

*Kings County Public Hearing on Redistricting-  
February 15, 2023- Medgar Evers College*

*Good day, members of the New York State Independent Redistricting Commission.*

My name is JoAnne Challenger, and I am a homeowner residing in the 56th Assembly District. I have lived in my home at 341 Halsey Street for approximately 4 decades. I value the advocacy, legislation and the continuous struggle to ensure residents in my community have decent healthcare, affordable housing and respectable police relationships, by the past and current assemblypersons who have represented my interests in this community of plurality .

**I am here in support of the current 56th assembly redistricting map**, and I implore you to maintain the current lines so that the Bedford Stuyvesant and Crown Heights communities of interest, can maintain a voting strength. I support the current lines that contain the following borders: Nostrand Avenue, Flushing Avenue, Broadway, Howard Avenue, to Putnam Avenue, Ralph Avenue to Bergen Street to Utica, Utica to Prospect Place, Prospect to Troy, Troy to St. Marks, St. Marks to Kingston, Kingston to Bergen, Bergen Street to Nostrand Avenue.

**These lines prevent our community from being unnaturally divided.**

**In the last 10 years, many long-term homeowners have sold** their homes and relocated elsewhere, leaving a plethora of housing stock for purchase. Some homeowners were victims of wrongful sales of their properties. These two factors determine some of the causes of gentrification in Bedford Stuyvesant and Crown Heights; and it is germane for the current residents to continue to work with elected officials to create a cease-and-desist zone to protect homeowners from predatory realtors.

**I oppose the proposed map created by the IRC**, because it will reduce the already depleted Black population from 52% to 46%. In addition, we will lose longstanding allies in Crown Heights in small business development, arts and culture. Lastly, we will lose our relationship with Community Board 8 who we have common interests and share purpose for community development.

*Thank you for your attention and the opportunity to bear witness. It is my hope that you will use my testimony towards your decision in this critical issue of redistricting.*