

Dear members of the commission,

Hello, my name is Suleima Rivas and I am testifying to ensure the 2021 redistricting committee considers the best interests of Westchester County Residents and understands the microcosm within Westchester County.

I am currently a resident of the village of Mamaroneck but I grew up in the city of New Rochelle. Both of which are in Westchester County. Below are my thoughts the commission should take into consideration when redrawing our districts.

US Congress- Congressional District 16 in New York (Jamaal Bowman)

- Mamaroneck is currently being represented by a congressman who has to balance between representing suburban constituents of Westchester County and residents of New York City because parts of the Bronx are included in our 16th district. However, both suburban residents and city residents live entirely different lives. New York City has their own educational and tax structure, as well as has rules and regulations that are exclusionary to them and not found anywhere else in the State. On top of this, because district 16 is majorly populated by Westchester County residents, it may leave Bronx residents feeling left out in their voices. However, New York City brings in tax revenue and notoriety; therefore, making Bronx residents a possible priority to the congressman as opposed to Westchester County. The point being that both are separate in almost every way yet must share the commonality of one representative who clearly cannot encompass both microcosms simultaneously.

State Upper house- State Senate District 37 in New York (Shelley B Mayer)

- In terms of the State Upper house I propose that central and southern parts of Westchester and all of its sound shore communities be formed as one district, separate from the northern parts of Westchester like Mt. Kisco, Katonah and Bedford Hills. The reason being that although we are all a part of Westchester County, there is still a separate way of living. Northern parts of Westchester are significantly more like the mid-Hudson communities than Southern and central parts of Westchester which reflect more of a suburban hub of New York City, similar to Nassau County. New Rochelle, along with other parts of central and southern parts of Westchester are being marketed as “the city without living in the city” due to its geographical closeness and accessibility to Manhattan. This slogan touted by real estate agents I think perfectly embodies the commonality Central, Southern and Sound Shore communities have which is the investment in NYC matters; such as MTA and subway funding, public safety, sales tax, toll prices etc while maintaining a suburban identity that encompasses a different board of electors, public school governance, property taxes etc. Therefore, I ask that you support a redistricting in the upper house that best reflects the tied nature central, southern and

soundhore areas have while still taking into account the differences these neighborhoods have with northern parts of Westchester County

Thank you for your time and consideration of my request.