

**Testimony of
Catherine McVay Hughes
Before the
New York State Independent Redistricting Commission for
New York county
Public Hearing:
Hunter College (CUNY) Kaye Playhouse, 695 Park Avenue New York, NY 10065
Wednesday, November 10, 2021, at 3:00 PM**

Thank you for allowing me to testify on Redistricting in Manhattan. I am a 30+ year Financial District Resident of the Congressional 10th District of New York and have been very involved in rebuilding Lower Manhattan after 9/11, and again after Superstorm Sandy in 2012, and now COVID. My full affiliations are below.

We raised our family one block east of the World Trade Center site. We chose to stay in Lower Manhattan to be part of rebuilding and recovery, now for the third time. We stayed because we trusted the continuity provided by our 10th District legislative representation and the leadership of Congressman Nadler and his team.

To understand the importance of this district, here are three critical facts:

First, government action and leadership were central to the recovery after 9/11 and Sandy. Lower Manhattan would be a dead zone today had it not been for concerted, sustained, and effective government response. This was not about "government getting out of the way." The private sector abandoned Lower Manhattan after 9/11 and Sandy, only returning after the government restored essential services and rebuilt business confidence.

Second, Lower Manhattan is an extraordinarily complex mosaic of jurisdictions. All three branches of State government operate here, as well as the City Council, the Borough President, the Mayor, and the Community Board. Lower Manhattan is the linchpin of the MTA regional transit network and home to the second-largest state authority, BPCA; and the bi-state Port Authority operates the Trade Center and the PATH. Nowhere in the country is the organization of government more intertwined.

Third, the current Congressional district has maintained its boundaries for over 40 years. People know it and know that their representative understands the community and its concerns, and most importantly it works.

- Community Boards should not be split between Congressional districts.
- Security continues to be a top priority – NYPD police precincts in Manhattan largely run north/south and not east/west.
- Financial District/South Street Seaport, Battery Park City (BPC) & Tribeca share connections and community resources with the Village, including parks, ballfields, waterfront, and schools. For example, The Empire State Trail is a multi-use trail starting at the tip of Manhattan in BPC and then through Hudson River Park Trust (HRPT) along the Hudson River all the way to the Canadian border, just another reason why Lower Manhattan should

be kept in a West Side Congressional District, and that the UWS and Morningside Heights should be in the same district all the way to the Battery in Lower Manhattan.

- New York's Harbor and the Hudson River unite downtown with the East River – we saw the devastating and costly impacts of Hurricane Sandy and now see the critical need for improved waterfront resiliency, including the dense FiDi-Seaport area where high tide already splashes over the esplanade.

Congressman Nadler has made sure that our community got the services and support that we needed to bring back America's fourth largest business district and its diverse community. We need to have a Member of Congress who understands the complex character of our area, and today's District 10 assures this. Thank you very much.

Affiliations for purposes of disclosure:

Catherine McVay Hughes is currently a member of the Board of Directors for Battery Park City Authority, Lower Manhattan Development Corporation, South Street Seaport Museum, WTC Scientific Technical Advisory Committee, WTC Survivors Steering Committee, NYC's Climate Coalition for the Seaport-Financial District, Financial District Neighborhood Association, CERES Presidents Council, Princeton Climate Institute, Storm Surge Working Group and the External Committee for Princeton University School of Engineering and Applied Science Andlinger Center for Energy and the Environment.

She served as Chair of Manhattan Community Board 1 and its World Trade Center Redevelopment Committee and Governors Island Trustee, Earth Institute at Columbia University Advisory Board, NY Rising Community Reconstruction Program for Southern Manhattan Co-Chair, Downtown Alliance Board, NYC Police Museum Board, The Battery Board, Community Advisory Boards for the WTC Health Registry, Gouverneur Healthcare Services and Community Liaison to the US Environmental Protection Agency WTC Expert Technical Panel in 2003-2004. She holds an MBA from the Wharton School of Business and a Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering from Princeton University.