

Testimony of New Rochelle Mayor Noam Bramson

Thank you for this opportunity to submit written testimony with regard to the redistricting of State legislative boundaries within the City of New Rochelle.

New Rochelle has several distinct regions and neighborhoods. When neighborhoods are divided between multiple districts, it becomes difficult for residents to know who represents them. While we recognize that it is necessary to divide our city as a whole among different districts, neighborhoods within New Rochelle should be kept whole within a single district to the extent possible. Unfortunately, all current proposals needlessly divide neighborhoods:

The Assembly Letters plan divides Rochelle Heights, one of two neighborhoods that form the Rochelle Park-Rochelle Heights Historic District. The Letters plan would split the historic district community in half.

The Assembly Names plan also divides the Rochelle Park-Rochelle Heights Historic District and divides the Beechmont neighborhood as well.

The Senate Letters plan cuts the entire North End of the city in half, dividing the Wykagyl Crossways neighborhood where the two districts meet and separating the North End neighborhoods from each other.

The Senate Names plan also divides the North End, placing most of the North End in one district and dividing three North End neighborhoods in the process: Paine Heights, Beechmont and Huguenot Park.

In addition to well-defined neighborhoods, New Rochelle also has six neighborhood elementary schools, each of which constitutes a community of interest. The parents and families of students at these schools can best advocate for their needs when they share a common legislator. While it may be impractical to draw districts that entirely avoid divisions of these attendance areas, the boundaries of these neighborhood school zones should be respected where possible. Unfortunately, once again, all four proposed State Legislative plans divide elementary school attendance areas:

The Assembly Letters plan divides the attendance area for the Ward elementary school.

The Assembly Names plan divides the attendance areas for the Davis, Ward and Webster elementary schools.

The Senate Letters plan divides the attendance areas for the Davis, Ward and Webster elementary schools.

The Senate Names plan divides the attendance areas for the Davis, Ward and Webster elementary schools.

Redistricting is always a difficult challenge, involving a balance of multiple legitimate considerations. As you work to provide fair and effective representation, I trust that you will give due consideration to this input, address the deficiencies noted above, and ensure that the interests of the people of New Rochelle are fully respected.

Thank you for your consideration.