

82 East 5th Street, Apartment 4R
Brooklyn, NY 11218

February 23, 2023

Independent Redistricting Commission
250 Broadway, 22nd Floor
New York, NY 10007

Testimony related to the 44th Assembly District in Brooklyn

My name is Amanda Ritchie and I live on East 5th Street and Greenwood Avenue with my husband and two children. We have lived in our building in the 44th Assembly District for nearly 13 years, and the newly proposed IRC map of the 44th AD would remove my family and our neighbors from our district. **I strongly object to this proposed change as it will arbitrarily carve us out of a community we have been a part of for over a decade and add us to a new district where our needs and interests will be underserved.**

First, the proposed map would cut us out of the 44th AD by changing the boundary from Green-Wood Cemetery to the Prospect Expressway. **The Prospect Expressway is not a natural boundary in our district as there are multiple pedestrian bridges and overpasses that keep our community connected.** In fact, my family and I cross the Prospect Expressway almost every day, multiple times a day, to access the subway, buses, Prospect Park, stores, friends' houses, etc. It is understandable that the Commission might have looked at the map of our district and perceived the expressway as a dividing line, but take it from someone who has lived in the community a long time that it is not. **Green-Wood Cemetery at McDonald Ave, which has been a boundary in the 44th AD for over 30 years, is a natural boundary in the community and it should remain as such in the final map.**

Second, as long-time constituents in the 44th AD, my neighbors and I have fostered relationships with our local elected officials and organized as a community around our district ties. I am a member of the 44th Assembly District Democratic Committee, in which I participate in voter outreach efforts and other community organizing activities. Some of my neighbors who are similarly involved in community work and would be removed from the proposed 44th AD will be disenfranchised if such a change is approved. **Changing our AD affiliation as proposed will result in disruptions of important community organizing work and threatens the sustainability of work that has been done to this point.**

Finally, the proposed changes would uproot a small portion of residents who have historically been a part of Kensington/Windsor Terrace and move us into the 51st AD which is largely comprised of Sunset Park and Red Hook, a community with very different needs. For example, my neighbors and I are concerned about the proposed changes to truck rerouting off the Prospect Expressway due to upcoming BQE repairs. We discussed these concerns with our Assembly Member in the 44th district, Robert Carroll, who organized a meeting for us with the

NYC DOT and helped us communicate our concerns. If we were part of the 51st AD, it is unlikely our concerns would be as effectively addressed since the remainder of that district has very different traffic and transportation patterns and would not be affected in the same way as us. Furthermore, our slice of the district is already underrepresented in terms of community board representation on CB7, which is predominantly composed of Sunset Park and thus focused on issues related to its commercial strips, large industrial area and residents' needs. **Moving our portion of the community into the 51st AD would serve to diminish our voices and lessen our ability to advocate for our community.**

I hope you will listen to the concerns of my neighbors and I and keep our community together by maintaining the current boundaries of the 44th Assembly District. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Amanda Ritchie