

Timestamp	Meeting Date	Agenda Item	First and Last Name	Zip Code	Representing	Comments
5/4/2021 9:08:33	May 4, 2021	Selection of Mapping Consultant	Lynne Hudson	85704	Arizona Citizen	<p>Many commenters have suggested Haystaq should be disqualified because the firm has worked for and been praised by prominent Democrats or Independents and because some Haystaq employees are, or may be, Democrats themselves. On its face this argument is specious. Consultants are not responsible for, nor necessarily aligned with, the political leanings of their employers. Moreover, all three firms have employees with political preferences, but those preferences, whether Democrat or Republican, are irrelevant because the mapping process is transparent. Republican members of the California IRC clearly understood this, as evidenced by the fact that they, like their Democratic counterparts, recently supported Haystaq as their mapping consultant.</p> <p>What Haystaq detractors fail to understand or appreciate is that fairness is ensured because the mapping process uses fully public data and is completely open. But Arizonans who remain doubtful have an added safeguard against bias. They can use publicly available mapping software to draw their own maps, compare them with those proposed by whatever firm is hired, and offer public comment online or at one of the many meetings to be scheduled around the State.</p> <p>So what should be the criteria for selecting a mapping consulting firm? Two are the general ones at the top of any hiring list: excellent qualifications and relevant experience. A third, necessitated by the condensed timeframe this Commission must operate within, is a track record of avoiding and/or overcoming court challenges. I hope all commissioners will focus on these three criteria and not be distracted by side issues, smokescreens, or partisan paranoia from either side.</p>
5/4/2021 9:10:18	May 4, 2021	II. Approval of minutes from April 27, 2021	William Bowlus-Root	85365	Myself	Thanks to Valerie for joining the team. Unfortunately, I don't think the Chair told us your last name when she introduced you. That would be nice to know.
5/4/2021 9:13:29	May 4, 2021	VIII Mapping Consultant	Ted Hiserodt	85020	Self	It's clear the public comments have been brigaded by a group of people with strong, bias against one mapping consultant in particular. I encourage the Commission to look at the track record of the candidates and select a company with a solid success rate of generating maps that can withstand the inevitable legal challenges to come. The legacy of the IRC should be that they made robust, unbiased decisions that withstood the courts. Based on this criteria, HaystaqDNA should be the clear choice.
5/4/2021 9:14:47	May 4, 2021	VIII: discussion of mapping consultant	Jacqui Bauer	85716	Myself	<p>All of the mapping consultants appear to be biased, with 2 having proven right-leaning/Republican ties, and one having clear ties to the left/Democrats. This process is supposed to be nonpartisan, and the appearance of bias compromises this. Above all else, the commission needs to protect the integrity of the process.</p> <p>Please reject all three firms, and solicit firms or entities that don't have clear political leanings. For independent redistricting to work, we as voters need to feel confident that the process is actually independent.</p>

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5/4/2021 9:19:44	May 4, 2021	VIII	Jean Meconi	85737	Mapping Consultant	All the mapping firms will have a political history given the nature of their work. I think that given the type of analysis they do, the companies will be associated with campaigns. This alone does not make them biased if they do their jobs appropriately. I am much more concerned with firms like the Timmons Groups, who have lost court case due to their gerrymandered work.
						<p>Thank you for allowing public comment. With reference to selection to mapping consultant, I am certain you do not want to have to contend with litigation or controversy over mapping. NDC has been involved in multiple litigation over their mapping in multiple states. The court actually adopted the plaintiff's map in the case involving West Contra Costa Unified School District in California. Redwood City Council in another case was forced to start over on their map. NDC failed to deliver in a Yuma County redistricting contract.</p> <p>Also the CEO of Taylor English has a history of homophobic language and previously defended students accused of rape. He & Taylor English should be disqualified from being hired.</p> <p>Hiring a mapping consultant with a record of drawing & defending court related gerrymandered maps would risk integrity of maps. Commission must reject NDC & Taylor English.</p>
5/4/2021 9:21:32	May 4, 2021	VIII	Cindy Wagner	86301	Self	
5/4/2021 9:21:41	May 4, 2021	Redistricting	Marlene Leatherwood	85254	orange tree precinct (I'm a committeeman)	I opposing using Haystaq fir redistricting project.
5/4/2021 9:22:44	May 4, 2021	V Legal Counsel	Nan Meister	85364	self	This does not seem like an open and transparent process when most agenda items result in executive session. How does the public know what is actually happening?
5/4/2021 9:27:05	May 4, 2021	Mapping consultant (VIII)	William Li		self	I thought this was meant to be a nonpartisan commission. If so, why are commissioners encouraging comments against specific mapping firms? https://twitter.com/WendyRogersAZ/status/1386865090285211650
5/4/2021 9:38:29	May 4, 2021	VII	Diane Boman	86303	Myself	In reference to the hiring of the Public Information Officer and other potential hires. I did not see any experience in this persons past to qualify him for this position. This process only happens once every 10 years and it is in the interest of the citizens of Arizona to be represented by the most competent and experienced of candidates. I think it is also important that these hires are decided upon by the entire commission as well as with input from the executive director.
5/4/2021 9:47:58	May 4, 2021	VII	María-Elena Dunn	86303		So far we have heard about the black out and the public comments re the hiring of a mapping firm and are on way to ES for second time. But I wonder when the public will learn what will be the measures (matrix) used to evaluate the firms, when we will see the pubic comments submitted fr Tue to Thu of last week and, more importantly, the answers to some of the issues raised by those comments provided by the firms???

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5/4/2021 9:51:21	May 4, 2021	Mapping	Ronda Olson	85131	self	I was not in attendance at the 4/27/2021 but have read the comments. I would like to recommend that the IRC go back to the drawing board. The three consulting groups all have ties to a political party. Timmons partnership with National Demographics Corporation should have disqualified them from consideration. It is imperative that you find a company that is qualified, reputable without party ties.
5/4/2021 9:54:42	May 4, 2021	VIII	Diane Boman	86303	Myself	Taylor English Decisions does not have any statewide or redistricting specific experience. Considering the importance of this process to all Arizonan's it should be possible to find an experienced candidate. This firm is now being run by 3 Republicans who have been very involved in our recent political elections and held republican party positions on various political issues. Oscar Persons, Frank Strickland, Anne Lewis and Bryan Tyson have recently closed their political law firm of 18 years in order to create this firm just in time for the redistricting effort. This is not a bi-partisan choice for the people of Arizona.
5/4/2021 10:03:47	May 4, 2021	Re mapping consultants	Beth M. Horowitz	85716	Myself	<p>I am concerned about the potential party bias of the firms under consideration. The firms chosen should be non-partisan and should be mapping so that residents have the greatest opportunity for participation in our democracy. An example of a poor redraw was the inclusion of Pima county voters into district 4. Previously these people were active in their district but these folks identify with Pima county as they shop and work in Tucson and the surrounding areas. When they were wrongly districted into the current district 4, their voice was nullified and they were not welcomed in Yuma, their new seat.</p> <p>In selecting the firms and doing the mapping, what efforts are going to go into making sure these vote dilutions and Jerry meandering do not occur? Are you going to make them make a separate map for each of the 6 (?) criteria so that bringing these 6 maps into overlay might show the best districts? Are you going to require that every proposed district have an independent mathematician do the geometric analysis to check for jerryandering? Are you going to require that in addition to looking at maps, that they canvass the affected communities like the communities at the edges of Pima county to see which areas the communities identify with and where they are most likely to participate? Then make sure that these voters are not severed from those communities and placed with districts and voters they have no accord with? What are you going to do to ensure the fairness of the firms' commitments to lack of bias and to increasing and not decreasing voter participation and voice (unlike our current legislature)?</p>
5/4/2021 10:07:22	May 4, 2021	Discussion and Possible Action on options for mapping consultant	Virginia Dotson	85902	Self	The mapping consultant Haystaq is experienced and knowledgeable. Ten years ago they tried very hard to draw fair maps for Arizona, and overall they succeeded. Several of the legislative districts have over time proven to be less competitive than they initially appeared, but this has worked against Democrats rather than Republicans. Has the AZ Legislature ever had a Democratic majority in the past ten years (and longer)? Even with a state so closely divided, this has not happened. Haystaq's record for fairness is much better than either of the other two mapping consultants. I urge you to select Haystaq.

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						Timmons Group/NDC has a long history of Mapping Analysis that has been rejected by the courts. In March of 2019 West Contra Costa Unified School District settled a lawsuit claiming that the districts election map diluted the voting strength of Latino and African American citizens. NDC cost the district \$650,000 by spending a year producing map after map that didn't show a Latino Majority area. The court adopted the plaintiffs map, not NDC's. The city of Redwood, CA also had the same complaint and NDC had to reverse their position. The City of Redwood had to start over with the mapping process which cost them time and money. Doug Johnson failed to deliver on the redistricting contract in Yuma in a timely fashion. Failed to meet deadlines and drafts of maps on a timely basis. Doug Johnson has been and "expert" witness in court cases and his analysis and unpersuasive arguments in 4 cases have led to a rejection in his analysis. We can do better than this.
5/4/2021 10:08:36	May 4, 2021	VIII	Diane Boman	86303	Myself	
5/4/2021 10:21:10	May 4, 2021	Discussion of mapping consultants	Deborah Broome	85123	Myself	Please find other firms that do not have the biases that are evident in the current applicants.
5/4/2021 10:43:29	May 4, 2021	Hiring of legal and mapping firms	Leslie Hunten	85716	myself	Dear IRC, thank you for your work on this difficult task of setting up a commission. Please make sure that the legal teams and mapping consultants are able to be objective and unbiased. Arizona is a well-known "red state", and the legislature is heavily biased, but this commission needs to be verifiably non-discriminatory. Please make sure that either the firms are unbiased, or hire two firms that balance out. Our last IRC was successful; let's do it again and maintain public trust.
5/4/2021 11:13:26	May 4, 2021	Hiring of Mapping Consultant	Crystal Bazarnic	85085		Given that all three firms have partisan ties, the Commission is charged with choosing the LEAST partisan of the three - the one closest to meeting the Chair's call for bipartisanship and transparency and meeting the Commission's instructions including compliance with communities of interest. HDNA is the obvious answer. Its leader does not have the outside political ACTIVIST past of Timmons and Taylor, nor the controversy of Taylor's leader. Nor a DOJ AZ rejection as does Timmons. HDNA also has Fortune 500 clients -- Do Timmons and Taylor have clients from both sides of the aisle? There is one clear choice here.
5/4/2021 11:25:19	May 4, 2021	VII. Hiring staff	Betty Bengtson	85718	League of Women Voters of Arizona	On behalf of the League of Women Voters of Arizona I am writing to remind the Commissioners of their commitment to hire staff that represent the diversity of Arizona's citizens. We urge you to fulfill that commitment in your future staff selections. It will reassure the public and help to increase confidence in your decisions. Thank you for your continuing hard work for all Arizonans.
5/4/2021 11:40:49	May 4, 2021	Executive Session	Deborah Howard	85308	Self	Must every conversation with lawyers be in executive session? In a really paranoid way - I suppose they might argue that every word out of their mouths is attorney-client privileged. Where will this road lead? Does it insulate you from legal challenge? or make it more likely? Clearly I believe the latter. There is a sad irony that the commission is less transparent, less inclusive of the public as it becomes staffed. Such a trend is deeply troubling.

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5/4/2021 12:03:04	May 4, 2021	VII - ES	David Dunn	86303		We, the public, need to be assured that when you return from this very long ES you will give us a full and fair account of what transpired during said session. We understand that some privacy issues need to remain that way, but so far the selection process for what is a very, very important hire has been clouded in what can only be qualified as less than forthcoming actions. The after meeting public comments have not been made public NOR have the tools that commissioners will be (are?) using to gauge the qualifications of the mapping firms. Those do not/should not come under privacy privilege of any kind.
5/4/2021 12:20:49	May 4, 2021	V -B: Legal counsel, expert witness	M. E. Dunn	86303		After the first ES the Chair returned to explain, sort of, what had been discussed but it was very unclear. WHY, if the IRC has just engaged TWO legal firms to provide legal counsel, now we find there's a need to hold further discussion regarding having to hire legal counsel knowledgeable about voting rights act,,,etc? Are the firms already on board not competent in this arena? If not, why were they chosen? If they cannot provide legal representation on these issues, why were they hired? Befuddled.
5/4/2021 12:24:15	May 4, 2021	Retention of legal consultants/expert witnesses	Jennifer Hilsbos	85140	Myself	We have already hired two legal firms, why are we hiring another consultant? Did we not choose firms that already have expertise with regards to these issues?
5/4/2021 13:12:11	May 4, 2021	V. Discussion and Possible Action on Legal Counsel Briefing	William Bowlus-Root	85365	Myself	Why is it necessary to consider hiring an expert on the various laws surrounding redistricting (e.g., the Voting Rights Act and the US and AZ constitutions)? Isn't that what you hired the two law firms for? If they're not already experts in those areas of the law, then why did you hire them in the first place? Those would seem to be primary qualifications that any law firm you hired should possess. William Bowlus-Root A concerned citizen

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5/4/2021 13:51:47	May 4, 2021	Legal Counsel Guidance	Deborah Howard	85308	self	<p>One of the selected law firms, Snell and Wilmer, announced that the firm would not suspend its candidate and campaign political practice while serving as legal co-counsel to the commission. It is disturbing that this was not a disqualification of their services.</p> <p>Since you have hired them, what policies, procedures and practices will the IRC demand so that the commissioners and the public may be certain that the advice given to the redistricting commission is not influenced by the current and future political work of the firm? Snell and Wilmer may be advising the commission well into the 2022 election season if the maps are challenged. In an abundance of caution, protections need to be put in place now for that prospective, but very real, possibility.</p> <p>What disclosures will be made? to whom? and what intervals? What will be the process for redress if needed? If the 2021 Commission is as sincerely committed to an ethical, independent and transparent process as Chairwoman Neuberg regular states such policies, practices and procedures need to be developed and made public. Yesterday.</p> <p>Please advise me as to the manner in which the IRC plans to address these concerns - either directly via e-mail, or in public session. It is an unsatisfactory response to announce that you have read the comment. What actions will be taken to protect the integrity of the 2021 IRC redistricting process? Thank you for your consideration.</p>
5/4/2021 13:57:24	May 4, 2021	Legal Counsel Guidance	Deborah Howard	85308	self	<p>One of the selected law firms, Snell and Wilmer, announced that the firm would not suspend its candidate and campaign political practice while serving as legal co-counsel to the commission. It is disturbing that this was not a disqualification of their services.</p> <p>Since you have hired them, what policies, procedures and practices will the IRC demand so that the commissioners and the public may be certain that the advice given to the redistricting commission is not influenced by the current and future political work of the firm? Snell and Wilmer may be advising the commission well into the 2022 election season if the maps are challenged. In an abundance of caution, protections need to be put in place now for that prospective, but very real, possibility.</p> <p>What disclosures will be made? to whom? and what intervals? What will be the process for redress if needed? If the 2021 Commission is as sincerely committed to an ethical, independent and transparent process as Chairwoman Neuberg regular states such policies, practices and procedures need to be developed and made public. Yesterday.</p> <p>Please advise me as to the manner in which the IRC plans to address these concerns - either directly via e-mail, or in public session. It is an unsatisfactory response to announce that you have read the comment. What actions will be taken to protect the integrity of the 2021 IRC redistricting process? Thank you for your consideration.</p>

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5/4/2021 14:10:06	May 4, 2021	Mapping consultant and whether IRC is observing open meeting law	shanna leonard	85719	self	<p>You have hired a partisan law firm: Snell & Wilmer which is being paid by partisan campaigns at the same time as your contract. This is a severe conflict of interest to INDEPENDENCE. They must be suspended from their contract for this.</p> <p>I'm concerned about the closed nature of meetings and whether partisan decisions are being pushed there. We need reporting on which topics which are covered in Executive session. The public needs to know that all topics which should be publicly discussed are being discussed publicly and in the public record.</p> <p>I'm also concerned about your considering partisan mapping firm with a record of failures (NDC) and the fact that AZ will endure large costs and litigation if you select NDC based on their history - they failed preclearance. The only firm with a successful track record is Haystaq. The other firm (Timmons) is completely inexperienced.</p>
5/4/2021 14:19:07	May 4, 2021	VIII. Discussion and Possible Action on options for mapping consultant:	William Bowlus-Root	85365	Myself	<p>This is an outrageous decision. You've selected an extremely biased mapping consultant without significant SUCCESSFUL redistricting experience. If this is the BEST that you can do for the people of Arizona, then you must re-examine your process. It has surely failed us all.</p> <p>William Bowlus-Root A concerned citizen</p>
5/4/2021 14:20:18	May 4, 2021	Mapping consultant	Peggy Pena	85643	Self	Various obvious from chairman's determining vote on executive director and mapping consultant that she is a republican. Will have to watch closely how she acts in the future

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5/4/2021 14:21:13	May 4, 2021	Response to Public Comment	Deborah Howard	85308	Self	<p>Last week Chairwoman Neuberg said "You know, we live in a robust democracy and Arizona has a lot of independent strong-minded people and we're hearing from the community. You know as we alluded to, I think several weeks ago, when you have such a unique niche of something like mapping that only happens once every ten years, you are not going to get a lot of options with true experts. And given the realities, we got three firms which is more than a decade ago. There's no perfect, just like there's no perfect Commissioner, there's no perfect mapping firm either."</p> <p>I draw out two points here. The first is the unnecessary and unhelpful comparison to the 2011 commission. This perpetuates the false narrative that there was something inherently flawed with the 2011 effort. The controversy that transpired in 2011 was instigated by the Republican Governor and the Republican majorities in both chambers of the state legislature. The two Republican commissioners went along with it.</p> <p>Commissioner York seems especially wedded to this narrative. This was one of the five sentences on his statement of interest: "I was unhappy with the outcome of the last re-districting efforts." The five commissioners of the 2021 Commission can make their own choices not to create a similar dynamic - and make a commitment to make their own mistakes and their own history.</p> <p>Secondly, Commissioner Neuberg's comment that there are not "real experts" reflects more about a lack of curiosity or inadequate staffing about redistricting than the lack of experts in the field of redistricting.</p> <p>Please be aware of the narratives that you are creating for 2021 and stop being afraid of the shadow on 2011.</p>
5/4/2021 14:21:27	May 4, 2021	Mapping Firm Vote	M.E. Dunn	86303		<p>Here we go again. We are asked to be happy with a split decision on a major hire and told that only if we had seen, only if we had heard.... Well, how about having had those materials available BEFORE you announce the vote. And, how you can call the process rigorous with robust discussion if you end up with two commissioners who are ultimately unhappy with the outcome. Sorry, not clear to the public. AND, now we hear from Com York that you used a point system to evaluate and decide. Why was the public not made aware of those criteria BEFOREHAND so that we could feel comfortable about this decision. Shame. This, together with the very questionable decision on the ED and even the Asst., gives the public reason to have GREAT CONCERN re the future necessary fairness and impartiality of this Commission!!!! Very disappointed not to say worried about the future of our redistricting process.</p>

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5/4/2021 14:23:33	May 4, 2021	Mapping Consultant Selection	Lynn Peters	85374	self	So much for an impartial Chair of the IRC this is the second time that the Chair has sided with the 2 Republican commissioners. This is another straight Republican choice. Chair Neuberg repeated many times her wish to avoid litigation. The choice of Timmons DNC insures that there will be a great deal of litigation and DNC has a history of losing their mapping litigation. I am extremely disappointed with this selection and the Republican control over IRC selections. This is not a bipartisan decision and that is so very disappointing. I urge the Chair to reconsider her Republican leaning and listen to the public comments.
5/4/2021 14:27:18	May 4, 2021	Vi	David Dunn	86303		This is getting out of hand. ES, again....to discuss a recommendation/decision from the ED - the rather partisan ED. What is going on? Might as well stop the public charade and hold the rest of the IRC meetings in ES!
5/4/2021 14:35:32	May 4, 2021	Mapping Firm Hire	María-Elena Dunn	86303		Did it ever occur to the commissioners that Haystaq, a much more experienced firm, was busy likely because they are very good. Inversely, perhaps your choice is NOT "spread so thin" because no one wants to hire them. The people of Arizona deserved a competent, experienced, litigation-free firm and we just blew that. Shame, shame, shame. Trust that budget that BS fails to produce will include some significant funds for litigation. Truly pitiful outcome.
5/4/2021 14:37:09	May 4, 2021	Mapping Consultant Selection	Hope Bustos-Keyes	85743	Self	<p>Dear Commissioners,</p> <p>I am disappointed that a mapping firm with a history of questionable maps and missing critical deadlines has been selected to redraw districts in Arizona.</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration.</p>
5/4/2021 14:37:52	May 4, 2021	VIII	Maria Lynam	86301	Self	You awarded the mapping contract to Timmons DNC. It is NDC. Is that contract valid? I am super disappointed in this selection, by the way. If they are not spread thin, it is because they have had so many lawsuits.
5/4/2021 14:40:26	May 4, 2021	Mapping contract	Margaret Strai	85018	Citizen/. Voter/self	I object to a selection of National Demographics Corporation. This group is waaay too partisan and fraught w a history of problems. The citizens of our state demands "Independent" redistricting process. P
5/4/2021 14:41:05	May 4, 2021	selection of mapping firm	shanna leonard	85719	self	<p>1. Please to clarify - the name of the firm you selected is "Timmons/NDC" correct? - I believe it was misstated?</p> <p>2. Per their public announcements, prior to the AZ selection this firm had 60 concurrent contracts for redistricting maps. The Chair said they are not "spread too thin" - Competitor Haystaq, you mentioned had 1 state, California. Can someone please explain this discrepancy. And how 60+ contracts gives them more time for us?</p>

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						Based on every decision made to date, from the hiring of the partisan Executive who didn't meet the minimum qualifications to the partisan law firm and mapping team, this committee is showing us you are anything but nonpartisan. This behavior is embarrassing, if not illegal. The "independent" member should have the decency to resign and turn the seat over to someone who is actually independent.
5/4/2021 14:42:04	May 4, 2021	Mapping	Tammy Ryan	85041	Self	Lastly, holding nearly everything in Executive Session is another way to keep the public out. You should be ashamed of yourselves.
5/4/2021 14:43:31	May 4, 2021	IX	david dunn	86303		Great. The legal team actually opining that there is no need to be in ES. I was wondering why this would be in an ES since most of the information on the legal cases is out being publicly discussed in the media. ... For goodness sake, the fall back to ES seems to be on over drive..
5/4/2021 14:57:01	May 4, 2021	mapping consultant	Susan Bickel	85718	self	Thank you Commissioners Lerner and Watchman, for your no votes for mapping consultant. I appreciate your diligence to considering the overwhelming evidence of why Haystaq should have been the most obvious choice for mapping consultant for this IRC. I am truly disappointed in the partisanship direction this commission is taking. From the partisan hiring of an obviously inexperienced executive director to the selection of a mapping firm with a disturbing record of poorly constructed maps which have resulted in the additional burden and cost of redrawing maps for many clients across the country, including Arizona, I am rapidly losing confidence that this current IRC will be able to duplicate the success of the prior IRC.
5/4/2021 14:58:42	May 4, 2021	IX	M.E. Dunn	86303		This presentation, the tag-team approach by the counsels, shows that it is actually quite easy to limit the use of ES - or their length - by asking presenters to discuss general aspects of the topic in open session and then limiting to the ES only those aspects that are very clearly a violation of privacy or proprietary data. Kudos to the legal teams for pushing back on the call for a ES on this. Well done. Let this be a lesson going forward.
5/4/2021 15:07:05	May 4, 2021	Census data and AL litigation presentation	Mary-Jeanne Fincher	85253	self	There seems to be a knee jerk reaction to go into Executive Session with the least possible available reason. Example, the initial suggestion that this presentation on privacy and census data required E session. This is not the IRC's lawyers giving legal advice; they are simply talking about legal issues. The prevalence on E sessions interferes with public participation and transparency. Do better, IRC!
5/4/2021 15:52:04	May 4, 2021	IX	David Dunn	86303		Is this a joke? Yet another ES?! For today's meeting, significantly more than 2/3 of the time has been spent in ES. This excessive, and likely mostly avoidable, use of ES is making a mockery of the idea of the meeting being "open to the public." No matter how many times the verbiage is read re the commission's legal right to go into ES, it does not make it right to invoke it with such frequency and disregard to the schedules of the members of the public who are trying to follow the action. I have been participating in this exercise since the meetings first started, with an open and hopeful state of mind,. Now, with each passing session I grow more and more dissatisfied and disappointed. .