing the  
18 district lines. But we need to listen.

19           And that's, as I mentioned earlier, number  
20 one. I do listen. That has been a part of my --  
21 the jobs that I've held, is having to listen, and  
22 having to take input from others. And I actually

1 enjoy that. I actually enjoy listening to  
2 different opinions because I only know what I know.  
3 And I only know what I know based on my  
4 experiences. And listening to others and their  
5 experiences is beneficial, not only to me but to  
6 everyone, and respecting that.

7           And in terms of what I would ensure that  
8 it's not seen as polarized, again, I would be open,  
9 I would hope. I mean, you are bringing 14  
10 strangers together, so there's going to take some  
11 time for everyone to get to know each other and  
12 respect each other. But I would hope, at some  
13 point in time, we will all respect each other, get  
14 along. And then when we do make decisions we're  
15 making decisions as a united front, not as a  
16 Democrat or Republican or a different party, it's  
17 as the Commission, a nonpartisan Commission is how  
18 I would see it. Because the last thing you want to  
19 do is to have some of the Commissioners go against  
20 whatever the ultimate decision is.

21           So granted, is that a Pollyanna approach?  
22 Yes, it is a Pollyanna approach. Is that

1 realistic? Maybe it's not realistic but that's  
2 what I'm hoping for. I'm hoping that we can all  
3 get to a point where we can all respect each  
4 other's values, opinions, and decisions, that we  
5 support them all. Is it going to be 100 percent  
6 support? Probably not. But I just hope at the end  
7 of the day, we do.

8           And I'm just going to bring up that we did  
9 recently redraw the district lines for our school  
10 district. Excuse me. And we're made up of five  
11 rural communities, farming communities. And they  
12 brought forward the census data, obviously, and  
13 they brought forward the maps. And I wasn't -- I  
14 didn't -- I wasn't in agreement with the initial  
15 way they had drawn the plans. So we asked them to  
16 go back because some of the areas, rural areas,  
17 weren't being represented as we felt they should  
18 be, so they went back.

19           And during that time I also researched  
20 some Education Code to ensure that we were doing  
21 the right -- we were following the correct process.  
22 And at the end of the day, they came back with

1 other plans that I felt that were more appropriate  
2 and represented our communities better, and the  
3 rest of the board did as well. It's a member of  
4 seven. And at the end of the day, did I completely  
5 agree with how they were drawn? No, I did not. But  
6 at the end of the day, did I support? Yes, because  
7 that's what our responsibility is per the Education  
8 Code, and also what was best for the students.

9           So, again, being able to put your own  
10 values and your own wants aside for the betterment  
11 of everyone is what our role is. So that's how I'm  
12 hoping that we will be able to work together and  
13 not have any biases or conflict at the end. But,  
14 you know, we may have conflict but that's something  
15 that happens in any group setting.

16           MR. DAWSON: Thank-you. Question three:  
17 What is the greatest problem the Commission could  
18 encounter and what actions would you take to avoid  
19 or respond to this problem?

20           MS. FERNANDEZ: It was kind of interesting  
21 because, coming from a law enforcement background,

1 my initial thought was being threatened. So I  
2 actually have two. I hope that's okay.

3           One of them would be threatened. Because  
4 what I've seen, not only from the people I  
5 interview but from communities, and you see it in  
6 the media, and you see it firsthand, is that, as I  
7 mentioned earlier, people are very passionate.  
8 They're very passionate about what they feel, their  
9 culture, their community. And if they feel that  
10 that's threatened, they may also threaten you as a  
11 result of that. And being in law enforcement, I  
12 don't take threats lightly. There is a process for  
13 that. You contact your local law enforcement  
14 agency and ask them to conduct a threat assessment.  
15 I'm hoping it doesn't get to that point. But, you  
16 know, we do need to prepare for that. And we  
17 shouldn't just shrug it off if someone makes a  
18 threatening comment. I think we need to take it  
19 seriously. But, actually -- so that's one of them.

20           And the other thing is conflict, if  
21 there's conflict amongst the Commissioners, the  
22 members. And with that, I addressed that in number

1 two, is hopefully -- I mean, the main thing with  
2 conflict is you have to address it. And many  
3 people, I see it where I work, I'm sure you have  
4 all seen it where you work, is they don't like to  
5 address conflict. But that's the one thing you  
6 need to do right away is address the conflict, try  
7 to bring the parties together. If it's two people,  
8 four people, whatever the case may be, try to  
9 understand where the conflict resides and try to  
10 help them work through it because the last thing  
11 you want is for there to be conflict among the 14  
12 because we are on -- I don't remember the timelines  
13 but I know it's pretty strict timelines. And we  
14 don't have time to get derailed for too long.

15           So in terms of actions I would take, what  
16 actions I would take to respond, is I would work  
17 with those that have conflict. And the conflict  
18 could be with me as well. So if it's with me, as  
19 well, then I need to sit back and I need to do some  
20 self-reflection. And I need to determine, why am I  
21 having such a big issue with whatever the -- either

1 the Commissioner, the other Commissioner, or  
2 whatever the issue is?

3           And then I also need to be a good  
4 listener, which is what I mentioned in the first  
5 one, is I really need to sit back and listen  
6 because, again, I don't know it all. And they will  
7 -- they, obviously, have differing opinions. And  
8 it's not to say that it's a wrong opinion, it just  
9 means it's a different opinion. I need to be able  
10 to take that in, be open to that, and then realize,  
11 at the end of the day, we have a goal. And so  
12 what's the best process to take to get to that  
13 goal? And that is to resolve whatever conflicts we  
14 have internally.

15           I think that's it. I think just  
16 understanding what our mandate is and what our time  
17 frames are and just continue to move towards that  
18 effort and resolve any conflicts that we have.

19           MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

20           Question four: If you are selected you  
21 will be one of 14 members of the Commission which



1 is charged with working together to create maps of  
2 the new districts.

3 Please describe a situation where you had  
4 to work collaboratively with others on a project to  
5 achieve a common goal. Tell us the goal of the  
6 project, what your role in the group was, and how  
7 the group worked through any conflicts that arose?  
8 What lessons would you take from this group  
9 experience to the Commission, if selected?

10 MS. FERNANDEZ: I think in terms of the  
11 experience, one of the projects that I worked on  
12 when I worked at CalPERS I was on the Investment,  
13 Accounting, and Reconciliation Project Team. I was  
14 the team leader, so I worked directly for the  
15 project managers. I had a project manager that was  
16 on the information technology side, and then one  
17 that was on the business side.

18 And so what this project was as CalPERS,  
19 public employment -- the Public Employees'  
20 Retirement System, they were -- they had never had  
21 a reconciliation system, a system that reconciled  
22 their investments to their accounting, to their

1 custodial bank, which was external, then to their  
2 accounting. So for me, as a CalPERS member, that  
3 was very important to be able to reconcile that  
4 information. So we never had it. And they made a  
5 decision to implement a system. And with that, as  
6 part of the project team, I had to work with our  
7 external stakeholders, which were our custodian  
8 bank.

9           And then we also hired a consultant, a  
10 consultant that was actually going to implement the  
11 system. And, by meaning implement, they  
12 had -- it was a package that we were, you know,  
13 buying from a company but we had to implement it  
14 into our CalPERS infrastructure, which had to go  
15 into our I.T. area, which also had to have access  
16 to Investment Operations, as well as our Fiscal  
17 Services Division which actually did the accounting  
18 piece of it. And, again, this is something new  
19 that we had never -- that had never been  
20 established.

21           So with that, it was challenging because  
22 we -- those were five different groups that we had

1 to work with to try to make this happen. And we  
2 did have tight timelines. We had a year to  
3 implement it with the budget.

4 And in terms of what we did is we -- every  
5 area, the Investment Office, Fiscal Services, the  
6 I.T. as well, their contractors, they all  
7 identified users that would be part of our team.  
8 And so those users for the -- they have their  
9 regular work assignment, plus they also had -- they  
10 were on this project which, as you can imagine, can  
11 be challenging because their main focus was either  
12 investments or it was I.T. area or it was doing the  
13 accounting for the rest of the agency.

14 So with that, in terms of some of the  
15 issues that arose were their dedication to the  
16 project. And so what would happen, as a team  
17 leader, if there were conflicts or there were  
18 issues that needed to be addressed, I would be the  
19 one to address them initially with those at the  
20 lowest level, if possible, which is how I've always  
21 tried to work. And then we also had weekly  
22 meetings that had -- where we met with all of the

1 team members. And then, also, had a timeline. It  
2 was a strict timeline. It was like by week. So --  
3 and at that point, when we would meet we'd come up  
4 -- there would be a list of issues that we had. So  
5 at that point, we would address the issues in terms  
6 of, okay, who's responsible for addressing it?  
7 And, also, listening to what the issues were.

8           And like I said, there were conflicts, so  
9 -- but at the end of the day, it was successful.  
10 It was actually -- at that point, CalPERS, I think,  
11 had six different projects at the same time and we  
12 were the only project that came in on time. And we  
13 were the only project that came in under budget  
14 which, if you've ever worked for the state, coming  
15 in under budget is quite an accomplishment. And at  
16 the end the users did buy into it. And they did  
17 see that it was going to be beneficial for them.  
18 It did make their life a little bit easier.

19           But going through the process it was  
20 painful because change is hard for many people.  
21 And when you're trying to do both jobs, you're  
22 trying to be on the project and, also, your normal

1 work, we had to be sensitive to that as the Project  
2 Management Team, which we, you know, we tried to be  
3 as much as we could but we also had time frames.  
4 So just continually reaching out and ensuring they  
5 had the resources they needed in terms of moving  
6 forward.

7           Then, also, towards the end, ensuring that  
8 the consultant had transferred all of the  
9 information to our staff, be it I.T., Accounting or  
10 the Investment Office, that they were properly  
11 trained and they felt empowered that they were  
12 going to be able to implement this successfully and  
13 they could work through it. It actually ended up  
14 working well.

15           In terms of what lessons I would take from  
16 this group is to remain focused. And to -- we know  
17 what our timeline is, so just continue to maintain  
18 that timeline. And like I said, if there's  
19 conflicts, definitely work through those as soon as  
20 possible. Don't let those drag because the longer  
21 you let them drag and you don't address them the

1 bigger they become. It's easier to solve when  
2 they're not as big.

3 And so that's what I would take. I would  
4 just take the going back and just listening and  
5 appreciating what we're all trying to do,  
6 appreciating that we do have a common goal, and  
7 then just, you know, reminding everyone to sit  
8 back, take a deep breath, and remember this is our  
9 goal and it's nothing personal, it's just this is  
10 what our mandate is.

11 And I think that's it's. I think you just  
12 -- with the Commissioners, with the 14 of us, we  
13 just really need to take time to learn about each  
14 other and understand our positions and respect  
15 that, respect that information but then move  
16 forward with the common goal.

17 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

18 Question five: A considerable amount of  
19 the Commission's work will involve meeting with  
20 people from all over California who come from very  
21 different backgrounds and a wide variety of  
22 perspectives.

1           If you were selected as a Commissioner,  
2 what skills and attributes will make you effective  
3 at interacting with people from different  
4 backgrounds and who have a variety of perspectives?  
5 What experiences have you had that will help you be  
6 effective at understanding and appreciating people  
7 and communities of different backgrounds and who  
8 have a variety of perspectives?

9           MS. FERNANDEZ: Okay. First of all, I am  
10 first generation, so not only am I culturally an  
11 American, I'm also culturally Mexican, which I  
12 think is the best of both worlds. But, also, being  
13 in that position, sometimes you also feel like you  
14 don't belong because you're kind of in this middle  
15 ground. You're not to the left. You're not to the  
16 right. You're just kind of in the middle  
17 somewhere.

18           And I feel that, for me, that has been  
19 very helpful to be empathetic to others that have  
20 come to this country and that are -- have different  
21 cultures, different experiences, because it is  
22 important to me. And I feel that because it's

1 important to me, I know it's important to them, so  
2 I do, I respect that. And, actually, I welcome and  
3 I'm open to learning new cultures, new ways, new  
4 experiences. I think it just makes me a better  
5 person. It makes me better informed.

6           Oops. I just kind of lost my train of  
7 thought for a second but I'll get back on my train  
8 of thought.

9           And ensuring -- so -- and not only -- and  
10 I'm just talking about cultural differences. I  
11 mean, we have geographical differences. We -- it's  
12 every type of difference that you could think of.  
13 But at the end of the day, we go back to listening  
14 and appreciating each other's differences.

15           And in terms of, what was it, experiences  
16 you've had? Okay, so the experiences I've had.

17           So I've talked about being a special  
18 agent. And as a Special Agent, also as an Auditor,  
19 you have -- you collect all this information, all  
20 this evidence prior to interviewing your witnesses.  
21 And we call them witnesses and subjects, so -- as a  
22 Special Agent.



1           So there has been numerous times when I  
2 have gone in, I have my information, I have my  
3 evidence, I have my documentation, and I think I  
4 know what the answer is going to be or I think I  
5 know this person is guilty or not guilty, whatever  
6 the case may be. But so many times I've gone into  
7 the interview and they've actually educated me  
8 because I haven't taken into consideration the  
9 human aspect of it, their experiences, what their  
10 mindset was of why they did what they did. Does it  
11 explain it? If it explains it, does it make it  
12 right? Sometimes it does make it right. Sometimes  
13 it doesn't make it right.

14           But at the end of the day, just having the  
15 experience as an agent just leads me to believe, no  
16 matter how much evidence I have, sometimes when you  
17 go into that interview, it can just be kind of  
18 blown out of the window because they're able to  
19 justify it and explain their reasoning for doing a  
20 certain action. And like I said, it may be it may  
21 still be incorrect or misconduct, as we see it, or  
22 it might be justified.

1           And then, also, the other thing, when I  
2 ran for School Board, as I mentioned earlier, it's  
3 five small communities, farming communities, and  
4 when I ran against the incumbent, it was a true  
5 grassroots effort where we actually got the  
6 electoral rolls and we actually went out to every  
7 home and we knocked on their doors. And we -- you  
8 know, for me, it was probably one of the best  
9 experiences, which it's probably one of the hardest  
10 experiences but it was also one of the best  
11 experiences because, you know, in my mind, I  
12 thought, oh, we're all farming communities, we  
13 should all have the same goals, positions,  
14 interests. But, boy, I was so wrong.

15           I actually appreciated getting to know  
16 people from other communities. And you would  
17 think, these are small communities, I should have  
18 already known them. I don't know them. I tend to  
19 go towards the big city where the other communities  
20 are away from the big city.

21           So when I was -- when we were walking the  
22 districts, as we said it, as we would say it, when

1 we were walking the districts, you know, we felt we  
2 were educating them on, you know, this  
3 is -- this is what we need for the district, this  
4 is blah, blah, blah. And at the end of the day,  
5 they ended up educating us in terms of what their  
6 wants were, what their opinions were. And at the  
7 end of the day, we had more in common in terms of  
8 what we wanted for our students and for our  
9 community.

10           So in a sense, even the small communities,  
11 small farming communities where you wouldn't think  
12 there's much diversity, there really is much --  
13 there really is diversity. It can be diversity  
14 just from one street to the next street and it's  
15 just being aware of that and being open to that.  
16 And I feel that the experience I've had, I have had  
17 I my life, has opened me up to the diversity and  
18 being able to be open and appreciate the diverse  
19 individuals that we have in this state.

20           MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

1           We'll now go to Panel questions. Each  
2 Panel member will have 20 minutes to ask his or her  
3 questions. We'll start with the chair.

4           Mr. Belnap?

5           CHAIR BELNAP: Good morning, Ms.  
6 Fernandez.

7           MS. FERNANDEZ: Good morning.

8           CHAIR BELNAP: For a combined total of 14  
9 years, you've worked at either the Inspector  
10 General or with the Department of Corrections in an  
11 investigatory role, how have you exercised  
12 impartiality in these roles?

13          MS. FERNANDEZ: In terms, specifically,  
14 I'll talk about as a Special Agent. As a Special  
15 Agent, our investigation and investigative reports  
16 are unbiased. And so what that means is that we  
17 don't form an opinion. What we do is we collect  
18 the information, we collect our evidence, we  
19 collect -- (clears throat) excuse me -- we collect  
20 our evidence, our documentation. I've already  
21 talked about surveillance or whatever, getting  
22 police reports, so we collect all of our evidence.

1 And then we start interviewing the witnesses.  
2 Obviously, we already have allegations ahead of  
3 time, so that's what we're investigating are the  
4 allegations that have been vetted through our  
5 Central Intake Unit.

6 And with that, we go into our interviews  
7 with the witnesses. And from that, we either  
8 interview more witnesses, or then we go to the  
9 subject. And when we interview the subject,  
10 obviously, we have all the information that we've  
11 collected so far. And at that point, we don't make  
12 our decision that the person is guilty or not  
13 guilty. What we do is we confront them with the  
14 information that we have. We confront them with  
15 the allegation that we have.

16 And that's -- and then from there, you  
17 know, obviously, we have follow-up questions and  
18 whatever else triggers from that. If there more  
19 information that the subjects have brought forward,  
20 then at that point in time, after the interview,  
21 then we go back and we research that information.

1           So what we attempt to do and what I hope  
2 we do is we provide a well-balanced report that has  
3 all the information that we have. And if, like I  
4 mentioned, if the subject brings up additional  
5 information, we also research that and we draft our  
6 investigation report. And as I mentioned earlier,  
7 we did not draw opinions. We provide that  
8 information and report and we submit it to the  
9 hiring authority.

10           And so the hiring authority, at that  
11 point, they are the ones that are the decision  
12 makers in terms of whether or not allegations are  
13 sustained or not sustained. And they also work  
14 with the -- (clear throat) excuse me -- they also  
15 work with a vertical advocate which is an attorney  
16 for our office. And we also work with the  
17 attorneys in our office, the vertical advocates, as  
18 well, and we also work with the Office of Inspector  
19 General. And they also have an attorney,  
20 sometimes, on our cases.

21           And so we ensure that the information that  
22 we have is complete, it is unbiased, but it is what

1 it is. I mean, when I say unbiased, is I didn't  
2 come up with that information. I  
3 didn't -- I wasn't the one that initially -- that  
4 created it. I just gather what was available at  
5 the time.

6 And so that's how I ensure that -- I think  
7 you said unbiased; correct?

8 CHAIR BELNAP: I said impartial but  
9 it's --

10 MS. FERNANDEZ: Impartial. I'm sorry.  
11 Impartial, yes.

12 And for the Office of -- Inspector  
13 General's Office, you asked for that, too; correct?

14 CHAIR BELNAP: It's fine. I think the --

15 MS. FERNANDEZ: oh.

16 CHAIR BELNAP: -- process is similar.

17 What I want you to go into now is if you  
18 could describe a particular experience at either  
19 places, in an investigative role, where you had to  
20 set aside your personal views to conduct an  
21 investigation in a fair and impartial manner?

1 MS. FERNANDEZ: I can't go into specific  
2 details. I'm sure you can appreciate that because  
3 they are investigations. So I'll go more in  
4 generalities if that's okay? Hopefully, that's  
5 fine.

6 CHAIR BELNAP: Yes. Okay.

7 MS. FERNANDEZ: Okay. I think for me, the  
8 ones where it was more challenging, it would be  
9 more challenging for me to set aside my personal  
10 opinions, is more when you get into the Equal  
11 Employment Opportunity area where we have quite a  
12 few investigations that are in that realm, and more  
13 of the sexual harassment side of it. So that's  
14 challenging to interview someone if you have all of  
15 this information and it appears that the subject is  
16 -- has done this, conducted himself  
17 inappropriately.

18 And it is -- it can be difficult to go  
19 into an interview and interview someone, knowing  
20 that they've done this to a female or a male,  
21 either way, but I have been able to do that. I go  
22 in there and I just, okay, so what's -- here's the



1 information you have, and I don't -- and I'm not  
2 accusatory towards them. I just, I want them to  
3 explain their position. I ask them questions.  
4 They give me their responses.

5           And I don't show emotion. I just -- I ask  
6 follow-up questions. So, actually, I don't think I  
7 show emotion. I shouldn't say that for sure but I  
8 don't believe I show emotions or bias in terms of  
9 whether or not I feel they have committed the  
10 misconduct or not. I treat them with respect,  
11 which everyone deserves regardless of what they may  
12 or may not have done. I allow them to provide  
13 whatever information they can. If they have other  
14 witnesses, if they have -- often times, they do  
15 have information to the contrary in terms of what's  
16 been alleged. So, of course, after that, I do go  
17 research that as well. And I may interview other  
18 people, as appropriate, to discount or to show that  
19 a point of -- to validate their position.

20           So I'm thinking that's probably the one  
21 area where it would probably be the most difficult  
22 for me to set aside by biases. But, again, at the

1 end of the day my position is to come in and  
2 present an impartial report, and that's what I do.

3 CHAIR BELNAP: All right. Thank you.

4 So in your discussion today, you talked  
5 about how we all have biases and we need to be  
6 aware of them. And you just talked about one where  
7 you have difficulty --

8 MS. FERNANDEZ: I have biases, not  
9 difficulty.

10 CHAIR BELNAP: Right. A bias against  
11 people who sexually harass. I think most of us  
12 share that view as a bias.

13 What other biases do you feel like you  
14 have? And what have you done or what would you do  
15 to make sure they don't affect the work of the  
16 Commission?

17 MS. FERNANDEZ: Oh, my goodness, that's a  
18 good question, so I'm trying to think of what other  
19 biases. I'm sure I have many. I'm just kind of at  
20 a -- you stumped me right now but I'll get to it.  
21 Let me think. Biases?

1           Probably, I'll give you this, because I  
2 grew up poor, so probably my bias growing up was  
3 that everyone that had money, I mean, they had it  
4 all, they controlled everything, they were -- I  
5 mean, I just had my own opinions of people with  
6 money and the advantages they have. But as I  
7 became educated, I went to school, went to college,  
8 got to know people, more people that were in the  
9 higher socioeconomic arena than me, I realized  
10 that, no, they don't have it made, they have  
11 problems, too, everything's not solved. They have  
12 issues just like us. And there's many, many, many,  
13 many great attributes that we all have.

14           And so I think maybe that was kind of like  
15 an eye-opening thing was, you know, we have to --  
16 it's easy to make preconceived -- oh, my gosh, I  
17 just -- it's easy to -- oh, gosh, I just kind of --  
18 generalities, it's easy to make generalities about  
19 people.

20           And like I mentioned earlier, when I  
21 was -- when I walked the school districts and I got  
22 to know people, then I realized that, yes, we all

1 are different and we do have our biases, and I did  
2 have my bias against those that had money, but at  
3 the end of the day they were unjustified because I  
4 really needed to -- and hopefully that's what I've  
5 learned, is that I really need to get to know  
6 people before I make decisions about whether or not  
7 I'm going to like them or not like them or how I'm  
8 going to classify them.

9 CHAIR BELNAP: All right. Thank you.

10 So where did you grow up? And how did  
11 your upbringing affect the way you view the world?

12 MS. FERNANDEZ: So where I come -- so  
13 where I grew up was in -- I lived in a small  
14 farming community outside of Sacramento,  
15 California. My dad was a farmworker. So, as you  
16 can imagine, I'm one of eight children, number  
17 seven. And to say we were poor is probably being  
18 generous. So we, obviously, did come up in a  
19 disadvantage in terms of income.

20 But, to be honest with you, I was actually  
21 talking to my son the other day and I said, "You  
22 know what? I didn't even realize how poor we were

1 until I went to college. And then I realized how  
2 poor we were because I was blessed." I mean, it is  
3 a small farming community and we do have -- you  
4 know, there is this big disparate between the  
5 farmworkers and then the farmers, obviously, but I  
6 can honestly say I don't remember -- and maybe I  
7 was just blind to it -- but I don't remember there  
8 like being treated differently because of that, so  
9 I think I was blessed where I had a good group of  
10 friends, a good mixture of people. And I think  
11 that's what I've learned, is that just because  
12 we're different doesn't mean we can't get along and  
13 we can't find common ground.

14 Okay, what was your question again?

15 CHAIR BELNAP: Oh, you've answered it.

16 MS. FERNANDEZ: Did I? Okay.

17 CHAIR BELNAP: You currently live in  
18 Clarksburg. Is that the same town you were  
19 referring to where you grew up?

20 MS. FERNANDEZ: I'm sorry. What did --

21 CHAIR BELNAP: Where, what town  
22 specifically, did you grow up in?

1 MS. FERNANDEZ: Oh, so I grew up,  
2 initially, my first few years was in Courtland,  
3 California, which is on the Delta, and then  
4 Clarksburg, which is where I currently live. I did  
5 actually -- I moved away for a while and then I  
6 came back.

7 CHAIR BELNAP: Okay.

8 MS. FERNANDEZ: I like the small town.

9 CHAIR BELNAP: That's leads to my next  
10 question, is have you lived in or worked in other  
11 regions of California??

12 MS. FERNANDEZ: No, I haven't. I mean,  
13 I've worked in other regions in terms of as an  
14 Auditor, I traveled throughout the state to  
15 different school districts. As an Investigator  
16 with -- as a Deputy Inspector General and, also, as  
17 a Special Agent, I traveled to different parts of  
18 California to the different correctional  
19 facilities.

20 But in terms of actually living somewhere  
21 else permanently, it's mainly been in the

1 Sacramento area, Sacramento/Elk Grove/Delta  
2 community. Is that what you're asking?

3 CHAIR BELNAP: Yeah. In your work travels  
4 --

5 MS. FERNANDEZ: Um-hmm.

6 CHAIR BELNAP: -- do you feel like they  
7 were extensive enough and you stayed there long  
8 enough that you got a good sense of the areas you  
9 were in or were they mostly focused, get the  
10 investigation done, and get back home?

11 MS. FERNANDEZ: I would say they were,  
12 probably, mainly focused on, you know, get the job  
13 done. But I will say in all of -- like in most of  
14 my jobs, I actually did get to know the personnel,  
15 the staff that worked there, when I would talk to  
16 them about their processes, especially with  
17 auditing, because you really need to know the  
18 internal controls and the processes. And I do feel  
19 I went out of my way to get to know what their  
20 processes were. And I actually provided  
21 information on how they could improve those

1 internal control processes because I didn't want  
2 anything to be a surprise at the end.

3 But in terms of getting to know them, I  
4 mean, I feel I did. Like I mentioned earlier, I  
5 mean, I could travel throughout the whole state, I  
6 would think, and at the end of the day, we're all  
7 just -- we're all trying to get to the same place,  
8 which means, you know, trying to do our jobs.  
9 We're trying to do our jobs the best we can. We  
10 all have, obviously, families that we have to feed,  
11 even if it is just ourselves, so we do have --  
12 there's so many more commonalities than  
13 differences, I believe. Because at the end of the  
14 day, we do have survival instincts, we do have  
15 values and morals. It could be at different  
16 ranges. But if we try hard enough, we can find  
17 commonalities with most people.

18 CHAIR BELNAP: All right. Thank you. You  
19 answered one of my questions. I was going to ask  
20 you how being a School Board of Trustee has  
21 increased your appreciation for California's



1 diversity, but I feel like you've answered that  
2 today in your testimony.

3           What I want to give you is an opportunity  
4 to discuss any other volunteer work experience that  
5 increased your appreciation for California's  
6 diversity?

7           MS. FERNANDEZ: Any volunteer? Well, the  
8 volunteer that I do is being on the board member,  
9 obviously -- being on the Board, obviously.

10           And then, other than that, my focus has  
11 been on education when I do volunteer. I do  
12 volunteer at the schools. I hope to start doing  
13 that a little bit more often now. But I probably  
14 did that for about a good eight years. And my  
15 favorite was going into kindergarten classes and  
16 reading to children that -- reading and math to  
17 children that did not speak English. So it was,  
18 actually, probably one of the most rewarding  
19 experiences because by the start of the school  
20 year, they don't know English, any English at all,  
21 and by the end of the year, they know English.

1 They're singing, they're talking, everything's  
2 English to them.

3           So for me, it was just like so rewarding  
4 to just see the difference one year can make -- not  
5 even one year, eight months can make, and just  
6 providing the one-on-one attention that people  
7 need, so that's been very rewarding. And like I  
8 said, most of the English learners were  
9 socioeconomically disadvantaged.

10           And then other volunteer, I volunteered as  
11 a soccer coach for -- in Rancho Cordova, so it's an  
12 area that also is not -- is low socioeconomically,  
13 so that was actually kind of fun. It was getting  
14 to know, I think it was six girls, that I knew two  
15 of them from before but I didn't know four of them,  
16 and just their diverse backgrounds in terms of,  
17 again, they're just trying to make -- they're, I  
18 guess they're at the point where, I believe, I was  
19 early on in my childhood, where they're just trying  
20 to make ends meet.

21           So in my -- so my volunteer has mainly  
22 been focused on areas that they need volunteers

1 versus excess of volunteers, and only because I  
2 really do like and enjoy meeting other cultures,  
3 other diversities, other ethnic groups. I'm open  
4 to that and I actually enjoy it. It makes me a  
5 better person.

6 CHAIR BELNAP: All right. Thank you.

7 Madam Secretary, time check?

8 MS. PELLMAN: Yes. Four minutes, four  
9 seconds remaining.

10 CHAIR BELNAP: All right. Thank you.

11 Can you walk us through an investigation  
12 or other analysis you've performed that you believe  
13 demonstrate the strength of your analytical skills?

14 MS. FERNANDEZ: Can it be a special  
15 project, not necessarily an investigation? Would  
16 that work?

17 CHAIR BELNAP: Yes.

18 MS. FERNANDEZ: Okay. Actually, it did  
19 end up to be an investigation.

20 So there was -- our Prison Law Office --  
21 (clear throat) excuse me -- had conducted a review  
22 of High Desert State Prison in Susanville. And

1 they issued this report that had over 70 findings.  
2 And I was -- they tasked me for resolving those 70  
3 findings.

4           So with that is, in terms of my analytic  
5 skills, I had to develop -- I didn't have to, I  
6 developed a spreadsheet. I had to -- actually,  
7 initially what I had to do was review the report.  
8 And then I had to decipher the 70 allegations that  
9 were in there. And so with that, I developed a  
10 spreadsheet that I used to track every allegation.  
11 And with the allegation, I would also identify if  
12 there was a subject that was identified, if there  
13 were any witnesses identified, who the complainant  
14 was, whose responsibility it would be to follow up.

15           And so with that, weekly I worked with --  
16 well, actually, daily I would work with the  
17 institution because they were mainly the ones that  
18 had to conduct inquiry works. And so every inquiry  
19 that they conducted on each different allegation, I  
20 had to -- I actually went there and I reviewed it  
21 to ensure that it was complete, that they had done  
22 a thorough job. And, if needed, we would open up

1 investigations. And with that, I would also follow  
2 the investigations to make sure that they were done  
3 appropriately.

4           And then from there I would track to see  
5 where those -- once the investigations were sent  
6 back to the Hiring Authority to see if discipline  
7 was issued. And then, also with that, I had to  
8 work, like I mentioned, with -- I had to work with  
9 High Desert State Prison, I had to work with my own  
10 management, because this was the first type of this  
11 report that we had received. And then, also, I  
12 worked with our internal investigators or special  
13 agents. And I also worked -- we hired an external  
14 consultant that was independent, so I worked with  
15 them too. And with the external consultant and  
16 myself, we had to come to consensus in terms of  
17 when each allegation was resolved.

18           So at the end of our -- it was a long  
19 process. It took us about nine months, I believe,  
20 eight months. But at the end of the process the  
21 external contractor was satisfied, which meant the

1 prison law office was satisfied. Our agency was  
2 satisfied.

3           So, for me, that kind of exemplifies my, I  
4 believe you said, analytical and being able to  
5 interpret information, and then look at law, also,  
6 and then look at our own operations manuals, our  
7 different -- because some of the alleged misconduct  
8 was not misconduct because if you look at the  
9 policies and procedures, which I had to, too, they  
10 were within policy, so that was part of it too.

11           So, for me, I think that just shows all  
12 the different resources I had to use in order to  
13 resolve these 70 allegations. And at the same  
14 time, I was still doing my other regular  
15 assignment, so I was continuing to process  
16 investigations also.

17           CHAIR BELNAP: All right. Thank you.

18           MS. FERNANDEZ: Thank you.

19           CHAIR BELNAP: I have no further questions  
20 at this time.

21           I'll turn the time over to Mr. Coe.

1 VICE CHAIR COE: Okay. Thank you, Mr.  
2 Chair.

3 Good morning, Ms. Fernandez. Thank you  
4 for taking the time to speak with us today.

5 MS. FERNANDEZ: Thank you.

6 VICE CHAIR COE: I just want to apologize.  
7 I don't know if you guys can hear noise. Somebody  
8 is, apparently, jackhammering concrete outside my  
9 house. I've lived here for over a decade and  
10 that's literally never happened. And, of course,  
11 now that I'm trying to conduct this meeting here,  
12 somebody's jackhammering concrete outside and  
13 making a lot of noise, so hopefully that doesn't  
14 come across to everybody else.

15 Ms. Fernandez, I'd like to start with  
16 asking you about some of your volunteer roles in  
17 describing your application. And most of those  
18 appear to be geared towards working with young  
19 people in some capacity. And I'd like to know what  
20 motivates you to focus your volunteer work on the  
21 youth of your community?

1 MS. FERNANDEZ: Because -- that's an  
2 interesting question because I've actually thought  
3 of that myself too. And it's like, why do I  
4 concentrate so much on the youth?

5 I think because -- and if you'll look on  
6 my application, I've worked for the Department of  
7 Corrections and office of internal -- Office of  
8 Inspector General probably 17-plus years, so I see  
9 what the end effect is in terms of institutions and  
10 inmates and parolees. And I honestly feel that the  
11 children are a key, are a key to have our -- so  
12 that our -- so they don't end up in our  
13 institutions or facilities.

14 And I feel that I've been blessed. I have  
15 the resources that I can help the children and,  
16 maybe, a little bit of a mentor for them, to let  
17 them know, hey, I was a farmworker's daughter as  
18 well. I mean, I was -- English is my second  
19 language. And for me, I feel that they need more  
20 mentors, hopefully that are positive and that will  
21 support their aspirations of either, you know,  
22 continuing on to college or to go into a trade



1 school or whatever the case may be. But when  
2 you're struggling, when you're poor, often times,  
3 education is not your priority, nor should it be,  
4 because you're trying to just put food on the  
5 table.

6 And so for me to concentrate on the youth,  
7 I just, I think that's the key. That's the key to,  
8 hopefully, them making better decisions in the  
9 future. And if they -- and it's actually kind of  
10 neat because I did coach volleyball, and so now  
11 it's kind of fun to see that some of the girls that  
12 I coached are coming back to be coaches as well.  
13 So it's nice to see them give back as well.  
14 That's why I concentrate on the youth.

15 VICE CHAIR COE: Thank you.

16 I'd like to talk about your impartiality  
17 essay for a moment. And in that essay, you  
18 mentioned having changed your position a few times  
19 after listening to the input of others. And I'm  
20 wondering if you could give us a specific example  
21 of a time where you changed your position after  
22 gathering additional input?

1 MS. FERNANDEZ: Probably -- I'm going to  
2 get some (indiscernible). Probably, when I talked  
3 about -- when I talked earlier about the school  
4 district, when we redrew, we recently redrew the  
5 district boundaries, our district doesn't have to  
6 do that because we vote at-large, so you don't have  
7 to have district -- you don't have to redraw your  
8 district boundaries every ten years. And I just, I  
9 actually continued to fight that because there was  
10 a community member that kept asking us to do it,  
11 asking us to do it, and I felt, and the rest of the  
12 board also felt, that we weren't being fair across  
13 the district.

14 And it was recently where somebody really  
15 sat down and explained why they felt it should be  
16 and gave me more insight as to what their positions  
17 were. And at that point, that's when I decided  
18 that, yeah, you know, you're right, we do need to  
19 redraw the boundaries to be more reflective of our  
20 population, our census numbers. And so I guess  
21 that was probably one of the major times when my --

1 when I've changed my decision and my mindset to do  
2 something different that I wasn't set to do.

3 VICE CHAIR COE: Thank you.

4 I'd like to -- it's a nice segue into the  
5 other question I wanted to ask you about your  
6 service on the School Board where they recently  
7 redrew the School Board Trustee districts. And I'd  
8 like you to talk more specifically about what your  
9 role was in that. And were the Trustees drawing  
10 their own boundaries? How was that working?

11 MS. FERNANDEZ: Oh, no. Okay, so once we  
12 made a -- well, let me see. So once we made a  
13 decision and voted, you know, in open forum, that  
14 we agreed to move forward with this, then we  
15 consulted with, oh, goodness, I think it's our  
16 County Office of Education, I can't remember,  
17 excuse me. But they're the ones that, actually,  
18 they took our information, our census information,  
19 as well as our district boundary overall and how  
20 the census split up, and they're the ones that came  
21 forward and they presented, initially, three  
22 different scenarios. They would show what our

1 current district boundaries are and then two other  
2 -- no, three other options. And at that point,  
3 when they initially came in with the three other  
4 options, I was not happy with how they had drawn a  
5 couple of those.

6 So they actually went back and they came  
7 up with a couple of other options. And at the end  
8 of the day, we unanimously voted for the one that I  
9 felt was more reflective of the communities, so  
10 that each community could maintain its own trustee.

11 VICE CHAIR COE: Was community input  
12 gathered and considered during this effort?

13 MS. FERNANDEZ: All of our meetings are  
14 open. And I actually don't remember receiving any  
15 community input. But, again, our meeting agendas  
16 are posted 72 hours prior to the meetings.  
17 Everyone, anyone and everyone, is open to come to  
18 our meetings. And you do have to understand that  
19 it is a rural area. It's, I mean, it's probably  
20 over 50 miles. And each community, probably my  
21 community, maybe has 1,000 residents, I'm not sure.

1 So rarely do we receive -- do we have community  
2 members attend our meetings.

3 VICE CHAIR COE: I see. And to get a  
4 little bit more technical, what data was used for  
5 this process, and was there any use of mapping  
6 softwares?

7 MS. FERNANDEZ: I'm not sure if there were  
8 mapping softwares because, again, we're not the  
9 ones that actually created the boundary lines.

10 In terms of the data that was used, it was  
11 the census data, so this would have been the census  
12 data for 2010 because, obviously, 2020 hadn't been  
13 -- hasn't been done yet. So we used the census  
14 data and, also, obviously, the mapping, the map of  
15 the district in terms of how that population was  
16 distributed amongst the districts.

17 And like I mentioned, there are seven  
18 trustees. So then divided those -- that area into  
19 seven to try to come up -- I think they tried to  
20 make every trustee area, approximately, maybe 2,000  
21 residents, something like that.

22 VICE CHAIR COE: Okay. Thank you.

1 Changing subjects a little bit to your  
2 essay on appreciation for California's diversity.  
3 You said in there, and I think you mentioned  
4 something similar earlier during the interview, but  
5 in the essay you said, "I know how difficult it is  
6 to feel as if you belong." And I'm wondering if  
7 you can expand on that a little bit?

8 MS. FERNANDEZ: What was it, "I know how  
9 difficult it is" --

10 VICE CHAIR COE: "To feel as if you  
11 belong."

12 MS. FERNANDEZ: That was a long time ago.  
13 Let me try to remember. I'm kidding.

14 So I believe what I'm referring to is it's  
15 difficult if you already feel -- like I mentioned  
16 earlier, English is my second language. So if you  
17 already feel that you're different, then it is hard  
18 to feel like you belong. And part of that, too, is  
19 people want to belong. So in getting from -- excuse  
20 me, I probably need water -- in getting from point  
21 A to point B, you probably need another step, you  
22 probably need a point C, so it's important. I

1 think it's important for most people to feel like  
2 they belong.

3           And when you tie this into the -- what  
4 we're going to be tasked with here is not only  
5 feeling that you belong but hearing that you're  
6 being heard and that you're being understood. And  
7 that's probably how it ties into being on the  
8 Commission is I do know that people want to be  
9 heard, and people are unique, and people  
10 culturally, and different religiously and  
11 socioeconomically, they want to be heard, they want  
12 to be represented.

13           And I believe that's what I'm -- what I  
14 was trying to say. I'd have to read the whole  
15 thing to see in the context of, you know, what that  
16 one phrase came out of, but I think that's just  
17 wanting to belong. And I think that's important  
18 with this Commission, is people want to feel that  
19 they were heard, and maybe that will increase their  
20 participation in the future with future elections.

21           VICE CHAIR COE: Okay. Thank you.

1 MS. FERNANDEZ: Did that answer your  
2 question?

3 VICE CHAIR COE: No, it did. And,  
4 actually, you covered a follow-up question that I  
5 was going to ask you afterwards and we already got  
6 that one covered, as well, so thank you.

7 So I want to talk about communities of  
8 interest for a moment. And one of the biggest  
9 tasks that the Commission is going to have to go  
10 through is to identify communities of interest all  
11 across the state. And some of those communities  
12 may be easier to identify than others. They're  
13 more engaged. They're more obvious in one way or  
14 another. And some of them might be harder to find.  
15 They're less engaged or they don't normally want to  
16 be found for a variety of reasons.

17 As a Commissioner, how would you go about  
18 identifying communities of interest, particularly  
19 paying close attention to kind of inadvertently  
20 overlooking some of those harder-to-find  
21 communities?



1 MS. FERNANDEZ: Oh, my goodness, that's a  
2 good question. I'm pretty sure we can't do  
3 grassroots, like I did with the district when I ran  
4 for district, going door to door.

5 But, actually, if you go to some of the --  
6 we were just talking about this recently -- if you  
7 go to some of the churches. You know, churches are  
8 also community areas. There could be different  
9 organizations or different groups. We could try  
10 that as well. I mean, as I mentioned earlier,  
11 having the internet access, I mean, you can Google  
12 everything, anything now, not in the old days when  
13 you had to actually do door to door.

14 But I would -- and like you mentioned,  
15 also, there are some people that just want to be  
16 engaged or don't have the time to be engaged and  
17 you have to respect that as well. You can't impose  
18 yourself too much because then that works opposite  
19 of what you're trying -- what your goal is trying  
20 to be.

21 But I would just try to reach out. If

1 I -- if we know -- oh, also, your law enforcement  
2 agencies, that's a good source in terms of  
3 different areas that may not be as represented or  
4 as engaged. So at that point in time, you can work  
5 with law enforcement or with church or with  
6 different groups. And more than likely, they would  
7 be the pulse and they could tell you, hey, talk to  
8 this person. You know, they're well -- they're  
9 kind of who everyone looks up to. So maybe doing a  
10 little bit more effort of trying to just not go to  
11 the obvious, that's what you mentioned earlier, and  
12 I'm not afraid to do that. I mean, I did that when  
13 I ran for the School Board. I actually went door  
14 to door and actually did door to door, as well as  
15 mail, postal campaign. And now you have the  
16 internet access too. So I would try to engage  
17 something like that.

18           And we actually just recently did  
19 something with the School Board where we're trying  
20 to decide whether or not we're going to move  
21 forward with a bond and -- the bond measure. And  
22 we hired a firm that actually went out and did

1 calls for us, had a questionnaire that they went  
2 through, and just randomly made calls, telephone  
3 calls, both cellular phone, land lines, and also  
4 via the internet. So that's another option that we  
5 could do as well.

6           It's whatever -- and that's a good point,  
7 and we see that in the school, too, is like you  
8 always have the same people that volunteer to do  
9 this or that, give opinions on this, which aren't  
10 the majority. It's just maybe, you know, a handful  
11 of people and they're kind of trying to make the --  
12 trying to make the decisions for all. And, as you  
13 pointed out, that's not appropriate.

14           So, you know, definitely try to engage  
15 more, either telephone, you know, seek out law  
16 enforcement, as well, or some other community  
17 organizations, even sports related. Youth sports,  
18 everybody gets -- not everybody. A lot of people  
19 get their kids into sports, so that's probably  
20 another area you could go to also. But just try to  
21 think outside the box.

1           VICE CHAIR COE: So in that work, you  
2 might encounter some communities that are concerned  
3 about engaging, not necessarily that they're  
4 against it, they might like to but they have  
5 concerns for one reason or another in getting  
6 involved with government bodies or with engaging  
7 and providing their perspectives or their concerns.

8           But since input from as many communities  
9 as possible is important for the Commission to do  
10 its work, how could the Commission make some of  
11 those communities feel more comfortable coming  
12 forward and sharing their perspectives?

13          MS. FERNANDEZ: I think trying to  
14 develop -- like I mentioned earlier, even those  
15 communities, they do have spokespeople. So  
16 try -- my initial instinct would be to try to  
17 develop a rapport with whoever those spokespeople  
18 are. And really try to educate them and explain to  
19 them what this is in terms of how it can help them  
20 in the future.

21          I mean, you see a lot of the commercials  
22 now on the census and how that's going to help with

1 the schools, but it can be the same type of  
2 marketing and information sharing that we could do,  
3 is to just, again, go back, listen, listen to what  
4 the spokespeople have to say, and try to adjust to  
5 that and try to figure out how you can break that  
6 barrier and earn their trust.

7           And that's really what we want to try to  
8 do is earn their trust. And that doesn't mean 14  
9 of us go and maybe just one or two of us go so it's  
10 not so overwhelming to them. So just try to find  
11 out through your other sources, you know, what's  
12 really driving them? What can we bring to the  
13 table that will, hopefully, help them understand  
14 that we really do want them to be engaged, we  
15 really do want to know what they want and what  
16 their, you know, values are, what their goals are?  
17 So that's kind of how I would approach it.

18           VICE CHAIR COE: Thank you.

19           If you were to be appointed to the  
20 role -- the Commission, which aspects of that role  
21 of Commissioner do you think you would enjoy the  
22 most and, conversely, which aspects of the role of

1 Commissioner do you think might cause you to  
2 struggle a little bit?

3 MS. PELLMAN: A quick time check. We have  
4 3 minutes, 50 seconds remaining.

5 VICE CHAIR COE: Thank you.

6 MS. FERNANDEZ: The role of the  
7 Commissioner? I'm sorry. Do I answer that or I  
8 don't answer that?

9 VICE CHAIR COE: No, you can. The  
10 Secretary was just letting us know we have just  
11 under four minutes left before we have to pass on  
12 the time --

13 MS. FERNANDEZ: Oh.

14 VICE CHAIR COE: -- to the other person.  
15 So did you hear the question or do you  
16 need me to repeat it?

17 MS. FERNANDEZ: Okay. And so just so I  
18 understand, in terms of the roles of the  
19 Commissioner? You're kind of going in and out, so  
20 I just want to make sure that I did hear you.

1           VICE CHAIR COE: Okay. I'll repeat the  
2 question. Hopefully, I come through clearer this  
3 time.

4           So the question was: If you were to be  
5 appointed, which aspects of the role of  
6 Commissioner do you think you would enjoy the most  
7 and, conversely, which aspects do you think might  
8 cause you to struggle a little bit?

9           MS. FERNANDEZ: The roles of the  
10 Commissioner? Now if I had that in front of me,  
11 that would be great.

12           So I think the analytical side of it, I  
13 think, would probably be my positive side. I'm  
14 very resourceful and very analytically minded.  
15 Gosh, I'm kind of a data nerd, so that part, I  
16 would probably be very comfortable with.

17           In terms of what I wouldn't be comfortable  
18 with, I'm just trying to think right now. I'm  
19 actually not sure, you know, which role I would not  
20 be comfortable with because I think that many of  
21 the roles that the Commissioner has I've had, also,  
22 on the School Board. So I'm trying to think of on

1 the School Board, what have been the most  
2 difficult? I mean, the School Board is different  
3 because we've had to make budget cuts. So,  
4 obviously, those were the most difficult for me to  
5 make because I never like to cut anything in  
6 schools but it was necessary at the time.

7 So I actually don't -- I can't think of  
8 what role I would not be as comfortable with right  
9 now.

10 VICE CHAIR COE: Okay.

11 Mr. Chair, no further questions at this  
12 time.

13 CHAIR BELNAP: Thank you, Mr. Coe.

14 We'll turn the time over to Ms. Dickison.

15 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you, Mr.  
16 Belnap.

17 Good morning, Ms. Fernandez. Thank you  
18 for meeting with us today.

19 MS. FERNANDEZ: Thank you.

20 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: So many of my  
21 questions have been asked but in your response to  
22 question two, you may have touched on this already,



1 but you stated that we all have our biases and need  
2 to recognize that and set that aside.

3 So what are your biases and what will you  
4 do to ensure those biases don't affect your  
5 decisions as a Commissioner, should you be  
6 selected?

7 MS. FERNANDEZ: Okay. In terms of the  
8 biases, oh, let's see. I think my -- probably a  
9 bias that I would have, and I mentioned it earlier,  
10 I think, with Mr. Coe is how you normally have the  
11 same people coming to board meetings and giving  
12 opinions. And after about like the third or fourth  
13 time, you kind of become numb to that and you tend  
14 to exclude it, or you could.

15 And so I think with me, I just have to be  
16 very, very cognizant of not dismissing anyone in  
17 terms of what their opinion or what their  
18 conversation and what they want to communicate to  
19 us. And I think that's -- it's probably just not  
20 dismissing what someone has to say because, for  
21 them, it is true and something that they believe.

1           And I just have to continue to remind  
2 myself of that, that it's just like me, I speak  
3 what I feel emotional about, what I value, what's  
4 important to me. And it would be the same with  
5 being a Commissioner, is you have to be open to  
6 that. You have to listen. You have to take them  
7 all equally, everyone's comments equally.

8           PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you.

9           So one of the things the last Commission  
10 noted was there were instances in which they felt  
11 that people were presenting themselves as members  
12 of community or they were speaking on behalf of  
13 members of the community when, actually, they may  
14 have had ulterior motive of political bias.

15           With your background in investigations,  
16 what skill set do you have that you think would  
17 help the Commission in identifying this and how  
18 would you handle these types of things?

19           MS. FERNANDEZ: Okay. In that, we get  
20 that too. I mean, like you said, as a Special  
21 Agent, and also being on the district, is we have -

1 - on the Board is we have members coming up saying,  
2 "Many people feel this way."

3 And so what I've done in the past, and  
4 what I do, also, as an Investigator is, again, I  
5 welcome what their position is, I welcome the  
6 information they have -- (clears throat) excuse me  
7 -- but at the end of the day, it's just one person  
8 giving their opinion, and that's what I try to  
9 remind myself of.

10 And, also, in terms of whatever they are  
11 presenting, be it as a Special Agent or be it on  
12 the School Board, I go back and I research that.  
13 And I do as much investigative-type work as I can  
14 to, one, understand that person better if they are  
15 someone that maybe does have -- like you said,  
16 maybe even politically is -- has a different  
17 political position or whatever the case may be, I  
18 go back and try to learn as much as I can about  
19 that person and maybe what their past practice has  
20 been.

21 And as an Agent, that's (indiscernible) or  
22 a witness in, I went back and validated that

1 information. And, again, at the end of the day if  
2 it's one person coming forward with their  
3 information and, yes, they often -- or not often,  
4 sometimes they do come forward and they try to  
5 appear that they are representing the community.  
6 But, again, unless the community is there with  
7 them, then it's one person, one opinion, and go  
8 back and do as much validation and research as you  
9 can on their positions.

10 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you.

11 So you're the Trustee of the School Board.  
12 And you talked about running a grassroots campaign  
13 for that.

14 When you were running that campaign, what  
15 did you learn about the communities in your area  
16 and their needs that you may not have already  
17 known?

18 MS. FERNANDEZ: What's interesting, well,  
19 one of them was at the end of the day, we did have  
20 the same goals. We did want our kids to be  
21 educated. We did want our kids to have the best

1 facilities, the best teachers, be equitable. That,  
2 I guess, I assumed.

3 But I think what I learned most of that  
4 was the area I represent is on the north end. And  
5 on the south end is, like I mentioned earlier,  
6 probably 30 miles away, something like that. And  
7 it was actually interesting because we always felt  
8 on the north end -- and on the south end is where  
9 the district office is located. And so on the  
10 north end, we always felt that the south end  
11 schools were getting all of the resources and they  
12 got everything they wanted and, you know, all of  
13 the programs and sports and different types of  
14 classes, and had the better teachers, all of that.  
15 And then when I went to actually walk that area,  
16 they felt that the north area was the one that had  
17 the best school, the best program, the best  
18 services, everything.

19 So I think what I learned is that, because  
20 no one's talking to each other, if that's a good  
21 way to put it, they all -- you're operating in a  
22 silo. You're operating just in your own little

1 area and you're not realizing that you're all  
2 feeling the same way. And I think that's probably  
3 what I learned, was that at the district, we really  
4 didn't do a very good job of communicating with all  
5 of our areas.

6           And one thing that was changed when I got  
7 on the School Board is, before, all of the Board  
8 meetings were held at one end of the district and  
9 then -- so what we did is we started holding the  
10 meetings at the different schools. So now the  
11 district meetings are being rotated to the  
12 different sites and we actually have a few more  
13 community members come. But we also  
14 realized -- or I realized how important  
15 communication is, and listening. I mean, you  
16 really need to hear what they're saying.

17           And just by moving the district meetings  
18 to different communities, that was a way of  
19 communication of not only us communicating out to  
20 the public in our communities but, also, for the  
21 community members to come forward with any concerns  
22 they have, because we always have an open forum, a

1 public comment period, and they can also comment  
2 during the different agenda items.

3           So I think that's probably like the thing  
4 that I found most interesting is that each end felt  
5 like the other end was the golden child and they  
6 felt like the stepchild. So now we do a better job  
7 of communicating, being very more transparent on  
8 our decisions, more vocal in communicating that out  
9 to our community areas.

10           PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you.

11           So you've talked a little bit about the  
12 experiences of when the school district went  
13 through the redistricting process. What did --  
14 what I -- what did you learn during that process  
15 that you think will assist with the work of the  
16 Commission, should you be selected?

17           MS. FERNANDEZ: (Clears throat). Excuse  
18 me.

19           I think what I learned more -- most  
20 through that process was that it is important for  
21 every -- to draw the boundaries so that you do have  
22 areas that are either communities that are

1 represented, that are inclusive and representative  
2 of themselves.

3 I also learned through that process that  
4 it doesn't have to be equally divided in terms of  
5 2,000, 2,000, 2,000, 2,000. It can be drawn  
6 differently based on how -- you know, based on  
7 maybe the identities of certain communities or  
8 whatever the case may be.

9 So I learned those two things, which  
10 before I thought it has to be just equally drawn  
11 within a few -- you know, a couple hundred numbers.  
12 But I learned that it is important to ensure that  
13 each community or area, if possible, can be  
14 represented singly. And then, also, that you can -  
15 - you do have flexibility in how those boundaries  
16 are drawn.

17 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you.

18 If you're selected as one of the first  
19 eight Commissioners, which are selected randomly,  
20 you would be tasked with selecting the next six.  
21 What would you be looking for in those individuals?



1 MS. FERNANDEZ: Oh, my goodness. Well, I  
2 think what I would look at first is, if I'm, you  
3 know, one of the eight, I would see what the eight  
4 of us are, hopefully have a chance to meet the  
5 eight. I'm hoping I will. And then to see what  
6 our skill sets are and what, maybe, our strengths  
7 are.

8 And then in terms of selecting the next  
9 six, I would like to select six that could bring  
10 something, some other strong skills sets into the  
11 group, if that makes sense, so that collaboratively  
12 we have a strong Commission where we have a  
13 breadth, you know, a breadth of different skills  
14 and knowledge and abilities.

15 Because, you know, having 14 of the same  
16 type of people isn't necessarily good because you  
17 really need to have -- you need to have an array of  
18 the different tasks, because we can't all be  
19 experts in everything because, at certain points in  
20 time, some of us will be leaders, but then we'll  
21 step back and not be leaders because that's not my

1 area of expertise, so somebody else could step up  
2 to that.

3 So that's probably what I would look --  
4 the six that would complement our team, not  
5 necessarily overlap it in terms of what we already  
6 have with our skills and abilities, but that would  
7 complement and just make us a stronger, well  
8 diverse group of Commissioners.

9 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you.

10 You've talked a couple of times about  
11 people needing to be leaders, and also knowing when  
12 to step back and let someone else --

13 MS. FERNANDEZ: Um-hmm.

14 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: -- be the leader.  
15 What can --

16 MS. FERNANDEZ: Yes.

17 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: -- the Commission  
18 do early on to build that team atmosphere where  
19 they know when -- when each person knows when they  
20 need to step out?

21 MS. FERNANDEZ: Can you repeat that just  
22 one more time? I'm sorry. It kind of cut out for

1 a little. I'm sorry, my internet connection is  
2 probably not the best, so I apologize for that.

3 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: That's okay.

4 What can the Commissioners do early on to  
5 build that team atmosphere in which each of the  
6 Commissioners knows or understands when maybe they  
7 should step back or maybe they should be in the  
8 lead?

9 MS. FERNANDEZ: Okay. So I think as  
10 Commissioners early on, I think we really do need  
11 to get know each other. We need to get to know our  
12 backgrounds. We need to get to know our strengths  
13 and our weaknesses.

14 As I do now on the School Board, I'm just  
15 going to give you an example, is there's seven of  
16 us. And, fiscally, that's really kind of my area,  
17 so everyone kind of looks to me to make sure, do  
18 the numbers look good, is everything good?

19 But then when it comes to the contract  
20 side of it, another Board member, that's his  
21 strength, so I definitely step back at that point  
22 and he's the one that's going to really dive into

1 that to make, you know, make sure that all the  
2 questions are asked and we're going in that  
3 direction appropriately.

4 And then there's another one that's an  
5 expert in the construction side of it. So at that  
6 point in time, we -- the rest of us step back and  
7 let them ask the questions, not that we don't have  
8 questions also, but they definitely speak the lingo  
9 and have more expertise in that area.

10 So that's what I would feel, as the 14  
11 Commissioners, we're all going to have strengths.  
12 But there's also going to be areas where we're not  
13 as strong as in terms of what I would consider an  
14 expert. And at that point in time, we have to  
15 trust each other and we have to have respect for  
16 each other. That is, for example, they're going to  
17 say, okay, Alicia, you take  
18 the -- if it's a fiscal, you know, why don't you  
19 lead that effort. They have to trust in that  
20 person, that they're going to come through and do  
21 their due diligence to ensure that that area is  
22 covered. So at that point in time, I'll step up.

1 Not to say everybody steps back because everybody  
2 still have the opportunity to ask questions, to  
3 look into it.

4 But I think it's just more of getting to  
5 know each other and having the trust and respect  
6 for each other that that is your area of expertise  
7 and, yeah, you know, you can take the lead on that  
8 one. Because we can't all be leaders. One, it's  
9 exhausting. And, two, if you're all leaders, it  
10 can be very hard to move forward.

11 So we just all have to have the same --  
12 not the same minds. We have to have the mindset  
13 that we won't know it all. There's going to be  
14 some areas where just may not be as comfortable as  
15 we would like in terms of whatever we're analyzing  
16 or going into, and it's okay. It's okay because  
17 there's 14 of us and we can support each other.  
18 And we just have different roles at different times  
19 and it's fluid. And that's what we need to  
20 understand, that it's always fluid and it's  
21 changing. It could be changing from one minute to  
22 the next.

1           So my goal would be to -- for us to meet  
2 and get to know each other and get to know our  
3 backgrounds first in terms of what we all bring to  
4 the table and what has been successful in the past  
5 for all of us, what we've learned, and then just,  
6 like I said, just respect each other.

7           PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: Thank you very  
8 much.

9           Mr. Belnap, I don't have any further  
10 questions at this point.

11          CHAIR BELNAP: Okay. Thank you.

12          We'll turn the time over to Mr. Dawson.

13          MR. DAWSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

14          Good morning, Ms. Fernandez. Thanks for  
15 being here.

16          MS. FERNANDEZ: Thank you.

17          MR. DAWSON: I was going through your  
18 application. And, you know, as you know, the  
19 supplemental application is quite lengthy and  
20 requires each applicant to list out, you know, all  
21 their relationships to determine whether or not  
22 there's a conflict of interest, and a name jumped

1 out at me. You list as a sibling a Margarita  
2 Fernandez.

3 MS. FERNANDEZ: I do list that as a  
4 sibling.

5 MR. DAWSON: Is this the same Margarita  
6 Fernandez who is an employee of the California  
7 State Auditor's Office?

8 MS. FERNANDEZ: Yes, it is.

9 MR. DAWSON: All right. Thank you.

10 MS. FERNANDEZ: Yes. I shouldn't say it.  
11 Don't tell her I said it.

12 MR. DAWSON: I just, I think this might be  
13 news to the Panel. But just in the interest of,  
14 you know, full transparency and fairness, I wanted  
15 to say on the record that, of course, this is not a  
16 disqualifying relationship. You absolutely have --  
17 should be on the Panel if you're qualified and it  
18 shouldn't influence the decision of the Panel one  
19 way or the other, so thank you for that.

20 MS. FERNANDEZ: Um-hmm.

21 MR. DAWSON: If I could move on to the  
22 question -- you talked about your service on the

1 school district. It's the River Delta Unified  
2 School District?

3 MS. FERNANDEZ: Yes.

4 MR. DAWSON: And that comprises several  
5 different cities and towns; correct?

6 MS. FERNANDEZ: Yes, cities, towns, and  
7 three counties.

8 MR. DAWSON: Three counties?

9 MS. FERNANDEZ: Three different counties.

10 MR. DAWSON: Okay.

11 MS. FERNANDEZ: Yes. Um-hmm.

12 MR. DAWSON: That's a bit unusual; isn't  
13 it?

14 MS. FERNANDEZ: Yes, very unusual.

15 MR. DAWSON: And it's mostly -- is it  
16 mostly rural kids?

17 MS. FERNANDEZ: Yes, it is. They're all  
18 farming communities on the Delta.

19 MR. DAWSON: Do you think, as a Delta  
20 resident --

21 MS. FERNANDEZ: Um-hmm.



1 MR. DAWSON: -- the Delta is, obviously, a  
2 very important part of California, but do you think  
3 it tends to be overlooked by the coastal  
4 communities and Sacramento?

5 MS. FERNANDEZ: Oh. Tend to be  
6 overlooked? I would say it may be overlooked just  
7 because of the pure numbers of it. I mean, when  
8 you're talking about there's 2,000 students in our  
9 district versus Sacramento City Unified has, I  
10 can't remember how many children they have but they  
11 have, probably, over 20,000. Elk Grove has over  
12 40,000, I believe, something like that.

13 And to be honest with you, in terms of  
14 politics, the school district is probably as far as  
15 I've gotten. I haven't really gotten into the --  
16 outside of my community because it's challenged.  
17 It's kept me busy enough just trying to ensure that  
18 our kids are educated and it's equitable amongst  
19 all of our students.

20 But I can see where it could be overlooked  
21 because it is, numbers-wise, and that's what  
22 appears to dictate is numbers, numbers-wise, we're

1 not that many. But collectively, if you look up  
2 and down the state with different farmers,  
3 collectively, we are. So I feel in that sense they  
4 are represented on the farming side of it because  
5 they do collaborate statewide.

6 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

7 So the three counties are Sacramento,  
8 Yolo, and Solano; is that right?

9 MS. FERNANDEZ: Yes.

10 MR. DAWSON: So I don't know if you looked  
11 at the composition of the 2010 Commission, but the  
12 farthest north that any Commissioner represented --  
13 county represented was Yolo.

14 Assuming you were selected for the 2020  
15 and, again, Yolo County was the farthest north,  
16 would you be looking to fill representation from a  
17 farther north county than Yolo?

18 MS. FERNANDEZ: Oh, would I -- can you  
19 like reword that? Because --

20 MR. DAWSON: Well, so Ms. Dickison asked  
21 you about if you were on the first eight and

1 looking for representation that you would find for  
2 the next six --

3 MS. FERNANDEZ: Uh-huh.

4 MR. DAWSON: -- would the geographic  
5 diversity of representing the northern part of  
6 California be part of that consideration?

7 MS. FERNANDEZ: Oh, like if -- for the  
8 next six, I'd be looking for that? I guess I'm not  
9 understanding your question.

10 If Yolo County, if I'm going to be the  
11 Yolo County and, theoretically, I'm representing  
12 the rest of the northern state; is that correct?

13 MR. DAWSON: Well, my question was just  
14 more general about the importance of representing  
15 all of California. And is it sufficient that  
16 someone from Yolo County represent all of Northern  
17 California?

18 MS. FERNANDEZ: If that's going to be my  
19 role, and at that point I better start doing some  
20 traveling because, in my opinion, it would be  
21 important for me to go visit those communities that  
22 are north of me. I have gone to some of them.

1 Unfortunately, it's been where prisons are located.  
2 But I would make more of an effort to make sure  
3 that I either went out to visit more of the  
4 northern communities, or even online or, you know,  
5 whatever I could do to try to find out what their  
6 wants and desires and goals are. Because if I'm  
7 going to represent the north, then I've got to make  
8 sure that I talk to and get as much information as  
9 I can, so I can be educated in that area.

10 MR. DAWSON: All right.

11 MS. FERNANDEZ: Because I'm not going to  
12 just talk about me. I'm not going to just talk  
13 about my community. It needs to be all.

14 MR. DAWSON: All right. Thank you.

15 Mr. Chair, I have no further questions, if  
16 the Panel has any further questions?

17 CHAIR BELNAP: Mr. Coe, do you have any  
18 follow-up questions?

19 VICE CHAIR COE: No follow-up questions.

20 CHAIR BELNAP: Ms. Dickison?

21 PANEL MEMBER DICKISON: I don't have any  
22 follow-up questions.

1 CHAIR BELNAP: I don't have any follow-up  
2 questions either.

3 And I want to affirm something that our  
4 Legal Counsel said. We've received no  
5 communication from Margarita or anybody about your  
6 application. And that was the first time I ever  
7 heard of that. So we've evaluated your application  
8 and we will evaluate your interview completely free  
9 of any communication from your sister or anyone  
10 about that. So that is the first time we heard of  
11 it.

12 Thank you.

13 MR. DAWSON: Madam Secretary, how much  
14 time is remaining?

15 MS. PELLMAN: Yes. Two minutes, five  
16 seconds remaining.

17 MR. DAWSON: All right. Thank you.

18 Ms. Fernandez, with the time remaining,  
19 I'd like to offer you the opportunity to make a  
20 closing statement to the Panel, if you wish?

21 MS. FERNANDEZ: I'm sorry. To what?

1 MR. DAWSON: Oh. If you would like to  
2 make a closing statement or --

3 MS. FERNANDEZ: Oh.

4 MR. DAWSON: -- remarks to the Panel?

5 MS. FERNANDEZ: Okay. I just want to make  
6 one comment because you brought up Margarita. She  
7 did not even know I applied. So, I mean, this is  
8 something that I've kind of just kept to myself.  
9 Really, it's just a handful of people that know  
10 that I'm applying for this, the three people that I  
11 asked for letters of reference, and my immediate  
12 family, that's pretty much it. So I just want to -  
13 - when I do things, I kind of do them solo in terms  
14 of it's something for me personally. The less  
15 people that know, I think for me, is the better, so  
16 I just wanted to throw that out there.

17 Also, I just want to thank you for this  
18 opportunity. I know these are challenging times  
19 for all of us. And I appreciate you continuing to  
20 hold the interviews and move forward with this  
21 process. I realize that we are under tight time  
22 frames and you need to get through this process.

1 But I appreciate allowing this process to go  
2 through and continue. And I understand that it's  
3 such a difficult job for you.

4 And, hopefully, what I've presented today,  
5 as well as in my application, has shown you that I  
6 would make -- I would be a good addition to the  
7 Commission.

8 CHAIR BELNAP: Okay. Thank you. I  
9 appreciate you being with us this morning.

10 We're going to go into recess now and be  
11 back at 10:44 a.m.

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