**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE IRDC HEARING FOR NOV. 10, 2021**

 **By JANICE OPPENHEIMER**

 **DISTRICT LEADER**

 **67th ASSEMBLY DISTRICT**

My name is Janice Oppenheimer and I am a District Leader representing the 67th Assembly District, Part C of Manhattan’s Upper West Side in the New York State Democratic Committee.

My husband and I live in Lincoln Towers on West End Avenue. We are an integral part of a very vibrant community. The Upper West Side is known for its diversity and progressive politics. It is unique to New York.

It should not be separated and combined with the East Side congressional district as the East Side has it’s own community needs.

 The West Side has shared community facilities such as:

* Subways, with their shared impact on transit and community that run north/south not east/west;
* Elementary and Middle School Zones that do not cross Central Park or run river-to-river;
* Contiguous waterfront parks from the Battery to Riverside Park, including Hudson River Park which runs from Chambers to 59th Street,

My husband and I are Jewish and feel strongly that the West Side, which has one of the largest concentrations of Jews in the United States

should be kept in a single Congressional District.

 We have studied the draft maps for the 10th Congressional District and feel strongly that Morningside Heights be included as its population base -particularly around Columbia University- has more in common with the Upper West Side than Harlem. Morningside Heights should be in MAP J and not MAP Q. Separating Morningside Heights from the Upper West Side would divide a large Jewish and academic population from much of their community.

 The District Maps would be best identified by Letters not named Maps. Named Maps consistently break apart historic communities and political entities and would unacceptably harm communities of interest.

 I urge you to keep the East Side and the West Side of Manhattan as two distinct Congressional Districts. The West Side which is currently known as District 10 would run from Washington Heights to the Battery in Lower Manhattan.

 Thank you.

**Janice Oppenheimer**

 **Democratic District Leader, 67th AD/Part C**