

Testimony for New York State Independent Redistricting Commission

November 8, 2021

Dear New York State Independent Redistricting Commission members:

I write with the recommendation that Westchester County be kept unified. Westchester is a distinct county where individuals and families from a multitude of countries, languages, religions and beliefs have made their home and families receive services at all levels of government. I generally agree with the Westchester League of Women Voters in that maps should be drawn to align communities of interest. That should be the priority.

CD16 should completely include New Rochelle and Pelham and should be extended north to Carmel and Brewster. New Rochelle and Pelham are natural extension of the sound shore area and there are major commonalities between those villages and towns all along the sound shore including bilingual healthcare services that are offered at low cost as well as not-for-profit agencies that service Brewster, Carmel, Mount Kisco Port Chester, Mamaroneck and New Rochelle. For example, Neighbors Link is a not-for profit agency in Mt. Kisco that serves lower income populations of Mt. Kisco, Bedford, through Port Chester. The Community Resource Center (previously the Hispanic Resource Center) is a not for profit serving all individuals from Port Chester all the way down to New Rochelle and Mount Vernon. In addition, United Community Center of Westchester is located in New Rochelle and serves the populations of Port Chester, Mamaroneck, New Rochelle, Pelham, Yonkers and Mount Vernon. Also, the state family court in New Rochelle serves the populations including New Rochelle and Mount Vernon.

There is great importance in recognizing the southern border of Westchester as a natural border as we have vastly different sales tax, property and income tax structures in Westchester from the Bronx.

CD 17 should be a Hudson Rivertown congressional district, including White Plains, down to the border of Yonkers with the Bronx allowing the congressperson to represent the community at either side of the river. The area comprises individuals and families who share major commonalities including bilingual healthcare services and transportation lines that travel north to south (ie. metro north). There are not-for-profit organizations that serve the community from White Plains all the way to Tarrytown, Sleepy Hollow, Ossining and Peekskill. For example, El Centro Hispano is a not-for profit organization that serves these communities. The Mario Cuomo Bridge also ties these communities together. Where flooding occurs on either side of the river, it would be most impactful if one congressperson represented both sides of the river to address mitigation.

Lastly, Yonkers assembly district representation should be divided into two and not three districts.

Thank you,

Karen Beltran
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