

**Testimony to NY Independent Redistricting
Commission
February 7, 2023**

Dear Chairman Jenkins and Commissioners:

I am Shari Weiner and though today I am testifying as an individual I am co-chair of Community Board 8 Manhattan's Voting Reform Task Force. In that capacity I have thoroughly examined the Commission's proposed redistricting for Manhattan Assembly Districts 73 and 76, both of which overlap the boundaries of CB-8 Manhattan.

I find that the Commission's proposed redistricting moving approximately 60 blocks of the eastern side of Manhattan and Roosevelt Island to a Queens based district does not meet the criteria set forth in the New York State Constitution for redistricting and therefore urge that the

proposed redistricting boundaries for 73AD and 76AD be rejected!

Two of the constitutional criteria being violated are that:

1. A requirement that all districts consist of contiguous territory and be as compact in form practicable;
2. A requirement to consider maintaining the cores of existing districts or pre-existing political sub-divisions and to consider “communities of interest.”

Two-borough districts that have existed in the past have shared “communities of interest” – they have been comprised of neighborhoods that are contiguous, have similar demographics, share similar public transportation, public education and other services. Manhattan, Roosevelt

Island and Queens areas of the proposed 36AD do not have these similarities.

I am concerned that the Manhattan and Roosevelt Island residents moved to the Queens based 36AD will not receive the representation, attention and funding to which they are entitled due to their small percentage of 36AD's population.

As a former elected official myself, I am aware that the attention and priorities of any elected official are naturally directed to the population center of their districts. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume the focus of the newly elected Assembly member for District 36 will be in Queens where the District is based and not in Manhattan.

For these reasons and other so eloquently spoken by residents of Manhattan (including Roosevelt Island), I urge you not to combine the neighborhood of Manhattan including Roosevelt Island with a Queen's based Assembly District. A very similar proposal was recently rejected by the NY Districting Commission tasked with redistricting City Council Districts. I urge you to allow eastern Manhattan and Roosevelt Island remain in Manhattan based Assembly Districts.

Respectfully submitted,

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