January 30, 2023

Dear Commissioner Jenkins and Members of the Assembly Redistricting Committee:

 I have been a resident of the hamlet of Mahopac, which is located in the town of Carmel, for nearly 40 years. My remarks are related primarily to the town of Carmel, which would be split into two Assembly Districts under the current proposed redistricting plan.

Created in 1795 and having a a population of 33,710, the town of Carmel houses over one third of the population of Putnam County. The county seat of Putnam County is located in the hamlet of Carmel, while the town offices for the three hamlets, Carmel, Mahopac and Mahopac Falls, are located in Mahopac. They are hamlets of one town, not separate villages. It is here that the building, assessment, taxation, recreation, zoning and planning functions reside as well as the headquarters of the Town of Carmel Police Department. The town functions as a whole of the three hamlets, with like character and interests that include such services as water, sewer and transportation.

The county has two main roads. Route 6, a state road, is the main transportation route of the town of Carmel. Route 301, which begins in Carmel and is the main east/west roadway for the county would also be cut into two Assembly districts. Your proposal would unnecessarily complicate any discussion or planning for repairs, improvements, safety, traffic or other.

Splitting the town into two Assembly Districts would make the town, the school districts and the residents’ relationship to state lawmakers more difficult and confusing. Many children, who live in the Carmel hamlet zip code, attend the Mahopac Schools and the reverse. If a parent living in Carmel with a child in school in Mahopac, has a problem that requires contact with their Assembly member, who do they call? Do they have to call two Assembly members? This is government at its most ridiculous. In Governor Hochul’s budget presentation, she prioritized consolidation of towns, hamlets, villages and departments. This Assembly District proposal complicates any consolidations which could be proposed.

Any redistricting proposal must take into account the transportation routes and the units of local government in order to function efficiently. They should not to be drawn for political expediency. This same distain for the largest town in our county was exhibited in the unconstitutional gerrymander in which the town of Carmel was singled out to be represented by a Congressman from the Bronx! Ideally, this small County should be treated as a whole. At the very least, the Town of Carmel should be kept together, in one Assembly District.

Through the current proposal, the designers have deemed our community, our identity and our voice to be irrelevant. We don’t matter.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Alana Sweeny