The following comments coincide with my oral testimony on 2/28/23. As the former Assemblymember, I represented AD21 for two terms, from 2019-2022. This experience gave me some important insight on how best the district can be represented in this year's redrawn lines.

Aside from a few minor issues, the proposed map for AD21 is a major improvement of the map that was drawn in 2022. I will explain the key reasons why I support the proposed map as well as discuss the parts of the newly drawn district that make sense.

Equal Population with Neighboring Assembly Districts

I was pleased to see the proposed map for AD21 revert back to a population of 132,456. The most serious flaw in the map drawn in 2022, was that AD21 was given a population of 139,710. This was about 7000-8000 more than neighboring Assembly Districts and much more than the average size of an assembly district. I anticipated that representing an additional 7000 constituents would definitely put a challenge on resources: presenting a need for increased staff, raising the cost for constituent mailings, certificates to recognize local achievements, etc., and require much more time to represent the entire district equitably and sufficiently.

Applauding the IRC's Unification of AD21 School Districts

I was pleased to see that your proposed map made a concerted effort to consolidate school districts. I believe this is the best way to remove political gerrymandering because school districts are fixed lines, known to local residential taxpayers, and often the central civic relationship in many Long Island communities. Last year, my legislative counsel and I drew a proposed map using school districts as our guide and felt this not only was a pragmatic way to redraw districts, but also benefited the school districts as well as the constituents. An effort should be made to include an average number of school districts in each Assembly district when possible. Consolidating school districts helps achieve many of the goals important to the IRC such as creating equitable maps for all. In my experience as a state legislator, representing a high percentage or the entirety of a school district is more effective because state representatives must advocate for funding for each district, as well as allocate funding to the school districts as part of the annual state budget process. It is not beneficial for a district to have only 10%-25% of their residents represented by an individual assembly member, given the governing reality that often a member needs to allocate resources to districts that they represent a much higher percentage of in order to best serve the greatest number of their constituents. Having districts divided among two or more members often compromises the ability to provide adequate resources and also presents a challenge in residents being able to hold their elected representatives accountable. Assembly Members often meet with administrators, Board of Education Members and the PTA leadership of their school districts, attend events at their local schools, and endeavor to help resolve school districts' issues with other state governmental entities. As a result, it compromises limited public resources and time if too many school districts are included into a single Assembly district.

Therefore, I fully support the inclusion of Lakeview in AD21, given that historically the Village of Malverne and the shared Malverne School District has been represented within AD21 already. The IRC's proposed map included Lakeview in its first draft, as did prior drafts proposed last year during the 2022 redistricting process. In my experience as a local elected official, government staffer and citizen, this change makes sense because Lakeview makes up about 40% of the Malverne School District. Carving Lakeview out of AD21 was the most obvious gerrymander on the south shore of Nassau County for the past decade. When you view the existing map, the regions to the south, west and east are included in AD21 but Lakeview is carved out. If Lakeview was included in AD21, it would be ideal because one Assemblymember could allocate support to the school district while also advocating for and providing resources to the Lakeview Public Library, Lakeview Volunteer Fire Department, the local Nassau County Police precinct and the parks serving Lakeview.

I was also happy to see that last year's expansion of AD21 into the Village of Valley Stream was not included in your proposed map. This addition in the 2022 map not only increased the population of AD21, again compromising the resources of AD21, but it also gave a bigger share of the Valley Stream School Districts, of which there are 3 in total, to AD21. This unique situation and the requirements to represent such a large and diverse community in good faith would compromise the resources of funding and time to provide fair representation for any Assembly member. The IRC's proposed map makes sense by removing the Village of Valley Stream and the lion's share of the Valley Stream School Districts to the neighboring AD. It is important to note that although the villages of Lynbrook and Malverne are partially served by 2 of the 3 Valley Stream School Districts, those clearly established communities are distinct from the Village of Valley Stream.

Suggested Improvements to the First Draft of AD21
The minor issues I have with the IRC's proposed map are as follows:
I favor the Assembly's 2022 map's changes to the eastern part of the district, which included more but still not all of the Village of Freeport served by the Baldwin School District. I believe this action was taken by the Assembly because 84% of the Baldwin School District was represented by AD21 prior to the 2022 redrawn map. I would advocate for the IRC to go one step further and include all residents in the Village of Freeport included in the Baldwin School District within a redrawn AD21. I believe that a case can be made for unifying all of the Baldwin School District within AD21.

Additionally, I favored the decision reflected in the 2022 map to add the small area of North Baldwin surrounding Coes Neck Park to AD21. Many constituents living here told me, this past year, that they felt cut off from the rest of Baldwin in AD18 since Hempstead is the focal point of this district. They explained that they identified with Baldwin and South Hempstead and therefore felt their common interests could be better met by being included in AD21. Although some of this area is in the Uniondale School District, Baldwin is otherwise an unincorporated hamlet with a distinct shared community of interest centered around their public school district and the Grand Avenue corridor running from the Southern State Parkway southward to Baldwin Harbor. The IRC's

current proposed map reverted this area of Baldwin back to AD18, but I recommend keeping this area of North Baldwin in AD21.

The following lists show the percentages of School Districts and villages and hamlets represented by AD21 prior to the 2022 Redrawn Maps.

<u>**Percentage of School Districts Represented by AD21**</u>

1. Baldwin 83.7%
2. East Rockaway 48.9%
3. Franklin Square 10.4
4. Freeport 26.2
5. Hempstead-5%
6. Hewlett-Woodmere-7%
7. Lynbrook- 81.9%
8. Malverne 60.1%
9. Oceanside-8.7%
10. Rockville Centre 96.8%
11. Uniondale 4%
12. Valley Stream 13 -23.1%
13. Valley Stream 24 - 8.4%
14. West Hempstead 35%

<u>**Population Breakdown in AD21**</u>

1. Baldwin 77.5%
2. Baldwin Harbor 100%
3. East Rockaway 64.8%
4. Franklin Square 10.3 %
5. Freeport 47.4%
6. Hempstead-1.5%
7. Hewlett-36.7%
8. Lakeview-.4%
9. Lynbrook- 99.9%
10. North Lynbrook 100%
11. Malverne 100%
12. Malverne Park Oaks-100%
13. Oceanside-16.1%
14. Rockville Centre 99.9%
15. South Hempstead 100%
16. Valley Stream 0%
17. West Hempstead 38.6%