**Testimony to Independent Redistricting Commission (IRC)**

Clyde Lederman— White Plains, November 8, 2021

Good afternoon Commissioners,

I am Clyde Lederman; I am speaking to you a pre-registered voter in the Village of Nyack, Town of Orangetown and as student in the Village of Dobbs Ferry, Town of Greenburgh both of which are in the 17th Congressional District.

As a resident of Nyack and a student in Dobbs Ferry, I understand that unity in political representation between the Hudson River Rivertowns— including the villages of Piermont, Nyack, Upper Nyack and Haverstraw in Rockland, and Sleep Hollow, Tarrytown, Irvington, Dobbs Ferry and Hastings-on-Hudson in Westchester— is vital. Together they share unique climate challenges and diversity, both of which necessitate unified political representation.

These communities face one challenge distinct from the rest of the region: climate resiliency preparation. Due to failures to prepare for increasing severe weather events resulting from climate change, many in the region have been adversely affected; I can personally attest to this as my education has been significantly disrupted as a result. Last year with windstorms and flooding that left my family without power, I was unable to participate in virtual learning for several days. Again, this year on the other side of the Hudson, my school was closed one day this past month for an unprecedented “rain day” due to concerns over flooding and it has been forced to shutter a number of its facilities following flooding over the summer. Without one district that includes all of the Rivertowns, the mounting climate challenges faced by these communities due to their similar geography will lose the political attention it requires. Dividing constituents with common concerns into separate congressional districts will likely politically diluted their influence and be detrimental to climate resiliency preparation. Thus, it is imperative that new district boundaries reflect account for this new climate reality.

These communities share not only challenges, but other demographic similarities as well. For instance, with respect to racial diversity, the Rockland Rivertowns are far less white and racially more diverse than the county at-large. With a population that is upwards of two-thirds Hispanic in Haverstraw and one-half in Sleepy Hollow, whereas all of Rockland is just 18% Hispanic, the Rockland Rivertowns demographically more closely resemble the Westchester Rivertowns than they do the rest of Rockland County. Considering demographic similarities and climate challenges, residents of the Rockland and Westchester County Rivertowns form a community of interest.

Thank You.

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