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November 24, 2021

Dear Commissioners

I'm a registered voter in the 17th Congressional District, in the Village of Croton-on-Hudson, Town of Cortlandt. Thank you for your efforts to draw fair voting districts and for inviting public comments.

The current and proposed maps divides Westchester County's river communities contained within the towns of Cortlandt, Ossining and Greenburgh. Indeed, the Town of Greenburgh itself is divided in the current map.

I believe this is a mistake because the river towns constitute both a common community of interest and shared identity. The river towns are connected by the Old Croton Aqueduct, Hudson River Metro North Line and Routes 9/9a. The River Journal newspaper covers Peekskill, Croton, Ossining, Briarcliff, Sleepy Hollow, Tarrytown, Irvington. The river towns, which are served by Con Edison, are also on the same electrical service which is not the case with our neighbors to the east who are served by New York State Electric & Gas.

My suggestion today is that all of Westchester's river towns be included in the same congressional district. On big issues like mitigating the impacts of climate change, improving infrastructure, improving mass transit and protecting the Hudson, it makes sense that the river towns share a congressional representative.

For these reasons, I encourage the Commission to adopt a map similar to the one submitted by Suzanne Berger, which keeps the river towns together. I think the Berger map is more consistent with the realities of life in Westchester County—specifically, that communities are primarily connected by North/South transportation arteries and these physical connections create a basis for shared economic & political interest. Therefore, it makes sense to try to keep these communities together for the purposes of federal representation.

Thank you,

Brian Pugh