

1 I want to thank you all for this excellent
2 opportunity. I know you'll make the wise decision. And I
3 know that I'm in good hands as a California citizen and
4 voter with the work of this Commission. Thank you.

5 CHAIR COE: Thank you, Mr. Barron, for taking the
6 time to speak with us today.

7 Our next interview is scheduled for 10:45, so we
8 will be in recess until 10:44.)

9 (Off the record at 10:22 a.m.)

10 (On the record at 10:44 a.m.)

11 CHAIR COE: Okay, the time being 10:44, I'd like
12 to call the meeting of the Applicant Review Panel back to
13 order.

14 At this time I'd like to welcome Pastor Trena
15 Turner for her interview. Pastor Turner, can you hear us
16 okay?

17 MS. TURNER: I hear you just fine. Thank you.
18 Good morning.

19 CHAIR COE: Thank you. Good morning to you. I'd
20 like to turn the time over to Mr. Dawson for the standard
21 five questions, please.

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

23 Mam, I'm going to read you five standard
24 questions that each of the applicants have been requested
25 to address. Are you ready?

1 MS. TURNER: I am.

2 MR. DAWSON: First question. What skills and
3 attributes should all Commissioners possess?

4 What skills or competencies should the Commission
5 possess collectively?

6 Of the skills, attributes and competencies that
7 each Commissioner should possess, which do you possess?

8 In summary, how will you contribute to the
9 success of the Commission?

10 MS. TURNER: Thank you. I think the most
11 important skill will be one of listening. A simple skill,
12 but kind of complex in that we need to ensure that we are
13 paying full attention not just to what we know, but what
14 others know. So that we are leaning in, not based on
15 previous perspectives, but we are open to new ideas. So, I
16 think the individual skill, as well as the collective skill
17 is a desire, an appetite and a passion to know more than
18 what you currently know. So, I'll say listening is a huge
19 skill.

20 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Question two. Work on
21 the Commission requires members of different political
22 backgrounds to work together. Since the 2010 Commission
23 was selected and formed, the American political
24 conversation has become increasingly polarized, whether in
25 the press, on social media, and even in our own families.

1 What characteristics do you possess, and what
2 characteristics should your fellow Commissioners possess,
3 that will protect against hyperpartisanship?

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

7 MS. TURNER: Yeah, this ties in for me the
8 importance and the intentionality behind standing with just
9 the one skill of listening. Of course there are lots of
10 skills that can be in place. But the polarization of our
11 nation right now is such to the point where if we don't do
12 something drastically different I'm almost afraid of where
13 we'll end up.

14 People have dug into camps as opposed to
15 remembering that people are people. And if, indeed, you
16 have a love for those around you, then certainly there is a
17 capacity to love those that are further away from you.

18 Polarization. This particular role, people
19 coming from different backgrounds I think is great because
20 you for sure will have an understanding of why you believe
21 what you believe. And always there are people behind
22 understandings, people that come to mind that you believe
23 you're representing, your family, your loved ones. People
24 that you've been in close proximity to.

25 However, on this Commission having people that

1 come from certain camps that's great, again with the
2 ability to lean in and learn new things.

3 So, for example, the work that I do -- and we'll
4 talk about that later. But the work that I do requires
5 that I step out of what I already know and be able to
6 listen from a different perspective. That may sound
7 foreign and even offensive at its onset. However, at the
8 core people just do want to protect those that they hold
9 dear, and the key is in helping them see that there are
10 others that are just as dear as well.

11 So, the polarization, to me only happens when we
12 don't recognize that we really do have a greater capacity
13 to embrace more than those that we have become familiar
14 with and comfortable to. And that extends across every
15 situation.

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

19 MS. TURNER: One of the greatest -- change is not
20 easy for people. In human nature it's not easy at all.
21 The greatest problem would be for someone that digs in and
22 refuses to receive new information, new insights. That
23 just will -- and so, the difficulty is to even have
24 patience with those individuals because there usually is an
25 approach that because of an exterior, because of an initial

1 word spoken that can make you want to shut down, and what
2 you have to do is to kind of listen through the pain.
3 Listen through offense. Listen through to first of all get
4 to the place of did I understand what your perspective is?
5 Did I understand what you said? And it's like, hmmm, I did
6 understand you. Okay, let me stay in this long enough to
7 see if I cannot then move you from where you are based on
8 new information. Or, perhaps it's me that needs to hear
9 new information and shift the thought.

10 So, the danger would be for those that shut down,
11 have an unwillingness to move, unwillingness to receive new
12 information, fact, testimony, et cetera, and not move
13 beyond that.

14 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Question four. If you
15 are selected, you will be one of 14 members of the
16 Commission which is charged with working together to create
17 maps of the new districts. Please describe a situation
18 where you had to work collaboratively with others on a
19 project to achieve a common goal.

20 Tell us the goal of the project, what your role
21 in the group was, and how the group worked through any
22 conflicts that arose.

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

25 MS. TURNER: The example that comes to mind has

1 to do with when I was instrumental in merging the five
2 organizations that I currently am now Executive Director
3 over. So, that's kind of skipping ahead to the end. But
4 it didn't start out that and that certainly was not my
5 intent.

6 Back in 2015, 2016 I started doing work with a
7 grass roots organizing. Not at all my frame coming from
8 corporate world, and so was not very familiar with it, but
9 was intrigued by the concept as I was introduced to it and
10 drawn in. And quickly learned that of the five counties in
11 the Central Valley there were five separate entities doing
12 work. And the culture and the way each of them operated
13 was very different.

14 And in trying to have -- so, then I learned that
15 the issues that they were fighting were very similar, but
16 they were going about it in a very much of a different way.
17 And there were those that felt they were stronger, more
18 powerful, more affluent, influential and affluent. Those
19 that they believed were kind of almost beneath them.

20 So, yet, in building together certainly we would
21 create and have more power. So, in that my role was at the
22 time just one of the board members of a local -- one of the
23 five organizations. But I was brand-new coming in and
24 didn't have all of the history and baggage concerned.

25 And so, beyond the personality issues, beyond

1 people digging in and holding onto their own kind of belief
2 processes, I really was looking at the bigger picture as I
3 was just learning it. The importance of winning for more
4 people, for a broader group of people and being able to
5 move policy, et cetera.

6 So, I started asking questions about why would we
7 not merge? They told me it was something they had talked
8 about for -- depending on who you asked, either three to
9 seven years. And I was like, well, let's not waste time
10 talking about anything for those many years, let's vet it
11 and see if we can merge, and if it's beneficial or not.

12 And me coming in as a brand-new person, too, the
13 discussion and to the issues was -- actually wasn't as hard
14 as you would imagine. But I came in asking questions,
15 leaning in, trying to determine is this legal? Can we
16 merge five 501(c)(3)'s or not? And then, what would be the
17 benefit and what will it cost us to not do it. Let's look
18 at the wins we're currently having.

19 So, I just started out by asking questions to
20 determine why were people somewhat hesitant and why were
21 there all of these -- all statements about why we couldn't
22 merge. So, let's just kind of work through them one by one
23 and see what's real.

24 And after doing that for about four or five
25 months, meeting with the individual board members from the

1 different counties, we decided to bring in legal
2 representation to ensure that it can be done. And once we
3 learned that we can do it, then we had to work with what
4 all along was the real issue, the personal thought
5 processes, and the relinquishing of power and who would be
6 in charge. That, of course, is always the issue.

7 And so, we worked through that. We determined
8 that we were a body of people, no matter where we can from,
9 that really was only serving to ensure that we're meeting
10 the needs for the whole of the community, all of the
11 communities in the Central Valley.

12 And so, brought the boards together with the
13 legal representation. They agreed to merge after we
14 addressed the situations. We had a founding convention and
15 2,000 people were there. We did merge. And after the
16 merger I was approached about leading the organization as
17 the Executive Director, which wasn't where I initially
18 thought we were going. But through some prayer and just
19 kind of reflection, I did accept that position.

20 But that's my example of having people from
21 different backgrounds, and although they were all
22 organizing, they were very different in their approach and
23 as far as who they felt were worthy of being represented.

24 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Question five. A
25 considerable amount of the Commission's work will involve

1 meeting with people from all over California who come from
2 very different backgrounds and a wide variety of
3 perspectives.

4 If you are selected as a Commissioner, what
5 skills and attributes will make you effective at
6 interacting with people from different backgrounds and who
7 have a variety of perspectives?

8 What experiences have you had that will help you
9 be effective at understanding and appreciating people and
10 communities of different backgrounds and who have a variety
11 of perspectives?

12 MS. TURNER: Yeah, I feel like this one is kind
13 of almost the whole of my life. Working for the telephone
14 company, all the iterations of it, Pacific Bell, Pacific
15 Telephone, ATT, SBC, all of those, I spent a great amount
16 of that time in management traveling, getting an
17 opportunity to deal with people from different backgrounds.
18 I did a lot of travel in that particular role.

19 My role, primarily, most of that time was
20 teaching managers how to manage across -- before we merged,
21 it was actually across in a couple of different states.
22 And then, eventually, based on the way the company shifted
23 it was California.

24 But even, I guess I more want to focus on the
25 current work that I'm doing, both from a pastoral

1 perspective, our congregation is pretty much about 70
2 percent African American, but there are others as well that
3 are there from different backgrounds. And it's one of the,
4 I think, few ministry congregations that have up front
5 conversations about race. Churches, you know, for the most
6 part are very segregated and without intentionality, and
7 leaning into those that are different, other, they could be
8 othered, people come, and they go, and they just don't
9 stick.

10 So, we're starting to see a growth and spread
11 there. And that's kind of narrow in the approach as far as
12 different thought processes. Because still, after all,
13 they're coming from a faith perspective that's similar.
14 But in the work of faith in the valley, working with the
15 elected officials, working with people in the community,
16 because we are nonpartisan everyone that I interact with
17 don't believe the way I do. They don't -- they're not
18 pulling for the same sort of outcome.

19 And so, I still get to respect and honor that.
20 And it would be a mistake to think that through every
21 conversation you're going to get to the end and everyone's
22 like, oh, I see, yes, let's just work for the same thing.
23 That's not what happens sometimes. Sometimes people will
24 have all of the facts on the table, they'll hear all of
25 what should happen, and we are really good on bringing in

1 testimony from different backgrounds, and there still then
2 is a determination.

3 Usually, there just is something that we have not
4 gotten at, yet, to be able to determine why -- why are you
5 lifting one group or individual over another. And
6 sometimes you can get to that. Sometimes people won't have
7 enough trust for you to let you know what that core issue
8 is, again.

9 So, for me, it's the work that I do, I did. I
10 did through the company, the church, Faith in the Valley.
11 I've ran into people -- there are people that, because I
12 wear a title of Pastor, that I think I put them off.
13 Coming in it's kind of like I know you're not going to
14 appreciate me and where I come from. And so, I then do my
15 best to over compensate for that, to assure then that even
16 though I have my own personal beliefs, I also believe that
17 people get to live life the way that they -- not to be so
18 mysterious and vague. Barcelona last year, Borealis.
19 Borealis, an Australia foundation, they will work heavily
20 for trans, gay, lesbian individuals, and they invited me
21 into this space. And when I got there, I think all of the
22 participants were surprised that me, black, cisgendered
23 female was in this space. And everyone was prepared for
24 me, I guess, to judge them or not received them based on
25 experiences and what have you.

1 However, it was a very fruitful and rich,
2 rewarding experience beyond the content of what we were
3 there to do, which was work on the over criminalization of
4 people of color. Beyond that, I think there were some life
5 changes and adjustments that made from the perspective of
6 who's seen as valued. And I think I was able to represent
7 a group of individuals that had received rejection before,
8 out of what they categorized me as the church, and they'd
9 been rejected from such. And they were like, huh, maybe
10 this -- maybe I have over-generalized the church because
11 you seem to be receptive.

12 Now, most of what I was there for had nothing to
13 do with that. It just is an example of me not holding any
14 set belief about any person. I think every person has
15 value and should be well-represented. And it's an example
16 of me leaning in to see what someone different than me
17 would desire, and need, and be able to represent them fully
18 in their humanity.

19 MR. DAWSON: Thank you.

20 We will now go to Panel questions. Each Panel
21 Member will have 20 minutes to ask his or her questions.
22 We'll start with the Chair, Mr. Coe.

23 CHAIR COE: Thank you, Mr. Dawson. Good morning
24 again to you, Pastor Turner. Thank you for taking the time
25 to speak with us today.

1 MS. TURNER: Good morning.

2 CHAIR COE: So, your application lists quite a
3 few community efforts, including a VIP community
4 development center that serves the community of all ages,
5 working with Californians for Safety and Justice,
6 facilitating leadership trainings for the Boys and Girls
7 Club, First 5, and others. Recruiting people to
8 participate in the annual Stop and Read Program. You know,
9 there's a lot more here.

10 What -- my question is what motivates you to be
11 so involved in your community in these ways?

12 MS. TURNER: Uh-hum. Well, I love -- sorry,
13 cliché answer. I love people. Because of now I have more
14 time to actually direct the things that I love to do. Not
15 time that I'm not busy, there's a lot going on always, but
16 now I get to be kind of the -- I get to direct which
17 programs I want to work in.

18 And for us, my husband and I, that the CEC is
19 part of our ministry, it's a segment of it. And so, for
20 the Stockton area, I haven't been here that long, but the
21 people here -- I don't know, I think I've had experience
22 and exposure to things that sometimes seem different than
23 what the people that I'm around have had. And so, I'm
24 doing, now, a reading program in our shut-in space. Both
25 for adults, two hour reading to adults, and then also for

1 children's bedtime stories in a community reads program. I
2 didn't start it, I just volunteered to participate in it.

3 I think people are hungry for someone that will
4 see them, spend time, and recognize the gift that they are.
5 You know, and so anything that I can bring to that, I think
6 I walk away richer because of it. So, it fills me with
7 just joy to be able to work with people and, also, those
8 that are considered challenges by others. I like to see
9 new people change when they have a new experience, and they
10 walk away a little different.

11 CHAIR COE: Thank you. You also mentioned in
12 your application that you've received community honors from
13 the NAACP, and the Amelia Ann Adams Whole Life Center
14 Bridge Award. Were you awarded these honors for something
15 specific or for overall involvement in the community?

16 MS. TURNER: Uh-hum. Let's see, NAACP was, I
17 think overall work in the community for sure. Just for
18 some of the same things that you read, et cetera.

19 For the Amelia Ann Adams program, she is actually
20 -- she's deceased and so that award is done in her honor.
21 And she's actually the one that brought me into social
22 justice work. I, of course, I went to school and read like
23 all of us have, but it never stuck, social justice never
24 stuck for me, I think with all my years of corporate work.
25 And so, coming into Stockton, moving here, starting to do

1 ministry work, I think that we represented something
2 different.

3 So, when Pastor Amelia initially approached us it
4 was because of work that we were already doing in the
5 community. And she had not quite seen anything like it in
6 the Central Valley. The way that we do work multi-
7 culturally, the CEC that's open, the reading programs, all
8 of that is a little bit of a different frame for some of
9 the churches in this in this particular area of the Central
10 Valley. And so, that award had more to do with innovation,
11 bringing a freshness, newness, programs to the Stockton
12 area specifically.

13 CHAIR COE: Great, thank you. I'd like to move
14 on to your essay on impartiality for a moment. And in that
15 essay you say that: Impartiality is one of those things
16 better spoken about by a third party. It is something best
17 said about you, rather than something you say about
18 yourself.

19 MS. TURNER: Uh-hum.

20 CHAIR COE: And in your letters of recommendation
21 and in many public comments to your application, other
22 people do indeed speak very favorably to your ability to be
23 impartial. Why do you think that other people view you as
24 impartial? What is it you think you've done in your life
25 to make you -- to make other people view you this way?

1 MS. TURNER: Uh-hum, yeah. I feel very strongly
2 about that. I think that you can easily be deceived. And
3 the thing about this deception is that you don't really
4 know it, right. And you can easily be deceived about
5 yourself when you make absolutes about I always, and I
6 never, et cetera. And I'm always cautious about that. And
7 I love it and I was really blessed by reading some of the
8 comments that came. It really made me feel -- it really
9 made me feel good that my desire was being seen as such. I
10 think it's because I try to come into any conversation -- I
11 always bring what I know, but I always try to come into a
12 conversation, Mr. Coe, listening for what others know.

13 And now, I can't come with a set knowledge and
14 receive new knowledge and walk away the same, right.
15 Nothing works like that. It shouldn't. And so, I love
16 listening to people, hearing their perspective, and then
17 kind of testing or checking, seeing what do I need to
18 adjust based on this encounter, based on what I've learned,
19 et cetera. And then, how do I carry the gift that I've
20 been given, how do I carry that with me when I walk away
21 and not pretend like it never occurred?

22 And so, I think conversations are gifts. I think
23 experiences are gifts. This experience is something that
24 prior to last year, I hate to tell you, I didn't know
25 anything about a redistricting committee, which made me

1 determined to want to lean into it more, and to study, and
2 to make this attempt. Because I believe that when you
3 learn information, when you've been exposed to something
4 that you should carry it and treat it, and I've shared it
5 with so many different people. Regardless of where we go
6 with this, I've shared it with so many different people
7 just because so people are aware of it.

8 So, I think people, when I give them the best
9 that I have, I think they respond in kind and give me their
10 best.

11 CHAIR COE: Thank you. In your very first essay
12 you say: We embrace diversity when we have a desire and a
13 capacity, with demonstrated actions to learn from others
14 gaining a clearer picture of what our collective needs may
15 be in a way that brings value to all.

16 And you've kind of said some similar things this
17 morning. Can you give us some examples of the demonstrated
18 actions that you're referring to here?

19 MS. TURNER: Uh-hum. Mr. Coe, say it again
20 because I don't have it in front of me. I heard you say
21 demonstrated actions, but I want to make sure I'm
22 demonstrating exactly the point you're talking about.

23 CHAIR COE: Yeah, the excerpt from your essay
24 that I quoted was: We embrace diversity when we have a
25 desire and a capacity, with demonstrated actions to learn

1 from others, gaining a clearer picture of what our
2 collective needs may be in a way that brings value to all.

3 And so, my question was can you give us some
4 examples of the demonstrated actions that you're referring
5 to here?

6 MS. TURNER: Yeah. We went -- this is simple,
7 but we went -- my husband and I went -- there was an open
8 house after one of the bombings of the Islamic Centers and
9 stuff. And here, locally, there is a center that I'd never
10 visited or been, and even though we represent people from
11 the Muslim and the Sikh communities, et cetera, I'd never
12 been to this particular place.

13 But they made an open invitation to everyone.
14 You know, kind of to remove that fear that people typically
15 would have. And I told my husband we've got to go, you
16 know, let's -- because I did not want them to do an open
17 invitation and no one show up. And so, that's another, I
18 guess, way of thinking I have about myself. I always want
19 to be the one to try and represent. Well, let's not just
20 think someone else should do it, you go. So, we went.

21 And, of course, if you've ever been to a temple,
22 you know, they separate -- in the center they separate the
23 males and females, and what have you.

24 Well, when I went, I am aware that there is a
25 head covering that they wear. And so, when I went I had

1 one in my purse. And I didn't even think to talk to my
2 husband about it one way or the other. We just, we went to
3 the event. We went in, we went our separate ways, and we
4 did our tour and what have you. And at the space where
5 they pray, I noticed the other women were putting on their
6 scarves. And I had to follow their lead because I don't --
7 didn't have a lot of knowledge in it one way or the other,
8 other than to say that the hair covering is important. And
9 so, when they pulled theirs out, I pulled mine out, and I
10 watched very carefully and tied it the way that the others
11 were. Some had it on the whole time.

12 Anyway, and so we went in and we did the prayer
13 and, you know, took the shoes off, the whole bit. And when
14 we came out I didn't remove it because those that wear them
15 all the time of course kept them on, and the others had
16 them on. So, when I came out my husband kind of -- he did
17 a little double take, like what? You know, so he was
18 surprised because he didn't know.

19 But by the same token, in the kind of reception
20 period, I'm not certain if that's what they call it, but
21 the reception period when they have the different foods and
22 what have you, and I'm really picky, Mr. Coe, about trying
23 different things. But I would rather try something that I
24 never would eat at home than offend someone. So, I was
25 eating the different things that I don't know what it was.

1 And one of the ladies she says, oh, your Muslim, right?
2 And so, and I was like, oh, no. You know, and she kind of
3 looked like you sure? You know, because you had the hair
4 dress.

5 For me that's the point, that's the demonstrated.
6 It's not the big announced, oh, and I'm going to do this,
7 that and the other for the people. Do what you know to do
8 and then when you learn more do more, but try to fit in.
9 My goal was not to mock, not to pretend, but to honor what
10 they respected and to try and show them that you've opened
11 your home to me, I want to be a great guest in your home,
12 and I want to learn in the process.

13 CHAIR COE: Thank you. I wanted to ask you about
14 something you mentioned a couple of times before and that's
15 leaning in and really understanding what other people are
16 saying. And I'm trying to actively not lean in so my head
17 isn't too big in this screen here right now.

18 But how do you actively demonstrate to another
19 person that you are open and interested to the things that
20 they find important?

21 MS. TURNER: Uh-hum. People, every -- you don't
22 have to be an excellent communicator to have great value
23 and excellent points. And many people aren't great
24 communicators. So, the first thing they say may not even
25 be what they mean or intend.

1 And I think what happens frequently is things are
2 stated and said, either out of frustration or, you know,
3 just, you know, feeling of not being heard. And it's said
4 the first time and then people are offended by it, or
5 they're put off by it, or it wasn't, you know, something
6 that they found value in, and end of conversation.

7 And what I like to do, particularly if something
8 strikes me odd or different is to just kind of -- and I
9 mean lean in. My head may look big, too, but really do
10 kind of lean in and say, you know, tell me more. Tell me
11 more about that, which is kind of my go to for I really
12 want to say what? Right. It's like, well, tell me more
13 about that, you know, which gets them then to maybe say a
14 little bit more.

15 And sometimes you might be surprised that people,
16 when you say tell me more, they kind of like step back
17 like, you know, you really want to know? Because we move
18 so fast in our society, we really don't get to the depths
19 of conversation frequently that we need to. So, tell me
20 more just basically says, no, I do value what you're saying
21 and I want to understand. And I don't want to just react
22 to your first thing.

23 I mentioned a couple of times about words and
24 conversations being gifts. People will give you, based on
25 how valued they feel, right. So, if I don't feel like

1 you're really listening anyway, I'm going to give you short
2 answers, responses. How are you doing? I'm great. Are
3 you? Good. Tell me more? What -- you know, and then it's
4 like, oh, well, maybe I'm not so great, right. Maybe there
5 was more I wanted to have in this conversation.

6 And so, the leaning in to me is not thinking so
7 much about what do I need to do in another 20 minutes, or
8 30 minutes, this moment won't repeat. Let me get all of it
9 out of this moment that I'm in.

10 CHAIR COE: So, part of the reason that I asked
11 about that was that one of the tasks in front of the
12 Commission is going to be identifying communities of
13 interest all across the state. And a lot of that
14 identification, there's going to be some data aspects, but
15 a lot of it is going to be listening to the perspectives of
16 the people in those communities and what they find
17 important.

18 So, my question is kind of twofold. It's one,
19 some of those communities are easier to find, some of them
20 are a little harder to find people that aren't engaged for
21 one reason or another. So, how would, as a Commissioner,
22 you go about identifying communities of interest,
23 particularly trying to pay attention to inadvertently maybe
24 overlooking some of those harder to identify communities?

25 MS. TURNER: Uh-hum. Hmmm, a couple of things.

1 You have to be willing to be -- it's kind of almost like
2 that -- I don't know if it's called Samoa, I don't know
3 what I was eating at that place. But it's almost akin to
4 that. You have to be willing to go places you typically
5 would not go, physically and, you know, in the moment, in
6 the conversation kind of exploring, et cetera.

7 You have to be willing to be with people and
8 around people that you typically wouldn't. I don't know
9 how much time I have, but there's an amazing story that
10 later I maybe can tell you.

11 But there was a gentleman, his name was Frank.
12 Frankie, Frankie, Frankie. He was a Latino gentleman, big,
13 big, big booming guy, right. He was -- had mental
14 challenges. But he loved me and my husband. And to make a
15 long -- he was very brash, he was -- you know, had some
16 issues. He looked at the young girls kind of the wrong way
17 and he had a lot of kind of issues around them. But we
18 also knew that he had some mental challenges or what have
19 you.

20 Long story later, but for right now let your mind
21 wander all of those things. And he was around the church a
22 lot because he loved being there. But he had no
23 background, no social graces.

24 And Frankie had a birthday party and he invited
25 all the church to, and we knew all the church wasn't going

1 to go, right. And but for sure I could not imagine him,
2 even Frankie having his big 40th, I think it was back then,
3 party and no one show up. We did. We went, my husband and
4 I, but there was about five or six people that were there.
5 The five or six people were all people that were probably
6 from Frankie's community, if you would. And they were all
7 shocked as all get out that he really had someone that
8 showed up to his party.

9 We went there and, Mr. Coe, the barbecued on a
10 dirty grill, with their hands dirty, the meat wasn't clean.
11 They opened chicken out of a package that was thawed out in
12 the sun. And all the while it was like -- and so, but they
13 were like, oh, Mrs. Turner, Pastor Turner, they were like
14 over the moon excited, right. And I'm sitting there going,
15 oh, my God, I'm praying. And to make it worse, I had my
16 two-year-old grandson with me. And I'm like, Jesus, this
17 is more than I can do. But I was determined I wanted to
18 hear him. I wanted to be there for his people.

19 You see I'm alive, and well, and didn't die from
20 it or any of those other things. But that was huge for him
21 and for those five or six individuals. That was just for
22 five or six people that no one else pays attention to,
23 people that people, you know, push aside.

24 I think that you have to be willing to -- because
25 people aren't going to just come to you. Frankie came by

1 some miracle, but his friends wouldn't.

2 And so, I think the Commission, it's important
3 for us to recognize that any time -- I try to make myself
4 as regular, normal as possible. But there are people that
5 I'm amazed that they'll be like I was so scared to talk to
6 you, Pastor Trena, I didn't want to talk. And I'm like I'm
7 blown away by that. I'm like, why? I'm just me. I really
8 do want to hear from you.

9 I think people in the community, when we're
10 trying to listen to testimony to try to make the decisions
11 and determinations, we need to make them as comfortable as
12 possible. Number one so that they can share their truth
13 and know that we're willing to go where we need to, to be
14 able to hear the stories. So that we're doing the right
15 job and a good job at representation.

16 CHAIR COE: So, you touched on a point I wanted
17 to make regarding those communities that maybe have a lack
18 of comfort for one reason or another in engaging
19 particularly in government or authority. But since
20 perspective of as many communities and as many people as
21 possible is important for the Commission to do its best
22 work, how do you make them feel comfortable enough to come
23 forward? Because in some of the examples you've given,
24 you've talked about how you've gone to them.

25 But in the work of the Commission, at least the

1 way they did it ten years ago, you're having to get the
2 people to you, to some type of meeting. How do you get
3 them to feel comfortable enough to come, and speak, and
4 share their perspectives with the Commission?

5 MS. TURNER: Yeah.

6 MS. PELLMAN: We have three minutes remaining.

7 CHAIR COE: Thank you.

8 MS. TURNER: Normalizing as much as possible. I
9 love the approach that you are all going through to ensure
10 that you have diversity represented. I think everyone
11 can't sit with suits and ties, and look so polished, and
12 posh, and what have you. I think people will see that as
13 another body of government that they won't approach.

14 I think it's the regular language, it's the
15 shifting in language of being able to use terminology that
16 is normal, natural, accepted by all. It could be videos.
17 It could be public service announcements. Social media for
18 sure, making sure that people -- because it's some of the
19 things that we use now. Just trying to ensure that through
20 the six degrees of separation that we are reaching people
21 and they're saying, no, this Commission you do want to
22 approach and you do want to speak with.

23 CHAIR COE: Thank you.

24 Madam Secretary, one more time check, please?

25 MS. PELLMAN: Two minutes remaining.

1 CHAIR COE: Two minutes, thank you.

2 Pastor Turner, I'd like to ask you, if you were
3 to be appointed to the Commission which aspects of the role
4 do you think that you would enjoy the most and, conversely,
5 which aspects of that role do you think you might perhaps
6 struggle with a little bit?

7 MS. TURNER: I would love the meeting the people.
8 Hands down, that would be great. And I would enjoy the
9 challenge of hearing different perspectives and trying to
10 ensure that I'm still holding them of in value and in
11 respect.

12 The ones that I would find challenging?
13 Challenging I don't know, it's not my forte, numbers,
14 figures, those kinds of things. You saw my records and
15 stuff. I have ability to understand all of it, but it's
16 not where I like to hang out. And so that, for me, would
17 be like eat your peas, right. Peas being synonymous for
18 something I hate. Can do it. Not my favorite.

19 CHAIR COE: Okay, thank you very much. I have no
20 further questions at this time, so I'm going to go ahead
21 and turn the time over to Ms. Dickison.

22 MS. TURNER: Thank you.

23 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Good morning, Pastor --

24 MS. TURNER: Good morning.

25 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: -- Trena, right?

1 MS. TURNER: Yes. Good morning.

2 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Okay. So, I wanted to kind
3 of go a little further on one of Mr. Coe's questions.

4 MS. TURNER: Uh-hum.

5 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: And he was talking about
6 communities of interest. And something that stood out to
7 me in your essay on diversity, you were talking about
8 ensuring inclusivity at meetings and planning?

9 MS. TURNER: Uh-hum.

10 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: And you always ask who's
11 not at the decision making table.

12 MS. TURNER: Uh-hum.

13 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: How would you determine
14 who's not at the table or who's not be represented when
15 you're looking at communities of interest in each of the
16 areas of the state?

17 MS. TURNER: Uh-hum. I would go about it --
18 thank you for the question. I would go about it similar.
19 A couple of days ago, even on my team we're looking at
20 perhaps a restructuring and what have you, and we're doing
21 some visioning meetings because of the time that we're in.
22 How do we not go back to a normal? How do we move beyond?

23 And so, we were talking about who needs to be a
24 part of this meeting, right. And they were like let's
25 bring in this person, that person. Well, you know the more

1 people you get in the more opinions, you may not move as
2 quickly as you'd want to, and not that that's always the
3 best thing.

4 But we started with a question that says who's
5 here? And I don't mean that, you know, I look around the
6 screen and say, oh, Mrs. Dickison is here and then, you
7 know, the legal rep, and Chris is on and all. Not that
8 who's here. Who do you represent? Who are you? Right.
9 And so, it gives an opportunity to say, well, I'm an older,
10 black, this female gendered, I'm a pastor, I'm here.
11 Because those are the things, my natural things that I'll
12 hold. And then, when you do that around the table you'll
13 learn that someone else is there because they are an
14 immigrant. Someone is there because of all the different
15 things. At the very -- because the easy answer is they'll
16 get all the people that have them represented, right. But
17 that's not always the luxury that we have.

18 And so, you start with who are you that's there.
19 What -- honestly, what groups can you hold in -- what
20 groups can you hold? What groups can you represent? And
21 once you name that, then you begin to see where are the
22 gaps of who's not at the table.

23 Now, do I have an opportunity to bring that group
24 into the table with me? Can I go get them? Or, now, do I
25 need to do the research, or the interviews, or the reaching

1 out to ensure that I'm holding them at the table, and their
2 perspective, even if they're absent.

3 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Okay, thank you.

4 MS. TURNER: Uh-hum.

5 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: You spoke about individuals
6 that might represent various groups. Something that the
7 last Commission noted was that in some of their
8 interactions they suspected that there were individuals
9 that were representing themselves as members of communities
10 when in reality they probably were not. They were probably
11 looking to further their own agenda.

12 MS. TURNER: Uh-hum.

13 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: What do you think the
14 Commission can do to guard against that type of thing this
15 time around?

16 MS. TURNER: And the guard against would be the
17 perception or guard against that happening?

18 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Guard against being --
19 guard against communities being represented by somebody
20 that doesn't have their best interest at heart.

21 MS. TURNER: Uh-hum.

22 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Or is using the community
23 to further their own agenda.

24 MS. TURNER: Yeah, yeah. I think it's the deep
25 questioning and challenging of who's there and why. And

1 not the assumption. The thing that I have to say, Ms.
2 Dickison, that keeps coming to my mind, so I'll say it so I
3 can quit tripping up over it in here. When I first started
4 doing work in community involvement, of course I'm Black,
5 all day long I've been Black. So, in being in one of the
6 groups, they were having a discussion, I remember
7 distinctly, about interactions with police. And they were
8 going back and forth and I couldn't quite understand it,
9 right. And so, finally, because of the way the discussion
10 was going there was finally an agreement where the police
11 union, or whoever it was, agreed to meet with the people at
12 a Starbucks, and they were just going ballistics. And I'm
13 thinking what in the world is wrong with these people?
14 They just cannot be satisfied, right.

15 And then, finally, someone turned to me and they
16 said because we don't go to no f'ing Starbucks, right. And
17 I was like, whoa. Okay, so now here is my point. If I
18 were chosen to represent Black people, I would have been in
19 a meeting saying this is beautiful, yes, let's meet at
20 Starbucks. Let's go do it, right. Not recognizing that I
21 was not representing them well because I didn't represent
22 that segment of community, where they came from, and what
23 their realities were one way or the other.

24 So, your question makes me think of that in the
25 manner that says it has to be deep. Not just who you're

1 presenting as, but what are your experiences? Who are you
2 surrounded with and what have you been exposed to, to be
3 able to answer that question? Other than that, we'll just
4 categorize people, oh, you know, I see a white male, looks
5 conservative in a suit, he's going to represent this group,
6 this people. And it's not as simple as that. I think it
7 requires interrogation to know not just who's presenting,
8 but who are you really carrying with you when you show up.

9 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you. Appreciate
10 that. Another thing that you talked about in your
11 impartiality essay, you talked about that you do your best
12 to be impartial and you listen to feedback from others.
13 And as you learn better you make adjustments, you know,
14 when and where those adjustments are needed.

15 Could you give us an example of a time where as a
16 result of feedback you made an adjustment that improved
17 your impartiality going forward?

18 MS. TURNER: Yeah, I can. Early on in the work
19 we were talking a lot about sanctuary, and this had to do
20 with immigrants. And we were looking at, first of all,
21 faith spaces, temples, mosques, churches, people, places
22 that would serve as a sanctuary for immigrants. And
23 because we have a church, as well I was thinking, oh, maybe
24 Victory and Praise, I wonder could we be a sanctuary.

25 Well, in the conversations, and then it started,

1 it kind of moved into we also have immigrants, right, that
2 could be same sex, what have you, partners. And then I was
3 like, oh, I don't know if that will fly in my community.
4 Because personally, that's not necessarily what we teach or
5 whatever. And I'm like, you know, that might be a -- I
6 wonder what that's going to -- well, maybe I won't say
7 Victory and Praise.

8 Well, in one of the events one of the individuals
9 that worked with -- well, for me, actually, now, and we
10 were having a conversation. And I'm thinking, well, we
11 probably could -- and I didn't name our congregation.
12 Thank the Lord I was spared from that. But I said there
13 are probably spaces that would be sanctuary, but they would
14 probably need to make sure they were married or they were
15 not this.

16 And she went off about those sanctuaries that
17 would think that, that would weigh in people's lives over
18 their sexual preference or what have you. And as she was
19 talking, first of all I was like kind of taken aback. And
20 I wanted initially to argue it by saying, wait a minute,
21 these are their places, they can think the way they want to
22 think. And I was like Trena, do what you always talk
23 about, listen, right.

24 And so, she went deeply about what this would
25 cost people if they were being deported, and if they'd been

1 in this area for a long time. And you know, after I
2 finished listening I'm thinking, wow, how do I adjust for
3 that? What do I think? You know, because this isn't about
4 me trying to proselyte someone. It's not about me trying
5 -- no, this is about saving lives, you know.

6 So, the shift in me, number one I could have
7 never asked the question and said we're not ever going to
8 be a sanctuary. And then, even when she gave her
9 perspective I could have dug in to a personal. But the
10 work that I do, I'm not there for my personal beliefs. I
11 get to hold whatever they are, but I also get to fully
12 represent all of the other people.

13 And so, I was appreciative of her, glad for the
14 wisdom because being the boss I didn't never want to come
15 across like that. But I was glad for the wisdom in just
16 naming some, because I recognized there were others like
17 it.

18 But I walked away from it having learned that
19 without the challenge I never would have tried to wrestle
20 with what was more important, people's lives or a personal
21 belief as far as -- because it really had nothing to do
22 with the ability to give the building, right.

23 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you. So, you
24 mentioned doing a lot of traveling in your role with AT&T,
25 I believe it was.

1 MS. TURNER: Uh-hum.

2 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: How much knowledge do you
3 have of the far northern part of the state or the far
4 southern part of the state?

5 MS. TURNER: How much knowledge? Can you help me
6 quantify that, what do you mean when you say how much
7 knowledge?

8 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: What do you know about any
9 communities in those areas or how being located in those
10 areas might affect their needs or what they're looking for,
11 for representation?

12 MS. TURNER: That's interesting. Well, I do know
13 one of the -- Terry Supahan, on my team, he's another one
14 that -- not on my team personally, but he's one of the
15 other executive directors in the network. He works in True
16 North and they have spaces where he was looking forward to
17 having some of the Census group come out because he was
18 explaining how they literally had to get on a boat, you
19 know, and cross a river and go up, you know, whatever. It
20 was a very difficult space to get to. So, I know there
21 presents a lot of challenges where he is in the True North.

22 But other than that, the geographic challenges
23 are spread out in some of the areas. I know that for us,
24 in the Central Valley, with a lot of the migrant
25 communities there's issues. I know Southern California

1 somewhat. Never really thought about it in my travels.
2 And my travels with AT&T was always, you know, jump on the
3 plane, grab a cab, get to the buildings right. So, that
4 would be a little bit different. So, I don't really know
5 how to answer from a challenge of geography as far as me
6 getting to them.

7 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you.

8 MS. TURNER: Uh-hum.

9 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Can I get a time check,
10 please?

11 MS. PELLMAN: Yes, there are nine minutes, 14
12 seconds remaining.

13 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Okay, thank you. Just
14 looking at my notes to make sure all of my questions have
15 already been answered.

16 So, one of the ways that the Commission -- the
17 way the Commission is selected, the first eight
18 Commissioners are selected randomly, and then they are
19 tasked with selecting the next six.

20 If you are selected as one of the first eight,
21 what would you be looking for in those other six
22 Commissioners?

23 MS. TURNER: I would be looking for someone for
24 sure that's different than me. Different than me, but also
25 flexible and open to -- back to the listening again, and

1 showing a willingness to receive new information and make
2 adjustments.

3 I'd be looking for someone that is farthest --
4 yeah, farthest away from what I represent. I feel pretty
5 strongly about my beliefs and strongly about what I've
6 presented for you today, but I know that that's not --
7 everyone doesn't come from that same perspective. And so,
8 it would be easier, I wouldn't have to stretch me later to
9 represent a group of people if we could find that on the
10 Commission. And then, that helps us be able to relate to
11 people that we meet across the state.

12 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you. What would you
13 ultimately like to see the Commission accomplish?

14 MS. TURNER: Ultimately, I would love for the
15 Commission to come in their full selves, first of all, so
16 that we know who we're dealing with, know what to expect.
17 And what I mean by that is I sit on a board that have some
18 diverse opinions, but I've sat with them long enough to
19 where even when they're not present I'm able to say, well,
20 you know, if Justin was here, this is what he'd be saying,
21 even if it's different than what I want to happen. Because
22 of the -- just the valuing of a difference of opinion we
23 can learn to represent each other to ensure that we come
24 out -- because the bottom line what you want is not to come
25 out with my thought process, you want to come out with

1 what's best for the end game, right. So, in this case for
2 the State of California.

3 So, I would hope that we'd end up with a
4 Commission that has the same kind of -- first of all coming
5 with their true self, no hidden agendas. This is what I
6 know, this is what I don't know. This is what I'm strong
7 in. So, because of the areas I'm strong in, you have that.
8 This is an area that is not my first strong suit, well, let
9 me kind of step back and you lead in that area. Because I
10 don't think anybody has to be great at everything, but
11 let's be real clear on what we can do and not set us up for
12 failure by pretending. So, pretenses doesn't get us
13 anywhere. So, I would love a Commission that would trust
14 each other enough to be open, vulnerable, and let us know
15 who we're dealing with and I think we can build anything
16 from there.

17 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: Thank you.

18 Mr. Coe, I don't have any further questions at
19 this time, so I yield the rest of my time.

20 CHAIR COE: Okay, thank you Ms. Dickison.

21 Mr. Belnap, the time is now yours.

22 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay, thank you. Good
23 morning, Pastor Trena.

24 MS. TURNER: Good morning.

25 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: So, you worked at AT&T for

1 25 years.

2 MS. TURNER: Yes.

3 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: What were your various
4 roles at AT&T?

5 MS. TURNER: Okay. Oh, I moved a lot. So, I
6 started out, believe it or not, as a TSPS operator. It was
7 the first year away from the old cord boards. And so, I
8 did that until I almost got fired for falling asleep doing
9 the job. But my boss saw me doing the job while I was
10 asleep, so that actually got me a promotion out of there.

11 So, from there I spent a short amount of time as
12 a service representative in residence. I was promoted from
13 there into San Francisco, working with some of the data
14 lines, tracing lines, tranches, those kinds of things.

15 And then, I went into management leading special
16 projects. I ended up working a while in methods and
17 procedures. I had moved into second level management into
18 the training department, teaching managers how to manage.
19 So, not so much on the product side of it, but on the
20 personnel side. From there I ran call centers for a great
21 amount of time.

22 And as the Associate Director, my second level
23 managers, basically just taught them how to run call
24 centers.

25 So, that's kind of the journey, the quick pace.

1 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: So, in what role at AT&T
2 were you most satisfied and having the most joy in your
3 job?

4 MS. TURNER: Oh, you know, I skipped one. I sung
5 for the telephone company for a while. They made up a
6 position for me to just run the management programs and
7 come out and sing. Unheard of. You won't find that I
8 applied for.

9 The thing I think that gave me what I loved the
10 post, I tend to like places I am. I think the thing I
11 loved the most was probably as an associate director
12 helping second level managers know how to run their call
13 centers. It was a challenge. I was there for -- I don't
14 think we were ATT at the time. I was there when we did all
15 the cease and desists, and all of that whole sales scandal
16 stuff that was going on. That was probably the darkest
17 time. But the challenge in that was getting people to be
18 able to sell, teach their individuals how to sell in
19 integrity, even though that was very real there was lots of
20 pressure to sell in ways that were basically deceptive.

21 But the good part about -- it did get to be a
22 challenge to say you know what, this is really a good
23 product. It really is a good product. You've got to be
24 darn good at what you do to keep up with those that are
25 putting things on that's not real. Because internally that

1 got to be the competition was not, you know, how you would
2 excel in your job. The competition got to be how do you
3 sell and do a great job, and people actually know what
4 they're receiving, while you're being compared against
5 those that's not.

6 And so, my role, I got an opportunity to counsel,
7 coach, train a group of individuals that was determined to
8 do it the right way. And we really did have a good time
9 with that, in spite of all of the trauma.

10 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right, thank you. What
11 skills did you develop at AT&T that you would bring to your
12 work as a Commissioner?

13 MS. TURNER: Hmmm, at AT&T, that was some years
14 ago, too. Probably communication was one. AT&T was
15 masterful in their trainings, in their customer service
16 trainings, in their presentation, facilitation skills. All
17 of that really came from AT&T training.

18 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay, thank you. So, one
19 of the things you emphasized in your response to question
20 one was that the skill the Commissioners need to have is
21 the ability to listen.

22 MS. TURNER: Uh-hum.

23 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: That was the focus of your
24 answer. And I could acknowledge that that is probably one
25 of the most important skills, but there's probably others.

1 So, what other skills should the Commissioners either have
2 individually or collectively?

3 MS. TURNER: Uh-hum. Uh-hum. Yeah, there would
4 need to be the ability to analyze data, communication.
5 Written skills are important. They would need skills of --
6 let's see, so that's what comes to my mind for -- written
7 skills, analytical skills. I'm drawing a blank. That's
8 all I'm thinking about right now.

9 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay. So, I think your
10 experiences that you've written about in your application
11 and that you described today demonstrate your ability to
12 listen to communities. Of the other skills, analyzing
13 data, written skills, what else do you bring to the
14 collective pool of skill sets for the Commission?

15 MS. TURNER: Uh-hum. Uh-hum. One of the -- with
16 the analysis and data that's presented, I think that it can
17 get so wonky that people turn off from it, turn away from
18 it. I have ability and it's amazing, I don't -- I wouldn't
19 be able to necessarily spell it out for you, but to look at
20 data, look at something that is written, and reword it.

21 Coming into this current job that I have, there's
22 one gentleman whose name is Joseph McKellar. He is
23 masterful in how he writes. But I tell you, everything he
24 writes I have to read it like two or three times. I'm
25 thinking are you kidding me? No one, Joseph, is going to

1 love you enough to read this two and three times.

2 And I'm like who are you writing this to? You
3 know, and so he -- Joseph does a lot of work with the
4 Catholic Diocese and what have you. And he and I had an
5 opportunity to actually meet Pope Francis and be in a
6 closed session with him in the World Meeting of Popular
7 Movements, a couple years back. And that's how he writes.
8 He writes like he's writing to, you know, the Pope and, you
9 know, a whole bunch of -- I'm like, Joseph, you know what
10 that was amazing, we did that. We followed up. He went
11 back a different year through the World Meeting of Popular
12 Movements, but that's not our audience.

13 And so, and he says, well, you know, Pastor
14 Trena, you know, they need to know this, this, and this.
15 And I'm like okay, I got that. Number one, I had to read
16 it a couple of times to see what you're really saying, but
17 that three-page document try this on, right. And I'll give
18 him something that may be a page long. This is the plain
19 English, you know. For the most part people read at about
20 an eighth grade level, right, and he's writing easily like
21 college level or whatever. There's a place for that.

22 But if we're reading -- I mean, if we're using
23 the data to actually want people to understand it and read
24 it, we have to be able to speak plainly and clearly. And I
25 like to reword things.

1 I'll tell you something else, one of the other
2 jobs, unnamed jobs that I had at AT&T, and when I say
3 unnamed, they would hire me just because they wanted me to
4 be there and there wasn't necessarily -- they'd make up a
5 position or what have you. One of them was trying to get
6 -- there was a problem between the computer programmers.
7 There was a problem between the computer programmers and
8 marketing, and they could not get along at all. Everything
9 was an issue. It was causing delays in productivity and
10 everything else. And I would go in and listen to
11 programmers say what they need and listen to marketing say
12 why it couldn't happen. And after I listened -- and I'm
13 not a -- my husband's a computer programmer by trade. I'm
14 not and we certainly don't talk about computer programming.

15 But I would listen to them for a while and be
16 able to say, wait a minute, if you need load live, and I
17 don't even know the words I'm saying, right, but I heard
18 the patterns of speech of what they're talking about. If
19 this is what has to happen, then are you asking for this?
20 And I'd say a couple of different things and they'd be
21 like, oh, my God, yes, this is what we need, right.

22 It's a different kind of analysis. It's a
23 different kind of being able to take information and have
24 it translate across to someone else. And I actually did
25 that for a while and I still do that in different scenarios

1 where people are at odds. And what they're really doing is
2 talking on different levels. And I don't mean
3 intelligence. I mean just different. They're talking in a
4 different almost coding.

5 And if you again, back to that, and I hate for it
6 to be overused, but for me at least I feel like it's almost
7 an interpretation of languages, or translation, and being
8 able to sit and saying, wait a minute, you guys are dug in,
9 but this is what you're asking for. And this is not what
10 you have an aversion to. And so, being able to relay it
11 again, then it's like, yeah, that's what I want, right.
12 And then, we can put it down and move forward with it.

13 So, that's a unique, I think, ability that I have
14 and a skill set that won't fall into a normal category that
15 I provide.

16 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right, thank you. So,
17 Faith in the Valley, it was a merger of five different
18 nonprofits or five different groups.

19 MS. TURNER: Yeah.

20 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Can you -- I don't -- you
21 might have said it in the application but I don't remember,
22 what were the five groups that came together into one?

23 MS. TURNER: Uh-hum. They were all similar
24 groups with different levels of ability and strength, and
25 money. But one was in Bakersfield. Our Kern County

1 chapter. There was Bakersfield, which was Faith -- they
2 were called Faith In Action. There was the Fresno, which
3 was Faith In Community, Fresno County. Merced was called
4 -- oh, what was Merced called? I'll come back to them. I
5 forget what Merced was called before. Stanislaus County,
6 and then San Joaquin County. San Joaquin County was PACCT,
7 People Acting in Community Together. I'm not going to
8 think of the Stanislaus's previous name was, and Merced for
9 whatever reason is not coming to me. But those were the
10 five counties.

11 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: And they were all faith
12 based organizations?

13 MS. TURNER: Yes.

14 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All Christian or other
15 faiths?

16 MS. TURNER: Oh, no. Oh, no, we're multi-faith.
17 So, there is -- there's a mix in all of them.

18 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay. You spoke about it
19 somewhat in your essay on impartiality, but I'd like you to
20 speak about it again.

21 MS. TURNER: Uh-hum.

22 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: As you were helping the
23 group come together and merge, how did that -- how did you
24 have to exercise impartiality in bringing that group
25 together and also as Executive Director over the group?

1 MS. TURNER: Uh-hum. Uh-hum. So, it was
2 twofold. The impartiality came in because each of those
3 groups represented some sort of faith leader and, you know,
4 that's a huge feat in itself to get faith leaders from
5 different backgrounds -- it's a huge feat to get faith
6 leaders in the same background to agree and yield power.
7 Now, it's further complicated when you have someone that is
8 a Rabbi, that's very learned, et cetera, and then someone
9 that might be representative of an indigenous tribe, or
10 someone that is -- because we like to say in our faith
11 frames, no matter what it is that, that you know, we all --
12 you know, we believe in the sanctity of people and the
13 dignity of all, as long as I get to lead it, right.

14 And so, but trying to bring them together and not
15 have some of the prejudices and privileges that sometimes
16 we don't know we operate in, where I feel like I need to
17 yield -- I need to have the floor and you need to yield to
18 me, and although you've spoke I'm going to restate what you
19 already said, and I'm actually putting a little bit of a
20 slant on it to my favor.

21 So, I had to kind of listen through and see what
22 was going on, and to ensure that everyone had their voice
23 heard, and was not talked over or made to feel smaller, or
24 minimized. And I couldn't alienate those that were used to
25 leading and running everything in the same process, at the

1 same time.

2 And so, specifically, for my organizations, I'm
3 still my Board Chair, and we've come along in three -- this
4 is bad. I hope this isn't televised. But any -- is this
5 televised? I shouldn't say this, then.

6 But anyway, yeah. So, there are very, very
7 intelligent, a lot of skill, a lot of ability, which
8 sometimes can also mean lack of patience with someone
9 that's still trying to find their way.

10 And so, trying to just ensure that everyone has
11 time on the floor and are able to fully articulate what
12 they need for who they're representing.

13 So, in the merger process everyone of course
14 wanted to know, we know who we are now. Who will we be
15 once we merge? And will I lose, that was the biggest
16 battle I think, what power will I lose? Because ultimately
17 five boards that were running the organizations had to
18 agree to become five steering committees, without the legal
19 voice that they had before. And each of them got to send
20 only three board members to the new merged board. So, we
21 have one board, now, over the whole organization. And
22 everyone else is just kind of like a steering committee.
23 Not even the power of an advisory committee. It's just
24 they are the steering committee.

25 And so, we allow and we use them to direct what

1 we work on, but the power of the organization comes through
2 the faith leaders and the board of directors.

3 And you mentioned as Executive Director. I just
4 want to remind you, so all of this was not with me having
5 any title. I was a board member in PACCT, the one in San
6 Joaquin County. It just was I understand mergers,
7 acquisitions, all that stuff. I understood that a lot
8 stronger than I did social justice, initially. And based
9 on what they had taught me to date, it was like if we need
10 to wield more power, our best opportunity for doing so
11 would be to bring these organizations together.

12 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: All right, thank you. So,
13 to answer your question, this is live streaming on the
14 internet. But just my opinion, it didn't sound like you
15 said anything offensive. Just sharing your experience.

16 MS. TURNER: Which is good.

17 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: So, tell me more about the
18 Latino Community Foundation that you talked about in your
19 application.

20 MS. TURNER: Yes.

21 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: And why you were asked to
22 be a part of that particular program?

23 MS. PELLMAN: Time check, we have 40 minutes --
24 four minutes, 40 seconds.

25 MS. TURNER: Oh, my goodness because I could talk

1 about them all day, and I won't. They are -- they have a
2 deep, deep special place in my heart. When I was
3 approached, like I said, by the Latino Community
4 Foundation, Masha is the one that approached me, it was I
5 kept receiving emails. And the program that they were
6 naming seemed amazing. It talked about the power of the
7 Latino and how much support that they needed. And by them
8 being historically, you know, coming from the perspective
9 that they were, that there were things that they were not
10 receiving the same amount of training and support for. And
11 if you're going to be engaged with, you know,
12 mainstreaming, you need to make sure that you're coming and
13 you're at the top of your game and, you know, all these
14 things that you're missing. And I kept thinking, oh,
15 that's an amazing program. I wish I -- I wouldn't slow
16 down, but I kept thinking I wish they did something like
17 that for Black folk, that is just, oh, I love that, right.

18 And so, I kept doing my job and after so many
19 more weeks I'd get another invitation and, you know, about
20 being a part of this. I'm like these people obviously
21 don't know I'm Black, right. I'm not the Latino community.

22 And then, finally, because they kept -- I kept
23 thinking is this spam mail or are they really sending me
24 something, because sometimes you can't tell. And so, I had
25 my admin, I said call them, because at least I don't want

1 them to keep reaching out to me and I certainly don't want
2 to feel like I'm not responding to my email.

3 So, I had my admin give them a call and they were
4 like, oh, no, we know exactly who you are. This isn't spam
5 mail, we're sending it to you. And they were sending it
6 just because of that work that I do with the immigrant
7 population community.

8 And just ensuring that we are providing, you
9 know, the help for all services, we have a valley watch
10 network where people are able to call in when they are
11 concerned about their rights as it was relating to all of
12 the ICE raids that was going on, and what have you. And
13 all of those things are near and dear to me, and things
14 that my group was working actively on.

15 And so, basically, they were like, no, and I was
16 the -- they were like, no, we want you as part of this
17 because we want -- it's in our best interest that you're
18 providing your best service, and that we have worked to
19 hone your skills as well.

20 And so, I went through an 18-month program with
21 the Latino Community Foundation, the only Black person
22 there. And they didn't try -- what I love about them is
23 they didn't try to adjust or shift and say, you know, we're
24 here for our heritage, oh, and for the Black. No, they
25 were unapologetically in support of their community. And

1 I got to benefit by them bringing all of their experts that
2 they did, all of the coaching through Google and through
3 some amazing sponsors and coaches that they had. I learned
4 things that I never would have.

5 And last thing I want to say about them, what I
6 loved about them is what they do is provide true feedback.
7 If you presented something and it sucked, it just did, it
8 was like they'd say it with love, but it was like, yeah,
9 no, Pastor, I've seen you do better. They'd do that. And
10 I'm like, ah, I love this, you know, true feedback. Yes,
11 let me fix it, okay.

12 So, anyway, that's the Latino Community
13 Foundation. They're an amazing organization and I got a
14 chance to be a part of their program.

15 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: Okay, thank you.

16 I have no further questions, Mr. Chair.

17 CHAIR COE: Okay, Mr. Dawson, the time is now
18 yours.

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

20 Good -- well, good morning, still, Pastor Trena.

21 MS. TURNER: Good morning.

22 MR. DAWSON: I wanted to follow up on one of the
23 questions, I can't remember which Panelist, but you were
24 talking about your time at AT&T. You were a manager and
25 not only that, you were a trainer of managers, correct?

1 MS. TURNER: That's right.

2 MR. DAWSON: And so, knowing what you know about
3 the job of the Commission, could I ask you to put your
4 management training hat back on and what would you be
5 telling your fellow Commissioners that would be important
6 to know as they manage the work of the Commission?

7 MS. TURNER: Yeah. I'd be telling them to share
8 their learnings, articulate, share, speak out their
9 experiences. I would imagine that whatever we are
10 experiencing together would hit each of us differently,
11 from a different perspective. And I think that we can kind
12 of multiply that learning when it's shared across.

13 We used to do, with my managers I used to have
14 morning, every morning, you know, just a quick 10, 15
15 minutes, what's our game plan for today. What did we
16 learn? What needs to shift? You know, that kind of thing.
17 That's from a call center perspective when we did that. I
18 would pull them all together on a conference call or what
19 have you to say how do we need to adjust in the moment.

20 Now, from that a lot of things happen. Of
21 course, you will learn new things, et cetera. But beyond
22 that, you get an opportunity to adjust a thinking,
23 attitudes, how you want to approach the day so that you're
24 not waylaid or checking in with someone, figuring out that
25 someone had a break through moment months ago that could

1 have benefitted the entire team, that just didn't think it
2 was important enough to talk about.

3 So, that was big because when you're managing
4 people that are already very self-sufficient, et cetera,
5 there aren't a whole lot of hand-holding things you need to
6 do. But what we do forget to do is to check in and share
7 the incremental gains as we're moving.

8 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Can you tell me a bit
9 more about your transition from being a corporate executive
10 to being a Pastor, and also a community organizer?

11 MS. TURNER: Yeah. Traumatic, almost. I was a
12 lover of the corporate world, absolutely was -- it was --
13 if you allow me to say from my faith frame, it really was a
14 God thing only that allowed me to walk away in 25 years.
15 I'm not old enough to have retired. I did not get a buyout
16 package or what have you. I was at the top of my game,
17 walked away with lots of amazing commendations, and awards,
18 and what have you.

19 But I knew that while I was going around and
20 helping others be better at what they were doing, my
21 husband meanwhile was pastoring back at home. And I was
22 also trying to help build that work. We started our
23 organization, our church I'll say, with just my family back
24 in '95. We currently have 12 churches.

25 And at that time, when I was still working for

1 ATT, I was helping them build and I felt like I was giving
2 the leftover to the ministry that he was trying to build.
3 And very much love my husband. We've been married 43
4 years, and he's a great guy and all that.

5 But for the -- so, it got to be kind of like,
6 man, where should I be spending my time? And I decided to
7 just really -- well, not I so much decided, I really felt
8 led and called to walk away from the job that I had to be
9 able to build this ministry that he was doing. And I
10 really expected to kind of like suffer for Jesus, be really
11 sad about it. And one of the miracle things that occurred
12 is that when I did walk away, my VP and everyone, they were
13 sure that another headhunter, because that was something
14 that would happen frequently is a headhunter would come to
15 try to get me to work for someone else. And they're like,
16 you sure you're not going? I'm like, no, I'm going to work
17 for my husband at the church, I really am going to do that.
18 So, it blew everybody away, including me. I just felt it
19 was the right thing to do.

20 I walked away from it. That heaviness that I
21 expected never really did occur because I moved right into
22 teaching, now, people that were coming in from -- you know,
23 people that weren't part of churches before that were
24 coming in, now needing to be in leadership, but really not
25 knowing how to lead. They had a heart for wanting to do

1 this different work within the church and was making some
2 of the typical mistakes a brand-new manager or leader would
3 make. So, there, I went right back into training again,
4 teaching people how to interact, how to work with others,
5 how to be flexible. How to get the best of them, not what
6 you want, what are they -- people are already crafted and
7 shaped to do some things. How do you help them be their
8 best.

9 And so, that's what we were doing and the
10 ministry began to grow from us, you know, into -- the
11 largest we were, were 600, and then we moved a building,
12 and so now we're about almost 400. You know, so we lost a
13 couple of people in a different process. I'll talk about
14 that later. I mean, I won't. But anyway, that's a
15 different thing that happened.

16 But in that, as we were growing from just us to
17 all of these other people, and then birthing out all of
18 these other churches and what have you, that's what I
19 think, back to the woman I told you, Amelia Adams, part of
20 what got her attention and she started talking to me about
21 this organizing group. They're now -- Faith In Action is a
22 nationwide group.

23 And so, she started talking about you need to be
24 a part of this, right. And I did not understand her frame,
25 her approach. So, she came to me a couple of different

1 times and finally I agreed to go to a meeting. And when I
2 went to the meeting about who do you love and, you know,
3 that's how we typically start out to see, you know, who do
4 you have passion to fight for and all of those things, I
5 didn't get it. I felt like they were moving too slow. I
6 went to one meeting, whew, I did that. This Amelia person,
7 I loved her, I did it, I'm done.

8 And she's like now I need you to come back to
9 another meeting. And I'm like, oh, Lord, no one has time
10 for this -- anyway, to answer your question, I went back to
11 a couple of more meetings. I didn't get it until I ended
12 up in a national meeting. And I'm like oh, my God, this is
13 amazing, all faith institutions should be doing this.

14 So, that's how I got involved. I came back and I
15 kind of move and stuff, created a plan on the plane, back
16 home, for just in my mind at the time of a social justice
17 ministry within our church. And then from there is when I
18 learned about the organizations thinking if they should
19 merge, and all of that. And then, I ended up being a part
20 of it, which is why I wasn't expecting to be the Executive
21 Director. I was still just working at the church. And
22 they were like, no, the way you put that together, we need
23 you to be a part of this process to apply for Executive
24 Director.

25 So, there was -- I said it that way because I had

1 to still go through a process with a few other people that
2 were in running. But ultimately, I ended up being the
3 Executive Director. So, that was the transition. It's
4 kind of a -- not a direct line.

5 MR. DAWSON: So, it was your work in ministry,
6 your pastoral role which then brought you into contact with
7 these other community groups?

8 MS. TURNER: Yes.

9 MR. DAWSON: Are you originally from Stockton,
10 have you always lived in the Valley?

11 MS. TURNER: No, sir. I'm from the Bay Area. I
12 grew up in Richmond, California. I've been in Stockton
13 since '95.

14 MR. DAWSON: I see. And these groups that -- I'm
15 taking it from Faith In The Valley these are all Central
16 Valley organizations?

17 MS. TURNER: These groups?

18 MR. DAWSON: I'm sorry, the five groups that
19 became Faith In The Valley, they're all based in the
20 Central Valley?

21 MS. TURNER: Yes, from Bakersfield to Stockton,
22 yes.

23 MR. DAWSON: So, my question is about the
24 perspective of the Central Valley and the importance or
25 whether you -- I'm going to assume that you think it's

1 important that the Central Valley be represented on the
2 Commission. Could the interests of the Central Valley be
3 recognized, be understood by folks, say, south of the
4 Tehachapis or on the Northern Coast? Does it take a
5 Central Valley person to understand the issues of the
6 Central Valley?

7 MS. TURNER: I strongly believe it does. The
8 Central Valley is very different. We have this same
9 conversation in the work that I'm doing currently. Coming
10 out of the Bay Area, the Bay Area is very much more
11 involved politically there. It's an easy thing to say,
12 you know -- in my work frequently they say, okay, well,
13 what is everyone talking about in the Central Valley, you
14 know, what issues are important for them? And I would be
15 like no issue. I mean, the priorities are so many, so
16 great in the Central Valley that there is no one issue that
17 you can come -- Bay Area, hands down housing. You know, it
18 would be housing first of all. And everyone knows how to
19 participate. It's easy to say we're getting ready to
20 organize around an issue, and a few, a couple of phone
21 calls, you know, somebody has heard of it or participated
22 before.

23 The Central Valley has such a low participation
24 of civic engagement that it makes it its own issue, number
25 one. Beyond that, the priorities, the issues between the

1 environmental concerns, and water, and the air because of
2 being in the Valley, the immigrant population because of
3 being in the Valley. You know, the conservative kind of --
4 we speak of the Central Valley -- oh, that's disrespectful
5 to us. I was going to say we talk about the Central Valley
6 almost like Alabama, right. And so, it's very different
7 than the -- very different than the Bay Area. Very
8 different than Southern California, again civically
9 engaged. Southern California has different types of
10 issues. But the Central Valley stands out.

11 And even in some of our coalition spaces they
12 frequently will speak in -- funders, let's go there, the
13 funders will speak, typically speak about representing the
14 Southern California and even/or the Northern California.
15 Central California seems to be an afterthought, an add on,
16 and like, oh, yeah, well, yeah, that includes them, too.
17 And frequently the conversations it does not include
18 Central Valley, not from a Central Valley frame, other than
19 just to understanding what they're -- what holds North and
20 South together.

21 MR. DAWSON: I understand. Thank you. That was
22 -- that answered my question.

23 I believe those were all my follow ups. Mr.
24 Chair, I have no further follow ups, if any of the Panel
25 Members have any further follow ups?

1 CHAIR COE: Ms. Dickison, any follow-up
2 questions?

3 VICE CHAIR DICKISON: I do not have any follow-up
4 questions.

5 CHAIR COE: Mr. Belnap, any follow-up questions?

6 PANEL MEMBER BELNAP: None here.

7 CHAIR COE: I have no follow-up questions, Mr.
8 Dawson.

9 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Madam Secretary, what is
10 our time remaining in the 90?

11 MS. PELLMAN: Eleven minutes, 15 seconds.

12 MR. DAWSON: Thank you. Pastor Trena, with the
13 time remaining I'd like to offer you the opportunity to
14 make a closing statement to the Panel, if you wish.

15 MS. TURNER: Yes, I would first of all like to
16 thank you all for just the innovation, and being able to
17 continue in the process. I want to close by saying that I
18 am looking forward to an opportunity of serving on the
19 Commission, and I'm also looking forward to whoever serves
20 on it.

21 I believe the process is set up to get the very
22 best people that are here that will be able to serve
23 California. I've done more research about redistricting
24 and understanding the maps that has to be drawn, et cetera.

25 And so, I'm confident in the process that you all

1 have gone through to narrow it down. That if it's me, I'm
2 going to be excited about it. If it's someone else, I'm
3 like, yeah, they did that. I trusted the questions that
4 you asked will yield the right results.

5 So, I'll just close by saying it's been an
6 amazing experience. I thank you for it. I hope I get the
7 opportunity to go on the ride, the journey. And I just
8 trust the process regardless of what happens. So, I just
9 want to say thank you.

10 CHAIR COE: And thank you, Pastor Trena for
11 taking the time to speak with us today.

12 Our next interview is scheduled for 1:15 p.m., so
13 we will be in recess until 1:14 p.m.

14 (Off the record at 12:05 p.m.)

15 (on the record at 1:14 p.m.)

16 CHAIR COE: Okay, the time being 1:14 p.m., I'd
17 like to call the meeting of the Applicant Review Panel back
18 to order.

19 At this time I'd like to welcome Ms. Michelle
20 [sic] Offutt. Did I say that right?

21 MS. OFFUTT: Michal.

22 CHAIR COE: Michal, okay.

23 MS. OFFUTT: Yes.

24 CHAIR COE: Welcome, thank you for being here.

25 MS. OFFUTT: Certainly.