

NYIRC Testimony - Laura Ying Liu
Given on 2/7/2023 at the Hunter College Hearing

Good afternoon!

Thank you to all the Commissioners for your service! And thank you for this opportunity to speak. My name is Laura Liu. I have been a resident of Scarsdale in Westchester County since 2009. I strongly support keeping the Edgemont area of Greenburgh in District 88, which also includes Scarsdale. I understand that the 2022 Assembly Map is provisional, and would like to urge the Commission to keep Edgemont in District 88 permanently at the end of the provisional period.

As an active member in the community, I currently serve on the Board of the Scarsdale Public Library, multiple school committees as well as Asian American and Pacific Islander, or AAPI community groups. Edgemont and Scarsdale share a long border, the same train station, same demographics, same local newspaper, and the same zip code. There is a long history of these two areas being highly cohesive sister neighborhoods, and they are essentially one and the same housing market.

More importantly, Edgemont and Scarsdale combined have the largest AAPI community in all of Westchester County. It will be hugely beneficial to have Edgemont and Scarsdale together in one district, so we can have the same representation in the state legislature and our community can work together and actively engage in public life. Nationwide and statewide, the AAPI communities are underrepresented in civic and political spaces. As relative newcomers to these spaces, AAPI voices are just beginning to be recognized. In the face of anti-Asian hate sentiments and geopolitical tensions globally, our community faces many severe challenges. The stereotype to see all Asians as perpetual foreigners, not full Americans, still affects many people. In suburban areas, our numbers are nowhere near as large as in the city, so it's even more important not to divide and dilute us. It's great that we have many bustling Asian businesses here, ranging from restaurants, groceries to professional services, and many cultural organizations, language schools, and houses of worship. But we have low representation on town boards and councils, neighborhood associations, voter engagement and many other areas of public life. I can't overstate the value of keeping this community of interest together. It will be a big boost to community engagement.

In closing, I would like to urge the Commission to make it permanent that Edgemont stays in District 88.