To: NY Independent Redistricting Commission

From: Kathy OConnor, resident of Tivoli NY, Dutchess County

Date: 1/30/23

Dear Commissioners -

First, I want to thank you for your service, and I acknowledge the seriousness of your responsibility. What comes out of this redistricting process will have long-lasting repercussions.

I am here to petition that you do NOT sever the Towns of Red Hook and Rhinebeck in Dutchess County, currently in Assembly District 103, from the City of Kingston and its environs across the Hudson River in Ulster County.

We in Tivoli have long-standing community associations with our counterparts across the river. I belong to two organizations (the League of Women Voters of the Mid-Hudson Region and Bard Lifetime Learning Institute) whose members come from both sides of the river, and we have many activities on either side.

As the District is currently joined, we get an advantage of having a greater diversity in the make-up of our common communities. I am so glad my son and his family became residents of Kingston; I can see that my grandson will grow up with the advantages of multi-cultural exposure. With the exception of the Bard College population and migrant farm workers, we are a much more homogenous group in the Northern Dutchess Area.

Our Congressman (CD-18) serves his constituents on both sides of the river. Our State Senator (SD-41) serves her constituents on both sides of the river. Does it not make sense that our Assemblymember (AD-103) would also serve a population long-linked?

I want to point out a couple of things I wish the Commission had done differently. First, the Hudson Valley Regision is quite large, yet you scheduled the only public hearing in our area at the lowest part. It would take me an hour and a half to go in person to the hearing in White Plains; over an hour to travel to the Capital Region in Albany. I know each of you travel many, many miles for these hearings, but I think more consideration for the public in the Mid-Hudson Valley could have be effected.

Second, the proposed maps on your website are very difficult to discern. Light blue highlighted on medium blue is very challenging for these aged eyes of mine to differentiate. The current maps, showing blue on orange, are must easier to see clearly.

I want to close with, once again, thanking you all for your service. Giving attention to 150 State Assembly Districts is an extremely daunting task. It's very encouraging to see Democracy at work.

Sincerely,

Kathy OConnor

Tivoli NY