To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing on behalf of my neighbors and myself about the proposed NY Assembly Redistricting Plan for the 44th Assembly District and specifically the committee’s decision to place portions of the neighborhoods of Windsor Terrace and Kensington in two different Assembly Districts, the 44th and the 51st. We believe both neighborhoods should be wholly within the 44th AD as they have been for over 30 years. I recognize the challenges of laying new district lines and that the committee is focusing on balancing the constituents in the districts for more even representation and I acknowledge your hard work. I was unable to attend the in person meeting with the districting committee but I watched it in its entirety online and I appreciate how well the commissioners listened to the folks giving testimony and your invitation to submit further comment online. As someone who is making these changes from outside the neighborhood, I want to give you the perspective of a 20 year resident of Windsor Terrace and hope that you’ll take the take the time to read to my concerns and reconsider these changes.

The new boundaries of the map have split the neighborhood of Windsor Terrace into two separate assembly districts. My side of Windsor Terrace is being rolled into District 51 the bulk of which is comprised of Sunset Park and Red Hook two areas, which are geographically removed from Windsor Terrace due to our neighborhood’s border with the 478-acre Greenwood Cemetery. This will undoubtedly result in poorer representation for the folks who live in the small section of Windsor Terrace that is bounded by Prospect Park West, McDonald Avenue, Fort Hamilton Parkway and the Prospect Expressway.

According to the New York State Independent Redistricting Commission Website

*"A community of interest is a population which shares enough social and economic interests of importance that suggest said community should be included in a single district for effective and fair representation. These might include similar standards of living, shared methods and patterns of transportation, or similar economic and societal concerns. The commission shall consider the maintenance of cores of existing districts, of pre-existing political subdivisions, including counties, cities, and towns, and of communities of interest."*

The decision to put portions of both Windsor Terrace and Kensington into different Assembly Districts divides two long established and discrete communities with common interests, demographics and a history of positive civic activism. This is contrary to your stated goals of keeping a population that shares social and economic interests united for fair representation.

Windsor Terrace is a small, primarily residential neighborhood bounded by [Prospect Park](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prospect_Park,_Brooklyn) on the east and northeast, [Park Slope](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Park_Slope) at Prospect Park West, [Green-Wood Cemetery](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Green-Wood_Cemetery), and [Borough Park](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Borough_Park,_Brooklyn) at McDonald Avenue on the northwest, west, and southwest, and [Kensington](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kensington,_Brooklyn) at Caton Avenue on the south. Sandwiched between Prospect Park and Greenwood Cemetery this isolation gives it a unique character and small town feel. It is an old Brooklyn neighborhood that was first developed in the 1800s. Many residents are from working class families that have lived here for generations. In the 1950s Robert Moses’ Prospect Expressway cut through Windsor Terrace, and while the expressway remains a wound running through the heart of the neighborhood, geographically the two sides are united by bike and footbridges that residents traverse multiple times a day to get to schools, the subway and the grocery store.

The majority of District 51, where the new map proposes to redistrict this section of Windsor Terrace, is located in Red Hook and Sunset Park. Neither of those neighborhoods is contiguous to Windsor Terrace with the 478-acre Greenwood Cemetery separating Windsor Terrace from Sunset Park. In addition to being geographically removed from Windsor Terrace, neither Sunset Park nor Red Hook is easily accessible by transit to Windsor Terrace residents. Unless you own a private car, getting to Sunset Park from Windsor Terrace requires taking the train 4 stops towards Manhattan and switching lines to the R and riding multiple stops back into Brooklyn. Consequently if you live in Windsor Terrace you are more likely to shop and socialize in Windsor Terrace or the nearby neighborhoods of Kensington or Park Slope areas that are easily accessible by foot, the 67/69 bus or the F/G train that unite the neighborhood. Our children are zoned to go to nearby schools in the other side of Windsor Terrace that will now be in a new assembly district. Our local fire station and the many parks, businesses and amenities we enjoy will soon be in another district.

I mapped out the new district using the <https://districtr.org/plan> linked on the NY redistricting site and discovered that our portion of Windsor Terrace bounded by Prospect Park West, McDonald Avenue, Fort Hamilton Parkway and the Prospect Expressway has an estimated 4,475 residents based on the previous census data vs. the over 105,000 residents of Sunset Park and Red Hook. By necessity the assemblyperson representing District 51 will be more focused on the needs of the bulk of their constituents in two neighborhoods that meet the definition of other communities of interest. We are hardworking New Yorkers who pay our taxes and deserve to have our community’s needs represented in Albany.

Our current representative, Robert Carroll was born in District 44 and understands the area and the needs of the people. Our needs are aligned with the rest of Windsor Terrace and the greater Kensington area, which remains in District 44. In terms of city council representation our portion of Windsor Terrace remains in Council 39. The city council lines recognize that we are a united community. I hope you will consider redrawing the lines so we can be united with the rest of our neighborhood and community and don’t lose our voice in Albany.

As you look to balance district sizes and preserve communities of interest, my suggestion would be to restore more of the Sunset Park district to Assembly District 51. The new district lines shift the avenue block that borders Sunset Park between 6th and 7th avenue into a new district. Restoring those few blocks that all clearly have an interest in the needs and challenges of the park itself would allow you to reunite our section of Windsor Terrace with the rest of the neighborhood in District 44 and to ensure that District 44 remained the correct size, some of the new blocks added in the more northern region of the district could be removed and reunited with their previous district. I also created a map of how I see Assembly District 44 could be drawn: <https://districtr.org/plan/175056>. The district that I drew is just under 134k constituents but within the allowed variance.

Thank you for your time and consideration.