

To: New York State Independent Redistricting Commission

I'm a current and lifelong resident of Central Harlem, affordable housing professional, small business owner, and community activist. The purpose of my testimony is to advocate for the 70th New York Assembly District (70thAD). The 70thAD encompasses the neighborhood of Central Harlem and must remain a Central Harlem district to preserve African American plurality in addition to the history, cultural integrity, and interests of Central Harlem residents.

The newly proposed 70thAD assembly map extends too far west into West Harlem and Hamilton Heights essentially dividing neighbors in the predominantly Latino community of West Harlem and diluting African American plurality in the 70thAD. Amsterdam Avenue is the natural western boundary of central Harlem and should be the western boundary of 70th district. The north eastern boundary should extend to include up to 149th street and Adam Clayton Powell JR Blvd to include Esplanade Gardens, famously known as the Jewel of Central Harlem and Frederick Douglass Academy High School, my alma mater and that of notable Central Harlem residents such as Charles B. Rangel and James Baldwin. The south eastern boundaries must extend to 110th street to include Martin Luther King Towers which is famously known for the King Dome, one of Central Harlem's most beloved and storied outdoor recreational facilities.

I support the newly proposed eastern boundaries of the 70th AD which rightfully reinsert the Mount Morris park district into the 70thAD. Mount Morris Park is one of Central Harlem's most historic rows. I currently live on 122nd Street between Lennox and Mount Morris Park famously known as "Doctors Row". Doctor's Row was built at the turn of the century and was an early enclave for black professionals in Central Harlem. These boundaries would create a coherent overlap with Central Harlem's Manhattan Community Board District 10 and City Council District 9. I want to again thank the commission for the opportunity to provide testimony and urge you to revise the lines and maintain the integrity of the 70th Assembly District and the plurality of the African American vote in Manhattan's only predominantly black community.

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