

## **REDISTRICTING COMMISSION**

### **CHECKLIST FOR APPLICATION ESSAYS**

The supplemental application for the Redistricting Commission contains four essay questions. Applicants can begin drafting their essay answers now and the final application must be submitted no later than April 2, 2010.

Below is a checklist that might assist you in identifying your skills and experiences that are relevant to serving on the Commission. These suggestions are in no particular order and are in no way exhaustive; they are meant merely to help you think about the kinds of skills and experiences that will be favored by the selection committee. They are based primarily on the regulations that will guide the selection process and on the public comments that were submitted as part of the rulemaking process. This checklist, however, was neither created nor approved by the Bureau of State Audits.

#### **1. WHY YOU ARE INTERESTED IN SERVING ON THE COMMISSION**

- Belief in the goals of Prop. 11 and desire to participate in an historic process;
- Previous interest or experience in redistricting;
- Importance of drawing districts that are fair to everyone;
- Interest in applying legal standards;
- Interest in contributing to the public good;
- Interest in State's geography and diversity;
- Interest in the public policy process – fact-gathering, public participation, working with others, making decisions;
- Interest in providing fair and open government;
- You have the time commitment to make the Commission process work.

#### **2. YOUR ABILITY TO BE IMPARTIAL**

Impartiality is the ability to:

- Not prejudge people or situations;
- Not take sides;
- Set aside (at least temporarily) your own ideas and listen to others;
- Understand competing positions;
- Ask probing questions;
- Resolve competing interests;
- Reach compromises;
- Make decisions that are fair;
- Communicate in a manner that respects others.

With that in mind, describe several specific examples in your past or present when you acted impartially:

- A. Have your current or former jobs required you to be impartial?
- Does the job itself require fact-finding, mediation, or dispute resolution skills?
    - administrative or other judge?
    - mediator?
    - investigator or other fact-gathering duties?
    - draft neutral position or policy papers?
    - decision-making over competing options?
    - contract awards or claims reviews?
    - labor or other type of negotiations?
  - Have you served on a board charged with reviewing facts and making recommendations, such as a licensing board, credentialing committee, hiring or promotion committees, or performance review committees?
  - Have you served on committees charged with making difficult or strategic decisions?
  - Have you handled sensitive personnel disputes?
  - Have you acted as a project manager, managing people or departments with different goals?
  - Have you worked as a teacher or a school administrator?
- B. Have your current or former civic, religious, social, volunteer, or family activities required you to be impartial? For example, have you served on:
- neighborhood associations or other community planning boards or commissions?
  - parent-teacher associations or other school committees?
  - civic, community, or volunteer boards or commissions?
  - charity boards?
  - church committees ?
  - fundraising committees?
  - chambers of commerce or other business groups?
  - organized or coached in athletic leagues?
- C. Have you had any special training or education in fact-gathering, mediation or dispute resolution?
- D. Have you participated in other activities that have required you to be impartial or work with others with different beliefs or values?
- Served on a jury?
  - Mediated family disputes, such as estate issues or property disputes?

**3. YOUR APPRECIATION OF CALIFORNIA’S DIVERSE DEMOGRAPHICS AND GEOGRAPHY**

A. What are your feelings about California’s diversity? Do you think diversity as

- A strength;
- Part of the State’s identity;
- Something to be valued;
- Something that we need to pay attention to;
- An important part of government and the political process?

B. Through your work, activities and life experiences, have you (1) gotten to know (2) worked well with and/or (3) gained knowledge and understanding of:

California’s diverse demographic groups, including:

- Racial and ethnic groups;
- Age groups;
- People from both genders;
- People with different sexual orientations;
- People from different economic backgrounds

California’s geography and different parts of the state, including:

- Coastal (example: beach and ocean areas);
- Mountain (example: Sierra Nevada Mountains, Tahoe);
- Inland (example Central Valley, Riverside, Palm Springs);
- Urban (large cities – Los Angeles, San Jose, San Diego);
- Rural;
- Suburban;
- Industrial;
- Agricultural;
- Temperate (San Diego, San Francisco and other coastal areas);
- Arid (desert areas)

Describe some of those experiences, such as:

- Working with people who do not share your ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, or economic status;
- Living in various areas throughout the State;
- Traveling to different parts of the State for work, civic or religious activities, athletic events, family, vacation, or other reasons;
- Volunteer work that has taken you to places other than where you work and live;

- Canvassing or other grass-root activities requiring familiarity with different neighborhoods and communities;
- Friends, acquaintances, or co-workers that live around the State;
- Have your school courses, your own reading, activities or research covered:
  - Sociology
  - Psychology
  - The civil rights movements
  - Geography of California
  - History of California and the U.S., including the development of a diverse population

**4. YOUR ANALYTICAL SKILLS THAT MIGHT BE RELEVANT TO SERVING ON THE COMMISSION**

- A. Did you study subjects in school that required or developed analytical skills:
- Mathematics;
  - Statistics;
  - Science or Engineering;
  - Medicine;
  - Law;
  - Political Science;
  - Sociology;
  - Psychology;
  - Any debate or academic competitions;
  - Any course that required students to think about cause and effect or evaluate the various sides of an issue;
  - Any course that involved compiling and/or evaluating data?
- B. Through your work or life experience, have you:
- Analyzed data (e.g. statistics about people, places, trends, characteristics, programs, etc.);
  - Worked with lawyers or had to apply legal standards to specific situations;
  - Debated issues;
  - Compiled or organized data or other types of information;
  - Interviewed or gathered information from people;
  - Undertaken fact-gathering or other investigations;
  - Figured out how to solve problems;
  - Evaluated people or situations to decide on a course of action;
  - Worked with computers, computer software systems and other technical devices;

- Worked with spreadsheets or used technical information that will allow you to understand data processing and Geographic Information Systems (GIS);
- Worked with others on a committee or board;
- Received public input and worked with the public;
- Dealt with maps, especially maps that show demographic information;
- Conducted research of any kind.