

1 2:59, I want to call the meeting of the Applicant Review
2 Panel back to order. I'd like to welcome Dr. Sadhwani to
3 her interview today. Thank you for taking the time to meet
4 with us.

5 DR. SADHWANI: Thank you. Thank you for having me.

6 CHAIR DICKISON: You're welcome. I'm going to turn
7 this meeting over to Mr. Dawson, and he will read you the
8 five standard questions.

9 MR. DAWSON: Thank you, Madam Chair.

10 Dr. Sadhwani, I'm going to ask you five standard
11 questions that the Applicant Review Panel has requested
12 each applicant respond to. Are you ready?

13 DR. SADHWANI: Yes.

14 MR. DAWSON: First question. What skills and
15 attributes should all Commissioners possess? What skills
16 or competencies should the Commission possess collectively?
17 Of the skills, attributes and competencies that each
18 Commissioner should possess, which do you possess? In
19 summary, how will you contribute to the success of the
20 Commission?

21 DR. SADHWANI: Thank you. Great. First I just
22 wanted to say thank you so much for the opportunity to
23 speak with you all today. I am honored to have made it
24 this far in the process, and I'd like to thank the auditors
25 and all of the staff members for the, I'm sure, tireless

1 hours that you've put into this review process,
2 particularly given the circumstances that we're all living
3 under right now.

4 In terms of the first question, I think the mandate
5 for the Redistricting Commission lays out quite clearly the
6 three criteria, impartiality, commitment to diversity, as
7 well as technical skills and competencies for all
8 Commissioners. So I wanted to talk a little bit about what
9 those, what those mean to me, and also how I see myself
10 contributing to these.

11 In general, the Commission should be comprised of a
12 body of individuals with a variety of these skills, right.
13 So impartiality is something that should be shared by all
14 the Commissioners. And for me to be impartial is to really
15 leave your preconceived notions at the door. And it's
16 really about being open-minded. And to me, that's being an
17 active listener and listening to the others. Listening to
18 the community members who will come before the Commission,
19 as well as to the other Commissioners. It's a body of 14
20 members, and so I think coming with the approach of really
21 being willing and able to listen to one another will be an
22 extraordinarily important component to impartiality. In
23 addition, having leadership and interpersonal skills that
24 are required to reach across partisan divides, working
25 calmly and finding solutions.

1 For myself, you know, I think I would like to think
2 of myself as a unique case in terms of impartiality. We
3 all bring with us our own identities and certain
4 characteristics from our upbringings and from our
5 professions and from our everyday lives. For myself, in
6 terms of socioeconomics, for example, I've been working
7 since I was a teenager. I was a grocery store worker and I
8 waited tables in the service industry to put myself through
9 college and to earn a Master's Degree.

10 In my professional capacity I have always worked in
11 non-profit organizations, whether institutions of higher
12 education and learning, or advocacy organizations.

13 My spouse, however, of nearly 15 years, on the
14 other hand, is a CEO and a small business owner. We
15 certainly look at the world differently from time to time,
16 and yet we've always been able to find a common ground. So
17 I think that that ability to be team-oriented, despite our
18 differences, is something that I can bring to the table and
19 will help me in terms of being impartial.

20 In terms of race, I'm biracial. I'm the daughter
21 of immigrants. My mother is from England, my father was
22 from India. What that means for me is that I identify as a
23 woman of color, but that I've never really felt like I
24 belonged to any one community in particular. My best guess
25 is that the 2020 Census is actually going to show that

1 there are more and more Americans and Californians who,
2 like me, come from a mixed heritage.

3 So, for me, I think that this background really
4 gave me a footing in different communities and in different
5 worlds, and has made me a bridge builder over time, being
6 able to kind of cross between different communities and
7 really understand, understand them.

8 In terms of the commitment to diversity, and in
9 particular California's diversity, California has for a
10 long time been an immigrant receiving state, with a large
11 immigrant -- with large immigrant communities from Mexico,
12 Central America and Latin America, Asia, South Asia, Middle
13 Eastern countries. We have mountains, we have oceans, we
14 have deserts, farmland and urban centers. A part of a
15 commitment to diversity I think is the humbleness to
16 recognize that no one person can possibly know all of the
17 different forms of diversity that we have in California.
18 No one can claim to say that they are an expert in every
19 corner of our great state.

20 And so, again, I think coming back to this
21 willingness and ability to be an active listener. To
22 listen to the communities that are on the ground, and
23 learning more about other people's perspectives I think
24 will be a crucial skill and capacity for Commissioners to
25 have.

1 In many ways my research agenda is a demonstration
2 of my commitment to California's diversity. I'm a
3 political science professor and researcher. My research
4 particularly examines Asian American and Latino voting
5 behavior. I've written about Latino Republicans and
6 explored variations in voting behavior of Asian Americans
7 of differing national origin backgrounds.

8 I'm a part of research collaboration that
9 identifies the racial and gender identities of state
10 legislative candidates nationwide, and I'm a part of
11 numerous survey efforts specifically aimed at low incidence
12 and difficult-to-reach populations, such as Muslim
13 Americans and the limited English proficient.

14 Finally, in terms of technical skills and
15 capacities, you know, I think that this really comes down
16 to critical thinking and problem solving. I would imagine
17 that in a body of 14, the Commissioners will bring a host
18 of technical skills with them, and the capacity -- for
19 myself, you know, I'll bring the capacity to understand
20 data, as well as legal requirements. I'm not a legal
21 scholar, per se, but certainly have a long background
22 working in public policy and analyzing and teaching issues
23 on public policy.

24 In addition, I think there's also the ability to
25 manage a public-facing process that's inclusive for all

1 Californians. So really that ability to, you know, to have
2 a public face. To participate broadly across the State and
3 in a public way.

4 For my research, I'm getting into some of those
5 specifics. I have extensive knowledge and experience using
6 Census data and using the statewide database, the official
7 redistricting database of the state. My training includes
8 the use of various relevant statistical and analytic
9 software, as well -- such as Stata or ArcGIS, as well as
10 various methodologies. I teach research methods for
11 political science. I feel like that would -- is something
12 that I could bring, you know, bring to bear as a
13 Commissioner.

14 In addition, I think critical thinking and problem
15 solving is of course much broader. Given my background in
16 teaching research methods, I think I would be able to
17 assist other Commissioners, you know, understanding data,
18 understanding, you know, the mapping components, where
19 others might have other technical skills and capacities
20 that they could be bringing to the table.

21 And yet, as a modern-day academic, I certainly am
22 very much engaged in a, kind of public facing activities,
23 which I think would be necessary for the Commission. I
24 regularly present at academic conferences. I teach, I
25 engage with students and listen and respond to their

1 concerns on a regular basis. I regularly am engaging in
2 faculty discussions and scholarly roundtables, that from
3 time to time can be heated, and having to navigate that
4 process. So I think those are all of the ways in which I
5 would bring technical skills, capacities to the Commission.

6 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Question two. Work on the
7 Commission requires members of different political
8 backgrounds to work together. Since the 2010 Commission
9 was selected and formed, the American political
10 conversation has become increasingly polarized, whether in
11 the press, on social media, and even in our own families.
12 What characteristics do you possess and what
13 characteristics should your fellow Commissioners possess
14 that will protect against hyperpartisanship? What will you
15 do to ensure that the work of the Commission is not seen as
16 polarized or hyperpartisan and avoid perceptions of
17 political bias and conflict?

18 DR. SADHWANI: This is such an important question,
19 and I want to talk a little bit about being a professor of
20 political science during this era of hyperpartisanship.
21 Because this is certainly something that I deal with kind
22 of on a daily basis. But before I get into the
23 professional, I want to share a little bit about my own
24 personal background.

25 I come from a mixed-partisan family. Politics

1 means a lot to me. It's been a big part of life since I
2 was a kid, but it isn't the only thing. My father, who
3 passed away unfortunately this fall, was a naturalized
4 citizen, and he was also a registered Republican. I'm, of
5 course, a registered Democrat. One of my sisters is a
6 staunch conservative raising her four children with strict
7 religious values. But, you know, for us, that was never
8 the, that was never a piece that divided us, even though we
9 approached the world quite differently.

10 My years in community organizing and advocacy
11 taught me many important lessons, but one of the key
12 takeaways from that experience was that the foundation of
13 organizing is listening. To meet people where they are at,
14 right. To sit down, to share a cup of coffee and learn
15 about their life experiences, and how that has shaped their
16 beliefs about the world. I actually incorporate this
17 process into my smaller classes. When I've taught smaller
18 versions of American politics courses, at the end of a
19 semester I'll bring in coffee and snacks in our final
20 session, and we'll have a call a coffee shop class. And I
21 make students shut off their cell phones, and we'll take on
22 big questions about the path forward in American politics
23 by just having simple conversations. By having people get
24 to know one another, and better understand one another's
25 perspectives. So I think that that's really kind of the,

1 one of the baselines for moving beyond this era of
2 hyperpartisanship.

3 As a professor of political science, I've taught at
4 a range of institutions. You know, from the University of
5 Pittsburgh, which is a large, public institution in
6 Pennsylvania. At community college level at Glendale
7 Community College, where I had a number of students, many
8 of whom are immigrants and refugees who had recently left
9 war-torn countries and didn't exactly have a lot of trust
10 in government. To Pomona College and USC, private
11 institutions with a range of different students. And
12 currently I'm at Cal Lutheran University. It's a small,
13 religious liberal arts institution on the Central Coast,
14 located in Ventura County. We have student from a broad
15 spectrums -- excuse me, spectrum of backgrounds and
16 political persuasions.

17 Cal Lutheran has a number of students who come from
18 affluent backgrounds in Westlake, Santa Barbara, San Luis
19 Obispo, and other neighboring areas in the Central Coast,
20 from families who are seeking a private institution with a
21 religious approach, and Cal Lutheran provides that. At the
22 same time, the university is a federally recognized
23 Hispanic Serving Institution, an HSI, with a large number
24 of first-generation students from working families in
25 Oxnard and Moorpark.

1 As a professor, my challenge each day is to create
2 a classroom environment where all of my students can engage
3 and think critically. For example, when we're studying
4 executive powers, right, it's an issue that's in the news a
5 lot, we'll take examples from both Democrats and
6 Republicans. We'll look at Trump's travel ban, we'll look
7 at Obama's drone strikes, and try to use the standard of
8 democracy to evaluate the use of the executive power in
9 either of those circumstances. And I think doing so allows
10 me to -- allows students, regardless of their political
11 persuasions coming into the classroom, and many of them
12 don't yet know what their political persuasions might even
13 be, to really engage and think critically about, you know,
14 across both sides of the political spectrum.

15 Finally, my former work in non-profit organizations
16 I think also influences my understanding of impartiality.
17 I worked on immigration reform back in 2006 and 2007. And
18 in that capacity and during that time, I was working with
19 both Senator Ted Kennedy and John McCain's offices. These
20 were two giants of the Senate who saw the world admittedly
21 from very different perspectives, and yet they were both
22 very much committed to moving forward and advancing fair
23 and sensible immigration reform, comprehensive immigration
24 reform. And I think that influenced my perspective in so
25 many ways. Knowing that we can be solutions-oriented.

1 That compromises will from time to time have to be made.

2 So some of the characteristics Commissioners should
3 possess to protect against hyperpartisanship should include
4 a deep commitment to the process, such that Commissioners
5 are both team-oriented and solutions-oriented. They should
6 have that skill of active listening, to listen to
7 communities on the ground, but also to listen to other
8 Commissioners and to really hear what people are saying.
9 And what I will do, what I can commit to, is getting to
10 know other Commissioners on an individual labor -- excuse --
11 -- level, to the greatest extent possible.

12 You know, I always like to tell my students about
13 the example of Justice Ginsberg and Scalia, when Justice
14 Scalia was still alive. They came from very different
15 political and ideological, legal-theoretical backgrounds,
16 and yet they were very close friends. They would attend
17 the opera together. And yet they certainly did not often
18 see eye to eye on legal cases. And so, I think I would
19 bring that kind of approach to the Commission.

20 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. What is the greatest
21 problem the Commission could encounter, and what actions
22 would you take to avoid or respond to this problem?

23 DR. SADHWANI: Yeah. Absolutely. Thank you. I
24 think one of the largest problems that the Commission could
25 encounter would be legitimacy, right, whether that's with

1 State legislators, the Governor, with the people of
2 California, I think this requires upholding the spirit of
3 the law, ensuring that the Commissioners uphold the spirit
4 of the law. Losing legitimacy, you know, I think would be
5 a real problem for the path forward, in terms of actually
6 setting the boundaries of the districts, of engaging in the
7 redistricting process. And I see three components as
8 really being critical to the success of the Commission.
9 Transparency, a commitment to professionalism, and the
10 ability to make compromises.

11 So, in terms of transparency and ensuring a broad
12 and inclusive process, I think that's kind of one of the
13 key pieces of a Citizens Redistricting Commission. It's
14 unique that California is in -- has a Citizens
15 Redistricting Commission, rather than vesting that power
16 with the State legislature. So ensuring a broad and
17 inclusive process will be paramount to the work of the
18 Commission.

19 Steps to take would include things like ensuring
20 that the notice of hearings is given to communities in
21 advance, in advance, much as the auditors have done with
22 this entire process. That minutes are kept. That they're
23 made available. That people receive an equal amount of
24 time to be heard. I think maintaining all of those
25 components would be absolutely essential to the business

1 and legitimacy of the Commission.

2 I think maintaining professionalism is also a key
3 component for the Commission, especially in terms of the
4 public appearance. Having Commissioners -- certainly the
5 Commission is made up of people of different political
6 backgrounds. That is the whole point. But having
7 Commissioners publicly bickering, taking to social media to
8 air grievances, none of that would be helpful to the
9 legitimacy of the Commission in my opinion. So I think
10 some steps to take in that regard. I don't know if any of
11 this is already planned, but, you know, in advance, or in
12 the very early stages with the Commissioners, establishing
13 a set of formal or informal expectations of how matters
14 will be communicated, including the extent to which
15 Commissioners themselves might want to put together
16 guidelines for personally taking to social media, their own
17 personal social media, talking with legislators or others
18 who might influence their decision making.

19 In addition, I think being able and ready to
20 resolve conflicts, being solution-oriented, I think all of
21 those components are a part of maintaining a sense of
22 professionalism within the Commission. And, finally, I
23 think making compromises. And I've talked, I talked about
24 this a little bit in the last question. You know, the
25 ability and willingness to communicate and communicate the

1 justifications for compromises. I think the Commissioners
2 themselves will have to make significant compromises.

3 I think thinking through things like identifying
4 communities of interest that need to be held together
5 within a single district will be difficult. There will be
6 challenges. I think communities of interest tend to
7 overlap from time to time. Being able to use both data and
8 incorporate the needs and concerns that we hear from
9 communities on the ground will ultimately require a hybrid
10 approach from the Commissioners. And so, ultimately, I
11 think making -- the ability to make compromises and that
12 willingness to communicate them and the justification for
13 them.

14 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

15 May I have a time check, Madam Secretary?

16 MS. PELLMAN: Yes. We have 10 minutes, 44 seconds.

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

1 selected?

2 DR. SADHWANI: Great. Thank you. Well,
3 collaboration is kind of the name of the game for me. I
4 work on collaborative projects quite often in terms of
5 research projects, and I'm going to share a little bit
6 about one that I've -- I'm a part of currently. But as a
7 professor, I also require collaborative projects of my
8 students on a regular basis. Before engaging in a project,
9 I typically will have my students brainstorm a short list
10 of what we call, critical success factors of collaboration.
11 Really setting those ground rules for collaboration. They
12 usually come up with a list of items that include things
13 like -- and which I agree with, things like having great
14 communication skills, which means sharing one another's
15 contact information and actually using it. Holding a
16 brainstorming session early on, so that everyone's ideas
17 for the project can be heard. Equally dividing up the work
18 to draw on people's strengths, and respecting on another's
19 perspectives, even when they don't agree. And I think that
20 students are right, that those are a lot of the keys to
21 collaboration.

22 For myself, in terms of sharing a project just
23 recently, I'm a part of a research team. There was a
24 request for proposals from the Russell Sage Foundation to
25 analyze some aspect of a 2016 national Asian American

1 survey, and propose a journal article for a special
2 edition. The research team that I was a part of, we put
3 together a proposal. Our proposal was actually selected
4 and we received a small mini-grant to participate and
5 present our findings at a conference in New York City. We
6 have written the article and it's currently under review at
7 the Journal of Social Sciences.

8 Some of the key components though. We were all in
9 different cities, so in that instance, it really required -
10 - as well as in different time zones. So it really
11 required flexibility and respect of one another's time. We
12 didn't know each other well going into the research group.
13 We knew each other by reputation. We knew one another's
14 graduate school advisors. So we had to take some time to
15 break the ice. When we were able to get together in New
16 York, we took time and went and had, you know, slices of
17 New York style pizza in order to get to know each other and
18 share a little bit more about our backgrounds and families.
19 And I think doing so really allowed us to work, work better
20 as a team.

21 We had to split the project up. One person did the
22 data crunching and the visualizations, another person wrote
23 up the results and the implications, and another focused on
24 the front end of the paper, the framing of the findings,
25 the situating of the study within the existing literature.

1 My formal role in this project was writing the
2 front end, but my unspoken role was really as task keeper.
3 I'm the mom of three children. I'd like to think that I'm
4 a highly productive person. Because I have a number of
5 responsibilities in my life, when I commit to something, I
6 make sure that I break the tasks into manageable pieces
7 that I'm -- we're hitting benchmarks along the way. I
8 recognize that life happens. I think we're all recognizing
9 that in living through this pandemic. Kids get sick, cars
10 break down, and for professors, we have mid-terms and final
11 seasons that usually equate to a lot of time needed for
12 grading.

13 So when we had phone meetings I made sure that
14 there was an agenda, and that everyone had a chance to add
15 or change it. Research meetings for us are often
16 exploratory brainstorms. We're thinking about the kinds of
17 data that we have access to, and what hypotheses we might
18 form from them. But I always made sure that one of us was
19 taking notes. We would share that responsibility, and that
20 we came away from our conversations with concrete action
21 items for each person, as well as deadlines in which they
22 would be due, to ensure that we were staying on task.

23 After receiving feedback on our initial draft, I
24 ensured that we took time to debrief and make plans to
25 incorporate those changes. Throughout the process we split

1 the work evenly, and we were communicating with each other
2 on a regular basis if things came up. And most
3 importantly, we were -- we held on another accountable.

4 So I think all of those components to working in a
5 team are extraordinarily important. Especially, you know,
6 in a Commission with 14 members, I think having people that
7 are task-oriented, who can really see what the goal is, and
8 understand what the key steps will be along the way to get
9 us there, will be extraordinarily important, and also
10 having that flexibility, right. I'm sure that in a body of
11 14, there will ultimately be a lot of task keepers on that,
12 on the Commission. And so, having that flexibility to, you
13 know, make changes when necessary to respond to other
14 people's needs, I think all of those components would be
15 really important.

16 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Question five. A
17 considerable amount of the Commission's work will involve
18 meeting with people from all over California who come from
19 very different backgrounds and a wide variety of
20 perspectives. If you are selected as a Commissioner, what
21 skills and attributes will make you effective at
22 interacting with people from different backgrounds and who
23 have a variety of perspectives? What experiences have you
24 had that will help you be effective at understanding and
25 appreciating people in communities of different backgrounds

1 and who have a variety of perspectives?

2 DR. SADHWANI: So, some of the things here I feel
3 like I've already discussed, so I don't want to go into too
4 great of detail, and I'm sure there will be additional
5 questions afterwards. Right, my professional career is
6 dedicated to the study of racial and ethnic diversity. In
7 addition to my research, I teach courses in racial and
8 ethnic politics and immigration policy. I come from a
9 mixed partisan background, and despite our differences in
10 perspective, we have a very strong base as a family,
11 including my husband, who's a small business owner. I
12 myself am biracial. And being racially ambiguous has
13 allowed me to really have a foot in many different
14 communities and build bridges between them.

15 The piece that I perhaps haven't discussed too much
16 about is that -- is where I grew up. And I grew up in the
17 Rust Belt in Western New York. I went to the University of
18 Pittsburgh for my undergraduate, and really spent my
19 formative years in that environment. I'm from a small,
20 rural neighborhood where the community relies on farming,
21 and is based on working-class families. Not unlike many of
22 the regions in the Central Valley or the Inland Empire.

23 In many ways my upbringing has shaped who I am.
24 Though I've had the chance in my lifetime to spend plenty
25 of time in the cities, and now I live in the suburbs,

1 growing up in that environment, we were a church-on-Sunday
2 family even though my father was Hindu. I grew up in a
3 world in which you take care of your neighbors. Where you
4 welcome newcomers, and it's usually with homemade pie.
5 Community is based upon a common set of shared values. And
6 so, you know, I think that there are many different forms
7 of diversity that are out there. I think there's many
8 different kinds of folks who live in California. And, you
9 know, I would like to think that I've had a great
10 opportunity throughout my career to spend time in different
11 places throughout the state to conduct research in
12 different areas. Studying voting communities in the
13 Central Valley and San Diego, in Orange County and Los
14 Angeles and San Jose. And in my former work in the non-
15 profit world, having a chance to really build bridges
16 across communities, and building statewide coalitions.

17 So, I think all of those experiences informed my
18 understanding of California and my appreciation for its
19 broad diversity.

20 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. We'll now to go to Panel
21 questions. Each of our Panel Members will have 20 minutes
22 to ask his or her questions.

23 We will start with the Chair, Ms. Dickison.

24 CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you, Mr. Dawson.

25 Good afternoon. Thank you again for coming. I

1 lost my voice there for a moment. You answered some of my
2 questions as you went through. But --

3 DR. SADHWANI: I'm always happy to elaborate.

4 CHAIR DICKISON: In your application you identified
5 yourself as an advocate in the social justice community of
6 California. And in your diversity essay you discuss your -
7 - as part of your work with the Coalition for Humane
8 Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles and Asian Americans
9 Advancing Justice, Los Angeles --

10 DR. SADHWANI: Uh-huh.

11 CHAIR DICKISON: -- that you organize large-scale
12 nationalization drives and prepared to mobilize immigrants
13 to speak to legislators and built coalitions?

14 DR. SADHWANI: Correct.

15 CHAIR DICKISON: Can you talk about what you've
16 learned through these activities about communities of
17 interest that will assist you in the work of the Commission
18 should you be selected?

19 DR. SADHWANI: Yes. So all of that is true. I can
20 talk a little bit about naturalization drives and
21 organizing as well. I came to California right at the end
22 of 2005, and during that time that was when immigration
23 reform was really -- when people were really taking to the
24 streets. And I was fortunate enough to have the
25 opportunity to work at CHIRLA, the Coalition for Human

1 Rights of Los Angeles at that time. I think they've
2 dropped the L.A. part now.

3 During that time I worked in collaboration with a
4 number of different organizations. When I was at CHIRLA I
5 was working in collaboration with Asian Americans Advancing
6 Justice. At that time it was known as the Asian Pacific
7 American Legal Center, APALC. So, excuse me if I go back
8 and forth between the names, because they've changed over
9 time. And we worked with NALEO as well, the National
10 Association of Elected Latino Officials, I believe it's --
11 it is. And we were organizing large-scale naturalization,
12 naturalization drives.

13 There were a number of immigrants who are legal,
14 permanent residents, who had lived in the country for five
15 years, who were eligible to naturalize but hadn't do so for
16 a number of reasons, right. Maybe these people are
17 committed to their home countries. Maybe they just didn't
18 have the money to fill out, to complete the forms, or the
19 forms were a little daunting, right. If English is your
20 second language, sometimes -- even though you might speak
21 English, filling out those forms for taking the citizenship
22 test can be a really big challenge for an individual who
23 might be working, raising their children, et cetera.

24 So in those drives we were really trying to match
25 the resources needed by those communities of legal,

1 permanent residents who were eligible to naturalize, so
2 that they could do it. So if people needed attorneys, we
3 would -- we were identifying pro bono attorneys. We were
4 having people trained to complete the naturalization forms
5 themselves. Conducting trainings for people to prepare
6 them for their naturalization exam and for their
7 interviews. Those are things that people were really
8 concerned about. And so that was a lot of my work. I was
9 more so on the policy side. So I worked on the
10 naturalization piece, and then I worked on comprehensive
11 immigration reform.

12 So there were other organizers at CHIRLA that
13 specifically were working with household workers,
14 undocumented students, undocumented day laborers. And one
15 of the pieces that we thought was so important was the
16 ability for the communities themselves to share their
17 story. And that is something, that is most definitely a
18 lesson that I have learned from that time period. That
19 hearing, you know, hearing from the people who are impacted
20 themselves, nothing can replace that. They are the
21 communities of interest that we're talking about. And
22 those communities of interest will come in many different
23 forms, of course, but that ability for people to come
24 forward and share their stories, share their experience and
25 share their concerns about -- whether it's about policy or

1 whether it's about redistricting, I think it's an
2 absolutely essential component.

3 And so that was a large part of what I would do.
4 The organizers themselves would, you know, identify people,
5 be working with them. There was a lot of different kinds
6 of service provision that was going on. I was working on
7 the policy end. As I mentioned in my comments, you know, I
8 was a part of a nationwide coalition of advocates that were
9 working with -- at that time, the kind of key legislatures
10 heading it up were John McCain and Ted Kennedy. Of course,
11 both have passed since then. But we were working with
12 their campaigns to learn more about what their policy
13 priorities were, and then to mobilize the people on the
14 ground.

15 So the organizers bring the day laborers, the
16 undocumented students, and I would conduct advocacy
17 trainings, right, so that they know what they're getting
18 themselves into when they go to Washington, D.C., or go to
19 Senator Feinstein's office, you know, in West L.A., to go
20 and share their story and prepare them, you know, to share
21 what their needs were in a comprehensive immigration reform
22 bill.

23 And so, really, that piece around putting
24 communities first, allowing people to speak for themselves,
25 was something that I brought away with me. It's something I

1 feel like I continue to incorporate with my students,
2 ensuring that they have that time and ability to make their
3 own voices heard, to put -- you know, to articulate and
4 elaborate their needs, not only as students, but hopefully
5 in the long run, so that they have be active participants
6 in our California State politics, but also in our American
7 democracy as well.

8 CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you. So one of the things
9 the Commission's going to need to do is identify
10 communities of interest. And you talked about policy and
11 preparing immigrants to speak with legislators.

12 DR. SADHWANI: Uh-huh.

13 CHAIR DICKISON: Based on the work that you've
14 done, how -- what methods do you think that the Commission
15 should take to identify communities of interest, and what
16 types of communities of interest do you think that they'll
17 be able to identify in the various regions throughout the
18 state?

19 DR. SADHWANI: Yeah. You know, some of my
20 scholarly work, though I, you know, it involves using the
21 method of ecological inference, which is the statistical,
22 Bayesian statistical method required in Voting Rights Act
23 cases. So, this kind of goes a step beyond communities of
24 interest, thinking about vote dilution and racially
25 polarized voting. So certainly, I think, identifying those

1 areas in which you can find communities that are racially
2 polarized would be one step to identifying those
3 communities of interest.

4 In addition, however, you know, I think that there
5 are forms of communities of interest. You know, we don't
6 have enough data on, for example, Muslim Americans, or even
7 identifying racially polar -- well, it wouldn't be racially
8 polarized, but I think polarized voting amongst, for
9 example, rural voters versus urban voters. Voters that
10 are, you know, that might be aligned based on some sort of
11 socioeconomic needs or transportation needs. So I think
12 that there could be a number of different ways of going
13 about doing that.

14 Certainly, knowing the communities themselves,
15 having Commissioners from a broad array of the different
16 areas of the State of California would be, of course,
17 important. But then doing our due diligence to really
18 understand the communities of interest that exist currently
19 in the current -- from the current, you know, districting
20 process, and how that might have changed from 2010 to 2020,
21 and looking at kind of that change over time and that
22 Census data.

23 Of course, as I mentioned before, I think a key
24 piece will be having those public hearings, ensuring that
25 communities know about them. Perhaps having -- you know,

1 I'm curious to learn more about how the, you know, the 2010
2 Redistricting Commission, or the prior Redistricting
3 Commission, engaged perhaps with organizations on the
4 ground, or local legislators or officials even to, just to
5 do outreach to the communities, so that people are aware
6 that the Commission hearings are going on.

7 So, you know, I don't have enough information, I
8 think, about what the process looked like in the past, but
9 I think pulling all of that together to better understand
10 and, you know, if need be, improve the process or make
11 changes to the process moving forward would be important.

12 Certainly, if the pandemic continues, that would
13 make it difficult to hold hearings. I think we would have
14 to, of course, come up with new and innovative ways of
15 engaging with communities around the state, just as you all
16 have done for these interviews.

17 CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you. Thinking of the data,
18 the Census data, one of the concerns is the Census data is
19 going to come later than has originally been expected --

20 DR. SADHWANI: Yeah.

21 CHAIR DICKISON: -- or than was originally supposed
22 to come. What steps can the Commission take to prepare for
23 the lateness of the data, given the deadlines that the
24 Commission's going to have and the tightening of its own
25 deadlines?

1 DR. SADHWANI: Uh-huh. I think ensuring that all
2 of knowledge building is already done and in place and
3 ready to go, right. So, I don't know to what extent all
4 Commissioners receive training, for example, on the
5 legalities of the VRA or knowing the prior districts
6 already, but I would assume all of that has to take place
7 in advance of the data being released in any case. Knowing
8 more about what kinds of -- if any lawsuits have occurred
9 based on the redistricting from the past, or if there were
10 issues that communities raised during that time. I think
11 all -- you know, doing our due diligence in the beginning
12 with any of the components that can kind of be done before
13 we actually have the data, to ensure that Commissioners are
14 prepped and ready to go when that data is there, I think
15 would be absolutely essential.

16 In addition, I mean, there is ACS data. There's,
17 you know, the yearly and five-year estimates that are
18 available from the Census Bureau. It's not perfect, but it
19 could be possible to begin some thinking about
20 redistricting using some of that data, although, of course,
21 you know, it's not going to be as precise as the Census
22 data. But it is -- you know, I use ACS data in some of my
23 research, particularly, you know, for Asian Americans by
24 national origin. They do a pretty good job of capturing
25 that in the one year and five-year estimates.

1 CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you. You talked earlier
2 about being able to use data and incorporate what the
3 Commission hears from communities on the ground.

4 DR. SADHWANI: Uh-huh.

5 CHAIR DICKISON: Can you describe an analysis
6 you've done using data, such as Census data, and other
7 information, such as the public comment?

8 DR. SADHWANI: Sure. I'm sorry. The first part of
9 that question was, describe a project using that data?

10 CHAIR DICKISON: Yes.

11 DR. SADHWANI: Okay. So the main thrust of my
12 dissertation -- actually, my entire dissertation, which I
13 completed at USC, was using the statewide database. So the
14 key component of my project, sort of the main, exciting
15 finding for scholarly research, which is hopefully I'm
16 waiting on the final acceptance from the Journal of
17 Political Behavior. It should be forthcoming there. Is
18 the, is turnout of Asian Americans by national origin. So
19 prior literature has, since the late 90's, thought about
20 the role of a co-ethnic candidate. So for African American
21 voters, does an African American or Black candidate
22 stimulate voters, right. And since the late 80's, early
23 90's, within the academic literature, there was this sense
24 that a co-ethnic candidate will empower voters to come out
25 and vote. That never exactly was borne out in the data,

1 however.

2 Instead, where the literature has kind of landed,
3 is that it's not simply a co-ethnic candidate that will
4 stimulate turnout, but it's also contingent upon the
5 proportion of a minority community in a district, right.
6 So, when you have majority-minority districts, or at least
7 districts where there is a larger percentage of a minority
8 community, that's where you see increases in turnout with a
9 co-ethnic candidate, right, in comparison to other
10 situations. Those findings held for African Americans and
11 Latinos. There was a big study done by one of my
12 colleagues, Bernard Fraga, in 2016 in the American Journal
13 of Political Science. But his findings were relatively
14 inconclusive for Asian Americans.

15 And so in my work I argue that the problem with his
16 study was that he was looking at Asian Americans as one
17 heterogenous group, and only at the Congressional District
18 level. That's a problem, because Asian Americans are not -
19 - you know, can be lumped as a heterogenous group, but
20 there's so many different national origin backgrounds. So
21 who is a co-ethnic candidate even for an Asian American?

22 So, I take his research question, but apply to the
23 State of California, and look at Asian Americans using the
24 surname match data from the statewide database for six
25 different Asian American national origins. What I find is

1 largely, if we're looking at Asian Americans in that pan-
2 ethnic group, in which we aggregate everyone together, his
3 finding holds, that it is contingent, a turnout is
4 contingent -- excuse me, a stimulation of turnout is
5 contingent on district demographics, okay. However, when I
6 disaggregate based on national origin, I find distinct
7 differences between Korean Americans and Filipino
8 Americans, Japanese and Indian Americans and Chinese
9 Americans. They do not behave the same, at least at this
10 point in time. That's not to say that, you know, 10 years
11 from now that might be different. This is, of course, the
12 study of California, so that -- you know, hopefully, I'll
13 be -- have the chance to do additional work in the future
14 in other states, in other contexts, but at this point in
15 time, what we see is variation between these different
16 communities. And I think that's an important piece to kind
17 of think about in terms of -- not necessarily in terms of
18 redistricting, but certainly just to note that there are
19 these kinds of differences in voting behavior of various
20 minority groups.

21 CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you. You talked about your
22 professional, volunteer activities and your personal
23 commitments.

24 DR. SADHWANI: Uh-huh.

25 CHAIR DICKISON: How will be balance those with the

1 work of the Commission, should you be selected?

2 MS. PELLMAN: Just a quick time check. We have
3 three minutes, 45 seconds.

4 CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you.

5 DR. SADHWANI: Sure. Well, as I mentioned before,
6 I'm a working mom, and I take my commitments very
7 seriously. So if I'm going to take something on, I do it
8 wholeheartedly. I am a very task-oriented person.
9 Certainly there were times and moments when people told me,
10 you're crazy to do a PhD with kids, you know, while you
11 already have kids. How would you ever finish that? But
12 I'm very proud of the fact that I am one of the very few
13 women, not only to complete my dissertation from USC's
14 Political Science Program, but also to get multiple tenure
15 tract job offers.

16 So, you know, I think if I were selected to be on
17 the Commission, I would think long and hard about what my
18 other commitments already are. If there are places where I
19 can scale back on some things. You know, if I scale back
20 on my daughter's Girls Scouts in order to be available for
21 the Commission during that time period, I okay making those
22 kinds of, those kinds of adjustments. And I think my
23 family is certainly okay with it as well. And I know that
24 --

25 CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you.

1 DR. SADHWANI: Thank you.

2 CHAIR DICKISON: Real quick, is there a role for
3 advocacy within the Commission?

4 DR. SADHWANI: I would be cautious about it. I
5 think that certainly -- I mean, advocacy comes in many
6 forms, right. I mean, maintaining legal standards could be
7 considered a form of advocacy, and certainly we would want
8 to think about the expectations of the Voting Rights Act,
9 et cetera. Though Section V may be -- is in many ways
10 dismantled under the Shelby ruling, Section II is still
11 there. And so I don't think that we want to end up, you
12 know, in a situation in which we -- the lines drawn are
13 challenged in the courts. That being said, I think that
14 advocacy can really stand in the way of impartiality, so I
15 think it would have to be a very fine balance.

16 CHAIR DICKISON: All right. Thank you very much.
17 I don't have any further questions at this moment.

18 Mr. Belnap, the time is yours.

19 VICE CHAIR BELNAP: Good afternoon, Dr. Sadhwani.
20 You mentioned that you came to California in 2005. What
21 brought you to California?

22 DR. SADHWANI: A love interest. I was on the East
23 Coast. My husband actually is originally from the East
24 Coast as well. We had met back there, and he was out here
25 starting this business. And so when I had finished my

1 Master's Degree at the University of Pittsburgh, we made
2 the decision, we had made the decision to get married, and
3 I had moved out here. So that's what had originally
4 brought me here. It just so happened that at that time
5 immigration reform was really taking off. My Master's
6 Degree was in International Development. There are not a
7 lot of international organizations in terms of development
8 aid organizations here in Los Angeles. They tend to be
9 more centrally located in Washington, D.C., New York, maybe
10 in San Francisco. So when I came at the end of 2005, early
11 2006, I was looking at a host of opportunities, and
12 immigration reform made a lot of sense. Immigration cuts
13 across development issues, particularly if we're thinking
14 about the economic situation that people face in their home
15 countries, and the reasons why they come. So, it made a
16 lot of sense for me to kind of move into immigration reform
17 policy work, given my interest and background.

18 VICE CHAIR BELNAP: All right. Thank you. I see
19 from your application that you're from Los Angeles County.
20 What experiences have you had outside of Los Angeles County
21 but in California, that would give you an understanding and
22 appreciation for people from other areas in California?

23 DR. SADHWANI: Yeah, sure. So, I've actually in my
24 non-profit work from the past, much of it was building
25 coalitions from across the state. And so, particularly

1 when I worked for the California Immigrant Policy Center, I
2 was the strategy director there, the organization was
3 undergoing a change. It had previously been a
4 collaboration of four organizations, and it was becoming -
5 - in the process of becoming its own 501(c)(3). And so, at
6 that time we were working to develop a network of
7 organizations that were either serving or involved in
8 immigrant rights advocacy. And so I, much of my time was
9 actually spent going and visiting organizations in the
10 Central Valley, spending time out in the Inland Empire with
11 organizations that were out there. At that time there was
12 only a handful of organizations that were serving, serving
13 communities that were out there.

14 I spent a significant amount of time in Orange
15 County and Long Beach. So I've -- Long Beach is of course
16 still a part of L.A. County. I used to spend time going
17 down to San Diego to work with ACLU of San Diego. And our
18 office, we had another office in Oakland, as well as
19 Sacramento. So I spent a lot of time going to Sacramento,
20 engaging in, you know, in legislative advocacy in
21 Sacramento, as well as working with our partners in the Bay
22 Area. So, over the years I've had a number of times in
23 which I've worked in various areas. I was always based out
24 of the Los Angeles area, but I spent a lot of time in other
25 places.

1 Similarly, when I was at the Asian Pacific American
2 Legal Center, we were at that point building a statewide
3 network, also. This is a common theme of my work. Of
4 Asian American organizations specifically serving health-
5 related needs. So for Asian Americans language access is a
6 key issue for many people in trying to access healthcare
7 services. Even for folks who have health insurance, et
8 cetera, if they -- if they're limited English proficient,
9 it can be very difficult for them to go in and talk with a
10 doctor. And so we used to hear numerous stories of, you
11 know, mothers being told, and having to have their
12 daughters in the room and translating for them, that, you
13 know, that their mother had cervical cancer or some other
14 kind of life-threatening illness. So that was a major part
15 of our work.

16 And so we were working with Hmong in the Central
17 Valley. We worked with the Chinese American communities in
18 San Francisco. We worked very closely with the Vietnamese
19 community in Westminster/Santa Ana Area in Orange County,
20 with the Cambodian American community in Long Beach. So we
21 really took a broad perspective. I think it's particularly
22 for the Asian Pacific American Legal Center, they have
23 fallen on tougher times now, but at that point in time it
24 was one of the few organizations that was serving the needs
25 of Asian Americans and had the infrastructure. They had a

1 hotline system running in multiple languages. So when
2 people had issues, whether they were legal issues,
3 healthcare issues, et cetera, they would -- we would get
4 calls in the Los Angeles office. We were involved at that
5 point in opening an Orange County office. Of course, since
6 that time, APALC has merged with other partners around the
7 country, and it has become a much, much larger enterprise
8 and is supporting organizations across the state. So
9 certainly I was a part of the development of much of that
10 work.

11 From my research perspective, I've -- I haven't
12 traveled as much for my research yet. Much of it is data-
13 oriented, and so a lot of it I've been able to do from
14 home, but I've spent a lot of time. I had written a piece
15 that was published at Vox, looking at a San Jose
16 Congressional District, particularly the race between Mike
17 Honda and Ro Khanna. You know, it's a very interesting
18 sort of race between two Asian American Democrats in the
19 only Asian American majority-minority district in
20 continental U.S. outside of Hawaii. So, I have spent time
21 doing research in other areas from a data perspective as
22 well.

23 VICE CHAIR BELNAP: All right. Thank you. You
24 describe in your application how you've exercised
25 impartiality as a professor. How have you had to exercise

1 impartiality as a researcher?

2 DR. SADHWANI: That's a great question. You know,
3 I think as a researcher, that's one of the first things, if
4 you're bringing your partisan lens, it's one of the first
5 things that is truly beaten out of you in graduate school.
6 In fact, my dissertation advisor, I can very clearly
7 remember, she used to be very hard on me in the early years
8 of my program, would literally tear up my papers and say,
9 this sounds like an advocate, and you will not write this -
10 - if you write this way, you will not finish the program.

11 So, you know, they are definitely two very
12 different skill sets. And the approach of a social
13 scientist cannot be partisan. We are looking at -- we are
14 looking for patterns that are generalizable. So we might
15 look for generalizable patterns of voting behavior between
16 Democrats or Republicans, but ultimately we're looking for
17 something that is generalizable beyond just one individual
18 question.

19 So, for example, in the project that I had
20 mentioned around voter turnout of Asian Americans, I parsed
21 the data and look at it. I look at turnout for Asian
22 American Republicans, Asian American Democrats, as well as
23 Independents. One of the unique things about studying
24 Asian American voters, is that about a third of them
25 identify with no -- without -- do not -- excuse me, do not

1 identify with one of the major parties. They are
2 independents.

3 And so it's a particularly interesting community to
4 be studying, because, you know, there are districts in
5 which Asian Americans are a large portion of the voting
6 populous of the electorates. And, you know, particularly
7 in the 2016 election, there were districts, particularly in
8 Orange County, that went to Hilary Clinton, but also sent
9 back Republican legislators to Congress, to the House.

10 So, a part of my research has been to look at, you
11 know, what role did Asian Americans play in that? And what
12 I found is that, using ecological inference, the method of
13 the Voting Rights Act, is that Asian Americans were
14 supporting Clinton, and yet at the same time, supporting
15 Republican incumbents. That's an interesting finding,
16 right. And I think that that cuts beyond just kind of any
17 partisan approach that I would potentially bring to it.
18 Instead, it's kind of an interesting pattern that we --
19 what I'm finding amongst Asian American voters.

20 So I really think that the -- if you -- you know,
21 scholars who bring a partisan approach to social science I
22 don't think actually make it very far the (indiscernible).
23 You know, I think as professors we're all aware that at any
24 point in time a student could be recording us or, you know,
25 we've all kind of heard those stories. So it is most

1 certainly something that we avoid in the classroom, but
2 also in our research, because our focus really is on
3 generalizable patterns of human behavior or institutions.

4 VICE CHAIR BELNAP: Okay. Thank you. You mention
5 in your application that you and your husband are small
6 business owners, and that you have to set aside your
7 personal views and be objective in that business.

8 DR. SADHWANI: Uh-huh.

9 VICE CHAIR BELNAP: Can you further describe that
10 experience and how you have had to exercise impartiality as
11 a small business owner?

12 DR. SADHWANI: Sure. You know, my role in the
13 business is fairly limited at this point, though, you know,
14 I've certainly been with him every step of the way of
15 building that business. He's an importer and wholesaler.
16 It's -- you know, we deal with a lot of different people,
17 from Chinese manufacturers and factories to staff members
18 who work in the company, to other business owners that
19 we're -- and, you know, vendors that we are trying to sell
20 the product to. They all come from various backgrounds and
21 perspectives. And I think the way that we have found to be
22 most successful in business is to -- you know, again, you
23 know, I hate to come back to this again, but kind of a
24 similar, similar lesson learned from organizing that I
25 mentioned before, is meeting people where they're at and

1 being active listeners, right. You know, the folks that
2 work in the warehouse for us, the folks that are, you know,
3 work in sales or work in the administrative office, might
4 have a very different view than the owner of some of the
5 companies that are buying our products that we also have to
6 entertain. That's okay. It's really important that we
7 can, that we can kind of move from one group of people to
8 another and take a similar approach, and really kind of
9 leave the politics out of it. Certainly my husband I think
10 gets a little bit more of that from other business owners,
11 but, you know, but I think it's something that we navigate
12 kind of carefully, and that we have to bring that level of
13 impartiality to, given the host of different people that
14 we're interacting with on a regular basis.

15 VICE CHAIR BELNAP: All right. Thank you.

16 Madam Secretary, can I get a time check?

17 MS. PELLMAN: Yes. Eight minutes remaining.

18 VICE CHAIR BELNAP: Okay.

19 So you mentioned something in your analytical
20 skills essay. It's a sentence I'll read --

21 DR. SADHWANI: Okay.

22 VICE CHAIR BELNAP: -- then I want to ask you a
23 question about it. So, in a 2018 article in a peer review
24 journal -- you name the journal but I won't, "my co-author
25 and I contend that how -- contend that how electoral

1 institutions are designed, including how district lines are
2 drawn, may create both constraints and opportunities for
3 representational diversity." So, what I'd like you to do
4 is expand on that --

5 DR. SADHWANI: Sure.

6 VICE CHAIR BELNAP: -- finding that you had, and
7 talk about its implications for the Commission's work.

8 DR. SADHWANI: Sure. So, in that study we were
9 looking at two, two state assembly districts in particular,
10 in which the top two primary resulted in two Republicans
11 who were, you know, who were competing in the general
12 election. And in particular, one of the things that we
13 were kind of interested in is a prior study, not in our
14 study, a prior study, that had studied Latino desire for
15 descriptive representation. So what that means in kind of
16 layman's terms, is a desire to see one of your own elected
17 to office. That Latino Democrats exhibited in survey data
18 a greater desire to see other Latinos voted into office
19 than Latino Republicans, right. So there was this
20 difference between Latino Democrats and Republicans that
21 was found in this other study in terms of what they would
22 want. So we wanted to test that.

23 And so, what's unique about the California system,
24 the top two primary system, is that you get these general
25 elections in which you'll have Democrats versus Democrats

1 and Republicans versus Republicans. And so I like to
2 exploit that to understand better how under that kind of
3 constraint, right, when you are -- when you only in a
4 general election have two Republicans or two Democrats, and
5 in this instance of the article you mentioned, it's two
6 Republicans, who do you vote for?

7 And so we used ecological inference. Again, it's
8 the method of the Voting Rights Act, to estimate Latino
9 Democrats vote choice. Okay. And so what we find is that
10 the Latino Democrats overwhelmingly supported the Latino
11 Republican candidate, right. And this is a small paper and
12 a small finding, but it gives a little bit of credence to
13 this idea that Latino Democrats might have more of this
14 preference to support one of their own. They had an option
15 between two, two Republican candidates, and they chose the
16 Latino candidate. And that's really all that that paper
17 can say. Because we can't say why they went out and
18 supported them, but what we can say is, we can demonstrate
19 the fact that Latino -- excuse me, Latino Democrats as a
20 majority supported the Latino Republican under this
21 constraint. Okay. That could matter to redistricting, it
22 could not, right. I mean, I think it kind of comes back
23 down to the communities of interest. There are already a
24 number of majority-minority Latino State Assembly Districts
25 in the State of California. Given some of the areas and

1 the extent to which the Latino community may have grown, in
2 particular, this was in San Diego and the Central Valley,
3 you know, it's possible that those would ultimately become
4 areas where, you know, greater representation for Latinos
5 might make sense. But without seeing the data, I think
6 it's -- you know, the 2020 data, I think it's hard to say
7 exactly, you know, how that would influence redistricting
8 decisions.

9 VICE CHAIR BELNAP: All right. Thank you.

10 Madam Chair, no further questions.

11 CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you, Mr. Belnap.

12 Mr. Coe, the time is yours now.

13 PANEL MEMBER COE: Thank you, Madam Chair.

14 Good afternoon to you, Dr. Sadhwani. Thank you for
15 taking the time to speak with us today.

16 DR. SADHWANI: Yes. Thank you.

17 PANEL MEMBER COE: In your first essay, you
18 describe yourself having a deep commitment to upholding the
19 values of representative democracy. And many of the
20 activities you're involved in, professional or otherwise,
21 and some of the discussion we've had this afternoon has
22 demonstrated that commitment. And my question is, where do
23 you think that this commitment comes from?

24 DR. SADHWANI: That's such a great question. Not
25 one that I had thought too much about, but I do think, you

1 know, I -- boy. This kind of feels like a psychoanalysis
2 at this point. But I, you know, I think that as an
3 immigrant family, while we were to some extent seen as
4 outsiders in our community, I suppose. I mean, certainly,
5 I always got the questions of, where are you really from?
6 Gosh, well how come your parents have such funny accents?
7 But at the same time, as I mentioned before, it was a
8 small-knit community that believed in welcoming outsiders.
9 And so despite those kinds of questions, you know, it was a
10 patriotic community. One in which, you know, I have very
11 vivid memories as a child of, you know, reciting the Pledge
12 of Allegiance every day and singing, you know, songs from
13 Sea to Shining Sea, and thinking about the Statute of
14 Liberty and how there's a place for all of us here in the
15 United States.

16 And I do think, and my father, also, who was a
17 naturalized citizen, you know, took a lot of pride in being
18 in the United States, and being able to provide this
19 opportunity to be here to our family. So I think that that
20 dedication comes from pretty early on. That's, that
21 democracy is, you know, is a fairly good thing. I mean, I
22 think one of the prior questions was, you know, being
23 biased in your research. I'm fortunate in that I study
24 American politics and I'm largely dealing in democracies.
25 Others will study democracies versus authoritarian rule,

1 and think about, you know, the differentiation between, you
2 know, single-member districts and other forms of
3 representation. You know, for me I'm kind of wholly
4 focused on the United States system, and they -- you know,
5 I think that that interest in democratic governance was
6 formed fairly early on. When I was young I thought I would
7 be a lawyer. As I, you know, went through my undergraduate
8 I realized that that wasn't really the path for me, though
9 I still, did still end up kind of in public policy and
10 research and things like that. That was kind of the right
11 approach for me.

12 PANEL MEMBER COE: Thank you for that insight. I
13 wanted to read something from the impartiality essay and
14 ask you about it.

15 DR. SADHWANI: Sure.

16 PANEL MEMBER COE: In that essay you say,
17 "impartiality may be the most important quality needed in a
18 redistricting Commissioner, and yet may be the most
19 difficult to establish." I think you're probably right. I
20 think impartiality is very difficult to demonstrate. And I
21 know that you've been asked about it a couple of times from
22 my colleagues, but I'm wondering if you could pick one,
23 what do you think is a personal example that best
24 establishes or demonstrates your ability to make impartial
25 decisions for your self-interest?

1 DR. SADHWANI: I'm sorry. I missed that last part.
2 For my self-interest?

3 PANEL MEMBER COE: If you could pick one, one
4 example from your experience, which one would you pick to
5 fully demonstrate your ability to make impartial decisions
6 free of your self-interests?

7 DR. SADHWANI: Free of my self-interest. I really
8 think the classroom is where that comes into play. I mean,
9 typically my students -- actually, I'll get to the end of
10 the semester and students have no idea sometimes what my
11 own partisan background is. Because the examples that
12 we'll use in class, you know, will -- we use -- you know,
13 in my class, is because there is American politics focus,
14 we tend to use democracy as the standard by which we're
15 evaluating a whole host of institutions and actors.

16 And so, we can use democracy and a democratic
17 standard of, you know, engagement of the people, to
18 critique or think critically about both Democrats and
19 Republicans. Neither one are perfect, quite frankly. And
20 so, you know, I really think that in the classroom I have
21 had to kind of stretch, stretch myself in many ways to
22 leave my own beliefs at the door. There's really no place
23 for it in a classroom. You know, I have had a whole range
24 of students.

25 Certainly I think after the election, the 2016

1 Presidential Election, was particularly an interesting time
2 to be teaching. At the time I was teaching both at USC and
3 at Glendale Community College, in which I've had a number
4 of Armenian students, a number of Latino undocumented
5 students, as well as GCC also has a number of students who
6 have come from Iraq and the Middle East, and from war-torn
7 countries, from Syria, et cetera. It was fascinating to
8 just to kind of see the range of responses. Because there
9 were students who devastated, undocumented students were
10 terrified by a Trump administration. And yet at the other
11 -- on the other spectrum, there are a lot of students who
12 were very excited about a Trump presidency. In -- as the
13 head of the classroom, I have to create a space for both of
14 them to be heard, but also to be able to kind of minimize
15 some of the raw emotion of that point in time, right.

16 At that point we had several conversations in
17 classes, allowing students to kind of unpack that. Many
18 students actually did additional kind of counseling and
19 services, particularly undocumented students. You know,
20 but we did a lot of reflective essays. We -- in my classes
21 we usually -- because I study elections, I usually leading
22 up to an election, have students analyzing various
23 elections from around the country. So, being able to
24 debrief from them, and thinking about how, you know, a
25 turnout for Trump might have influenced congressional

1 elections or state legislative elections around the
2 country, or various propositions that were on the ballot.

3 So, I really think that in the classroom is where
4 I've had, I've had to learn how to be impartial.
5 Especially when you're first starting out and in your early
6 years of teaching, the only way to advance is to have --
7 you know, I hate to say it, but is to have decent teaching
8 reviews. And if you come in and you're completely one-
9 sided, one, you're not, you're not really teaching anything
10 about American politics and institutions. But, two, you're
11 not going to end up with very good, very good reviews,
12 because students will see right through that.

13 So, I think in the classroom, you know, you really
14 have to leave your, leave your perspective at the door and
15 create a space where students can be who they are, but also
16 explore who they might want to become. Many of them are
17 17, 18 years old and don't have a partisan affiliation yet,
18 and it's, you know, for them to find certainly.

19 PANEL MEMBER COE: Thank you. I'd like to switch
20 to something you talked about. Well, you talked about it
21 today. You talked about it in your appreciation for
22 diversity essay.

23 DR. SADHWANI: Yeah.

24 PANEL MEMBER COE: And that's your work as a
25 scholar examining voting behavior of diverse groups, and

1 your years working within the immigrants' rights advocacy.
2 And I'm curious how you think these experiences would help
3 make you an effective representative for the diverse
4 population of California on this Commission.

5 DR. SADHWANI: Yeah. I think I have an intimate
6 knowledge of many diverse communities in California. I
7 think my study of Asian Americans alone is quite unique.
8 Asian Americans do certainly tend to be kind of lumped
9 together as a group. They are not. Certainly, even in
10 terms of their geographic spread across the State of
11 California, there is a lot of diversity.

12 You know, for example, right, looking at -- I had
13 written a piece for the Washington Post in 2018, yes, 2018,
14 that examined the 39th Congressional District, for example.
15 In that race, it was Korean American Young Kim against
16 Latino Democrat Gil Cisneros. Many people thought that
17 because there was so many Asian Americans in the 39th
18 Congressional District, about a third of the -- of the
19 residents, excuse me, are Asian American, that that would
20 necessarily mean that that support for Young Kim.

21 And what -- every time I got interviewed after the
22 piece in the Washington Post, I had to remind people, yes,
23 but Young Kim is Korean American, and the majority of the
24 people in that district, of the Asian Americans in that
25 district, are Chinese American, right. And so that does

1 not necessarily mean that they are going to come and turn
2 out for Young Kim. She's still going to have to do the
3 work that any other candidate is going to have to do to
4 reach out to that community. She doesn't speak the same
5 language necessarily.

6 So, you know, I think having that knowledge,
7 particularly of the Asian American community, but also of
8 many other communities, right. I mean, I've done work over
9 the years thinking -- looking at Muslim Americans. The
10 statewide database, though I haven't done a project,
11 actually identifies Jewish voters as well.

12 You know, I think that there are many, there's many
13 different forms of diversity across the state. And I can
14 bring that kind of sensitivity towards it. Even in places
15 where I, where I'm less familiar, right. I'm sure that
16 there are newer communities that I know less about. But
17 having this background, having worked in communities, as
18 well as studying them kind of from the data perspective,
19 you know, I think that that gives me that openness to
20 listen and hear from them, and give them a chance for me to
21 better understand and get to know them and learn.

22 PANEL MEMBER COE: Thank you. I'd like to go back
23 now to the topic communities of interest. You had some
24 discussion with that with Ms. Dickison earlier, and
25 discussed how to identify communities of interest across

1 the State. In my question I want to piggyback off of that
2 and ask, how can the Commission kind of avoid inadvertently
3 overlooking some communities that may be less obvious,
4 harder to find or more hidden in its work?

5 DR. SADHWANI: You know, I think what's so great
6 about the Census data is the granularity of it, right, in
7 comparison to, say, for example, the voting, the voting
8 data alone, which is a surname matching. The Census data
9 really allows us to understand so many different kinds of
10 racial and ethnic groups, right. When we look at surname
11 matching, we tend to identify the top six Asian American,
12 for example, but there's also, there's over 20 different
13 kinds of national origins of Asian Americans.

14 And so we can, you know, we can certainly use the
15 Census data in that way to better understand kind of that
16 racial and ethnic diversity. But I think communities of
17 interest can come in many different shapes and forms,
18 right. So, knowing, knowing more about the unique ways in
19 which communities might be landlocked, for example, right,
20 in certain areas, in which there might only be one freeway
21 that gets to parts of, you know, the Inland Empire or the
22 Antelope Valley, for example, or the northern parts of the
23 State, right, and thinking about what kinds of communities
24 of interest might also come out of, of those kinds of
25 areas.

1 You know, I'd love to hear more about -- I don't
2 know that we have time for that here, or that that's really
3 -- this is really the place for it. But I'd love to hear
4 more about how the previous Commission kind of went about
5 doing that work. So, for example, the Census in years past
6 has worked very closely with organizations on the ground to
7 ensure that a broad count is actually heard -- is actually
8 conducted.

9 You know, I'm curious if the Commission previously
10 was working with various organizations on the ground to do
11 that kind of outreach or not. You know, whether its
12 conversations, you know, kind of a qualitative conversation
13 with various stakeholders in different parts of the State
14 to learn more about communities. Using the Census data to,
15 perhaps, identify regions in which there might be specific,
16 specific communities of interest that we might want to look
17 out for, and then going out and engaging in conversations.

18 Maybe they have -- they don't come to us, but maybe
19 we need to make sure that we're going out and trying to
20 find them, to the extent that that's necessary or feasible
21 to do so given the amount of resources.

22 PANEL MEMBER COE: In the Commission's efforts to
23 find communities, they may locate or identify some that are
24 less engaged or concerned about coming forward with their
25 perspectives or their opinions. And there could be a

1 number of reasons why certain communities may feel that
2 way, engaging Government or Government bodies. But since
3 the perspective of as many citizens of California is so
4 important to the work of this Commission to do its best job
5 and its work, how do you think the Commission should engage
6 these communities that may be concerned about coming
7 forward, sharing your perspective, to actually make them
8 feel comfortable coming forward, sharing their concerns,
9 their thoughts, to better inform the Commission in its
10 work?

11 DR. SADHWANI: Yeah. I think that there's a number
12 of ways of doing that. Certainly I've worked with a number
13 of communities in the past that meet that kind of criteria
14 that you're describing, right. Cambodian Americans who
15 have come from regimes where they do not feel comfortable
16 talking with government officials. Vietnamese Americans as
17 well. The Hmong. Undocumented immigrants, right, people
18 from Central American who have perhaps left very violent
19 situations, and have a lot of concerns about talking to
20 someone, you know, who's seen as a part of the Government,
21 or who -- you know, the undocumented generally, who might
22 fear deportation.

23 You know, I do think that meeting communities in
24 their neighborhoods, in their communities, can be
25 extraordinarily important. You know, whether it's holding

1 the -- holding hearings or actually going out and talking
2 with folks in neighborhoods and their churches, at their
3 community centers. You know, certainly that's something
4 that I'm, you know, very comfortable doing.

5 And like I said before, if there are organizations
6 or religious organizations or educational, you know, public
7 schools, you know, where folks are located, and where there
8 might be kind of intermediaries, people that are trusted
9 members of the community, maybe the school teacher or, you
10 know, the local pastor, who might be, might be kind of
11 trusted within the community and might be able to provide a
12 bridge for Commissioners to hear more from the members
13 themselves I think would be absolutely crucial.

14 PANEL MEMBER COE: Thank you.

15 Madam Secretary, time check, please?

16 MS. PELLMAN: Three minutes, 30 seconds.

17 PANEL MEMBER COE: Thank you.

18 Dr. Sadhwani, if you were to be appointed to the
19 Commission, which aspects of the role of Commissioner do
20 you think that you would enjoy the most, and conversely,
21 which aspects of the role do you think you might struggle
22 with a little bit?

23 DR. SADHWANI: I'm a people person actually, so I
24 think I would really enjoy being a part of the Commission,
25 working with other Commissioners, working with the

1 communities themselves. That being said, I'm also, you
2 know, a total data geek, so I enjoy the data side of it.
3 You know, I don't know the extent to which Commissioners
4 are using GIS themselves, or is it -- or is there typically
5 someone who does it, like on behalf of the Commission? I'm
6 not sure. You know, GIS I have been trained in. I know
7 how to use it. It's not my favorite thing, but I, you
8 know, I -- it's certainly something I am capable of doing.
9 But probably, you know, would be my least favorite -- or
10 less of a favorite part. The data analysis side I enjoy
11 more so, and certainly talking with people, being a part of
12 the Commission, getting to know the other Commissioners as
13 well.

14 You know, I think one of the things I talked about
15 in some of the other questions, I think especially when it
16 comes to reaching across partisan divides, I think so much
17 of that is done over a cup of coffee, over a slice of
18 pizza, you know, whatever. You know, I think that those
19 are things, if there's opportunity to do that, I think that
20 that's a really exciting thing, to get to learn more about
21 our great state, to learn more about the diversity that
22 exists across all of the different regions of California I
23 think would be very exciting for me. So, you know, there
24 were a number of reasons why I applied to begin with. It's
25 for all of these pieces. You know, and I think also just

1 to fine-tune some of my own skills and knowledge set I
2 think would be really exciting.

3 PANEL MEMBER COE: Okay. Thank you very much, Dr.
4 Sadhwani.

5 Madam Chair, no additional questions at this time.

6 CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you, Mr. Coe.

7 At this time I'm going to turn it over to Mr.
8 Dawson for any follow-up questions.

9 MR. DAWSON: Thank you, Madam Chair.

10 Professor Sadhwani, thank you for being here. I
11 wanted to follow-up on the question about the Census data,
12 and I'll give you a hypothetical, which is not that
13 hypothetical. The Census Bureau has -- is planning to ask
14 Congress to push back the deadlines by 120 days, which
15 would then really put the squeeze on the Commission in
16 getting out the -- in the deadline to get out the maps.
17 Based on your work, working with Census data and all that,
18 is it -- can -- do you think the Commission can do enough
19 work ahead of time before getting the Census data, that it
20 could maybe draw preliminary maps, and then drop in the
21 Census data and tweak it?

22 DR. SADHWANI: Do you mean using ACS data, the
23 American Community Survey data?

24 MR. DAWSON: No. I mean the actual redistricting
25 data that is required to be sent to the states.

1 DR. SADHWANI: I mean --

2 MR. DAWSON: I don't know about the ACS.

3 DR. SADHWANI: Okay. And I think it would be a
4 challenge to fully -- I mean, I think it's entirely
5 possible to begin drafting the, you know, a rough draft of
6 what the districts would look like, and certainly thinking
7 about communities of interest is something that can be
8 started earlier on. I do think that ACS data, the American
9 Community Survey data is a possible workaround, at least to
10 get started.

11 So, the Census Bureau puts out estimates annually,
12 but really it's based on a five-year kind of timeframe for
13 the kind of change that we anticipate seeing based on
14 survey data, right. So they'll do a large, a large survey
15 to kind of get that sense. You don't, however, in the ACS
16 data get fine-grained CVAP data, the Citizen Voting Age
17 Population, so I think that would be a little bit of a --
18 well, it doesn't necessarily matter for the redistricting
19 though, because you're using residents in any case. So,
20 you know, you miss out on some of those components, but I
21 think it's certainly something to get started.

22 I don't think that there's a reason to wait,
23 because time is of the essence, and I think this has to get
24 done. It has to get done before the 2022 election of
25 course, and be in place. So, yeah, I think that's entirely

1 possible, but, you know, obviously, the best-case scenario
2 is getting the Census data of course, and having that fine-
3 grain change.

4 I think one of the other challenges, right, is
5 California is projected to potentially lose a congressional
6 seat, right. And so without that final count, it will be
7 hard to know exactly, you know, what that would look like,
8 if reapportionment, if we end of losing a congressional
9 seat due to reapportionment. But, certainly, you know,
10 state legislative districts could be started now. Yeah.

11 MR. DAWSON: All right. Thank you. Do you think
12 that's likely to be in the L.A. area if the -- if we lost a
13 congressional seat?

14 DR. SADHWANI: Well, I think that would be up to
15 the Redistricting Commission, right. I mean, I think it's
16 hard to know. It's statewide, and the districts have to be
17 about the same, you know, the same number of residents. So
18 I -- potentially, yeah.

19 MR. DAWSON: All right. All right. Thank you.

20 DR. SADHWANI: Certainly Los Angeles has a high
21 concentration of congressional seats.

22 MR. DAWSON: I wanted to ask you about a statement
23 that you had in essay four. It was similar to one I think
24 that Mr. Coe was asking you about. But you said,
25 "furthermore, my research emphasizes how electoral

1 institutions like the Voting Rights Act, California's top
2 two primary and citizen redistricting influence voter
3 participation and representation." Does that mean that
4 when a state has a citizen commission, that they tend to
5 have better turnout?

6 DR. SADHWANI: Well, not exactly for turnout. So,
7 I'm not aware of studies that have looked at turnover, per
8 se, but I am a part of -- I was a part of a research team
9 for the Schwarzenegger Institute at USC looking at partisan
10 gerrymandering of state legislative districts. And so,
11 certainly, the State of California did far better than
12 states that hold their redistricting with the state
13 legislature, when that power is with the state legislature.

14 Not necessarily in terms of turnout. Instead, you
15 know, we're thinking more so about -- the article that that
16 was referencing was a piece specifically written about
17 descriptive representation. It was written for a symposia
18 on this idea of electing more, or an equal number of -- a
19 proportional number of men, women, minorities, et cetera,
20 to the legislature. In general, when we talk about
21 descriptive representation, that is what we're talking
22 about. It's a theory of people supporting candidates and
23 being represented by someone who resembles them, right.
24 And so it was this theoretical symposia.

25 And our -- you know, my contribution to that with my co-

1 author was, hey, descriptive representation is great,
2 however, right, we have to think about these electoral
3 institutions and the roles that they play. Whereas in some
4 instances, it might constrain women or people of color from
5 actually being elected to office. In other instances, it
6 might create opportunities where people -- where you can
7 have a more proportional representation actually occur. So
8 that was kind of the framework for that particular article
9 that I had mentioned.

10 MR. DAWSON: Okay. Thank you.

11 I have no further follow-up questions. If the --
12 Madam Chair, if the Panel has any additional follow-ups.

13 CHAIR DICKISON: I do not have any follow-up.

14 Mr. Belnap?

15 VICE CHAIR BELNAP: I don't have any further
16 questions.

17 CHAIR DICKISON: Okay. Mr. Coe?

18 PANEL MEMBER COE: No follow-up questions.

19 MR. DAWSON: Madam Secretary --

20 CHAIR DICKISON: No further follow-up.

21 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

22 How much time is remaining, Madam Secretary?

23 MS. PELLMAN: We have one minute, two seconds.

24 MR. DAWSON: All right. Thank you.

25 With the minute remaining, Dr. Sadhwani, I'd like

1 to give you the opportunity to make some closing remarks,
2 if you wish.

3 DR. SADHWANI: Sure. Well, I would just like to
4 thank you all so much for this opportunity, and, you know,
5 for taking the time to speak with me today, and for all of
6 our work, actually, to establish this Commission. I
7 imagine it is an enormous process and job. Certainly,
8 there was over 20,000 candidates, so you've had your work
9 cut out for you. So, I just truly want to thank you, you
10 know, as a Californian, for all of the work that you have
11 done to establish this Commission. Thank you.

12 MR. DAWSON: Okay.

13 CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you, miss -- or Dr. Sadhwani
14 for taking the time to meet with us today.

15 DR. SADHWANI: Thanks.

16 CHAIR DICKISON: Our next interview is tomorrow
17 morning at 9:00 o'clock. So we are going to recess now
18 until 8:59 tomorrow morning.

19 DR. SADHWANI: Thank you.

20 (Recess at 4:30 p.m.)

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