

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to express my opposition to the draft assembly map concerning the town of Guilderland and assembly districts 102 and 109.

The 2021/2022 Plan does not maintain the communities of interest that I believe exist between the Town of Guilderland and the City of Albany and its neighboring Towns of Bethlehem and New Scotland and the Village of Voorheesville. Guilderland and Bethlehem were linked historically, although the most recent attempt to redistrict separated the two towns.

I know personally that our neighbors in the Town of Bethlehem share social and economic interests because my sister Catherine lives on the border between Guilderland and Bethlehem. She and her neighbors have similar standards of living and similar economic and societal concerns that we have in the Town of Guilderland. Driving from Guilderland to her neighborhood to the south one barely notices the fact that one is no longer in Guilderland.

I know from personal experience that many other residents of the Town of Bethlehem and the Village of Voorheesville also share similar standards of living, shared methods and patterns of transportation, and enough social and economic interests of importance that require keeping the Town of Guilderland within the same district. Friends that I have known for more than 40 years live in these neighboring towns and it is my personal view that our economic and societal concerns are identical. For example, we share the desire to maintain open spaces while providing our residents with a variety of local businesses. Both towns and the Village offer biking and walking trails, town parks, and cultural opportunities. The most recent assembly map connected Guilderland with Voorheesville and Bethlehem and New Scotland, and I believe that was a proper reflection of our shared social and economic interests.

The result of the draft map, as drawn for the town of Guilderland, would destroy the core of an existing assembly district and remove a town from its direct communities of interest. I urge the commission to consider changing this in its next assembly district map draft.