**Redistricting testimony**

I want to thank the commission for giving me the time to testify:

My name is Joel Kaplan, and I am a member of the Jewish community and reside in Far Rockaway, NY which geographically speaking is at the eastern tip of the Rockaway Peninsula and is immediately adjacent to the Jewish incorporated Villages of Lawrence and the hamlet of Inwood in Nassau County. which both encompass the same communities of interest?

I am the executive director of Yeshiva Darchei Torah which is a Jewish school located in Far Rockaway, but which student population is drawn primarily from Far Rockaway, Bayswater communities in Queens, and the Five Towns communities(Lawrence, Cedarhurst, Inwood, Woodmere and Hewlett)

In very many ways, these communities function as one greater community; common educational institutions, synagogues, community centers, shopping, and so on.

The communities share the same concerns, and issues, and it would make the most sense to have their elected representation where possible be of one voice- one Congressman, one state senator, and one assemblyperson. To dilute or fragment the community would be the wrong thing to do, and to geographically divide the community would be equally wrong.

The Far Rockaway community stands firmly behind their incumbents of Assemblymenber Stacey Pheffer Amato and State Senator Joe Addabbo as they are very attentive to our needs. When this commission redraws the district lines, I ask that you please incorporate all neighborhoods mentioned into their assembly & senatorial districts. The current congressional district combines both Rockaway Jewish communities and parts of the neighboring Jewish communities in Nassau County.

Please make every effort to keep these communities of interest unified. I want to thank the commission for their time in allowing my testimony.