

JOHNNY ORTIZ
COUNCILMAN
TOWN OF HAVERSTRAW

February 3, 2023

Dear Commissioners:

I am writing to you to express my deep-seated concerns regarding any changes to the current boundary lines of Assembly District 96. This district has always been comprised of the Town of Haverstraw and the Town of Clarkstown, where we have enjoyed the representation of 1 Assembly person together. On behalf of the people of Haverstraw, who I have represented in different capacities for over 3 years as a councilman and proud to be the first Dominican to serve as Councilman in Haverstraw, we are urging you not to divide our Towns in the new redistricting map. We understand that there was even one plan that would have divided the Town of Haverstraw. This would be completely contrary to the Community of Interest.

The Town of Haverstraw, with the Villages of Haverstraw and West Haverstraw, share in a common citizenship since our inception. We have enjoyed being the gateway to every immigrant group coming to America. We are a true melting pot throughout our Town. The Town of Haverstraw's services are intertwined with the Villages of Haverstraw, West Haverstraw and parts of the Village of Pomona. We share the same school district, police department, wastewater treatment system, recreation facilities and activities, paramedics and ambulance corps. Together, the Town and Villages host many events with the school district such as the Latin Festival, Latin Night, Black History Month, Juneteenth, Dancing Under the Stars, North Rockland Family Charity Sports Day and North Rockland Community 5K Fun Run (where we have raised over \$350,000 for families in need in the Haverstraw community), the North Rockland Youth Police Academy, Badges for Baseball, Fourth of July Fireworks and Celebration, Dominican Independence Day Flag Raising Ceremony, free meals for those in need on Thanksgiving and Christmas


hosted by the Town and two Villages and our Annual Volunteer Firefighters and Ambulance Corps Recognition Evening.

We have taken great pains to ensure our Police Department represents our Haverstraw community. We have one of the most diverse Police Departments in the State of New York. We have sponsored Drug Court which has been extremely successful, which gives youth a second chance, Youth Explorer's where Officers meet with the youth of our community and volunteer for different events and two School Resource Officers who on a daily basis interact with the students of all nationalities in our schools. Our Youth Officer works with students and families on different challenges that they are having in our community. Unlike other communities, Haverstraw's Town and Villages have provided affordable housing for young couples, senior citizens and families, more than any other Town in Rockland County. We are the only Town that passed the Tenant Protection Act in three major apartment complexes.

We have always had an excellent working relationship with the Town of Clarkstown. We have shared many municipal services together. Some of these services are Police, Highway, recreation, paramedics, ambulance corps. and fire departments. Together our voice and representation of our shared Assembly person has brought much needed grants and programs to our residents. To undo this would significantly impact our minority population which depends upon these services that have been provided by our Assembly person. If the Commission cares about the representation of a community that is one of the most diverse in the State of New York, you will leave our Assembly District boundary lines intact.

Sincerely,

JOHNNY ORTIZ
Councilman



02/03/2023