Thank you for allowing me to provide testimony today. I am Dan Leinung and I currently serve as a member of the New Scotland Town Board.

I would like to provide testimony on the proposed 102nd Assembly district which sprawls from the inner suburbs of Albany on the Hudson River, all the way to the Adirondack park.

I would like to discuss the “community of interest” (or lack thereof) of this district.

Instead of including similar “communities of interest”, the proposal for the 102nd district links two very different areas into the same district by including some of the most suburban areas of upstate New York in Guilderland, New Scotland and Bethlehem with some of the most rural areas in Schoharie, Fulton and Montgomery County. These two parts of the district could not be more different. While the Albany county portion of the district includes many state workers, is growing in population and faces severe development pressures on open space the "western" part of the district is experiencing the opposite, as it is losing population and mainly agricultural.

New Scotland, Bethlehem, and Guilderland form a specific community of interest of growing suburban towns with strong ties to the city of Albany and the surrounding suburbs. Instead of connecting these communities to rural areas to the west, these towns should be connected to other suburban areas in the Albany area, including across the Hudson River in southern Rensselaer and Northern Columbia Counties.

This plan seems to go to great lengths to connect areas that do not share common communities of interest. Several districts (but more specifically the 102 and 107th districts) seem to take portions of suburban communities and then go to great lengths to connect these to more rural areas to the north and west instead of making two districts (one more rural and one more suburban).

Additionally, while I understand the reasons to not split the city of Albany (population of about 100,000), splitting a smaller community, such as Bethlehem (approximate population of about 35,000) doesn't make sense. Splitting a smaller municipality greatly reduces that municipalities impact on representation of the district.

Please reconsider putting the suburban communities of Guilderland, New Scotland and Bethlehem in a sprawling rural district and consider making a district that includes the suburban areas south of the City of Albany.

Thank you,

Dan Leinung

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