



EMILY GALLAGHER
Assembly Member 50th District

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February 14, 2023

New York Independent Redistricting Commission:

I represent North Brooklyn's 50th District in the New York State Assembly, where I have lived for nearly two decades. Prior to my election, I was a public historian and community organizer. Over the past two decades and beyond, Williamsburg and Greenpoint were regarded as sister neighborhoods—while they sometimes hold petty rivalries, we regard ourselves as a unified family, sharing a unified purpose, school districts, community-based organizations, and social groups. If you are a local, you do not regard Williamsburg and Greenpoint as separate communities: they are two parts of a whole.

Greenpoint has always been bordered by Newtown Creek to the North and East, and Meeker Ave to the south. This border goes back to the colonial era. In fact, Greenpoint, the core of District 50, was Greenpoint long before Brooklyn was Brooklyn. The northernmost area of Brooklyn has been known as one village since it was founded in the early 1700s. Before Brooklyn unification, Greenpoint, following the boundaries that are now District 50, was known as Ward 17 when it joined Brooklyn in 1855. It is rare for a community to have such a longstanding continuity as a political district. The IRC would be severing a historic boundary for the first time ever.

It makes good sense to keep both halves of Greenpoint together beyond its history. Both communities were centers of industry at the turn of the 20th century, which resulted in terrible health impacts and pollution that we are still fighting to clean up to this day. In this past year, we had an additional area identified as a Superfund site in the portion of Greenpoint that the IRC is proposing to sever and attach to District 38. We are planning a great deal of work to make certain that the Superfund site is cleaned up and the health impacts are closely monitored. Given that we have other Superfund sites in District 50, it is useful to maintain the same Assemblymember liaising with the EPA and other organizations to make sure this is prioritized.

Williamsburg and Greenpoint were rezoned in 2005 and have been struggling with the impacts of rapid luxury development together. Additionally, in 2021, New York City identified McGuinness Blvd for a major redesign, and my office has been

working closely with constituents from both sides of the Blvd as well as the industrial community and the Dept of Transportation. It would be simpler for one elected official in the Assembly to be responsible for the oversight of both of these projects, especially since District 38 has many additional neighborhoods in a completely separate borough to look after.

Greenpoint is a strong, unified community that exists despite McGuinness Boulevard, built only in the 1950s around the era of Robert Moses highway projects. Artificially divided by the boulevard and the BQE, Williamsburg and Greenpoint have fought hard to maintain their singular community identity– both a community of interest, given the environmental justice concerns and the strongly identified local immigrant communities, as well as a historic community. The Eastern portion of Greenpoint is historically underserved– it is where the most industry exists in the district and has many special concerns. It would perpetuate negligence towards this section of Brooklyn if it were haphazardly tagged onto an overwhelmingly Queens district, detached from its historic community.

During the 2022 redistricting process, the District 50 community fought to be kept whole. We managed to trim the district so that it contained the right number of constituents within its border, lines which were universally embraced across ideology. To divide Greenpoint is a reckless decision that will impact our community's future forever.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Emily Gallagher". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Assemblymember Emily Gallagher
50th District