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2:59 p.m.

CHAIR COE: Okay. Being 2:59 p.m., I'd like to bring this meeting back to order.

I'd like to welcome at this time Ms. Angela Vasquez.

Can you hear us okay?

MS. VASQUEZ: Yes, I can hear you.

CHAIR COE: Fantastic. Thank you for being here this afternoon. We appreciate your flexibility in rescheduling the interview during these times here.

Go ahead and turn the time over to Mr. Dawson for the five standard questions, please.

MR. DAWSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Ms. Vasquez, I'm going to ask you five standard questions that the panel has requested each applicant respond to.

Are you ready?

MS. VASQUEZ: Yes.

MR. DAWSON: First question. What skills and attributes should all commissioners possess?

What skills or competencies should the Commission possess collectively?

Of the skills, attributes, and competencies that

1 each commissioner should possess, which do you possess?

2 In summary, how will you contribute to the success
3 of the Commission?

4 MS. VASQUEZ: Great. Thank you. I certainly
5 believe there are some core skills and attributes that the
6 commissioners, you know, each commissioner should possess,
7 I think. First and foremost, a strong desire to see an
8 equitable and fair redistricting process. I think that's
9 sort of one of the fundamental attributes for all
10 candidates and for the final commissioners who are chosen.

11 I also believe, you know, a fundamental skill of
12 critical thinking and I think that could look a variety of
13 ways depending on education and experience but certainly I
14 think a demonstration of critical thinking, an ability to
15 analyze complex problems.

16 And I think thirdly, another core attribute and
17 skill is an engagement style that is -- that is open. And
18 I think there are ways to communicate fairly. So certainly
19 communication with the public, you know, should be open and
20 fair and I think similarly, commissioners in their work
21 together and with staff should be -- should be fair and
22 open to -- open to dialog.

23 I certainly think collectively there are some
24 skills that the Commission should -- should have. You
25 know, such as ideally there would -- we would have folks

1 with different types of expertise, whether it's legal
2 expertise, data analysis expertise. I certainly would hope
3 that we have folks who have done community development,
4 community engagement, community organizing such as myself.

5 And I also think that, you know, folks who have
6 either some government, previous governments or leadership
7 or even project management skills or background would be
8 really mission critical for such a -- for such a large and
9 time-sensitive public initiative such as redistricting.

10 For myself, I certainly believe that I have the
11 critical thinking and analysis skills part of -- actually,
12 the major part of my roles in public policy and community
13 advocacy has been sort of, you know, the ability to
14 identify data sets that are relevant to policy, whether
15 it's, you know, educational data, childcare data, et
16 cetera. Distilling that information and then developing
17 policy recommendations based on areas of need, et cetera.
18 So I certainly believe that I have the data analysis skills
19 necessary.

20 I personally am not a lawyer, but I have worked --
21 most of my roles involved extensive work with folks who
22 are. And so while I don't have that expertise, I
23 definitely feel like I bring to the table the ability to
24 code switch. I think with a sort of legislatively-driven
25 process, there are going to be -- there is definitely a

1 need for someone with a legal expertise. However, I feel
2 like one of my core skills and one of the best ways I can
3 contribute to the Commission and contribute to the
4 community processes in forming the Commission is being able
5 to take really complex information, distill that, refine
6 it, and then communicate it across the Commission when
7 we're sort of doing behind the scenes work. And then
8 conversely, being able to communicate the complicated
9 decisions and all the factors that are going in to drawing
10 these maps and communicating those back out to the
11 community.

12 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

13 Question 2. Work on the Commission requires
14 members of different political backgrounds to work
15 together. Since the 2010 Commission was selected and
16 formed, the American political conversation has become
17 increasingly polarized whether in the press, on social
18 media, and even in our own families.

19 What characteristics do you possess and what
20 characteristics should your fellow commissioners possess
21 that will protect against hyperpartisanship?

22 What will you do to ensure that the work of the
23 Commission is not seen as polarized or hyperpartisan and
24 avoid perceptions of political bias and conflict?

25 MS. VASQUEZ: So I think there are sort of three

1 core things that I think I possess and I would -- I would
2 hope that if selected, my fellow commissioners would
3 possess.

4 The first I think would be a focus and a commitment
5 to the issues. I think certainly in hyperpartisan -- in a
6 hyperpartisan climate, you know, folks -- folks have
7 developed very strong opinions about, you know, a variety
8 of different things. However I think a focus on the issues
9 and impact of those issues on communities, whether it be,
10 you know, the local -- local economies, employment, public
11 education, et cetera, I think focusing on the issues and
12 the issue at hand being redistricting and making sure that
13 those political boundaries are fair I think grounds people
14 in their values. And I think grounding people in their
15 values many of which we all share at some fundamental
16 level, fairness, you know, self-determination, et cetera, I
17 think sort of helps to diffuse a lot of partisan and highly
18 emotional conversations so that you can again talk about
19 things like data. You can talk about things like the
20 impact of, you know, current events on communities and
21 individuals and families, et cetera.

22 I think another important characteristic is really
23 an openness to complexity, right, that people hold varying
24 degrees of views, sometimes even conflicted views. So
25 people themselves I think are not monoliths, certainly you

1 get ten Democrats in a room and they're going to give you
2 ten different opinions on a particular -- on a particular
3 issue, right? So the end I think as commissioners knowing
4 that, right, but we will be engaging with different
5 communities who we may think may hold very similar views
6 but once actually engaging on -- engaging with those
7 communities will very likely see a broad range of opinions,
8 et cetera.

9 So I think definitely an openness to complexity, an
10 openness to conflicting viewpoints even within individuals
11 or groups of individuals who we would otherwise think are
12 very similar is -- is going to be something I think that's
13 really important for diffusing, again, conversations that
14 could get very, very high conflict.

15 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

16 Question 3. What is the greatest problem the
17 Commission could encounter, and what actions would you take
18 to avoid or respond to this problem?

19 MS. VASQUEZ: I think the first and probably one
20 that is most top of mind I would hope for everybody is
21 really the census and the great I think opportunity there
22 is right now for -- for undercounting everybody in the
23 state of California.

24 I think already our state was at great risk of
25 undercounting our most vulnerable residents. You know,

1 immigrants, children, certainly folks who are homeless,
2 folks who are highly mobile, low-income folks. I think
3 those populations who are already really vulnerable and
4 already are, you know, have been historically marginalized
5 in the political process and in the policymaking process.

6 I think especially now with, you know, shelter-in-
7 place orders sort of indefinitely into the future, I think
8 we're at even greater risk of undercounting those -- those
9 folks. And I think in terms of a strategy to at least
10 mitigate the impact, I certainly don't think the Commission
11 itself is going to have much on the front end of preventing
12 an undercounting of the census but I certainly would hope
13 that the Commission could think creatively about how they
14 might engage on sort of the back end after the fact.
15 Whether it's community groups, what are data sets that the
16 Commission could use or have access to to fill in those
17 gaps?

18 I think being, again, having commissioners who are
19 mindful that, you know, that there is great risk of the
20 census not being the end all, be all data set for which we
21 are drawing maps that, you know, to the, again, the extent
22 legally possible that we could be creative in -- in pulling
23 other pieces of information to fill in the gaps that the
24 census -- that the census will leave.

25 I think related -- relatedly another challenge to

1 the Commission is sort of the increasing racial and ethnic
2 segregation across California. That, you know, as our
3 state has gotten more diverse, we have geographically
4 segregated ourselves quite a bit for a variety of reasons,
5 mainly economics and historical segregation. And so,
6 again, I think as a Commission, to the extent possible
7 being creative about how -- how -- what kinds of
8 information we are able to use both quantitative data about
9 communities but also our ability to be flexible with real
10 time communication community, like community -- community
11 engagement efforts that aren't just in person but either
12 driven by, you know, online initiatives, digital
13 initiatives, I think are going to be really important to,
14 again, getting additional pieces of information that
15 otherwise we would not have access to.

16 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Question 4. If you are
17 selected, you will be one of 14 members of the Commission
18 which is charged with working together to create maps of
19 the new districts. Please describe a situation where you
20 had to work collaboratively with others on a project to
21 achieve a common goal. Tell us the goal of the project,
22 what your role in the group was, and how the group worked
23 through any conflicts that arose.

24 What lessons would you take from this group
25 experience to the Commission, if selected?

1 MS. VASQUEZ: So as a policy analyst at Advancement
2 Project, I was the lead organizer and really founder of a
3 broad-based coalition of advocates who historically had not
4 really worked together on anything.

5 So a little bit of background. You know, in 2013,
6 the state really radically changed its -- the way it funds
7 public education. And our organization thought as an
8 opportunity to ensure that vulnerable populations of
9 students were not left out of that reworking of -- of
10 public education finance. Because I was the resident
11 social worker at Advancement Project and I had a great boss
12 who allowed me to sort of identify a project and run with
13 it, I saw an opportunity to ensure that LAUSD's 8,000,
14 9,000-plus foster youths benefitted again from this huge
15 statewide policy shift.

16 So I -- I had a passion and interest but not a lot
17 of contacts or information about how -- how this policy
18 might impact foster youth. I just knew that I -- I had,
19 again, a drive to -- to make sure that those kids
20 benefitted from it. So I was able to sort of go out into
21 my professional networks and identify, you know, legal
22 service organizations, community advocates, youth
23 advocates, foster youth themselves and I established the
24 Coalition for Educational Equity for Foster Youth. And
25 over about six months, we -- I convened them and we

1 developed really a policy platform that we then took to
2 LAUSD, the second largest school district in the nation.

3 And that policy platform included a request of
4 \$10 million in new spending for -- for foster youth. So
5 that would have taken LAUSD's budget for their 9,000 kids
6 from three staff members to about 100. And it was -- it
7 was several meetings with Board of Education members that I
8 facilitated as well as many, many conversations with
9 existing administrators within the District, again, trying
10 to get as much input to create an actual roadmap for the
11 District of how they would implement our policy platform
12 and fund it. Right?

13 So the results of that was over about a year of
14 advocacy and engagement, I was able to help our coalition
15 secure that \$10 million. And so it was this huge new model
16 program for foster youth. And it was really informed by my
17 leadership and as well as my ability to bring together both
18 those advocates who had a variety -- like a huge variety of
19 opinions about what the District should be doing and how
20 they should be doing it and really built consensus for our
21 group so that we could go with one voice to those
22 policymakers.

23 And I feel like with all of that work on the
24 coalition is very similar to the kinds of, you know,
25 community stakeholder engagement that I would -- I would do

1 as a commissioner in the redistricting process. And I
2 think the way that I engage those elected officials and
3 policymakers gives me a really important perspective in how
4 community members would be approaching the Commission.

5 I certainly was a passionate advocate in, you know,
6 board meetings, giving public comments to LAUSD and, you
7 know, certainly, I had the backing again of a coalition of
8 folks. And I really appreciated the complexities that the
9 board members had in terms of weighing different budget
10 priorities. We were certainly not the only interest group
11 going to the board with our request and our ask and I'm
12 grateful that we won. But I certainly was cognizant that
13 we were one of many, many, many voices and organizations
14 and coalitions who were asking for really the same thing.
15 And so certainly that experience is going to be top of mind
16 for me as a commissioner knowing that, you know, there are
17 going to be lots of groups represented arguing passionately
18 and being able to weigh those voices among the many -- the
19 many others that will be present for sure.

20 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

21 Question 5. A considerable amount of the
22 Commission's work will involve meeting with people from all
23 over California who come from very different backgrounds
24 and a wide variety of perspectives.

25 If you are selected as a Commissioner, what

1 skills and attributes will make you effective at
2 interacting with people from different backgrounds and who
3 have a variety of perspectives?

4 What experiences have you had that will help you
5 be effective at understanding and appreciating people of
6 communities of different backgrounds and who have a variety
7 of perspectives?

8 MS. VAZQUEZ: I -- I certainly feel like I -- I
9 have extensive experience for navigating productive
10 disagreements and facilitating group decision making
11 certainly with my work on the coalition. Again, working
12 with folks who are very passionate, have their own
13 viewpoints and experiences in -- in child welfare and in
14 the foster care system and the public education system. So
15 certainly a big part of that coalition work was navigating
16 disagreements in a productive way and building consensus.
17 Acknowledging -- acknowledging when disagreements were
18 happening and then facilitating the group to move past that
19 toward a decision point or even a decision to table a
20 conversation for a later date.

21 I think sometimes it's important to know when to
22 let a conversation breathe and when -- when to -- give
23 folks space and when to push people. And -- so that was --
24 I definitely think that's a skill that I have developed and
25 would certainly bring to the Commission experience for

1 sure.

2 In terms of -- in terms of sort of more broad --
3 more broad experience, I mean, as -- at State School Board
4 Association where I currently am now, I am responsible for
5 being a liaison for 31 school districts in the northeastern
6 part of L.A. County. L.A. County is huge and we're -- we
7 are incredibly diverse. And each of those 31 school
8 districts represent a very different community from really
9 their neighbor.

10 We have -- you know, I work with folks who are in
11 very well-off suburban foothill communities in the San
12 Gabriel Mountain. And then I have working class immigrant
13 communities that I work with, school districts that I work
14 with the San Gabriel Valley. And my work there is really
15 both identifying their individual interests and hoping and,
16 you know, working to get -- ensure that they -- that
17 district has what they need to educate their students well.
18 And also identifying areas of commonality, whether it's
19 common interest or common need and communicating that
20 backup to my headquarters so that we can develop and refine
21 our own policy and legislative agenda based on what we've
22 identified as areas of common interest.

23 I certainly also feel like, you know, I'm a woman
24 of color. I grew up in the Inland Empire. My parents are
25 both second generation. So I grew up among immigrants but

1 I don't -- I do not have an immigrant experience myself,
2 but I'm sensitized to it. And I certainly feel like I
3 think that's an important attribute for hopefully all --
4 all commissioners to have is this sensitization to a
5 variety of communities.

6 I don't -- I don't know that it's possible for
7 every commissioner, including myself, to know everything
8 about every subcommunity or have, you know, deep expertise
9 on rural communities in Northern California. But I think
10 what I have and what I would hope other commissioners have
11 is a mindfulness of what you don't -- you don't know what
12 you don't know but you can certainly be sensitized and
13 mindful of what you don't know and an openness to learning
14 more.

15 And I think because I'm a woman of color, I sort
16 of expect to go in as -- as someone with a different
17 experience than the folks around me, especially in the
18 professional workspace. So I think my own professional and
19 personal experiences have sensitized me to -- to being
20 among people who are different and developing working
21 collaborative relationships with those folks.

22 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. We will now go to panel
23 questions. Each of the panel members will have 20 minutes
24 to ask his or her questions.

25 And we will start with the Chair, Mr. Coe.

1 CHAIR COE: Thank you, Counsel.

2 Good afternoon again to you, Ms. Vasquez. Thank
3 you again for being here and speaking with us today.

4 In your application, you used the words leader or
5 leadership in your essays quite a bit. And I got a strong
6 sense from the application and from hearing you talk today
7 that you are a doer, someone that likes to --

8 MS. VASQUEZ: Yeah.

9 CHAIR COE: -- get involved, to jump in and lead
10 the effort to get things done.

11 In fact, you mentioned that you were -- you were
12 recruited to the Pacific Oaks College Board of Trustees by
13 a colleague because he was impressed by your ability to
14 lead mission-based work.

15 MS. VASQUEZ: Yeah.

16 CHAIR COE: If you were appointed to the
17 Commission, you'd be one of 14 people who may also be
18 themselves strong leaders as well.

19 MS. VASQUEZ: Yes.

20 CHAIR COE: How would you work with other
21 commissioners who also viewed themselves in this same
22 capacity?

23 MS. VASQUEZ: That is a great question. And I
24 think I'd go back to the coalition which is where my
25 colleague Ryan who recruited me to the Pacific Oaks Board,

1 why he recruited me to the board. I led the Coalition for
2 Educational Equity for the past three years and in that
3 experience, I was certainly working with folks who -- who
4 had their own egos, who had their own agendas, who had
5 their own missions, who were experts absolutely in their
6 own right in many ways more so than myself. And part of --
7 part of my work I saw as an organizer and a facilitator was
8 often -- sometimes, especially in those conversations was
9 to step back and let -- let folks have conversations and
10 disagreements, a bit of what I was referring to earlier,
11 let folks sort of have conversations amongst themselves.
12 And I myself take a more an observer role.

13 I don't always have to add to or, you know, direct
14 a conversation. I think -- I balance my sort of doer side
15 with my learner side. I'm a huge nerd and I think I'm
16 always sort of very dynamically taking a sort of jump in
17 and participate and then step back and see sort of what --
18 what happens. I like to think that's actually one of my --
19 one of my strengths is the ability to take the microphone
20 but then also be able to step back and encourage others to
21 be more proactive in their leadership as well.

22 Because I think -- I certainly again do -- probably
23 rarely ever have if ever the monopoly on truth or a truth
24 or what is right. So I certainly feel like especially on a
25 commission of, you know, 14 other folks that I -- if there

1 is space to lead, that I would be confident enough to take
2 that space to lead, and certainly in spaces where it makes
3 more sense for me to observe and listen. And even be
4 challenged, be challenged by other -- my other
5 commissioners. I certainly hope that I have the strength
6 of character to be listen -- or to listen and be open to my
7 other commissioners' experience and leadership for sure.

8 CHAIR COE: What would you envision as your role on
9 the Commission if you were to be appointed?

10 MS. VASQUEZ: I view it as in many ways a thought
11 partner. As a -- I view myself as in relation to the state
12 of California certainly a leader and a public servant.
13 Right? That this is -- this is not my Commission, these
14 are not my maps, these are the communities' maps, this is
15 our state's maps, these are our state's political
16 boundaries. This is that community. That community,
17 hopefully, ideally will decide who -- who is a part of
18 their community and what those boundaries, again, to the
19 extent legally possible what those boundaries are.

20 I think in relationship to my other commissioners,
21 I think we are joint stewards of a process. And joint
22 stewards and thought partners to each other and leaders of
23 staff, directors of staff who will be giving us information
24 for us to make those really important decisions.

25 So, yeah, that's how I view broadly my role. I

1 think it sort of depends on what relationship you're
2 talking about.

3 CHAIR COE: Thank you.

4 MS. VASQUEZ: Yeah.

5 CHAIR COE: It wasn't clear from your application
6 how many groups or organizations that you are currently
7 involved in. Outside of your regular job, you're on the
8 Board of Trustees at Pacific Oaks College; is that correct?

9 MS. VASQUEZ: Yes. And currently that is my
10 volunteer civic engagement.

11 CHAIR COE: So are there any other organizations
12 that you're currently part of?

13 MS. VASQUEZ: Not right now, no.

14 CHAIR COE: How would you balance your role -- your
15 regular role in your regular job and your role on the Board
16 of Trustees at the college with your service on the
17 Redistricting Commission?

18 MS. VASQUEZ: I certainly would devote -- I view
19 the role of -- the work of the Commission to be intense and
20 for me would be my top priority. I would like to think
21 that my job would allow me to go part time should I need to
22 devote more time to the Commission work if, you know, if
23 that was required.

24 I will say that I -- I took -- I applied for the
25 Commission knowing that luckily I have the financial

1 flexibility to not work a full-time salaried job. And I
2 know that that is not the case for many folks my age.
3 Certainly many folks, you know, within my communities,
4 whether it's in L.A. County. Certainly none of my own
5 family members could afford to even go part time in their
6 current role and I view that as a huge privilege for myself
7 that I can even consider taking on something like this as
8 someone who is not retired, as someone who does not, you
9 know, make certainly enough income to take a year of
10 absence, two years of absence without an income.

11 You know, I'm lucky enough -- I'm lucky enough that
12 I -- I feel like my, you know, my life currently allows me
13 to devote as much time as possible to do such an important
14 public service, I feel like. So I definitely plan to
15 commit wholeheartedly to the Commission's work.

16 CHAIR COE: Thank you.

17 So you currently live in L.A. County and you
18 mentioned you were born in the Inland Empire.

19 MS. VASQUEZ: Yes.

20 CHAIR COE: Outside of those regions, tell us about
21 some experiences you've had in other parts of the state and
22 what you may have learned from the people in those regions
23 outside your home areas, about their concerns and their
24 perspectives and their needs and their desires that would -
25 - that would make you an effective representative for them

1 on this Commission.

2 MS. VASQUEZ: Certainly. I -- in my work as a
3 children's advocate at several organizations, a lot of my
4 work has required me to be both a local capacity builder
5 and then also a member of various sort of statewide
6 collaboratives or commissions or what have you. And
7 through that work, I have been able to meet a lot of
8 children's advocates, public administrators not just in
9 Sacramento but oftentimes because these are statewide
10 bodies.

11 You know, I've worked with folks from Sonoma
12 County, you know, in the wake of the fires and how -- and
13 learning how they were struggling to serve student --
14 homeless students in those -- in those counties. I was on
15 a statewide collaborative for -- for public schools and how
16 we were changing our accountability system. And I actually
17 remember a particular instance in meeting with that group
18 that folks from way up north in California had taken two
19 days to travel down to Sacramento for this meeting because
20 there weren't direct flights to Sacramento.

21 And to me it was sort of like, oh, yes, there are
22 places in California where, you know, there's not air
23 access, they didn't get, you know, they didn't walk into
24 LAX, jump on a plane, get to Sacramento in an hour and
25 half. That these folks have driven two whole days, stayed

1 in a hotel to come to this meeting in Sacramento. And I
2 think, you know, there're certainly -- I have learned
3 through my work that there are geographic barriers, income
4 barriers for folks who are more remote or more rural in
5 California.

6 And I would, again, I'm certainly not an expert in
7 those communities or geographies but I am sensitive to the
8 fact that they exist. And as a commissioner, we would need
9 to think through -- think through really well how we're
10 going to meaningfully engage those kind of communities.

11 You know, likewise, there are desert communities
12 even within L.A. County that most -- I would say most of
13 the advocates in L.A. County do not even bother engaging
14 with sort of the north -- the northern rural desert part of
15 our county. But because that's where most of our county
16 places their kids in foster care. For two years, I was
17 driving three and a half hours out to the desert to go --
18 to go work with school district administrators out in the
19 Antelope Valley because I felt so strongly that because
20 that was where the need was, that was where my work and our
21 organization's work should be.

22 So, again, certainly I don't -- I don't have an
23 expertise on all of the geographies of California, but I
24 think by virtue of my work, I'm sensitive to the fact that
25 there are going to be a lot of access and community

1 engagement barriers for folks across California. And I
2 would hope as a Commission, we would work to overcome those
3 barriers.

4 CHAIR COE: Thank you.

5 Staying on the subject of communities, one of the
6 biggest tasks from the Commission is to identify
7 communities of interest all across the state.

8 One thing I noticed in your application is that you
9 have some experience developing a community outreach
10 program. And specifically you talk about your -- your --
11 is it the Painted Brain?

12 MS. VASQUEZ: Yes.

13 CHAIR COE: Where you did an internship?

14 MS. VASQUEZ: Yes.

15 CHAIR COE: That experience that you had in
16 developing community outreach programs, I'm wondering how
17 you think that could assist your role on the Commission in
18 identifying communities of interest throughout the state
19 keeping in mind that some communities are -- are fairly
20 easy to find and some are more difficult to locate and are
21 less engaged.

22 And how do you think your experience developing
23 community outreach efforts assists in identifying
24 communities of interest throughout the state particularly
25 those that may be more difficult to locate?

1 MS. VASQUEZ: For sure. So the Painted Brain was
2 an interesting internship, social work internship. So it
3 was -- it was a collaborative of young adults with mental
4 illness of varying severity but really in many cases the
5 folks that we ended up working most with were folks who
6 were traditionally disengaged from other sort of peer led
7 groups. They're -- even in the mental health community,
8 they're sort of a hierarchy of diagnoses and those folks
9 with more severe diagnoses often were left out of, you
10 know, youth support groups, peer support groups, et cetera.

11 And so our work at the Painted Brain was to go out
12 and find those folks who would benefit from knowing each
13 other but who weren't necessarily there right at the table.
14 Right? And I think that sort of -- that's indicative of
15 community work generally. Right?

16 I'm forever -- I was joking with a colleague that
17 the nature of community work is, you know, hosting a public
18 meeting and having the three same -- the same three people
19 come every time. And what really you want the other 97
20 people, you know, or a group of 100, you want to know what
21 those other 97 other people are saying.

22 And so I think in that sense as a Commission, we
23 would have to be really proactive. I certainly think
24 opening a space and seeing who comes is one -- is one
25 important constituency to hear from and there will

1 certainly be community groups who would be proactive at
2 coming to us as a Commission. But I think then again being
3 mindful that there will be many other voices immigrant
4 communities, rural communities, very low income, unhoused
5 communities whose input we will either need to create a
6 plan to get directly or to develop really good
7 relationships with close representatives who will hopefully
8 be able to facilitate a dialog with those kinds of
9 communities or who will be able to help inform us about
10 those communities which are traditionally really hard to
11 engage again. You know, those ones that come to mind are
12 immigrants and unhoused folks. But certainly there are
13 others.

14 CHAIR COE: Thank you.

15 Madam Secretary, could I get a time check, please.

16 MS. PELLMAN: Yes. We have 5 minutes, 5 seconds
17 remaining.

18 CHAIR COE: Thank you.

19 Ms. Vasquez, could you give us an example of a time
20 where you had to make a difficult impartial decision that
21 involves setting aside your preference, your self-interest.

22 MS. VASQUEZ: Yes. With that, I really would go
23 back to the Coalition for Educational Equity for Foster
24 Youth here in L.A.

25 I facilitated and led that coalition knowing that I

1 was not the expert and that I convened a table of folks who
2 knew so much more about the child welfare system and the
3 foster care system than I ever could. Certainly as of that
4 point a pretty young professional. With that said, by
5 virtue of my role at Advancement Project, I did feel myself
6 at least compared to the rest of Coalition, I was certainly
7 more aware of and sensitive to both the budget constraint
8 of L.A. Unified, the political dynamics at play. That was
9 my expertise that I was bringing to that coalition.

10 And certainly in those conversation -- in those
11 coalition conversations as we were trying to develop our
12 policy platform, I was often the lone voice reminding the
13 coalition that we were like -- unlikely to get -- unlikely
14 to get any new programs. Right? That the District had
15 made very clear that they weren't going to invest any new
16 money, that they were just going to do business as usual.
17 And that was really their way of managing advocates like us
18 and our expectations.

19 And I think I -- it didn't take me a long time but
20 it certainly -- I think I had to -- I realized that that
21 was not building consensus with my group, that sort of -- I
22 was sort of the stickler and the Negative Nancy in that
23 group. And rather than continue to push that hey, you
24 guys, we're not going to get anything, but we should really
25 be at the table anyway, I had to set aside this what I

1 thought was managing expectations and again work toward
2 finding an advocacy platform that excited our coalition.

3 In the end, I'm really glad I did that and that I -
4 - I let better angels prevail because we actually did get
5 up getting \$10 million in new spending from -- from LAUSD
6 for these students. And I don't know that we would have
7 gotten that had I not just shut up and listened to the
8 passion and the moral suasion of the rest of the group.

9 And so I think that was a really big lesson for me
10 that again, you know, I'm not always, I'm not going to be
11 the expert. And many -- and a lot of cases it may be
12 better for me to sit and reflect on the truth that the
13 group is trying to communicate to me.

14 CHAIR COE: Thank you.

15 Time check, please.

16 MS. PELLMAN: One minute, 34 seconds.

17 CHAIR COE: Okay. No further questions. At this
18 time I'll go ahead and turn the time over to Ms. Dickison.

19 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you.

20 Good afternoon, Ms. Vasquez. Did I say that right?

21 MS. VASQUEZ: Vasquez. Yeah.

22 VICE CHAIR: Vasquez. Okay. Thank you.

23 So Mr. Coe asked a number of my questions. But so
24 the majority of your career it appears has been in
25 advocacy, correct?

1 MS. VASQUEZ: Yes.

2 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Okay. Given that, what do
3 you see as the Commission's role or what do you see as
4 advocacy or what role do you think advocacy should have in
5 the Commission's work?

6 MS. VASQUEZ: Certainly I see the Commission's work
7 as being the recipients of advocacy. In this case, you
8 know, I would be on the other end of the work that I
9 usually do. You know, my work, my professional work and
10 even my personal work has often been, you know, advocating
11 on behalf of communities to decision makers, to
12 policymakers, even to public administrators in many cases.
13 And so the role of the Commission I would see are -- are
14 recipient of advocacy as it relates to communities of
15 interest and where those -- where communities believe their
16 boundaries should be drawn. As it should be, right, that
17 we're a representative body and the reason why California
18 has moved to a citizen's Redistricting Commission is
19 because we feel like citizens and not politicians will be
20 more responsive to community interests as they shift, as
21 they change.

22 Now with that said, I do think because it's a group
23 of 14 people, there are going to be -- there's going to be
24 internal advocacy happening that's -- that's going to be
25 present in the group dynamic, right, that there're going to

1 be folks who have strongly held values. And I certainly
2 think that's going to be part of the dialog among the
3 Commission is, you know, we have this group saying the line
4 should be here and we have this other group saying the line
5 should be here. And I imagine that even -- even to the
6 extent that commissioners are impartial, they're going to
7 be making decisions based on their values and their
8 experiences.

9 And so I think even, you know, I'd imagine that
10 those conversations will look like advocacy in sort of
11 weighing, you know, each other's comments and perspectives
12 as commissioners. That to me is also advocacy. Yeah, but
13 I see it sort of -- the dynamic happening both externally
14 and internally.

15 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Okay. So thinking about what
16 you were just talking about, about two different groups
17 having, you know, kind of not agreeing on where the lines
18 should be, how do you -- how do you see that type of thing
19 being weighed and, I mean, what, if there's one thing that
20 should be weighed more than another?

21 MS. VASQUEZ: You know, I -- in the abstract it
22 would be hard -- it would certainly be hard to say. I
23 mean, again, there are going to be legal requirements that
24 the Commission is going to have to be weighing. There are
25 going to have to be practical considerations to be weighed.

1 And so I certainly would like to think that it would be
2 situation specific. Each of these boundaries are going to
3 be unique, each of these communities are going to be
4 unique. And there are going to -- there's going to be
5 diversity within -- within these communities.

6 And so, again, that's sort of where this ability to
7 be impartial I think becomes really -- really relevant. To
8 be able to at least that first pass weigh -- weigh
9 competing interest -- potentially competing interest,
10 different interests similarly and then through the lens of,
11 you know, legal requirements, practical requirements, et
12 cetera, be able to tease out those potential tradeoffs.

13 And I think that's where the work of the 14
14 commissioners is going to be most important is being able
15 as a team, as a group collectively decide with, you know,
16 holding that importance of saying we -- we were thoughtful
17 about the decision we were making in this particular
18 instance and be able to justify it to the public.

19 I hope that answers your question.

20 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: It does. Thank you. Give me
21 just a minute.

22 MS. VASQUEZ: Yeah.

23 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Okay. When you were thinking
24 of communities of interest and what might bind those
25 communities together, what do you think may influence their

1 preference for representation?

2 MS. VASQUEZ: I'm so sorry. Could you repeat that
3 last part of the question? I think --

4 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: What may -- I'm sorry, what
5 may influence community preference for representation? And
6 how could that differ between the regions?

7 MS. VASQUEZ: Got it. Great. Thank you.

8 I certainly think for me what comes top of mind in
9 terms of what influence -- influences preference for
10 representation is, you know, many of the demographic
11 differences among people that I think are, you know, are
12 pretty salient, whether it's racial and ethnic differences,
13 immigration status, income, profession, education, ability,
14 you know, gender, et cetera, I think all of those things
15 and more really are going into different communities of
16 interest. Right? But that's -- I think that's also,
17 especially when we're talking about drawing political
18 lines, I certainly think that the very salient demographics
19 are going to be important like race and ethnicity, like
20 income, like immigration status are going to be very
21 important.

22 And I would also hope that the Commission,
23 especially as the lines get more granular, try to look for
24 diversity within -- within communities where it may not be
25 readily apparent. Whether it's, you know, like I said,

1 profession or geography, rural, urban, suburban, what have
2 you, those are important factors that aren't typically
3 thought of but I think again as a Commission would hope
4 that we would have staff and the data to be able to make
5 nuanced decisions about how communities prefer to have
6 their representatives and their lines be drawn.

7 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you.

8 Let's see. If -- so the way the Commission is
9 selected, the first eight are selected randomly and then
10 they select the final six.

11 If you were selected as one of the six -- or one of
12 the eight, what would you be looking for in those final
13 six?

14 MS. VASQUEZ: Certainly would look, you know,
15 definitely depends on the composition of the eight. I'm
16 thinking political partisan diversity, gender diversity,
17 racial ethnic diversity. I would really hope, again, just
18 considering the own demographics of our state that we would
19 have someone who has an immigrant experience. If not an
20 immigrant themselves, that at least again coming from a
21 community where that is really salient for them and top of
22 mind for them in their experience.

23 You know, I'm third generation so I'm sensitized to
24 it but it's certainly not something that I -- it's not a
25 community that I would ever feel comfortable speaking on

1 behalf of. So, you know, I would look hopefully for
2 someone to have an immigrant experience.

3 I would like to see some education diversity. I
4 think it's very possible for the Commission to be stacked
5 with experts and nerds and, you know, very, very highly
6 accomplished folks traditionally speaking. And personally
7 I think folks who have a high school degree have a lot to
8 offer in terms of drawing political boundaries. So I would
9 sort of look for some education or professional experience
10 diversity on the Commission.

11 Those are the two that are top of mind. I think
12 there's demographics, certainly. But I also think that
13 there are certain experiences that just by virtue of the
14 Commission, we would need to be intentional about making
15 sure that the Commission is as representative of our
16 state's diversity and a variety of characteristics.

17 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you.

18 So I want to go back to a little bit talking about
19 when I asked about what role you thought advocacy could
20 play and you responded that, you know, the Commission being
21 recipient of that. So you've done that work, that type of
22 work.

23 Looking at the last Commission noted is that they -
24 - note that there were times that certain speakers at
25 public events may not have been a member of the community

1 that they were saying they were representing but they were
2 actually, you know, advocating for a political position
3 instead.

4 Do you think with your background, that would --
5 you would have something additional that could help the
6 Commission work through that type of thing?

7 MS. VASQUEZ: I certainly think so. I mean, I
8 think -- I certainly think that advocates -- I certainly
9 think as an advocate myself, I sort of have an intuition
10 about -- I don't even know, I wouldn't even call them
11 nefarious factors, but folks who like you were saying maybe
12 aren't representing the interest of the community that they
13 are claimed to be a part of or speaking on behalf of.

14 And I think that's sort of where my cognizance of,
15 you know, these are representatives that may or may not
16 have been chosen by community members to speak on their
17 behalf. And weighing -- being able to take what they're
18 saying as their -- as their individual truth and
19 understanding that that may not be everyone's truth in that
20 community again.

21 So I'm Mexican-American but I don't speak on behalf
22 of all Mexican-Americans, right? And to that extent, I
23 think there's -- there're -- I know you're going to always
24 have to weigh the validity and street cred, for lack of a
25 better term. Hopefully you're able to do some if, you

1 know, you're able to do some background research on folks
2 who are speaking and presenting to the Commission in a
3 formal capacity. You know, certainly written public
4 comment, you can search and see if that person really is,
5 you know, is vetted by the community that they're planning
6 to speak on behalf of. I think that's another strategy is
7 hopefully on the back end being able to vet folks who are -
8 - who are speaking, claim to speak on behalf of folks.

9 MS. PELLMAN: You have 5 minutes, 14 seconds
10 remaining.

11 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you.

12 So you mentioned that you have more than --
13 response to Question 1, you made the comment that out have
14 the ability to identify data sets that are relevant to
15 policy.

16 How do you think that ability would be helpful to
17 the work of the Commission?

18 MS. VASQUEZ: Yes. Especially, you know, as a
19 children's advocate, many times I -- I did not have -- the
20 data that I wanted to have did not exist. And so whether
21 at the state level, usually at the state level. And so I
22 had -- I had to get creative about the proxy data sets or
23 in some -- in a lot of cases, qualitative information I had
24 to go out and gather to answer the questions that I had.

25 So, you know, as an example, I had a project

1 related to childcare services for kids in foster care. The
2 state does not track that information. The state doesn't
3 know how many kids in foster care are also receiving
4 subsidized childcare. And so through both, you know,
5 qualitative engagement with experts, childcare
6 administrators, you know, foster parents, I got a general
7 sense of where that data might exist at the local level and
8 then I had to go on the back end, really do some -- some
9 direct surveys of foster parents in L.A. County to get at
10 least a somewhat representative sample about how many young
11 kids in foster care might be in preschool or childcare.

12 So in some ways that might be a product of being
13 nonprofit staff is that many times there aren't -- many
14 times there will be huge data sets that you can download
15 and like play with and do statistical analysis on, but a
16 lot of times the questions you want answered aren't going
17 to have cut and dry data answers to them. And so as a
18 commissioner, I would like to think that I would help steer
19 the group into thinking creatively about proxy data sets or
20 proxy information sets qualitative information that we
21 could use to answer questions we had about where
22 communities of interests are.

23 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you.

24 So at this moment I don't have any additional
25 questions so I yield my time.

1 CHAIR COE: Thank you, Ms. Dickison.

2 Mr. Belnap, the time is yours.

3 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right. Good afternoon.

4 MS. VASQUEZ: Good afternoon.

5 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: So you graduated with a
6 bachelor's from Claremont and went on to USC to get a
7 master's degree in social work.

8 When did you know that you wanted to study social
9 work and why?

10 MS. VASQUEZ: Oh, that's a fun question.

11 So I went to Claremont McKenna. I actually
12 transferred my freshman year to Claremont McKenna after one
13 year at the University of La Verne. My parents are both
14 public school teachers, they're first-generation college
15 graduates. All they knew in terms of advising me about my
16 career was you're smart so you should either be a doctor or
17 a lawyer. I had no interest in being a doctor or a lawyer.

18 I knew I wanted to do public service. I knew that
19 I didn't want to teach. And so I spent most of my college
20 years sort of floating and wandering. Part of why I ended
21 up at Claremont McKenna was that I knew that was where you
22 wanted to go if you wanted to do work in government. And I
23 said, okay. And I went there, realized that, you know, the
24 ethos there was much more conservative than what resonated
25 with me. And so I hid out in the psychology department and

1 got a lot of really great data skills but not really sure
2 what I wanted to do with those data skills.

3 And so going to social work school was really my
4 way of sort of splitting the difference. Do I want to do
5 clinical work and work directly one on one with children or
6 families or individuals and serve that way? Or do I want
7 to do community work organizing, policy, advocacy, and
8 social work as a discipline? I want -- I love it so much
9 is really grounded in both individual clinical direct
10 practice work and that community organizing public policy
11 work that also drew me very passionately.

12 And so going to social work school really
13 solidified for me that my career was going to be both
14 informed by really other's direct clinical practice, but
15 that I saw my role as a system social worker being in
16 advocacy in community organizing and development, but
17 always being informed by direct individual experiences.

18 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right. Thank you.

19 MS. VASQUEZ: Yeah.

20 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: So I'm curious about the
21 \$10 million that in funding that you secured from in the
22 LAUSD budget.

23 What specifically does the funding do for foster
24 youth?

25 MS. VASQUEZ: So it was dedicated to hiring 100

1 school-based social workers for those foster youth
2 students. So I think I mentioned historically, LAUSD had
3 three dedicated central administrators to serve 9,000-plus
4 kids across all of their school sites. And so we as a
5 coalition identified a broad need of capacity.

6 We just need boots on the ground, we need people,
7 we need -- we, foster youth, foster youth students need
8 people they can go to, interact with directly to be able to
9 get their individual education needs met. They needed an
10 advocate on the ground, they needed an ally, they needed
11 sort of a case manager, someone to help navigate --
12 navigate especially high school students.

13 I always thought, I think there was a lot of
14 disagreement in that coalition as to whether school-based
15 social workers were the best use of that \$10 million. And
16 there was a lot -- there was a lot of debate within our
17 coalition about what that \$10 million should be used for.
18 I personally as an advocate and a public policy person saw
19 that as the district scaffolding. That that was a
20 commitment, that was a stake in the ground that the board
21 said we care about our foster youth so much that we are
22 going to make a line item in the budget for these kids.
23 And that our job as advocates was to help shape what that
24 looked like.

25 So, you know, certainly I think this -- it was a

1 new program, it actually ended up being absorbed by a
2 bigger program just last year. But I think -- I think that
3 -- that \$10 million was certainly a huge win no matter what
4 it looked like because it signaled from the second largest
5 school district in the nation that they -- that they really
6 cared about one of our most vulnerable student populations.
7 And I was really proud to help shape what that looked like.

8 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: So where do you feel your
9 passion for foster youth comes from?

10 MS. VASQUEZ: You know, I -- my first -- my first
11 year in social work school, I was -- I was placed as a case
12 manager at a group home in south L.A. It was a group home
13 for young women ages 12 to 17. It was a group home, was
14 basically the last stop before these young women either
15 went to juvenile halls or went into locked mental health
16 facilities. So these were young women with really, really
17 challenging individual needs. And I loved working with
18 those young women and I hated the context in which I was
19 working.

20 Not necessarily even the group home, but just the
21 administration of the foster care system and how much I had
22 to fight with a system I couldn't even wrap my arms around
23 as a young professional, right, as a graduate student. And
24 that really for me put a fire in my belly for systems work.
25 And for -- and systems work broadly defined.

1 I think a lot of the great work that I did in many
2 roles was not just the \$10 million for foster youth from
3 LAUSD, but a lot of the administrative changes. I actually
4 helped make a school site level whether it was out in the
5 Antelope Valley, you know, putting in -- helping to put in
6 a process of an education evaluation for every single
7 elementary student at Palmdale School District so that
8 those foster youth had an administrator look at their whole
9 record and assess their needs.

10 So, again, I think that experience at the group
11 home helped me see that there -- that systems changed with
12 an equity lens can look a lot of different ways but that
13 someone needed to do it. And someone with a passion needed
14 to do it and find others who wanted to do that with them.
15 So that's where that comes from.

16 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay. Thank you.

17 In response to a question that you answered from
18 Ms. Dickison, you talked about external advocacy and
19 internal advocacy. Then you thought that on the
20 Commission, there will be strongly held values and
21 preferences. So there'll be some level of internal
22 advocacy on the Commission.

23 MS. VASQUEZ: Uh-huh.

24 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: What or for whom do you think
25 you'll be advocating for in terms of internal advocacy if

1 you were selected to be a commissioner?

2 MS. VASQUEZ: I would think fairness and equity. I
3 think that can look, that's going to look different ways to
4 different people on the Commission. And I ultimately for
5 me I would say probably the most relevant value that would
6 inform those conversations with my commissioners are that
7 people are the experts in their own experiences. And that
8 we should, we are being asked to weigh other folks,
9 individuals and communities, deeply held truths.

10 We're going -- we're -- like, we're going to have
11 to make really tough decisions because these are bright --
12 ultimately in the end, we're going to be drawing bright
13 lines, this person lives here and so they are part of this
14 community as it relates to political representation. This
15 person across the street belongs in this community of
16 interest. So we are going to have to be drawing bright
17 lines.

18 And so to that end we, I think the advocacy in the
19 Commission is going to be informed hopefully not by our
20 own -- necessarily by our own individual experiences but
21 the truth and the experiences that we have done a good
22 faith effort in getting from those communities and from
23 those individuals.

24 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay. Thank you.

25 MS. VASQUEZ: Yeah.

1 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: So you indicated in your
2 application that as a field organizer for the California
3 School Boards Association, you had worked with school board
4 members whose politics and personal beliefs are different
5 from your own.

6 Can you provide us an example of an experience
7 where you had a board member whose politics and personal
8 beliefs were different and you had to set those aside?

9 MS. VASQUEZ: Yes. So I very much -- a big part of
10 my role at the School Boards Association is customer
11 service. And I especially in the foothills of the San
12 Gabriel Valley, I work with predominately, you know, upper-
13 middle class, white suburban communities. Republicans,
14 many of them, if not most of them. They're elected
15 officials too. They certainly have more power and
16 influence over their communities and even within my
17 organization than I do. And it's in many, if not all,
18 cases in my professional role, it's not my -- it's not my
19 role to be an advocate for my own personal political
20 beliefs.

21 I certainly, I don't, you know, I'm not a
22 Republican but I certainly have many a lunch meeting with
23 folks who are, who have very, very different political
24 views. And I think for me, a skill set that I have is to
25 professionally engage in my role as a public affairs rep

1 with those -- with those folks even though I personally may
2 disagree with their politics. And even if they bring those
3 politics into that conversation, I -- I use -- I use my
4 skills to really either try to find some areas of common
5 interest, usually its kids and schools, and what kids in
6 those -- those schools, in their schools need from CSVA,
7 from the state, maybe even from community partners.

8 And I also like to think there are many times where
9 I have been -- I have been unexpectedly challenged and then
10 sort of had my -- because of the relationship and because I
11 still I think have mutual respect for the people I work
12 with, there have been times where I feel like I've had very
13 wonderful political conversations dialog with folks. Those
14 folks even in my role at CSVA that have led to, you know,
15 partnerships whether hosting a community forum, et cetera.

16 So like I certainly don't -- I certainly I would
17 think on a daily basis put aside my own politics so that I
18 can hear, listen more deeply for a need or for a concern
19 which is often where a lot of that comes from.

20 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right. Thank you.

21 Brief question. Do you speak Spanish? And if so,
22 how fluent?

23 MS. VASQUEZ: I do not. Yeah.

24 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right. Thank you.

25 Well I've got one last question. This will be

1 long.

2 Madame Secretary, can I get a time check?

3 MS. PELLMAN: Yes. We have 6 minutes, 44 seconds.

4 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay. Thank you.

5 So you indicate in your application that have
6 demonstrated in your career the ability to analyze complex
7 data, both quantitative and qualitative.

8 I'd like you to walk us through an example of an
9 analysis that you formed or have been heavily involved in.

10 MS. VASQUEZ: Yes. So I'll go back -- I'll go back
11 to the childcare example.

12 So we had a -- we had a hypothesis as an
13 organization. I had -- I helped -- hypothesis as an
14 analyst that kids in foster care, young kids in foster kids
15 were not accessing childcare and development services the
16 way they were entitled to, at a high enough rate.

17 The state does not -- the state does not track that
18 specific data point, how many kids in foster care are
19 accessing. They do have who -- who is accessing childcare
20 and development services. So that was a huge data set that
21 I was able to download. The who, the general location, you
22 know, ZIP code. And they were able to identify basically a
23 proxy flag that was a proxy for child is receiving
24 community services, I will say. So, again, it wasn't
25 whether or not they're in foster care, but it was a close

1 enough proxy.

2 We mapped that out particularly zoomed, we were
3 particularly interested in L.A. County so we zoomed in on
4 L.A. County and then we mapped out where those very, who we
5 termed at that point, very vulnerable kids were across the
6 county. And we noticed some hot spots. And we noticed
7 that was, we noticed that those hot spots were pretty well
8 directly aligned with a lack of childcare services map that
9 we had already created as an organization. So basically we
10 were able to overlay these two sets of data, right. But we
11 have very low-income folks layered, second layer, we have a
12 lack of access to childcare generally. And then we layered
13 over this sort of proxy data set of kids who were receiving
14 social services. And we found that there were specific
15 geography within L.A. County that were likely to have high
16 numbers of very young kids in foster care without access to
17 childcare and development in preschool programs.

18 So, again, not perfect data sets, but by drawing
19 from different pieces of information, we were able to
20 create a map that said, okay, this sort of answers our
21 question or at least points us in the right direction. And
22 from there, you know, I went and tried to put more meat on
23 those bones by engaging healthcare administrators, foster
24 care administrators, et cetera, to create a better picture
25 of what the community -- what the community, the community

1 being young kids in foster care, potentially needed in our
2 county.

3 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay. Thank you.

4 If I smiled, it was because we had the first
5 appearance of a pet come in behind you. I know you
6 couldn't see it--

7 MS. VASQUEZ: Oh, gosh.

8 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: -- your cat walked through.
9 That's okay. That's where that smile came from - it
10 wasn't your data analysis.

11 MS. VASQUEZ: That's funny. Okay.

12 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Anyways, I had no further
13 questions.

14 MS. VASQUEZ: Okay.

15 CHAIR COE: Thank you, Mr. Belnap.

16 First appearance of a feline photobomb in the
17 Applicant Review Panel history.

18 MS. VASQUEZ: Yeah.

19 CHAIR COE: Mr. Dawson.

20 PANEL MEMBER DAWSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

21 I'll just note, that that was not the first, but it
22 was about 20 minutes ago the cat first made an appearance.

23 MS. VASQUEZ: Oh, goodness.

24 PANEL MEMBER DAWSON: I wanted to follow up on
25 something that you had said in your response to Standard

1 Question 1.

2 You used an interesting term where you said that
3 you had the ability to code switch between -- let me make
4 sure I get it right, the language of policy and advocacy
5 and that of the community?

6 Did I understand that correctly?

7 MS. VASQUEZ: Yes. And I think it's a -- code
8 switching I think is a term used more when we're talking
9 about language or, you know, but I sort of, I see it as a
10 skill in terms of being able to interpret legalese. Again,
11 you know, I'm not a lawyer, but I work with a lot of
12 lawyers. So oftentimes I'm having to, you know, remind
13 folks people don't know what this legal term means. So,
14 you know, we need to translate it, not just for us as sort
15 of thought partners, colleagues in the field but then if
16 we're going to go out and do community engagement around
17 this issue, you know, we're going to have to make sure that
18 we're using plain language and not lawyer-speak. And then
19 vice versa, right.

20 But having, you know, communities are going to be,
21 individuals are going to be communicating in different ways
22 and being able to hear community input, I think that it may
23 be potentially -- potentially really emotional and not
24 super specific but be able to, my ability to be able to
25 hear what the underlying concern is. Maybe that's also a

1 bit of like my social work, clinical experience, right.
2 But hear -- hear the emotion and then be able to listen for
3 the subtext underneath and communicate that amongst the
4 commissioners.

5 So, yeah, that's sort of how I view code switching.

6 PANEL MEMBER DAWSON: All right. Thank you.

7 I wanted to ask you about, in your, the blurb that
8 you put for your work at the National Center on Youth Law.

9 MS. VASQUEZ: Yeah.

10 PANEL MEMBER DAWSON: You said that you directed
11 and led the review and analysis of existing and proposed
12 federal, state, local regulations laws or policies
13 affecting the education and foster youth in L.A. County and
14 statewide.

15 My question is, who was the audience? Who was the
16 clientele for this review and analysis?

17 MS. VASQUEZ: The review were school district
18 administrators and school board policymakers. So, you
19 know, especially the foster care system is a legally, very
20 legally-driven system. So is the education system in
21 California. And so when you're working with and on behalf
22 of a student group very heavily impacted by those two big
23 public systems, we're working with policies, you know,
24 you've seen the ed code, right? It's really vague.

25 So oftentimes my organization and me specifically

1 were called in to present really complex legal issues in a
2 way that made sense to the actors in those different
3 systems. So again, that's a bit where code switching came
4 in, but I was often explaining ed code to foster care
5 administrators. And vice versa explaining, you know, child
6 welfare processes and WIC codes to education
7 administrators.

8 PANEL MEMBER DAWSON: Okay. Thank you.

9 And then well then that sort of leads to my
10 question about your work at the School Boards Association
11 where you say that you identified and developed various
12 projects, initiatives, and local campaigns to strengthen
13 support of public education by stakeholders including
14 elected officials, parents, school staff, and students.

15 My question is, these stakeholders that you
16 identify as elected officials, did that include members of
17 the California legislature?

18 MS. VASQUEZ: It does, though at CSVA, very
19 indirectly. I would say at my -- more so at Advancement
20 Project as an analyst and at the National Center for Youth
21 Law, I was much more in conversation with legislative staff
22 and legislators themselves. Although, at CSVA, I did
23 convene and facilitate a student mental health policy
24 roundtable with Assembly member Chris Holden. So I
25 certainly have, you know, experience working with elected

1 officials and their staff, for sure.

2 PANEL MEMBER DAWSON: Were you ever called to
3 testify on a bill in Sacramento?

4 MS. VASQUEZ: I was not, though I will say a very
5 close -- a very close proxy is giving public comment at a
6 L.A. Unified School Board meeting which are often more
7 attended than the legislative hearings.

8 PANEL MEMBER DAWSON: I believe it.

9 MS. VASQUEZ: Yeah.

10 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: I think those are all my
11 questions.

12 Mr. Chair, I have no more follow ups.

13 CHAIR COE: Ms. Dickison, do you have any follow-up
14 questions?

15 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: I do not have any further
16 questions.

17 CHAIR COE: Mr. Belnap?

18 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: I do not.

19 CHAIR COE: I might have one.

20 Madame Secretary, how much time do we have?

21 MS. PELLMAN: We have 7 minutes, 24 seconds.

22 CHAIR COE: Okay. So really quick, Ms. Vasquez.

23 If you were to be appointed to the Commission, which
24 aspects of that role do you think you might enjoy the most
25 and which aspects of that role do you think you might

1 struggle with a little bit?

2 MS. VASQUEZ: You know, I think I hinted at this
3 earlier that I really do enjoy group analysis. I like -- I
4 like being able to take what in this case would be, you
5 know, staff recommendation, data sets that have been
6 distilled and reports that are being presented, maps that
7 are being presented. I really like having things to react
8 to, and I love having thought partners who are bringing
9 different perspectives, seeing things that I may not see,
10 bringing lenses that I might not have. I really do enjoy
11 those discussions. So I'm really excited about sort of
12 digging in with commissioner colleagues. And I think that
13 comes from my coalition work, right, in doing many of my --
14 much of my work in partnership with other organizations.

15 The part that I would probably struggle most with
16 is, again, you know, I am not a lawyer and so I'm an
17 advocate and I think -- I think I would struggle most with
18 -- not even struggle, but just sort of like, the
19 guardrails, the legislative guardrails I think would sort
20 of, I would be the one to say, well what can we do? It
21 says we can't do this, what can we do? Right? That I will
22 be the one pushing and I'm sure that will irritate the
23 resident lawyer or lawyers on the Commission.

24 Sorry, Counsel.

25 CHAIR COE: Thank you for that.

1 No further questions, Counsel.

2 MR. DAWSON: Madame Secretary, how much time do we
3 have left?

4 MS. PELLMAN: Five minutes, 8 seconds.

5 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

6 Ms. Vasquez, with the time remaining, we'd like to
7 offer you the opportunity to make a closing statement to
8 the panel, if you wish.

9 MS. VASQUEZ: Sure. So first of all, thank you all
10 for your time and for your commitment to creating a
11 commission that is going to be doing some of the most
12 important policy and political work for this state,
13 especially as we've talked about in this interview in times
14 that are hyperpartisan and now with the global crisis. Not
15 just the global health crisis, but the global economic
16 crisis. I think our -- we have yet to see just how intense
17 our political conversation can be and I think the work of
18 redrawing our voting districts is going to be evermore
19 important.

20 You know, as I said before, I truly believe that
21 people are the experts in their own experiences. And by
22 extension, I really am so proud of the state of California
23 for giving citizens the ability through representatives to
24 draw their own boundaries. But this is a public input
25 process and I would be incredibly honored to serve all

1 folks in the state of California as a commissioner if I am
2 chosen.

3 So with that, thank you.

4 CHAIR COE: Thank you, Ms. Vasquez, for taking the
5 time to interview with us this afternoon.

6 Our next interview isn't scheduled until 9 a.m. on
7 Monday, April 6th. So we will be in recess until 8:59 a.m.
8 on Monday, April 6th.

9 (Thereupon the Panel recessed at 4:26 p.m.)
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