

Dear Commissioners,

Thank you for incorporating public comments into the Independent Redistricting Commission's process and giving us a voice in how we are represented in our government.

I am Marjorie Hsu, one of the co-leaders of Rivertowns Vote, chair of the Sleepy Hollow Planning Board and co-chair of the Westchester County Asian American Advisory Board. I reside in Sleepy Hollow and am a registered voter in the 17th Congressional District and 40th NYS Senate District.

The coalition known as Rivertown Votes held a virtual meeting on July 28, 2021 to discuss concerns for the towns and villages on the eastern shore of the Hudson River. We have a keen interest in preserving the Rivertowns as one community of interest, including Ardsley, Briarcliff Manor, Croton, Dobbs Ferry, Hastings, Greenburgh, Greystone, Irvington, Mount Pleasant, Ossining, Peekskill, Sleepy Hollow, Tarrytown.

The 2020 census quantifies the strength of our diversity, many Rivertowns have large and growing Spanish-speaking residents. These constituents need similar services, including language access, high speed broadband, public transportation, food security and affordable housing.

Our communities are bound together by:

- Old Croton Aqueduct
- Hudson River Metro North Line
- Sleepy Hollow and Tarrytown share a school district, Warner Library as well as a zip code, 10591
- Hudson Independent newspaper covers Sleepy, Tarrytown, Irvington, and Dobbs
- River Journal newspaper covers Peekskill, Croton, Ossining, Briarcliff, Sleepy Hollow, Tarrytown, Irvington
- Routes 9/9a connect the Rivertowns

And most significantly, the Rivertowns are committed to keeping the Hudson River and the many tributaries that feed it safe and accessible to all our residents and wildlife. The CoVid pandemic helped us even better appreciate this treasure as we not only walked the shoreline but also swam and boated on the Hudson these last 18 months. The many parks along the Hudson and its tributaries were equally vital outdoor spaces to our Rivertowns residents to safely hike and walk with neighbors and pets.

NY Senate District 40 is one example of gerrymandering with boundaries oddly stretched and unevenly cut through Westchester, Putnam and Dutchess counties. SD40 needs to keep the Rivertowns intact as a community of interest. Currently, the Town of Ossining has been gerrymandered into SD38 and should be remapped into SD40.

The Village of Sleepy Hollow, the southern most boundary of the district needs to remain in SD40. The Village (and the Town of Mt. Pleasant) has been moved in and out through various state and county districts. While the Putnam County portion of SD40 is at least within the Hudson River Watershed, the northern end of the district -- the cat's tail in Dutchess County -- runs along the Connecticut border and should be mapped into another district.

Thank you for your efforts to improve voting districts and for inviting public comments.