

NEW YORK STATE
LEGISLATIVE TASK FORCE ON DEMOGRAPHIC RESEARCH AND
REAPPORTIONMENT

PUBLIC HEARING
CONGRESSIONAL AND STATE LEGISLATIVE REDISTRICTING

Queens Borough Hall, Rm 213
120-55 Queens Boulevard
Kew Gardens, New York
Tuesday, February 7, 2012
3:00 p.m.

Congressional/State Legislative Redistricting 2-7-12

TASK FORCE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SENATOR MICHAEL F. NOZZOLIO, Co-Chair

ASSEMBLY MEMBER JOHN J. MCENENY, Co-Chair

SENATOR MARTIN M. DILAN

ASSEMBLY MEMBER ROBERT OAKS

DEBRA LEVINE

ROMAN HEDGES

WELQUIS LOPEZ

LEWIS HOPPE

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2 (The public hearing commenced at 3:14
3 a.m.)

4 ASSEMBLY MEMBER JACK McENENY, CHAIRMAN
5 LEGISLATIVE TASK FORCE ON DEMOGRAPHIC RESEARCH
6 AND REAPPORTIONMENT: Clear the aisle.
7 Photographers please clear the aisle.

8 My name is Jack McEneny, I'm a member of
9 the Assembly, co-chair of this committee known as
10 LATFOR, which is the Legislative Task Force on
11 Redistricting. I am joined by my equivalent and
12 colleague co-chairman Mike Nozzolio from the
13 Senate. We are also joined on the Assembly side
14 by Dr. Roman Hedges, who is the citizen
15 participant. To his left is the Co-Executive
16 Director Lou Hoppe (phonetic). We may be joined
17 later by somebody who's working now in Albany and
18 that would be Bob Oaks. I'll introduce him
19 should he come here in time. And I'll pass it
20 over now to Senator Nozzolio.

21 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you very much
22 Assemblyman McEneny.

23 Good afternoon, ladies and gentleman.
24 My name is Mike Nozzolio and I am honored to be

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2 the co-chair of this task force, along with
3 Assemblyman McEneny. The Senate representatives
4 on this task force are to my right Senator Martin
5 Dilan. To his right Welquis Ray Lopez and to his
6 right the executive director of the commission
7 and that's Debra Levine.

8 This is wonderful to see such a great
9 turnout today. It's democracy in action and it
10 is the result of a suggestion made in Queens by
11 some of you who are here today. Our second
12 hearing in Queens, our 18th -- 19th hearing
13 altogether across every corner of the state.

14 The suggestion made in Queens was that
15 we have a meeting later in the day, in the
16 afternoon. And this was made by members of the
17 Asian American committee from Queens who said,
18 "Let's have this testimony opened up in the
19 afternoon, and evening," and we will be here
20 through this process.

21 The process we ask everyone, including
22 the elected officials to keep this testimony
23 orally to five minutes. Your written testimony
24 can be 500 pages, but that written testimony will

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2 be submitted for the official record of the task
3 force. Your testimony is being recorded; there's
4 a camera there and a camera there that will
5 record your testimony as part of the official
6 record of the LATFOR review.

7 I'd just like to say two more things: t
8 the first is that the lines that were put out are
9 meant for your review. We know that no plan is
10 perfect and that the purpose of the hearings is
11 to take testimony from those that are most
12 affected to hear their opinions. I'm also very
13 proud, from the Senate perspective, again an
14 issue that was germinated here in this room by
15 members of the Asian American community from
16 Queens who told us last year that they wish to
17 have a Senate seat with a majority Asian
18 population. The lines as presented establish
19 that objective for the very first time in our New
20 York State's history. There is an Asian majority
21 district, Senate district in Queens as a part of
22 this proposal.

23 Other than our Borough President
24 Marshall, and we appreciate very much your

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2 courtesies, your attention, your support, all the
3 work that took place to -- that you and your
4 staff engaged in to prepare this meeting room
5 today we are extremely grateful. We hear you and
6 we are going to leave it up to the elected
7 officials from the state, that normally it is a
8 courtesy that legislators present to legislators
9 when there is a hearing that legislators receive
10 the opportunity to choose when they speak. We
11 are going to leave it up to the senators and
12 assemblymen in this room, who, whether they
13 should speak in early order or whether or not
14 they should defer to the rest of the community.
15 That will be the senators and the assemblymen's
16 decision, not the panels'. Is that understood by
17 everyone?

18 Lastly we ask you to keep your comments,
19 again, to five minutes so that everyone has that
20 opportunity to speak. Thank you very much,
21 Madame Borough President. Again especially
22 thanks to you and your staff for the courtesies
23 you've extended us.

24 Oh, I'm sorry, Senator Dilan would like

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2 to speak.

3 SENATOR MARTIN DILAN: I would just like
4 to say good afternoon to all and I'm very eager
5 to listen to what you have to say. And I just
6 sincerely hope that this panel does listen to you
7 and that your voices does get heard by this panel
8 and produces a final product that is fair for
9 all. Thank you.

10 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Mr. Lopez, Mr. Hedges
11 any comments? Without further ado thank you
12 Madame Borough President.

13 ASSEMBLY MEMBER McENENY: The Honorable
14 Helen Marshall.

15 MS. HELEN MARSHALL, QUEENS BOROUGH
16 PRESIDENT: Thank you. I'm not going to read
17 from notes because (inaudible).

18 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Madame? We really
19 need you to speak into the microphone, Helen.

20 MS. MARSHALL: Well we need one that we
21 can pick up because I want to look at you when I
22 talk to you, okay? This is a very important --
23 in the whole politics of our city this is
24 probably one of the most important meetings we've

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2 ever had. I went down to Foley (phonetic) Square
3 and fought for a decent district and I also
4 helped integrate Southeast Queens, all right?
5 And it was very interesting.

6 Now the reason they put the three panel,
7 the three-judge panel in was because the past,
8 the race before, it was for a council seat and
9 they could not agree on the -- oh yeah, okay.
10 This is the wrong kind of -- all right I'll just
11 hold it, okay? Well I told you I want to see
12 their faces when I talk to them, okay?

13 Minority votes should count. It should
14 count, okay? Because this Queens is the most
15 ethnically diverse county in the whole United
16 States of America and one of the main things I
17 did here was bring together a Queens general
18 assembly to bring the people together. And we
19 live next door to one another and that's the
20 right things to do. And I know many shenanigans
21 can go on with this redistricting. I never
22 ignored redistricting. I never ignore it because
23 it's a very important time.

24 Now we're not -- we -- the last thing

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2 that I did I brought it under this, under the
3 Voting Rights Act. This whole procedure, I
4 brought it into the, into the federal court and
5 the judges, the three-judge panel was very good,
6 in fact they even established a special master
7 with all the computers and everything in the
8 world. And I've been all over this borough, all
9 over it. And we moved here in 1957 and I came
10 from the Bronx, I was roaring then and I'm still
11 roaring, okay? We've got to make sure that the
12 lines are drawn properly; that's very, very
13 important. And I want to thank each and every
14 one of you to take your time out to come and
15 testify here. I think as long as we have a civil
16 discussion we'll go on, okay? I want to thank
17 you again for coming. Okay that's it.

18 ASSEMBLY MEMBER McENENY: Thank you very
19 much.

20 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Any questions of our
21 borough president? Hearing none thank you very
22 much for your testimony.

23 The next witness -- again, there are
24 one, two senators and one, two, three -- three

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2 senators and three assemblymen and council
3 members. I'll call up the first senator, Senator
4 Gianaris; it will be up to him to decide whether
5 he wishes to speak.

6 SENATOR MIKE GIANARIS, SENATOR WESTERN
7 QUEENS: I will keep to my five-minute limit and
8 just for the information I'm as interested in
9 hearing what everyone else has to say as this
10 panel that's listening to you and I'm going to
11 stay for several hours listening to the entire
12 community. So I will be here with you every step
13 of the way. Let me address my comments to the
14 panel and do this as succinctly as I can so we
15 can move on; I know there's a lot of people here
16 today.

17 I want to begin my testimony today by
18 explaining what I will not do: I will not sit
19 here and plead for this panel to change its mind
20 and include my home within the boundaries of my
21 current district, which was left overwhelmingly
22 intact in the draft plan released two weeks ago.
23 There will be plenty of community residents who
24 will testify to the sheer partisanship and

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2 absurdity of the approach you have taken in that
3 regard but I'm less concerned about myself; I'm
4 more concerned about the community I represent
5 and all the people in this room. I for one will
6 not take the bait.

7 It is clear that Senate Republicans' aim
8 is to use blatant gerrymanders like that as straw
9 men to distract the public from your true
10 intentions to create artificial problems that you
11 can so generously solve in your next draft while
12 still achieving the disenfranchisement that is
13 the ultimate goal of the Senate Republicans.

14 Today you're being called out -- called
15 out for your disgraceful manipulation of the
16 democratic process to prevent communities
17 throughout this state from achieving the
18 representation their numbers warrant. We often
19 comfort ourselves in the notion that New York is
20 a progressive state, home to a proud tradition of
21 standing up for the rights of minority
22 communities. Yet the Senate Republicans belie
23 that tradition and belie us to a time long gone
24 when we saw the worst abuses of our democracy in

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2 vain attempts to deny political power to entire
3 segments of our community.

4 This time the public will not be fooled,
5 not by cosmetic changes that mask the true
6 atrociousness of Senate Republicans' plans and not by
7 hollow promises of change a decade from now. The
8 only changes that could salvage this debacle
9 would entail a wholesale revision of Republicans'
10 draft map to allow minority communities the
11 representation they deserve. I'm going to offer
12 a few specific examples, I'm going to cut short
13 the number of examples I brought because I want
14 to get through this quickly but it is best
15 illustrated by showing you some maps.

16 This is a map showing what was done in
17 the draft plan to the Town of Hempstead. Color-
18 coded by minority population the deeper the blue
19 the more populace in terms of minority population
20 these districts are. The gerrymandering you've
21 done in Hempstead should be held up to students
22 throughout the nation as a prime example of
23 redistricting being used to crack minority
24 communities into multiple districts to prevent

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2 them from achieving political power. Surgical
3 incisions were performed to ensure the density of
4 Hempstead's minority population is spread among
5 no fewer than four different Senate districts all
6 represented by white men. This in a town that
7 has African American representation in the
8 Assembly and two African Americans in the county
9 legislature. If you could see the map this is in
10 one district, this is in another, this is in yet
11 another, this and this are in another. This is
12 all one town, in the Town of Hempstead, yet it's
13 divided unnecessarily simply to deny
14 representation to the community there.

15 I'm going to show you Westchester as
16 well. Now in Westchester there were three
17 different cities and one Senate district that
18 were split up. What could possibly be the reason
19 Senate Republicans went to such great lengths to
20 subdivide not one, not two, but three cities in a
21 single Senate district? The City of White
22 Plains, the City of New Rochelle and the City of
23 Yonkers, the attached map reveals the answer.
24 Again you can notice how carefully District 37 is

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2 expunged of minority population which goes from
3 40 percent in its current manifestation to 32
4 percent under LATFOR's proposal. Meanwhile the
5 neighboring 35th District gets packed with a
6 population removed from the 37th. Hardly a
7 coincidence. You did the same thing in
8 Rochester, you did the same thing in Suffolk
9 where the Latino community in Islip and Brentwood
10 was split three ways. You get the idea. I won't
11 go through all the maps in the interest of time.

12 But what do all these examples have in
13 common? They all use the notorious tactics
14 known as cracking and packing, where minority
15 populations are cracked among several districts
16 to prevent their political power from being
17 harnessed into one district, thus diluting the
18 power of their votes.

19 Cleverly, Senate Republican talking
20 points speak of strengthening minority districts.
21 Let's put that lie to rest as well. The
22 corollary to cracking is the tactic of packing,
23 in areas where the minority population is so
24 large that cracking would be ineffective, those

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2 who seek to prevent minority representation pack
3 as much of that population as they can into as
4 few districts as possible, giving the false
5 impression of strengthened voting power.

6 Finally, additional tools in Senate
7 Republican's arsenal include the unconstitutional
8 addition of an entirely new 63rd Senate district
9 which is currently the subject of a legal
10 challenge and the abuse of population deviation
11 among districts between upstate and downstate,
12 thus diluting voting power for those of us who
13 live south of the Hudson Valley.

14 The final map I'm going to put up is
15 very telling and it's relevant to everyone in
16 this room because it is what allowed the outrages
17 you have conducted in Queens to take place.

18 FEMALE VOICE: Senator you have five
19 minutes.

20 SENATOR GIANARIS: Really quickly the
21 purple up here shows a maximum population
22 deviation which means these populations are
23 undercounted down here in New York City and the
24 suburbs it is overpopulated which means a vote

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2 upstate is worth more than a vote downstate.

3 It's outrageous, it's unconstitutional and

4 hopefully you won't let it stand.

5 If I could have just 30 more seconds I
6 will conclude. The top nine districts measured
7 by African American population in your plan would
8 contain 2,864,000 residents while the top ten
9 white districts would contain 2,925,000
10 residents, a number that is essentially equal
11 with a difference of only 2 percent. This means
12 that for every nine senators to which African
13 American communities are entitled white
14 communities would receive ten. In other words
15 the vote of an African American New York under
16 your plan would be worth nine-tenths that of a
17 white resident. How can you possibly propose
18 such a thing with a straight face? Abuses like
19 these belong in the dust bin of history and I'm
20 sure most people believe they're already a thing
21 of the past. Sadly you have proven them wrong.

22 Gentlemen and ladies your actions have
23 embarrassed yourselves and brought shame to the
24 State of New York. If you're serious about

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2 making substantive changes to this ridiculous
3 proposal these are the areas we would look for
4 progress, not in the fabricated abuses meant to
5 distract us from your goal of denying democracy
6 to millions of New Yorkers and communities of
7 color for the benefit of 32 white Republicans.
8 Thank you.

9 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Any questions of
10 Senator Gianaris? Hearing none, thank you
11 Senator Gianaris; very nice to see you, as
12 always. Senator Avella?

13 SENATOR TONY AVELLA: You know I happen
14 to agree with the members of the community who
15 got up and said that the public should speak
16 first, not elected officials. This is a public
17 hearing after all. So I'm not going to read my
18 speech but I just want to make, because it will
19 be entered into the record but I just want to
20 make a couple of comments.

21 We all campaigned on an independent
22 redistricting commission so that the politicians
23 would not be drawing the lines. And yet here we
24 are, here we are with a plan where the

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2 politicians have drawn the lines. Senator
3 Nozzolio, Senator Nozzolio can I have your
4 attention? Senator? Can I have your attention
5 while I'm speaking? I could sit here as long --

6 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: It's running,
7 Senator.

8 SENATOR AVELLA: Well I'd like to have
9 your attention. You're the co-chair of this
10 committee.

11 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: I can do two things,
12 Senator. All right continue, your time is
13 running.

14 SENATOR AVELLA: All right I'll
15 continue. But this goes to show, and that
16 attitude just goes to show why we're here, as it
17 relates to the Senate, the State Senate: the
18 Republicans have drawn a totally partisan plan to
19 protect themselves. And I've always said in the
20 past part of the problem is the Democrats and the
21 Republicans. But in this case Senator the
22 Republicans have done something that is
23 absolutely disgraceful, and that is to protect
24 your majority in the Senate at the exclusion of

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2 every ethnic, every neighborhood in the State of
3 New York. And in Queens it is especially
4 egregious and you should be ashamed of
5 yourselves. And I hope -- let me finish now,
6 Senator.

7 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Which districts are
8 you referring to, Senator?

9 SENATOR AVELLA: Every single district
10 in Queens. Every single district in Queens.

11 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: And which district --

12 SENATOR: (Interposing) And you know
13 exactly --

14 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: (Interposing) Which
15 district, which districts, in your opinion, are
16 in fact --

17 SENATOR AVELLA: (Interposing)
18 Gerrymandered?

19 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Changed -- you made a
20 charge, Senator -- where's your documentation?

21 SENATOR AVELLA: You have it, Senator.
22 You know I'm not going to --

23 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: (Interposing)
24 Senator, Senator (crosstalk) --

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2 SENATOR AVELLA: (Interposing) Look in
3 my testimony Senator.

4 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Are you submitting --
5 Senator are you submitting documentation of this
6 charge --

7 SENATOR AVELLA: (Interposing) Come on,
8 Senator.

9 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: -- for the record?

10 SENATOR AVELLA: Yes I will submit
11 documentation. You have it.

12 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Do you have it today,
13 Senator?

14 SENATOR AVELLA: Read my testimony. You
15 have it. Come on, Senator.

16 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: I'm asking you to
17 read, answer your own, your, the question you
18 posed.

19 SENATOR AVELLA: We can provide it. We
20 can provide it. But you know darn well, Senator
21 --

22 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: (Interposing) I look
23 forward to that -- I look forward to that
24 provision.

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2 SENATOR AVELLA: You know darn well,
3 Senator.

4 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: If you're ready to
5 provide it, Senator, I'll be glad to read it.

6 SENATOR AVELLA: I'm sure you will, and
7 it'll go right in the wastepaper basket I'm sure.
8 Senator, this is a disgrace and I hope every
9 single person that comes up to speak tells them
10 that it is a disgrace and we want the governor to
11 live up to his commitment to veto these lines.

12 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Senator Avella will
13 you submit to answering questions, Senator?

14 SENATOR AVELLA: Absolutely.

15 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Did you submit
16 written testimony to this?

17 SENATOR AVELLA: Yes.

18 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: We do not have it,
19 Senator, and that may be -- that is a problem
20 that -- did you submit written testimony to the -
21 -

22 SENATOR AVELLA: (Interposing) We have
23 it here; we have plenty of copies.

24 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: None have been given

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2 -- have any members of the panel received this?

3 SENATOR AVELLA: It might have been
4 given to the staff outside. I don't know if
5 they've given to you direct.

6 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Fine Senator. Thank
7 you very much. Any other questions? Hearing
8 none, Councilman Mark Wepburn. And while
9 Councilman Wepburn is coming forward I'd like to
10 announce the presence of Assemblyman Robert Oaks
11 as a member of the LATFOR taskforce. Thank you
12 Assemblyman, for your continued efforts on this
13 behalf. Councilman Wepburn?

14 MR. MARK WEPBURN, NYC COUNCIL MEMBER:

15 Thank you, Senator, assembly members and senators
16 and members of the panel. Thank you for having
17 me here today. You know, I have long supported
18 independent redistricting commission, as many of
19 you did last year in a pledge. And the reason I
20 think it makes most sense is that it instills
21 some sort of public confidence that the
22 redistricting process is not done for partisan
23 purposes. The anger you hear today and the
24 outbursts you hear all across this state are

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2 based in part because people don't trust us in
3 elected office these days. And that's
4 unfortunate. And by creating a partisan
5 redistricting commission which has districts that
6 do seem gerrymandered in so many ways, and in
7 particular in the Senate districts does create a
8 lack of confidence in the people that we
9 represent here in Queens.

10 Let me talk about specific things in
11 absence of that. I represent a district in the
12 city council now, the 23rd council district which
13 has a large portion of the current 24th council
14 district and in that district many of the
15 communities of eastern Queens are divided. And
16 it's a source of a lot of frustration. The state
17 constitution requires that you make an effort to
18 keep towns and counties together throughout the
19 state; here in New York City we're treated
20 differently, I understand. But we have
21 communities like the ones that are represented
22 here today, many of them wearing white shirt and
23 Eastern Queens that their neighborhoods have been
24 divided up. And when you're part of a

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2 neighborhood, when you live in a community you
3 want to be together in that same district.

4 There are arguments, as Councilman
5 Gianaris said, as the Constitution of the United
6 States says that you can't divide up communities
7 of a certain race or a certain minority or
8 ethnicity and that is a problem as well, and
9 efforts I know have been made in some areas to
10 try to unite minority communities but in other
11 areas like that in Belrose and Floral Park and
12 separately in the area of Richmond Hill where
13 there is a large growing South Asian community
14 those communities have been divided as well.

15 So unfortunately we fail two different
16 tests here. One test was to keep communities
17 together, one test is to try to keep minority
18 representation together and in areas in Eastern
19 Queens we failed both. I just think it adds to
20 the feeling out there that this has been done for
21 only partisan reasons. And I compliment -- and
22 I've known Jack McEneny a long time and he works
23 incredibly hard and he's a dedicated thing. But
24 the problem is Jack is that we can't, you know,

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2 this is an area that feels like we're getting the
3 short end of the stick. And I know you've bent
4 over backwards in some areas to try to make the
5 districts look united. But when they start
6 looking like Rorschach tests in parts of the
7 state and not like district lines people lose
8 faith in the process. And that's why an
9 independent restricting commission would have
10 made the most sense because we could say, "Look,
11 it was done by an independent group who isn't
12 doing it for partisan purposes.

13 So on behalf of my colleagues in the
14 Senate from Queens who feel like they've gotten
15 especially slighted, as we heard here today, but
16 on behalf of the people in this room who you've
17 heard some from in the audience and other people
18 who feel like their communities out in Eastern
19 Queens have been divide and areas in Belrose and
20 Floral Park in particular which have been divided
21 hurting an area and hurting a South Asian
22 population there as well both at the same time I
23 think we should look at how to address that issue
24 here in Queens. So thank you all very much for

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2 hearing from me.

3 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Councilor thank you.

4 Thank you very much.

5 ASSEMBLY MEMBER McENENY: Thank you.

6 Mark I have to comment that if you take a look at
7 what Common Cause did and some of the other
8 groups they look like Rorschach tests too. And
9 the reason is the Federal Voting Rights Act of
10 1965 requires us to wander around and gather in
11 groups from different neighborhoods of like
12 complexion, if you will, Asian, African American,
13 Hispanic, et cetera and people don't live in
14 little square boxes of neighborhoods. So they're
15 odd shapes, odd shapes.

16 MR. HEPBURN: I understand that. I
17 understand that, Assemblyman McEneny, but like I
18 said, if you can't draw the nice boxes that look
19 like fair districts then you should be drawing
20 them in order to protect a certain community; in
21 our area you didn't do either, that's all. Thank
22 you.

23 ASSEMBLY MEMBER McENENY: Thank you.

24 The Honorable Aravella Simotas. Aravella?

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2 Councilmember Karen Klassowitz (phonetic)?

3 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Councilmember Daniel

4 Halloran? Councilmember Daniel Halloran.

5 Councilmember Reuben Wills.

6 REUBEN WILLS, NYC COUNCIL MEMBER: Good

7 afternoon.

8 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Afternoon.

9 MR. WILLS: I actually did not come to
10 testify today. I'm in total agreement that the
11 public should speak first. We have a lot of
12 different organizations here and I'm hoping that
13 Reverend Norris and the Honorable (inaudible) and
14 others can speak. The issue that we're facing is
15 there's more than just fragmenting of communities
16 and I just want to put it as clear as possible:
17 whether it's intentional or not intentional the
18 procedure and the way that it was done and the
19 product of the procedure has been taken as
20 borderline racism in our communities. And I'm
21 not saying Senator Nozzolio and Senator Dilan or
22 anyone else has that intention but when you have
23 a process and you have a product that ends up in
24 the way it has it's easy for someone to extract

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2 that.

3 When you look at southeastern Queens and
4 if you look at my area in particular you have a
5 community that is majority-minority but the
6 communities have been spread around three or four
7 different Senate districts. And then if you take
8 the map that you had on (inaudible) to give you a
9 specific example if you look at Senate district
10 10, Senate district 10 was drawn all the way down
11 from Adelaide Park and St. Albans and other
12 districts and taken all the way out to Far
13 Rockaway, which we have no understanding of why
14 that could have possibly been done. And when you
15 can say that you can read your district so
16 drastically and still separate the cluster of the
17 district as far as minorities are concerned over
18 the same amount of Senate districts you're not
19 doing anything except breaking up the voting
20 power of those areas.

21 So when you have a district that is made
22 up of African Americans, a growing South Asian
23 population and a growing Latino population that
24 was spread out over four districts and you take

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2 the one district that you could have impacted and
3 brought more into and you spread that all the way
4 out to Far Rockaway it begs the question of what
5 is the real rationale behind this commission.

6 So we would just like you to understand
7 exactly what you've done with these first maps.
8 I do believe that these first maps (inaudible).
9 I don't believe this is really what you guys have
10 intended. I don't believe that this is a final
11 result. Going back to the drawing board if you
12 look at it, Senator Nozzolio you can see --
13 Senate district 10 is what I'm talking about. Do
14 you see the way that the map was redrawn? You
15 see that it came all the way down from Adelaide
16 Park, St. Albans, took out a lot of Hollis, came
17 all the way and you stretch it all the way out to
18 Far Rockaway -- that district has never been
19 before. And when Senator Mike Gianaris was
20 speaking Senate district 14 now goes up into
21 almost Hempstead.

22 So this is -- if you really look at the
23 maps this is the point of frustration of people.
24 It's not giving the new immigrant populations any

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2 voting power, it's not giving them any true
3 representation in the body of the Senate or the
4 Assembly with these new maps. That is my
5 testimony. Thank you very much

6 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Councilman thank you
7 for your specific testimony. One of the things I
8 would like to point out is that on the Senate
9 district that you focused on, and we will look
10 further into this issue and I appreciate you
11 bring it up today but the percentage of non-
12 Hispanic black population remains over 51
13 percent, almost 52 percent in district number 10.

14 MR. WILLS: No we understand the numbers
15 -- we can move the numbers around as much as
16 possible but when Senator Gianaris --

17 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: (Interposing) Just to
18 point out, it's still a black majority district.

19 MR. WILLS: But it's about, it's about
20 density. And it's not just about -- I'm not here
21 just to represent African Americans; I have a
22 large South Asian and a large Latino population
23 in my district also. So when we speak of
24 minorities we can't allow minorities to be

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2 divided up into black against Indo-Caribbean,
3 against South Asian, against Latino. Minorities
4 are minorities are minorities are minorities. So
5 when we -- wait, wait -- we're not doing it for
6 that; we're doing it to make sure we have
7 representation, not for applause. So when we go
8 to work every single day -- I go to work making
9 sure that every single citizen in my district is
10 represented no matter where they're from. So
11 that's just what I want to highlight today.
12 That's what I want to highlight. I want to put a
13 spotlight on the density and I want to put a
14 spotlight on the communities that the
15 redistricting to this point has broken up.

16 And I can't fault you because I don't
17 know if you were there before and I can't fault
18 the rest of this committee, even though some of
19 you were there. But the same communities that
20 were broken up the last time have remained
21 shattered, even though their growth has
22 increased. So that's all I want you guys to take
23 away today. Thank you.

24 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you very much.

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2 Going to our list: James Hong?

3 MR. JAMES HONG, SPOKESPERSON ASIAN
4 AMERICAN COMMUNITY COALITION ON REDISTRICTING AND
5 DEMOCRACY: Good afternoon members of the
6 taskforce. My name is James Hong and I'm a
7 spokesperson for the Asian American Community
8 Coalition on Redistricting and Democracy, also
9 called ACCORD. First of all thank you very much
10 for your presence here today and your serious
11 consideration of our past statements and
12 recommendations. ACCORD is a non-partisan Pan-
13 Asian coalition of social service agencies, civil
14 rights organizations, legal advocates and civic
15 associations from around the city joined together
16 around the critical issue of redistricting and
17 its impact on our democracy and in particular
18 whether democracy is realized for minority
19 communities, especially Asian American
20 communities of New York.

21 There are a lot of us in Queens and I'd
22 like some of them to stand here today just for a
23 moment and I'd like to point out the hundreds of
24 petitions that we have gather from this

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2 community, saying that they support our coalition
3 and the work that we are doing on redistricting.

4 The justice that we seek in
5 redistricting is not and has never been about
6 maximizing the number of Asian Americans included
7 in a district, nor is it about getting Asian
8 Americans elected into office. It is about the
9 ability, the potential of our democratic system
10 to properly represent the people. And when you
11 draw districts to reflect communities of interest
12 you empower people.

13 In light of this the proposals by the
14 task force have mixed results for the Asian
15 American community, that is to say our support as
16 well as our criticism of the proposals is
17 specific to neighborhoods in either the Senate or
18 Assembly maps. None of our comments should be
19 interpreted as support for an entire map.

20 Now in the Assembly's proposal three
21 majority Asian districts have been drawn. This
22 is a tremendous step toward equality and fairness
23 for our community. We applaud this achievement.
24 Yeah, you can clap. You can clap. The 49th

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2 District in southwest Brooklyn in particular is a
3 great district for our community in Sunset Park
4 and Bensonhurst. The adjacent 47th is also very
5 well-drawn. The proposed District 25 of Queens
6 is a vast improvement from the current district,
7 which was extremely problematic for our
8 communities.

9 District 24 is a clear and positive step
10 toward recognizing the vibrant South Asian
11 community of Queens. We applaud this effort as
12 well. However, the district is drawn in such a
13 way that it includes chunks of three distinct
14 neighborhoods, each with high Asian population.
15 So even though it creates a strong Asian
16 influence district this district splits up many
17 voters from their own neighborhoods. That is to
18 say Richmond Hill must no longer be fragmented.
19 It and South Ozone Park should be unified into
20 one Assembly district while the entirety of
21 Belrose and Briarwood be kept together in the
22 proposed Assembly District 24.

23 Now in the Senate's proposal the long-
24 anticipated majority Asian Senate district has

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2 been drawn. Our coalition was one of the
3 foremost proponents of a major majority Asian
4 district and we appreciate that the Senate plan
5 recognizes that such a district is warranted and
6 necessary. But the current proposal,
7 groundbreaking as it is divides the neighborhood
8 of Flushing, not only a residential center but a
9 social, commercial and cultural center of
10 activity for Asian Americans. It is a major
11 Chinatown and the heart of the Korean American
12 community.

13 Dilution of the Asian American vote
14 between Senate District 11 and Senate District 16
15 has been and continues to be unacceptable.
16 Rather than tweak the configurations of these
17 districts the taskforce should rearrange them to
18 more fully respect communities of interest while
19 maintaining the majority status of Senate
20 District 16. We suggest Bay Terrace as a
21 starting point in your visions. Now the Senate's
22 plan for District 22 of southwest Brooklyn
23 continues an egregious gerrymander and we
24 adamantly oppose the Senate plan for that area.

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2 On a side note I'd like to mention the
3 word diversity and what it means for
4 redistricting. Some people have brought up the
5 word diversity of a district as if it were some
6 way or some noble principle in drawing district
7 lines but actually districts should be built
8 around commonalities and common interests. This
9 is the essence of what it means to respect
10 communities of interest.

11 Lastly, ACCORD members have heard that
12 LATFOR has defended certain district
13 configurations on the basis that it was compelled
14 by the Voting Rights Act or the creation of
15 majority Asian districts. Our community should
16 not be put in this position. Adhering to the
17 Voting Rights Act can be done without
18 gerrymandering as shown by the Unity map, maps by
19 Good Government groups and even maps drawn from
20 redistricting competitions in New York. No one
21 should give a rationale about district lines that
22 pits the advancement of the Asian American
23 community against principles of fairness,
24 impartiality, representation or good

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2 redistricting in this process. Thank you.

3 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you, Mr. Hong.
4 Jerry Vattamala. Thank you very much.

5 MR. JERRY VATTAMALA, STAFF ATTORNEY
6 ASIAN AMERICAN LEGAL DEFENSE AND EDUCATION FUND:
7 Good afternoon. My name is Jerry Vattamala and I
8 am staff attorney of the democracy program for
9 the Asian American Legal Defense and Education
10 Fund known as AALDEF. AALDEF is a 38-year-old
11 non-partisan organization based in New York City
12 that protects and promotes the civil rights of
13 Asian Americans through litigation, advocacy,
14 community education and organizing. In the area
15 of voting rights AALDEF works on enforcement of
16 the Federal Voting Rights Act, bilingual ballots,
17 electoral reform, anti-Asian voter discrimination
18 and redistricting. We submit this testimony to
19 comment on the proposed state assembly and state
20 senate redistricting plans' impact on the ability
21 of Asian Americans to elect candidates of their
22 choice in accordance with the Voting Rights Act
23 of 1965 and the U.S. Constitution.

24 Our analysis shows that in the proposed

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2 Assembly plan Asian American voting strength was
3 equalized with other voters in certain districts
4 but not in other neighborhoods. In the Senate
5 plan Asian American voting strength was diluted
6 in some districts but an attempt was made to
7 preserve Asian American voting strength in
8 Flushing, Queens.

9 Since 1982 AALDEF had commented on
10 redistricting plans, worked with community groups
11 to develop proposed maps and litigated cases,
12 challenging redistricting plans that violate the
13 Voting Rights Act. AALDEF represented Asian
14 American voters, has defended as intervenors in
15 DSV Silver (phonetic), a case from 1997 in the
16 Eastern District of New York a case that
17 recognized that Asian Americans in Manhattan's
18 Chinatown and Brooklyn Sunset Park were a
19 community of interest that should be kept
20 together within the 12th Congressional District.
21 The court articulated several factors that could
22 establish a community of common interest
23 including cultural background, economic status,
24 common media markets, shared community services

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2 and organizations including health clinics,
3 stores, public transportation and workplaces,
4 voting patterns, common languages and dialects
5 and common country of origin.

6 We urged this task force to take a close
7 look at several neighborhoods in Queens, Brooklyn and
8 Manhattan to ensure that Asian American communities,
9 many of which have grown substantially over the last
10 decade were kept together within newly-drawn
11 districts. To assist LATFOR in this process AALDEF
12 prepared two documents. The first was the Asian
13 American neighborhood maps that was submitted at the
14 first public hearing in Queens by me. It included
15 detailed maps of 15 Asian American neighborhoods in
16 New York City as defined by community groups and
17 residents who live and work in those geographic areas.
18 They include and I'll just list the ones for Queens:
19 Flushing, Bayside, Elmhurst, Jackson Heights,
20 Woodside, Floral Park, Queens Village, Belrose and
21 Glen Oaks, Richmond Hills, South Ozone Park, Ozone
22 Park, Briarwood and Jamaica Hills.

23 For each of these maps we indicated the
24 total population of these community-defined

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2 neighborhoods and their racial and ethnic background
3 breakdown. At the Manhattan hearing Margaret Fong
4 executive director of AALDEF submitted the Asian
5 American communities of interest survey. We met with
6 community groups and residents throughout New York
7 City, especially in neighborhoods experiencing the
8 fastest Asian American population growth. They were
9 asked to draw their neighborhood street boundaries on
10 a map and describe their most common concerns and
11 issues in their neighborhoods.

12 Among the top concerns cited by the
13 groups we surveyed were the need for Asian language
14 assistance, immigrants' rights, social services,
15 health care, education, affordable housing and
16 workers' rights. Finally we asked the groups to
17 identify the surrounding neighborhoods that were most
18 similar and most different to their neighborhoods. As
19 you know we submitted those, we asked this panel, this
20 taskforce to use those two documents in drawing the
21 new districts.

22 Then on October 4th, 2011 AALDEF along
23 with Latino Justice, PERDEF, Center for Law and Social
24 Justice (inaudible) and National Institute for Latino

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2 Policy submitted State Senate and Assembly plans for
3 New York City to this task force called the Unity
4 Plan.

5 The Unity Plan was submitted to LATFOR
6 with the expectation that the suggested districts
7 would be considered by LATFOR in the redistricting
8 process which brings us to the proposed lines for the
9 assembly. LATFOR has taken steps to equalize the
10 voting power of Asian Americans in Assembly District
11 40, Assembly District 25 and Assembly District 49 as
12 was suggested in the Unity Map. However we are
13 disappointed that the community of Richmond Hills,
14 South Ozone Park and other Asian American communities
15 of common interest continue to be splintered in
16 numerous districts.

17 AALDEF is pleased with Assembly District
18 40 which is 62 percent Asian American and maintains a
19 substantial portion of the existing Asian American
20 majority district in Flushing, the residents of
21 Flushing have common concerns and interests and should
22 be together in one assembly district. AALDEF is also
23 pleased with Assembly District 25 which is 52.7
24 percent Asian American and is (inaudible) in the

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2 communities of Flushing and Bayside. AALDEF proposed
3 a similar assembly district in the Unity Map that
4 combined portions of Flushing and Bayside into on
5 assembly district. Residents of both neighborhoods
6 share common interest and are linked culturally,
7 economically and socially for assembly district 34
8 which is almost 34 percent Asian American the
9 communities of Queens Village, Belrose, Glen Oaks,
10 Floral Park, Briarwood, Jamaica Hills and Richmond
11 Hill are joined together in one assembly district.
12 The Hillside Avenue corridor is the main thoroughfare
13 that links these Asian American communities in Queens
14 similar to the Northern Boulevard corridor that links
15 the communities of Flushing, Bayside, (inaudible) Neck
16 and Douglaston. Assembly district 24 can be improved
17 to include more of the neighborhood boundaries of
18 these communities that were submitted to LATFOR by
19 AALDEF.

20 Now the neighborhood of Elmhurst,
21 Elmhurst is divided into five assembly districts in
22 this proposal, it's currently divided into five
23 assembly districts and this proposal continues to
24 dilute Asian American voting strength in this

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2 neighborhood. Elmhurst has a large Asian American
3 immigrant population with shared needs and struggles.
4 The Unity Plan drew Elmhurst into one Asian American
5 majority assembly district and equalized Asian
6 American voting strength in this community.

7 Now for the neighborhood of Queens
8 Village, Belrose, Glen Oaks and Floral Park. This
9 community is divided among assembly district 33,
10 assembly district 24 and assembly district 26. AALDEF
11 advocated for this community, this one community to
12 not be divided at any legislative district level.

13 Which brings us to Richmond Hill South
14 Ozone Park. This community is divided among proposed
15 assembly district 38, 24, 31, 23 and 32 continuing the
16 minority vote dilution of this community.

17 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Excuse me, Jerry,
18 you're over seven minutes. Could you summarize
19 and submit -- make sure your written testimony is
20 submitted to every member of the panel?

21 MR. VATTAMALA: Sure. Absolutely. And
22 if I quickly comment on the Senate proposal. We
23 believe that equal Asian American representation
24 in the New York State Senate can be achieved

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2 while also drawing compact district lines as
3 demonstrated in the Unity Map. There's been much
4 talk in the press and public arena regarding the
5 first ever proposed Asian American majority
6 senate district in New York and the odd shape of
7 the district. We believe the district could be
8 improved but reject the notion that this proposed
9 district was drawn in this odd shape to capture
10 Asian American population. The U.S. Supreme
11 Court ruled in Shaw V. Reno that race cannot be
12 the predominant factor in drawing district lines.
13 We believe that senate district 16 is compliant
14 with Shaw because the district was not drawn from
15 scratch to accommodate the Asian American
16 community. The proposed senate district 16 is
17 substantially similar to the current senate
18 district 16 illustrated in the attached figure
19 one that I submitted to this taskforce. The
20 almost identical proposed lines for senate
21 district 16 should not be mischaracterized as the
22 result of trying to capture Asian American
23 population, it's just not the case.

24

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2 Proposed Senate District 16 includes
3 portions of three Asian American [background
4 Noise]. All right. [background Noise]

5 I'll summarize. I'll summarize here.

6 SENATOR MICHAEL F. NOZZOLIO, CO-CHAIR,
7 NEW YORK STATE LEGISLATIVE TASK FOR ON
8 DEMOGRAPHIC RESEARCH AND REAPPORTIONMENT: Excuse
9 me. Please, please respect the speaker. To the
10 speaker, please respect the, please respect,
11 please, you do not have the floor sir. And if
12 you continue those kind of outbursts, I'm going
13 to have to ask you to leave. I'm saying to the
14 speaker, please listen to the request made two
15 minutes ago to conclude. Thank you very much.

16 MR. VATTAMALA: Okay. So, Senate
17 District 16 includes Elmhurst, parts of Flushing
18 and parts of Bayside, which we believe the three
19 communities have inter-related concerns, which is
20 outlined in my testimony. Our suggested
21 revisions to Senate District 16 are to eliminate
22 the Northern appenditure that goes into Bay
23 Terrace. And replace that with the equal amount
24 of population, which is about 16,000 people from

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2 the community defined Flushing. That's our
3 suggestions, you know. I have the rest submitted
4 here and I thank you for all your hard work on
5 this.

6 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you very much
7 Jerry. And if you would make sure that we all
8 have a copy of your written testimony. Thank
9 you. Mackenzie Yang. Mackenzie Yang.

10 MS. MACKENZIE YANG, MEMBER, OCA-NY: Hi,
11 good afternoon Committee members. My name is
12 Mackenzie Yang and I'm testifying on behalf of
13 OCA-NY as a member and its redistricting intern.

14 Founded in 1976, OCA-NY is a non-profit,
15 non-partisan organization dedicated to protecting
16 and advancing the political, economic and
17 cultural rights of Asian Americans. OCA-NY
18 represents the five boroughs in New York City and
19 is a founding member of ACCORD.

20 OCA-NY's work in Queens includes holding
21 naturalization trainings in Elmhurst and
22 Flushing, that attracted over 100 people,
23 conducting voter registration drives and
24 organizing community education forums.

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2 We co-sponsored candidate forums for
3 Queens City Council District 20, State Assembly
4 District 22 and State Senate Districts 11 and 16,
5 at Flushing Public Library. OCA-NY organized
6 community meetings with the Queens District
7 Attorney, involving crimes against Asian
8 Americans.

9 Flushing based groups like Min Quan
10 Center for Community Action, Chinatown Planning
11 Council, Queens Division, Korean Community
12 Services and Flushing Chinese Business
13 Association partner with OCA-NY on events and
14 issues. OCA-NY participates international dragon
15 boat races in Flushing Meadows and marches in the
16 Flushing Lunar New Year Parade.

17 We have leafleted throughout Queens
18 regarding OCA-NY's advocacy efforts on private
19 DNA Chin's case and OCA-NY's hate crimes, our
20 prevention contest.

21 OCA-NY's former President, Jerry Chang,
22 testified in the previous LATFOR hearing in
23 Queens on September 7th, 2011. Today I will
24 speak on OCA-NY's positions regarding LATFOR's

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2 proposed maps.

3 I do still live in Auburndale, Bayside
4 area. That is contained in proposed Assembly
5 District 26 and proposed Senate District 11. I
6 now live in downtown Flushing, which is part of
7 proposed Assembly District 40 and proposed State
8 Senate District 16.

9 I've also visited several schools
10 throughout Queens as part of my job as a
11 presenter for the Office of Emergency Management.
12 Support from statement is also based on other
13 OCA-NY Queens members, data from the American
14 Community Survey and the 2010 Census.

15 The 2010 Census demonstrates Asian
16 Americans now comprise 13% of the cities
17 population. The number of Asians have reached a
18 million, with over half a million in Queens
19 alone. So with respect to the Queens State
20 Assembly District, OCA-NY supports LATFOR's
21 proposed State Assembly District 40. This
22 district keeps intact the heart of downtown
23 Flushing, which is heavily commercial with
24 Flushing Library, Flushing shopping malls, many

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2 ethnic restaurants, grocery stores and schools.
3 More than 60% of the residents in this proposed
4 district are Asian.

5 OCA-NY supports proposed State Assembly
6 District 25, which contains sections of Flushing
7 and Bayside. We appreciate LATFOR's recognition
8 of the migration and growth that has initiated in
9 Flushing and flowed towards Bayside and Fresh
10 Meadows, as immigrant communities become more
11 established.

12 There's a transactional flow of
13 residents traveling between Flushing and Bayside,
14 passing through Murray Hill and Auburndale, for
15 shopping and restaurants. The Q-12, Q-13, Q-26,
16 Q-27 and Q-31 buses connect the southern end of
17 Flushing to the southern end of Bayside.

18 Residents in Bayside take the bus to
19 Flushing to connect to the number 7 subway. Many
20 Bayside residents attend church, participate in
21 civic organizations and do business in Flushing.
22 The variety of authentic Asian restaurants and
23 Asian products that can only be found in Flushing
24 attract Bayside residents to Flushing. In

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2 addition, many business people from Bayside
3 commute 20 minutes daily by car to Flushing.

4 So with respect the Queens State Senate
5 lines, it is feasible to draw State Senate
6 Districts that keep communities of interest with
7 a high concentration of Asian Americans together.
8 While proposed State Senate District 16 reflects
9 the growth in the Asian American population, over
10 the past decade and shared socio economic
11 concerns between certain neighborhoods, Bay
12 Terrace should not be included in this district.

13 Bay Terrace is 70% non-Hispanic white
14 and 19% Asian. Compared to Flushing and
15 Elmhurst, Bay Terrace has a significantly higher
16 socio economic level, smaller household size and
17 does not face the same issues of crime, nor need
18 the same social services, such as language
19 access.

20 Unlike Bayside and Flushing's
21 transactional traffic and interdependent economic
22 bases, Bay Terrace has its own express buses, QM-
23 2 and QM-20 that transfer Bay Terrace residents
24 straight into Manhattan. While Flushing has a

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2 Sky View Center, Queens Crossing Mall and the
3 Flushing Mall, Bay Terrace has its own well known
4 Bay Terrace Shopping Center. Thus there's
5 relatively little need for interaction between
6 Flushing and Bay Terrace residents.

7 Okay. I'm going to be quick. If Bay
8 Terrace is not included then Flushing should be
9 kept whole in District 16. Of all the
10 neighborhoods in Queens, Flushing has the most
11 dense Asian American population, with strong
12 shared interests between them.

13 To divide Flushing's Asian American
14 community is to dilute their ability to elect a
15 candidate of their choice. Who would advocate
16 for their shared interests and concerns. Thanks.
17 Thank you.

18 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you very much.
19 Midway Diyang [phonetic], Midway Diyang.

20 MALE VOICE 1: She's not here.

21 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Midway Diyang.
22 Bright Limm.

23 MR. BRIGHT LIMM, KOREAN AMERICANS FOR
24 POLITICAL ADVANCEMENT: Thank you and good

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2 afternoon. My name is Bright Limm. I am the
3 President and Steering Committee Co-chair of
4 Korean Americans for Political Advancement, also
5 called KAPA.

6 KAPA is also a proud member of ACCORD,
7 the Coalition of 13 Asian American organizations
8 that have come together to advocate with a
9 unified voice on the critical issue of New York
10 State's redistricting process. Now in the, out
11 of respect for the others who have to testify,
12 particularly the large contingent from Eastern
13 Queens United, as well as out of respect for the
14 Task Force, I'm going to focus my comments on one
15 district in particular today, which is the
16 proposed Senate District 16. And I'm just going
17 to also talk briefly about its neighbor to the
18 East, which is proposed District 11.

19 As you know, Flushing is an unmistakable
20 community of interests. We also know that by
21 itself Flushing constitutes half of entire Senate
22 District population. Given the tremendous
23 population growth of the Asian American
24 communities of interest, both in Flushing as well

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2 as in the surrounding neighborhoods, particularly
3 Queensboro Hill and the neighborhoods along the
4 Northern Boulevard corridor, it is clear that the
5 2012 State Senate map for this vicinity should
6 include one district with an Asian American
7 majority. And another nearby district with a
8 substantial Asian American constituency.

9 Like other members of ACCORD, KAPA's
10 reaction to proposed Senate District 16 is mixed.
11 On the one hand, we welcome the Task Force
12 recognition that the State District that includes
13 Flushing ought to be an Asian American majority
14 Senate District. However, regrettably we must
15 also criticize the Task Force decision to divide
16 Flushing between proposed Senate District 16 and
17 11. And we urge the Task Force to keep Flushing
18 whole.

19 Anyone who looks at proposed SD-16 can
20 see that Flushing is the center or anchor around
21 which the rest of the proposed district is based.
22 Yet the very anchor of this proposed district, as
23 in the current Senate map, is once again divided.
24 KAPA sees absolutely no need, and therefore, no

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2 justification for dividing in half this well
3 known residential community, booming commercial
4 center and icon of New York City culture.

5 Accordingly, in the event that the
6 Governor does not veto the Task Force maps, KAPA
7 offers this Task Force the following two specific
8 recommendations. We believe that these
9 recommendations are at once more consistent with
10 sound redistricting principles, in the interest
11 of all affected communities and politically
12 feasible.

13 Recommendation number one, we ask that
14 Bay Terrace be made part of Senate District 11
15 and that a corresponding proportion of the
16 population of Flushing that's currently located
17 in District 11 be incorporated into District 16.
18 In short, basically, this recommendation asks for
19 a swap between these two districts, Bay Terrace
20 for more of Flushing. Both the community of
21 Flushing and the community of Bayside would no
22 doubt welcome such a modification, as would good
23 government and civil rights groups.

24 Recommendation number two, in order to

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2 include nearly all of Flushing into Senate
3 District 16, we also recommend that the Eastern
4 most portion of the proposed Senate District 16
5 be made part of Senate District 11 and that a
6 corresponding proportion of Flushing that's not
7 currently included in 16 be made so. In short,
8 this is another swap where the parts of Oakland
9 Gardens, Bayside, Bayside Hills, that are
10 currently part of 16 be part of 11, and that more
11 of Flushing be included in 16.

12 Together with the modification proposed
13 in the first recommendation, this modification
14 would not only make Flushing nearly whole, it
15 would also make the Bayside, Bayside Hills,
16 Oakland Gardens region nearly whole, while
17 simultaneously making both Senate District 16 and
18 Senate District 11 more compact.

19 Finally, let me conclude by urging this
20 Task Force to consider these recommendations in
21 light of the unity map, which was developed by
22 Asian American, Latino and Black community
23 advocates, as well as the communities of interest
24 study that ACCORD member Aldiff [phonetic]

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2 conducted and submitted to the Task Force on
3 September 21st. I'm confident you will agree
4 that our recommendations are principled,
5 reasonable and feasible. Thank you very much for
6 your time and consideration.

7 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you very much
8 Mr. Limm. Anthony Nunziato. Anthony Nunziato.

9 MR. ANTHONY NUNZIATO: Good afternoon.

10 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Good afternoon.

11 MR. NUNZIATO: Thank you. My name is
12 Anthony Nunziato and I'm a business owner and
13 resident of - - for over 25 years. I am very
14 familiar with the neighborhood and the
15 surrounding areas of Queens as a whole. I wish
16 to thank the Task Force for proposed
17 redistricting maps, as I know it was a difficult
18 job.

19 Looking at new district map in Senate
20 District 15, it is clear you've done diligence,
21 researched a part of Queens and put together as a
22 district that unites communities of interest. I
23 am impressed that you kept - - Village, Glendale,
24 Howard Beach, the Rock Ways together, since

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2 neighborhoods are very similar to mine. And the
3 only thing that separates us is water.

4 All these communities are working class
5 communities and similarities. Also the economy
6 of small business is the same. Many
7 firefighters, police, city workers and teachers
8 reside in these communities. We have the same
9 district similar, we would like to have the same
10 district similar to the Congressional District,
11 so if there are pressing matters that we all
12 share.

13 But as pleased as I am with the Senate,
14 I am displeased with the 30th Assembly District.
15 You left out half the town of Middle Village.
16 And the appendix of all Woodside, Sunnyside and
17 Astoria is just hanging there in the 30th
18 Assembly District from the old gerrymandering.
19 And if you look at the old maps - - word came
20 from, gerrymander, this district makes that look
21 ridiculous.

22 It looks like a rowboat dog. The way it
23 just hangs there, has nothing in common as far as
24 the similarity of the homes, the transportation,

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2 the quality of life issues, has nothing in
3 comparison. And it's unfair to the people there
4 as it is to the people in - - Middle Village and
5 Glendale.

6 I thank you for listening to my
7 testimony. I submitted it. Thank you very much.

8 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you Mr.
9 Nunziato. Council Member Daniel Halloran.
10 Council Member Daniel Halloran.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER DANIEL HALLORAN, NYC
12 COUNCIL MEMBER: Good afternoon Senators, members
13 of the Task Force, I appreciate your time in
14 being here. Thank you.

15 I represent the 19th Councilmatic
16 District, which is perhaps the only natural
17 looking district in the City of New York.
18 Because it's bounded on one side by Long Island
19 Sound. It's bounded on the other side by Nassau
20 County. And it shares a border of the Long
21 Island or Grand Central Expressways and the
22 Vanwick Expressway.

23 So unlike most of my colleagues, I
24 actually live in a community that is bordered

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2 properly in terms of how a district should look.

3 The communities of North Flushing, which is

4 called Orbendale, Bayside, Whitestone, College

5 Point, Little Neck, Douglas and Orbendale are

6 almost entirely within the community. There are

7 only small portions of South Bayside. Flushing

8 itself, Flushing Proper, that are not wholly

9 within my Council District.

10 I think it's incumbent on us to strip

11 away some of the rhetoric. I've heard much

12 disparagement of the Senate's proposal. But

13 meanwhile, in my Councilmatic District, the 26th

14 was cut in half, the Assembly District. The 40th

15 was created. The 25th was pushed completely

16 South and none of those districts look natural

17 either.

18 And certainly I think my Asian

19 constituents, particularly the Chinese and Korean

20 community, who have for a very long time, sought

21 to have a seat that was theirs, both in the

22 Senate and the Assembly, have a vital interest in

23 doing so. I would simply request that the

24 commission continue to look to closing borders,

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2 stripping away corridors that exist within. Some
3 of the communities, as mentioned, the community
4 of Bay Terrace as something that should naturally
5 be part of the 11th SD, I agree.

6 The community of Bay Terrace should be
7 and the corridor to it should be closed. It
8 simply existed to protect one incumbent Senator
9 who lived in the corridor in the middle of what
10 would otherwise be the 11th SD.

11 Now whether or not that's something that
12 the Task Force finds reasonable, is something of
13 course, for you to decide. However, it certainly
14 creates an odd looking district. I also think
15 that the 11th SD should probably be cut off at
16 some place below the, above the Grand Central
17 because it naturally falls into whole communities
18 then.

19 However, I understand the balancing act
20 that you have to undertake. I would like to make
21 a note going forward. The United States is a
22 melting pot. It's a nation that is going to be
23 full of immigrants year after year, who are going
24 to become part of the fabric that is the United

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2 States. We cannot continue to gerrymander
3 districts to suit any particular whim and create
4 unnatural districts.

5 Our founders did not intend to do that.
6 They set up district systems for a reason. So
7 that everybody could be represented and that they
8 could be represented equally and fairly. I would
9 hope that in the future that this commission
10 looks to adopt rules that will enable this state
11 in particular to look to the future to create
12 radius based districts. Where you start from an
13 epicenter, go out a certain distance and include
14 all of the communities as intactly as possible
15 from that radius, with a standard deviation that
16 is set by the commission, to a reasonable number.

17 I appreciate the hard work you're doing
18 and I know many people have given you grief in
19 the process of doing it. I would just like to
20 say I appreciate the hard work that you've done.
21 And I hope that you will continue to take input
22 from those of us who have vested interests in
23 these communities, particularly the communities
24 of color, who have a vital interest in my

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2 community at least, in being represented in the
3 State Senate. Thank you very much for your time
4 Commissioner.

5 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Councilman before you
6 leave, it certainly welcomes and appreciates your
7 input. Thank you for taking the time to testify.
8 Whether or not anyone agrees or disagrees with
9 law, it's not important. What's important is
10 that we follow the law.

11 And that has been the attention of the
12 Task Force that a number of individuals have
13 spoken that share your concerns. But the fact of
14 the matter is the Federal law, the Federal Voting
15 Rights Act, requires the state to expressly,
16 implicitly comply, both the letter and spirit of
17 that law. And that's, unfortunately Assemblyman
18 Macanny indicated earlier, that creates sometimes
19 odd shapes, sometimes it runs over certain
20 communities of interest that you'd much rather
21 not interfere with. And the fact is you must
22 maintain the Voting Rights Act strength, in
23 particular, counties directly covered by it.

24 So your points are certainly expressed

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2 well and we thank you for your testimony.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER HALLORAN: Mr. Chair, I
4 appreciate it. Senator you've done a great job.
5 But I would just like to say on that point that
6 you've raised, simply because the Voting Rights
7 Act exists in Federal law does not necessarily
8 make it the ideal. Once you create
9 discrimination in attempt to remedy
10 discrimination, you open a Pandora's box of
11 problems.

12 And certainly, there are many
13 communities which would not have been served had
14 that Act not been passed. However, as we move
15 forward into the future, I would hope to find a
16 day one day when we're all simply Americans. And
17 as Teddy Roosevelt said, there's no room to be
18 anything but America, American in America. And
19 perhaps at that point we would no longer need
20 that sort of a situation.

21 But for now, I understand why we have it
22 and I appreciate that you have to follow the law.

23 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Councilman, thank you
24 very, very much. Richana [phonetic] Shaw.

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2 Richana Shaw. Richana Shaw. Richana Shaw. Ali
3 Najmi. Ali. Ali, would you please correct me in
4 the pronunciation of your name for the record
5 state it and thank you for being here today.

6 MR. ALI NAJMI, COMMUNITY ORGANIZER, SEVA
7 NY: Thank you. It was an honest attempt. The
8 last name is Najmi, first name is Ali, much like
9 the boxer.

10 My name is Ali Najmi. I'm an attorney
11 and community organizer with SEVA. SEVA is a
12 community based non-profit organization founded
13 and located in Queens, New York. SEVA engages in
14 community organizing in two distinct sections of
15 Queens, where we have substantial membership.

16 The first is the Richmond Hill and South
17 - - Part community. And the other is the Glen
18 Oaks, Bell Rose and Floral Park community of
19 interests.

20 SEVA's proud to be a member of two
21 separate community based coalitions from each of
22 these distinct communities, both of which are
23 very substantially represented here today. The
24 first is Unite Richmond Hill. And the other is

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2 Eastern Queens United.

3 Both of these campaigns have been
4 completely let down by your proposed maps. It is
5 clear that LATFOR and the State Legislature do
6 not care about our neighborhoods.

7 The message conveyed to our membership
8 by the proposed maps is that keeping our
9 communities united is not a real priority. In
10 Eastern Queens, the neighborhoods of Glen Oaks,
11 New Hyde Park, Floral Park, Bell Rose and Queens
12 Village continue to be gerrymandered by three
13 Assembly Districts.

14 The community of interest there totals
15 75,000 people. And it could be anchor for one
16 single Assembly District. The Richmond Hill and
17 South - - Park community of interest continues to
18 be divided by multiple Assembly and Senate
19 districts.

20 In the current proposed maps, the
21 Richmond Hill and South - - Park communities
22 divided by upwards of five Assembly Districts and
23 two State Senate Districts. SEVA identified the
24 community of interest here that totals about

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2 240,000 people, which we all know is more than
3 well enough for at least one Assembly District
4 and could be the anchor for a single State Senate
5 District.

6 This body, LATFOR, was provided with
7 specifically identified community boundaries. A
8 listing of specific center tracts that should be
9 kept together. Maps and petitions. You knew
10 what the right thing to do was and you still
11 didn't do it.

12 SEVA has organized community rallies and
13 workshops on the topic of redistricting for
14 almost two years. We have used art and music to
15 increase interest in the topic of redistricting
16 among our membership. We have created coalitions
17 with organizations that transcend ethnic, racial
18 and religious labels.

19 Our efforts have been highlighted in the
20 mainstream media and the immigrant press. With
21 our coalition partners we have succeeded in
22 creating an unprecedented level of awareness on
23 redistricting in both of these communities.
24 However, your proposed maps have created an

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2 unprecedented level of resentment towards the
3 political process and disenchantment with the
4 status quo.

5 This entire task force has failed the
6 people of New York. And all of you should be
7 exiled to New Jersey. Our community is now look
8 to Governor Cuomo to veto this proposal and
9 reform this process. Only with a truly
10 independent redistricting process will this state
11 achieve the level of reform that we are all
12 desperate for. Thank you.

13 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Garth Marchant.

14 Garth Marchant.

15 MR. GARTH MARCHANT, PUBLIC CITIZEN:

16 Good afternoon. My name is Garth Marchant. I'm
17 the Chairman of the Civil Rights Coalition for
18 Southeast Queens.

19 First, community of interest. The way
20 these maps are drawn, I'm addressing the Assembly
21 first. It is very racial in nature. I'll show
22 you for example. Far Rockaway, where you took,
23 look at these two divided districts. They don't
24 even connect.

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2 The 23rd runs around the 31st. That's
3 because you want to create a racial district for
4 the 23rd. That whole part of Far Rockaway should
5 be in one Assembly District, which was the 31st.

6 It's no way that this makes sense and
7 this - - connection. It doesn't make sense. It
8 doesn't connect. Now, the same area is also the
9 City Council. That same area is one district.
10 The State Senate in that area is one district.
11 And the Congressional District is one district.

12 Why do that for the State Assembly? And
13 we take the same 31st Assembly District and we
14 take it into Rosedale. You split Rosedale up
15 into two districts. Why?

16 Because to protect other districts. So
17 what I'm saying to you, go back to the map and
18 take Rosedale as a whole community and make it
19 one part of the 31st Assembly District. And you
20 take the Far Rockaway portion of it and make it
21 the 31st District. And you take the 31st
22 District that goes into South - - Park and
23 Richmond Hill and make, take that out of there
24 and make some of the Asians get a district. They

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2 deserve it.

3 It's racial gerrymandering when you do
4 that. When you create in Richmond Hill, five
5 different Assembly Districts. What is the
6 purpose of that? Or six. What's the purpose of
7 that?

8 Come on. We need a community of
9 interest community of whole. And there's no way
10 that we will stand for that kind of
11 gerrymandering. No way, no how.

12 Secondly, is that when we look at the
13 State Senate District, all of Far Rockaway, for
14 the last 30 years, was in the 14th Senatorial
15 District. All of a sudden Senator you're going
16 to split it up into two.

17 And send part of Far Rockaway all the
18 way to Astoria. That don't even make no sense
19 unless you're taking the A train to connect to
20 the R train.

21 Come on. It doesn't make sense. We
22 want all of Far Rockaway back into one district,
23 not split it into.

24 Now let's go because I couldn't go to

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2 Long Island. They didn't have a hearing in
3 Nassau County. Let's look at what you did for
4 Nassau County.

5 Nassau County, where is the black belt
6 and brown belt population. What the Senate did,
7 they took all of the black and Hispanic
8 neighborhoods and part of Asian neighborhood and
9 split them up into four different Senatorial
10 Districts. Freeport, Roosevelt, Baldwin,
11 predominantly black and Hispanic.

12 You're put into the Senate Majority
13 Leader's district. Come on. Split up the
14 district.

15 Now you talk Hampstead and you put it
16 into another district. Now you take Almont and
17 you take Valley Stream and you put it into
18 another district. Those are common districts.
19 The minority population in Nassau County is over
20 30% and you can't find a district to put 30% of
21 the population? Does not make sense.

22 So we are fighting on that. And we are
23 saying to you, ladies and gentlemen, that you got
24 to go back to the drawing board and you got to

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2 draw these lines for Southeast Queens. And you
3 got to, I support the Unity district, here it is.
4 That's a Unity map for the district in Richmond
5 Hill, Southeast Queens. So I'm suggesting this
6 is what you do.

7 Do it right. Do it right.

8 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you very much
9 Mr. Marchant. Linda Lee. Linda Lee.

10 MS. LINDA LEE, KOREAN COMMUNITY
11 SERVICES: Good afternoon everyone.

12 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Hi Linda Lee.

13 MS. LEE: I wish I was that dynamic of a
14 speaker. I'm here today as the Associate
15 Executive Director of KCS, Korean Community
16 Services. And also, personally I was, as
17 mentioned before, born in Upstate, lived in Long
18 Island for 20 years and now live in Queens. And
19 I see how the neighborhoods have been changing.
20 And so, that is pretty much why we're here today,
21 as an Asian, as part of the Asian Coalition,
22 ACCORD.

23 We want to encourage you guys to please
24 keep in mind communities of interest, especially

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2 when looking at the Senate District 16 and 11.

3 And not divide us and keep our communities

4 together. A lot of our constituents, a lot of

5 our clients live in those areas.

6 I represent the Korean community. We've

7 been around for 38 years, our organization. And

8 provide social services all throughout Queens, as

9 well as Manhattan and Staten Island. So we ask

10 that you please look at our recommendations.

11 Look at the Unity maps and the lines that we've

12 drawn and try to keep communities of interest

13 together.

14 On a side note, I just want to echo what

15 one of our other members had stated before, which

16 is that we appreciate and applaud the fact that

17 you heard some of our testimonies previously and

18 have attempted to create an Asian majority

19 district. However, those lines are a bit skewed

20 in terms of what we thought those lines should be

21 that represent our communities. You know, it has

22 happened in the media where we have been sort of

23 pitted against other groups, and please we don't

24 want to be the scapegoat. We just want to keep

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2 our communities of interest together, so we hope
3 that you listen to our recommendations and look
4 at the maps. Thank you.

5 SENATOR MICHAEL F. NOZZOLIO, CO-CHAIR,
6 NYS LEGISLATIVE TASK FORCE on DEMOGRAPHIC
7 RESEARCH AND REAPPORTIONMENT: Thank you, Miss
8 Lee. Emmanuel Caruana.

9 EMMANUEL CARUANA: - - President and
10 members of the legislative task force, good
11 afternoon. I'm going to read this, and then I'd
12 like a few quick comments at the end of this. I
13 have recently had an opportunity to participate
14 in the campaign for state assembly in the 30th AD.
15 With high expectations and a belief in our
16 political system, I threw myself into this
17 endeavor. Having seen nothing being done to help
18 my community and a representative who was on the
19 list of missing persons, I wanted change. Well,
20 surprise. This will never happen. Not in the
21 30th Administrative Assembly District. As
22 presently districted or gerrymandered, it is
23 impossible to run against an incumbent.

24 In the 30th AD, Maspeth and Middle

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2 Village are predominantly one and two family
3 homes while Woodside, Sunnyside, parts of Astoria
4 and Long Island City are predominantly apartment
5 houses, large condo developments, and public
6 housing. An incumbent can spend public funds in
7 the guise of public information mailings or look
8 what I've done for you lately pamphlets and
9 target these large complexes very effectively all
10 year long. Throw in a street fair or fund a
11 group in these large complexes, and the vote is
12 yours. Talk about buying votes.

13 Maspeth and Middle Village must be
14 separated from Woodside, Sunnyside, Astoria, and
15 Long Island City. We have nothing in common, and
16 our votes are overwhelmed by them. They say the
17 proof is in the pudding. Just look at the last
18 election results from the assembly race in the
19 30th AD. In Maspeth and Middle Village, the
20 challenger received an overwhelming majority of
21 votes. In the areas that have been gerrymandered
22 to the advantage of the incumbent, the reverse
23 happened. Note that the population of Long
24 Island City, Astoria, Woodside, and Sunnyside is

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2 far greater than that of Maspeth and Middle
3 Village. It is impossible to electioneer in
4 large buildings. Access is prohibited. The 30th
5 AD looks on the map like a - -. It can be used
6 as a poster child for gerrymandering. Something
7 needs to be done.

8 Now, this is the 30th. If anyone can
9 possibly explain to me why this was even allowed
10 to happen, I'd be more than willing to spend a
11 lifetime listening. It is a disgrace. The fact
12 of the matter is that not only can someone
13 looking to run for political office in the 30th
14 Assembly District not be able to compete
15 financially because the incumbent certainly has
16 the power to use their office for mailings...it
17 is impossible to raise the money to put the
18 mailings into these areas. So all I ask is that
19 you take a look at this. I think that the 30th
20 Assembly District should be boarded on the north
21 by Queens Boulevard and on the south by Woodhaven
22 Boulevard. This would make the population of
23 that area all having the same interests, the same
24 needs, and be able to go to their elected

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2 officials and get what they need, not have the
3 elected official go to the needs of the people
4 where they think they're going to get the most
5 votes. I don't believe that this is the politics
6 that our founding fathers had in mind. Thank
7 you.

8 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you, Mr.
9 Caruana. Vishnu Mahadeo.

10 VISHNU MAHADEO, PRESIDENT RICHMOND HILL
11 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL: Good afternoon.
12 My name is Vishnu Mahadeo. I am the President of
13 the Richmond Hill Economic Development Council,
14 which is a de facto - - chamber of commerce and a
15 social umbrella of Richmond Hill. Richmond Hill
16 EDC is a not for profit organization of
17 merchants, businesses, service providers, elected
18 officials, and other community members working
19 together to advance the business, cultural,
20 social, educational, and civic welfare of the
21 South Asian neighborhood of Richmond Hill, South
22 Ozone Park, and Ozone Park. Before I get in, I
23 will not go to my testimony. I'll give you just
24 pieces of it.

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2 There is an item that you will hear from
3 time to time in the presentations to follow, and
4 that is the word Indo-Caribbean. Who is an Indo-
5 Caribbean? Indo-Caribbean are a community of
6 about 500,000 people in the United States, people
7 who came from India to the Caribbean since 1883
8 and made a second migration to the United States
9 starting about 50 years ago. Although they come
10 mainly from Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago and
11 Suriname, we have a distinct mixture of
12 Indian/Caribbean culture and a heritage with a
13 distinctive and pronounced Indian influence.
14 There are over 150,000 Indo-Caribbean in Queens
15 alone and more than 60,000 in the area that I'm
16 going to highlight to you.

17 Now, one of the reasons why I bring up
18 this information is that we have a lot of
19 presentations today, and you drew maps that
20 confused the life out of everybody. So as a
21 grade school teacher I want to draw my own map.
22 This here is a map of Richmond Hill. On one side
23 here, we have Van Wyck Expressway. On the north
24 side of it, we have an area that's called

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2 Hillside Avenue and Jamaica Avenue. Then, on the
3 west side of it we have Woodhaven Boulevard.
4 Then, on the north side of this map is Belt
5 Parkway. It is a continuous area of people of
6 common interests, culture and heritage. When I
7 say I am from Guyana, in the census track, people
8 down I'm Indo-Guyanese or Indo-Trinidadian.
9 There is no such category for the census, so I
10 become an other.

11 So if you take the Asian Indian and the
12 other population...because if you go on Liberty
13 Avenue you'll be surprised to know there are so
14 many like me. Now, we have about 43% of this
15 area here, yet this - - of Richmond Hill if you
16 open it you will find that this is one assembly
17 district. This is a second assembly district.
18 Then we have a third assembly district here.
19 Then when you finish, we have a fourth assembly
20 district here. Then, when you finish, there's a
21 fifth assembly district here. Now - - because
22 out there there's another piece, but if you look
23 at your map very carefully, what you have
24 done...you are disenfranchising a large

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2 community. Look at the dense concentration of
3 our population, yet despite the fact we are so
4 highly concentration, you had the audacity to
5 actually chop us up. We have five, and we were
6 complaining about having too many chop up. Now,
7 you went and chopped us up into six. This has to
8 stop.

9 We are a people of common interests. We
10 and the Punjabi and the South Asians are all the
11 majority population in this area here. We're
12 just asking for the opportunity for us to become
13 part of the mechanism here in America. We have
14 been knocking on the doors. The councilman who
15 was here even said that. Everyone here who has
16 been talking - -. We're looking...the connection
17 of these districts. This has enough information
18 in here to have an assembly district by itself.
19 We are asking just for us to have an assembly
20 district by itself. Make this - -. Grow it all
21 the way over, so the people in Rockaway are
22 happy. The people up there in Glendale and all
23 the way up in Union Turnpike are happy...so that
24 we will have togetherness here. In closing, I

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2 would like to say one thing. We respect this
3 body. We came here because we respect you, but
4 please show us some respect. We have been making
5 these testimonies time after time after time. We
6 are looking for your help. Please, do what is
7 good. Thank you.

8 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you very much.

9 John Park.

10 JOHN PARK, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY
11 DEVELOPMENT - YWCA OF QUEENS, MEMBER - ASIAN
12 AMERICAN COMMUNITY COALITION ON REDISTRICTING AND
13 DEMOCRACY: Hello members of the task force.
14 Thank you for this opportunity to speak. I think
15 my statement isn't as fiery as some people or as
16 nuanced, but I'll just begin.

17 Established in 1978, the YWCA of Queens,
18 who I am representing as the Director of
19 Operations and Community Development, is an
20 influential non-profit that meets the needs of
21 low income individuals and immigrants that
22 provides the necessary resources and tools for
23 families to overcome language, cultural and
24 professional barriers and become economically

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2 self sufficient. As many of you are already
3 aware, the Asian American population is 15 times
4 greater than the proportion of legislators who
5 are Asian American. Although we should not view
6 fair access and representation strictly by
7 numbers, a large disparity in numbers is one of
8 the easiest and clearest systemic indicators
9 pointing to voting dilution. Our organization,
10 the YWCA of Queens, is also part of the Asian
11 American Community Coalition on Redistricting and
12 Democracy Accord. We also agree with a unity map
13 that is supported by diverse coalitions and
14 communities.

15 The YWCA of Queens acknowledges the
16 efforts that LATFOR has made to create more
17 opportunities for Asian American communities of
18 interest. However, further improvements must be
19 made. Regarding the specific maps proposed by
20 LATFOR, especially in the Queens area, we commend
21 the foresight and effort in terms of creating a
22 new Senate District with an Asian American
23 majority. However, the borders in keeping the
24 communities together don't make a lot of sense,

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2 to be honest...to be very frank. A lot of our
3 constituents will be divided between these two
4 districts when they should clearly be part of the
5 same community, part of the same district. For
6 example, the Northern Boulevard corridor is
7 divided in half, and that just makes no sense to
8 anybody who lives in the area, like myself, when
9 it should be kept intact....so that we ask that
10 the Senate District lines be reconsidered to keep
11 Flushing whole.

12 In conclusion, on behalf of the YWCA of
13 Queens and our constituents, we support the
14 recommendations of the unity map developed by
15 Asian American, Latino, and Black community
16 members and representatives. We urge the task
17 force to further consider and adopt those lines,
18 which we feel best reflects the communities of
19 interest and keeps them whole. Thank you.

20 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you, Mr. Park.
21 Carol Huang.

22 CAROL HUANG, MEMBER - ASIAN AMERICAN
23 COMMUNITY COALITION OF REDISTRICTING AND
24 DEMOCRACY: Good afternoon members of the task

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2 force. My name is Carol Huang, and I'm a
3 Professor at the City College of New York and - -
4 board member of Asian American and Asian Research
5 Institute of CUNY. Here, I represent myself and
6 as a member of Accord. As James Hong indicated
7 earlier, Accord is organized - - maximizing the
8 number of Asian Americans included in a district
9 and to get Asian Americans elected to public
10 offices. It is about keeping the community of
11 interest intact to empower all people. With this
12 pretext, I would like to cheer the first Asian
13 American majority Senate District ever drawn, but
14 taking an initial look at the map I was shocked
15 to see the shape. District 11...District 16 is
16 like a lobster with two huge claws holding a big
17 huge ball...District 16...District 11...and
18 swinging his tail into Elmhurst. I asked myself
19 why one area is kept so compact and the other one
20 is so spread out.

21 After carefully studying the map, I
22 found the map divided neighborhoods of Flushing
23 and Elmhurst. It breaks Flushing Chinatown and
24 the Korean American community by including part

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2 of Elmhurst that also breaks its community in
3 several districts. I appreciate LATFOR, the
4 Senate plan, recognized that an Asian majority
5 district is warranted and necessary, but dilution
6 of Asian American vote between District 11 and
7 District 16 is unacceptable. I believe that
8 LATFOR can draw a better map that I propose to
9 make district 11 more compact like the unity map
10 produced by Asian American, Latino American, and
11 African American. The Senate district plan for
12 District 22 in southwest Brooklyn continued to
13 gerrymander it, and I opposed the Senate plan for
14 this area. In district 22, neighborhood had the
15 fastest and highest Asian population growth rate
16 among the entire city, about 57% between 2000 and
17 2010. With this growth trend, the Asian
18 population will be a majority before the next
19 redistricting. Keeping the community interests
20 intact in this - - redistricting is very
21 important for the development of our democracy.
22 I propose that also follow that unity map line.
23 Thank you very much.

24 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you very much.

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2 Seema Agnani.

3 ANJALI CHAUDHRY: Good afternoon. My
4 name is Anjali Chaudhry, if you want to change it
5 for the record, but myself and - - will be
6 speaking on behalf of Seema Agnani and CHHAYA
7 Community Development Corporation.

8 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: You're speaking
9 together. That's five minutes.

10 MS. CHAUDHRY: Okay. We are.

11 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Okay. Thank you.

12 MS. CHAUDHRY: Good afternoon. We are
13 here to testify on behalf of CHHAYA CDC and as
14 local residents residing in the proposed Assembly
15 District 24 and Assembly District 34.

16 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Sorry. For the
17 video, would you state both names again, please?

18 MS. CHAUDHRY: Yes. My name is Anjali
19 Chaudhry.

20 MALE VOICE: - - .

21 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you.

22 MS. CHAUDHRY: It's on the top of the
23 testimony.

24 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Your names are not on

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2 the list.

3 MS. CHAUDHRY: Yes. We're speaking on
4 behalf of an organization. Seema wasn't able to
5 come today.

6 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Alright. So you're
7 replacing Seema?

8 MS. CHAUDHRY: Exactly, on her behalf.

9 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Go ahead.

10 MS. CHAUDHRY: Thank you. Based in
11 Queens, New York, CHHAYA, meaning shelter or
12 shade, is dedicated to creating more stable and
13 sustainable communities by increasing civic
14 participation and addressing the housing and
15 community development needs of New York's South
16 Asians and people of South Asian origin, new
17 immigrants, and their neighbors. Our work
18 encompasses tenant rights, home ownership,
19 foreclosure prevention, housing rights, civic
20 engagement, and advocating for the affordable
21 housing opportunities as well as research and
22 advocacy around community needs. We work
23 predominantly with South Asian communities in
24 both southeastern and northwestern Queens in the

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2 neighborhoods of Jackson Heights, Elmhurst,
3 Woodside, Sunnyside, Astoria, as well as in
4 Richmond Hill, South Ozone Park, and
5 Jamaica/Briarwood.

6 South Asians are immigrants from the
7 regions and borders and areas of Bangladesh,
8 India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka as well as
9 the diaspora from the Caribbean and other
10 areas...are one of New York City's newest
11 immigrant groups and also one of the fastest
12 growing ethnic populations. I'm going to skip
13 over.... CHHAYA is a member of Accord, so we
14 also endorse the unity maps. I'm just going to
15 turn your attention to the second page where we
16 talk a little bit about the foreclosure in our
17 communities.

18 If you look at the back, we've attached
19 a map, which is developed in part by CHHAYA and
20 also the Neighborhood Economic Development and
21 Advocacy Project, or NEDAP. The map reflects
22 foreclosure filings in the borough in 2010 for
23 Queens, and as you can see, two communities of
24 particular need are Briarwood/Jamaica Hills and

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2 Jamaica and Richmond Hill and Ozone Park.

3 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: We don't have what
4 you're talking about. I'm just looking for it.
5 I don't see it.

6 MS. CHAUDHRY: You didn't get it? Well,
7 you should get it from the...we submitted it to
8 the front.

9 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: It's probably under
10 Seema's name.

11 MS. CHAUDHRY: Yeah, it's under Seema's
12 name.

13 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Yeah. Thank you.
14 Continue.

15 MS. CHAUDHRY: Okay, so based on this
16 analysis, you can see that we looked at owners
17 who received default notices over a six month
18 period of time and identified South Asian
19 families. The analysis found that in 2008 over
20 6000 foreclosures were filed in Queens, making
21 the borough the epicenter of the foreclosure
22 crisis in New York City. The highest numbers of
23 foreclosures were recorded in the neighborhoods I
24 just talked about, so that's Jamaica/Briarwood,

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2 Richmond Hill, and South Ozone Park among others.

3 The findings indicated that in some of the zip

4 codes of Queens South Asians made up as much as

5 50% of the owners who received default notices.

6 The zip codes where South Asians made up the

7 highest percentage of all owners in default were

8 11432, which includes Briarwood/Jamaica and

9 Jamaica Estates. That was 53%...and South Ozone

10 Park, which was 50%.

11 MALE VOICE: We support the creation of

12 South Asian - - district in the - - district

13 maps. While District 24 is a clear and positive

14 step towards recognizing the vibrant South Asian

15 community of Queens, the district is drawn in

16 such a way that it includes a small portion of

17 Richmond Hill. While it is true that these

18 communities both have high concentrations of

19 South Asians, the Richmond Hill and South Ozone

20 Park community should be kept as one district as

21 it functions as one neighborhood...income levels,

22 schools, - - commercial districts and ethnic

23 communities are distinct from the Briarwood and

24 Bellerose.

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2 With the proposed district lines,
3 Richmond Hill and South Ozone Park are currently
4 split in two to three different - -. Richmond
5 Hill and South Ozone Park should be unified into
6 one - - community that must be kept together. We
7 are - - to take a closer look at these
8 neighborhoods and ensure that South Asian and
9 Asian American communities are kept together and
10 not splintered - - newly drawn districts. Thank
11 you for the opportunity to testify. Thank you.

12 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you very much.
13 Eli Shapiro [phonetic]. Harvey Gordon
14 [phonetic]. I am very sorry that you'll be
15 testifying at number 20. Mr. Gordon is not here,
16 and Mr. Shapiro's name was called and he is not
17 here. I apologize, Mr. Fragin, but we need to go
18 through the list. Robert Friedrich.

19 ROBERT FRIEDRICH, PRESIDENT - GLEN OAKS
20 VILLAGE CO-OP/EASTERN QUEENS UNITED: Good
21 afternoon. My name is Bob Friedrich, and I'm the
22 President of Glen Oaks Village, which is the
23 largest - - apartment co-op in New York with
24 10,000 residents, which you have chopped directly

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2 in half. So the residents on one side of the
3 street are no longer in the same district as the
4 residents on the other side of the street, AD 24.
5 I am also the founder of Eastern Queens United, a
6 coalition of more than a dozen civic associations
7 representing 75,000 residents in Eastern Queens.

8 Now, Eastern Queens United wants to make
9 it very clear...we are appalled by the new
10 legislative district maps that you have produced
11 for our area in Queens. The proposed legislative
12 district lines tear at the fabric of our
13 communities and our neighborhoods. Rather than
14 seeking to break up our community along ethnic
15 boundaries as others advocated, Eastern Queens
16 United simply sought to maintain the unity of our
17 diversely enriched neighborhoods that have worked
18 together harmoniously on civic issues for years.
19 So when community leaders of all ethnicities from
20 Bellerose, Floral Park, Glen Oaks, New Hyde Park,
21 and Queens Village came together to create
22 Eastern Queens United, we did not identify
23 ourselves as Catholics, Jews, Muslims, Sikhs,
24 Hindus, South Asians, Italians, or Irish...but as

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2 Americans first seeking to remain united and
3 continue working together as we have in the past.
4 This powerful pro-community message of unity was
5 summarily rejected by LATFOR.

6 Earlier this year, LATFOR promised to
7 respect communities of interest. It insisted
8 that an independent commission was not necessary
9 to draw lines since LATFOR would draw them free
10 of political considerations. What did you do?
11 All of you? You have treated our civic leaders
12 with contempt, publicly pretending to care about
13 our concerns and then privately going about your
14 business ignoring them. Your broken promises are
15 trumped only by your brazen and breathtaking
16 gerrymandering of our districts. The New York
17 Daily News described your maps as "a mugging of
18 democracy that cannot stand." The shameless
19 gerrymandering of our community has been an
20 insult to the honest efforts and hard work of our
21 civic groups. Eastern Queens United asked that
22 you respect our desire to remain united in a
23 single legislative district. We provided you
24 with carefully detailed maps, community names,

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2 and census tracks. Instead, you chose to ignore
3 our request in its entirety and then carved up
4 our neighborhoods into unidentifiable blobs on a
5 map. The new legislative lines are an
6 abomination. You have taken the 24th Assembly
7 District and sliced and diced communities
8 haphazardly along a narrow corridor that
9 stretches across Queens. Communities that have a
10 rich history of working together have been
11 disjointed...have been divided into disjointed
12 clumps of territory that no longer share a
13 community board, police precinct, or school
14 district.

15 These lines were drawn by bureaucrats
16 and rogue politicians with no knowledge and no
17 evidence of concern for our communities. The
18 lines do not follow natural boundaries and were
19 purposely drawn along small residential streets,
20 deliberately dividing neighbors and splitting
21 communities to serve the needs of politicians and
22 political parties. Instead of respecting our
23 request for unity, our neighborhoods have been
24 eviscerated by LATFOR. We have come together

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2 stronger than ever to stand up for our rights and
3 to again ask you to go back to the drawing board
4 and keep the communities of eastern Queens
5 united, a very simple request, a community of
6 75,000 people that can easily fit in an assembly
7 district. If you cannot do this, we'll call upon
8 the governor to carry out his pledge to veto your
9 gerrymandered lines because at the end of the day
10 voters should choose their representatives.
11 Politicians should not choose their voters.
12 Thank you so much.

13 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Mr. Friedrich, did
14 you submit a written copy of that testimony, your
15 testimony?

16 MR. FRIEDRICH: Yes, I did. You have a
17 written copy of the testimony. You also have
18 from previous letters that we sent to you, census
19 tracks, names of communities and maps showing the
20 communities of Eastern Queens United.

21 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you very much.

22 MR. FRIEDRICH: You're very welcome.

23 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Warren Schrieber.

24 WARREN SCHRIEBER, PRESIDENT - BAY

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2 TERRACE COMMUNITY ALLIANCE: My name is Warren
3 Schrieber. I'm President of the Bay Terrace
4 Community Alliance, a civic group representing
5 5000 households in Bay Terrace, Queens. That's
6 not 5000 people; that's 5000 households, which
7 represents a lot of people. It might be more
8 people than you even have in Seneca Falls,
9 Senator, so we are a large community. To my
10 friends, my good friends in the Asian community,
11 I have a message. Let's work together. Let's
12 not fight each other. Let's not...they want to
13 use the tactic of divide and conquer. Let's show
14 them that that's not going to work.

15 Look at a map, a current map of the 11th
16 Senate District in New York State and you can't
17 help but notice it contains what appears to be an
18 empty hole. It's almost like a puzzle with a
19 missing piece. That intentionally created gap is
20 the northeast Queens community of Bay Terrace,
21 which is currently part of the 16th Senate
22 District. Why would a community such as Bay
23 Terrace be excluded from a Senate District?

24 The 11th Senate District was originally

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2 gerrymandered in a manner designed to protect the
3 seat of, be it that time, Republican state
4 senator. Bay Terrace with its large Jewish
5 population and many co-ops and condos was not
6 viewed as Republican friendly. It should be
7 pointed out that contrary to popular belief, Bay
8 Terrace is a diverse neighborhood with a
9 multiplicity of different religions, ethnicities
10 and political leanings. This is not meant to be
11 a criticism of the Republicans, who merely
12 followed common practice and did what was
13 politically expedient under similar district
14 configurations. Democrats do the same things.
15 But no matter how you try to package it, it's
16 still discriminatory in nature. Excluding Bay
17 Terrace because of its large Jewish population
18 from being part of the 11th Senate District is
19 wrong.

20 There is simply no way to justify this.
21 Some voters may be surprised to learn that Fort
22 Totten was included as part of the 11th Senate
23 District by using the high water mark in Little
24 Bay. The high water mark in the bay, that's how

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2 that District was set up. The story gets even
3 more confusing when we look back 10 years ago and
4 find Bay terrace being represented by Senator
5 George Anarato, a Democrat from Astoria. Anarato
6 was a nice, capable gentleman, but invitations
7 for him to visit Bay Terrace always included
8 travel directions. You just can't make this
9 stuff up.

10 Unfortunately, as we can all see, the
11 current partisan method of setting district lines
12 is entirely self-serving, and only benefits our
13 elected officials. They get to choose their
14 voters when it should be the other way around.

15 For those of you who are not familiar
16 with Bay Terrace, we are not part of Flushing.
17 Not that there's anything wrong with Flushing.
18 Flushing is a wonderful place. Bay terrace is
19 not part of that community, we are part of the
20 community of Bayside, we're part of the fabric of
21 Bayside, and we always have been, and we always
22 will be.

23 My message to the LATFOR task force is
24 twofold. End discriminatory redistricting

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2 practices and allow Bay Terrace to take its
3 rightful place in the 11th Senate District and
4 number two, don't steal our votes. And
5 gentlemen, ladies and gentlemen, just in case
6 anybody is wondering, I'm a lifelong Democrat who
7 believes that a strong two-party system is vital
8 to a Democratic form of government. Thank you
9 for your time.

10 (applause)

11 CHAIRMAN NOZZIOLO: Thank you very much
12 Mr. Schrieber. Kenneth Cohen. Good afternoon,
13 Mr. Cohen.

14 MR. KENNETH COHEN: Good afternoon,
15 Committee. My name is Kenneth Cohen, I'm the
16 Regional Director for the NAACP New York State
17 Conference, Metropolitan Council. Today I'm here
18 not to read my testimony, but to give some brief
19 history of this great organization, which turns
20 103 on Sunday.

21 The mission of the NAACP is to ensure
22 the political, educational, and social and
23 economic quality of rights of all persons to
24 eliminate race-based discrimination. To inform

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2 the public of the adverse effects of racial
3 discrimination, and to seek its elimination. To
4 educate persons as to their constitutional
5 rights, and to take all lawful action to secure
6 the exercise thereof, and to take any other
7 lawful action in furthering these objectives
8 consistent with the NAACP's articles of
9 incorporation, and their constitution.

10 Today we have a full audience of people
11 from mostly the county of Queens. It is divisive
12 when you pull ethnic groups, religious groups
13 together to fight for just a small parcel of
14 their right when not working together and bring
15 in to create a common cause.

16 In our 103 years of existence, we have
17 met the challenge for all people, not one group,
18 not one small faction, and we have remained non-
19 partisan. We have fought for the rights of every
20 person in this room, and all the people in this
21 room have benefited from our actions. But yet,
22 we continually come back to these every 10 years
23 to fight for the same thing. And that's the
24 drawing of lines to keeping certain districts

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2 intact, keeping communities together, not to
3 enfranchise those communities or individuals, not
4 to take away the power of the civic groups or
5 community groups that exist.

6 The lines that were proposed on February
7 2nd do just that. We are appalled at those
8 actions, and we figure you guys must have been
9 out for blood as our State Conference President
10 said, because these lines do not do justice for
11 any one real group.

12 We ask that you redraw these lines or as
13 was said by the Governor, we will go to Albany
14 and demand that he veto these lines. These lines
15 were supposed to be an open choice for all people
16 of like minds and like direction. But in certain
17 communities you have disenfranchised them. You
18 have actually taken people that will probably no
19 longer vote in the same polling sites that they
20 voted for the past 50 years.

21 You have re-drawn lines where you have
22 drawn people out of communities by a half a
23 block. In fact, in one community in our
24 district, in Northeast Queens, you have drawn the

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2 only African-American elected statewide out of
3 the picture by a half a block. Now if that's not
4 coincidence, then I call it racism. Thank you.

5 CHAIRMAN NOZZOLIO: Thank you very much,
6 Mr. Cohen. Michael Fragin. Thank you very much.

7 MR. MICHAEL FRAGIN: Thank you.

8 Senator, and as I mentioned before, Mr. Harvey
9 Gordon was here earlier, he got pulled away by a
10 family emergence, so I can have him actually sign
11 a testimony if you want, and re-submit it, but I
12 am going to testify on his behalf. Thank you,
13 and I mention we, even though it's an I.

14 CHAIRMAN NOZZOLIO: I'd like the
15 conversation in the middle of the room to stop.
16 Two gentlemen that are standing, please feel free
17 to talk outside. Not here. Please provide--I
18 know this is a long process--respect those who
19 are speaking. And we are going to insist on
20 order. Thank you very much. Please continue.

21 MR. FRAGIN: Thank you, Senator. As I
22 said, I'll mention the we, even though my
23 colleague is not here. We would like to begin by
24 thanking the committee and the esteemed Chairman,

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2 Senator Nozzolio, and Assemblyman McEneny for
3 coming to Queens County today for this hearing.
4 Reapportionment is clearly a difficult and
5 complex undertaking, and we are sure that you're
6 relieved that the next iteration is not due for
7 another decade.

8 My Name is Michael Fragin, I'm a board
9 member of two important Far Rockaway
10 institutions, Yeshiva Darchei Tora, and Achiezer
11 Community Resource Center. I am joined here
12 today by Harvey Gordon, who's served for more
13 than a decade as Executive Director in the Jewish
14 Community Council of the Rockaway Peninsula, and
15 is now Director of the Safety and Security at
16 Yeshiva Darchei Tora. Harvey also currently
17 serves as a member of Community Board 14, that
18 represents all of the communities under a single
19 banner, and is on the board of the Adabo Family
20 Health Center.

21 Darchei Tora is a comprehensive
22 educational campus that today educates more than
23 1,800 boys and men, and is the third largest
24 employer in the Rockaways. Since time is short,

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2 let us get directly to the point. For the past
3 decade, our neighborhood and the entire Rockaway
4 Peninsula has been ably represented by Senator
5 Malcolm Smith of the 14th Senate District. The
6 current LATFOR New York State Senate maps would
7 move our community to the Southwest Queens
8 district of Senator Huntley, the 10th Senate
9 District.

10 This would sever our neighborhood from
11 the western part of the Rockaways. Our current,
12 and apparently future assembly district 23,
13 includes Breezy Point, Bell Harbor, and other
14 areas at the other end of the Rockaway Peninsula.
15 As well as Ozone Park, Broad Channel, and Howard
16 Beach. With the exception of Far Rockaway, all
17 of these other communities have been consolidated
18 into the new Senate District 15. We believe that
19 creating this type of overlap between the Senate
20 and Assembly districts is ideal.

21 The Far Rockaway community has interests
22 and concerns that are not necessarily felt by the
23 mainland southeast Queens communities that
24 dominate the 10th Senate District. We are a

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2 coastal community with a beautiful beach and
3 boardwalk. We have significant challenges of
4 long commuting times, lack of transportation
5 infrastructure, as well as concerns of
6 overdevelopment. This summer, Hurricane Irene
7 raised concerns very specific to those living on
8 the Peninsula.

9 A very recent example of a Rockaway
10 issues was the proposal to end the Cross Bay
11 Bridge toll for Rockaway residents. It is an
12 issue that unites neighborhoods to the west of
13 us, but not those to the north on the mainland.
14 Those common interests that have been enhanced by
15 our shared representation in the State Assembly
16 would not carry over to our senate representation
17 under the current proposal.

18 Our neighborhood at the far southeast
19 edge of New York City is often forgotten in terms
20 of government resources in response to our
21 concerns. If we are subsumed with a mainland-
22 dominated Senate District, our unique issues may
23 not be addressed as needed.

24 We, as long-time activists in our

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2 neighborhood, respectfully ask the task force to
3 take another look, and urge you to unite Far
4 Rockaway with the other coastal communities in
5 the proposed Senate District 15. Thank you for
6 providing us with this opportunity to speak
7 today, and we hope that you will be responsive to
8 the concerns of our Far Rockaway community.
9 Thank you.

10 CHAIRMAN NOZZOLIO: Thank you very much.

11 Steven Choi. Steven Choi.

12 MR. STEVEN CHOI: Good afternoon, my
13 name is Steven Choi, and I'm the Executive
14 Director of the Minkwon Center for Community
15 action. On behalf of the Minkwon Center and the
16 communities that we work with, I'm here to
17 comment on the proposed State Senate and State
18 Assembly Districts that this task force has
19 offered, specifically for those districts that
20 cover the areas in the greater Flushing area in
21 which we are based.

22 As a proud member of ACCORD, the Asian-
23 American Community Coalition on Districting and
24 Democracy, Minkwon Center has been active on this

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2 redistricting issue, because we believe that fair
3 and equitable redistricting is absolutely
4 critical to our goal of increasing civic
5 engagement of our communities.

6 These community's voters have
7 historically been disempowered and
8 disenfranchised by complicated procedures, the
9 lack of translator materials, and simple
10 intimidation and sheer harassment. The Minkwon
11 Center has sought to empower our communities by
12 registering new voters and education them about
13 the process, mobilizing them to vote and then
14 protecting them at the polls. I want to
15 emphasize that the goal of our efforts is
16 completely non-partisan.

17 We do not support or endorse any
18 politicians or parties. Nor is our goal to elect
19 an Asian-American or Korean-American candidate.
20 We do not believe that there is any correlation
21 between the race of an elected official and the
22 ability to represent his or her constituents.
23 Instead, our goal is to help empower our
24 communities that we work with.

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2 And if districts are drawn properly in
3 ways that respect natural communities of
4 interest, and that uphold the voting rights act,
5 then we are rewarded with competitive elections,
6 politicians who are accountable to their
7 communities, and the protection of
8 disenfranchised minorities.

9 These are the principles that underlie
10 our advocacy efforts on redistricting. My
11 comments today will relate specifically to the
12 Flushing and Bayside areas where many of our
13 community members reside. In my September
14 testimony, I stated that Flushing and Bayside are
15 not only clear communities of interest, they're
16 also closely linked, not only by geography, but
17 also by close cultural, familial, and economic
18 ties.

19 For example, the border between District
20 16 and District 11 cuts the aforementioned
21 Northern Boulevard Quarter almost exactly in half
22 instead of keeping this area whole. The proposed
23 Asian Area District, District 16 also contains an
24 unmistakable and unfortunate gerrymander to

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2 include Bay Terrace. The gerrymander makes no
3 sense.

4 And more importantly it runs afoul of the
5 principles we are fighting for. And we believe
6 that this Task Force can revisit these District
7 lines in a way that more closely respects the
8 Communities of Interest in Flushing and Bayside
9 that we have outlined.

10 And on the Assembly side we applaud the
11 creation of Proposed Assembly District 25 which
12 is a clear improvement on the existing District.
13 And we also approve of Assembly District 40 which
14 preserves the older District 22, a District of
15 historic import for the Asian American community.

16 I close by again referring to the Unity
17 Maps developed through a painstaking process by
18 Latino, Black, Asian American, and community
19 advocates. We are proud to have participated in
20 their creation. And we believe that these Unity
21 Maps truly reflect our principles of equality and
22 fairness in keeping Communities of Interest
23 whole.

24 The Minkwon Center for Community Action

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2 will continue to advocate so that the Korean
3 American, Asian American, and marginalized
4 communities are heard and that our political
5 rights are protected. We are committed to making
6 sure that this re-districting process helps
7 strengthen democracy and not undermine it. Thank
8 you.

9 ASSEMBLY MEMBER JOHN J. MCENENY,
10 CO-CHAIR, NEW YORK STATE LEGISLATIVE TASK FORCE
11 ON DEMOGRAPHIC RESEARCH AND REAPPORTIONMENT:

12 Thank you.

13 SENATOR MICHAEL F. NOZZOLIO, CO-CHAIR,
14 NEW YORK STATE LEGISLATIVE TASK FOR ON
15 DEMOGRAPHIC RESEARCH AND REAPPORTIONMENT: Thank
16 you very much. Duk Sun Chang. Good afternoon.

17 DUK SUN CHANG, OWNER, DUK CHANG GEMSTONE
18 CUTTER: Good afternoon. My name is Duk Sun
19 Chang. Since immigrating to the United States
20 from Korea in the 1980s, I have been - - and a
21 proud New Yorker. I have lived Flushing since
22 2002. And I bought a home in Flushing in 2004.
23 I am here today to voice my concerns on the Maps
24 as a Korean American community member and as a

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2 voter.

3 As you well know, most Korean American
4 New Yorkers who live in the Northeast Queens and
5 in the Korean American community, I have worked
6 hard in this country to give my children a better
7 life. I have done this by running a small
8 business, buying a home, and sending my kids to
9 good schools.

10 And today I am here to exercise my civic
11 rights and demand that my community's voice be
12 presented in these Maps. Korean Americans should
13 have a voice in the Queens political landscape.
14 But for many years our community's political
15 power has been diluted by these district lines.

16 On the Assembly level, I am glad to see
17 progress and some improvement. In the ten years
18 that I have lived in Flushing, I have seen the
19 Chinese, Korean, and South Asian population grow
20 and it is great to see this reflected by the
21 addition of another Asian Majority District to
22 the one that we had before. The same goes for
23 the Asian Majority District 16 in the Senate.
24 However on the whole the Senate Maps do not make

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2 sense for Flushing.

3 In the Whole Maps I was considered and
4 registered over in District 11. In the Proposed
5 Maps, I live in District 16. This order between
6 District 11 and District 16 is dividing the heart
7 of Flushing in half. The way that the Maps are
8 now I will be the same District as people all the
9 way up in Bay Terrace and cut off from my
10 neighbors here in Flushing.

11 Bay Terrace and Flushing are very
12 different neighborhoods. I have seen the Common
13 Cause and Unity Maps and I support either of
14 these Maps as they keep my community whole.
15 Thank you for your time.

16 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you very much,
17 Council Member Robert Jackson.

18 NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL MEMBER ROBERT
19 JACKSON: Good afternoon Task Force. How are
20 you? It is pretty hot in here and pretty
21 crowded. But let me take this opportunity to
22 thank you for what you are doing in order to try
23 to bring appropriate representation throughout
24 our great city and our great state.

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2 My name is Robert Jackson and I represent
3 the 7th Councilmanic District in Manhattan
4 consisting geographical areas of Harlem,
5 Washington Heights, and Inwood. And I apologize
6 that I did not testify in Manhattan. But as a
7 Chair of the Education Committee, I was chairing
8 a committee meeting from 10:00 a.m. until about
9 3:30 p.m. that afternoon which the Senate voted
10 on recently allowing churches to use the schools
11 in off-hours.

12 Besides chairing the Education Committee,
13 I also served as a Co-Chair of the New York City
14 Council's Black, Latino, and Asian Caucus. There
15 are 27 members of the Caucus. Every member that
16 is Black, Latino, or Asian is a member of the New
17 York City's Black, Latino, and Asian Caucus.

18 And this is the second time that I am
19 submitting testimony to this Body. And once
20 again I urge you to please consider the growing
21 population and participation of different
22 minority ethnic groups in our city when
23 submitting your recommendations for truly fair
24 and equitable joining of Congressional Lines.

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2 As contributing members of our great
3 City, these groups deserve equitable
4 representation in government that is both logical
5 and precisely supportive of their goals,
6 interests, values, cultures, and socioeconomic
7 needs from representation on the local school
8 boards to the White House and of course,
9 everything in between.

10 An unjust approach to rejoin the Lines
11 would splinter off communities that are otherwise
12 fused by shared businesses, civic, cultural, and
13 religious institutions as well as important
14 resources including transportation, healthcare,
15 and education. Rejoining the Lines to keep such
16 communities lined together could easily be
17 created without negatively impacting other
18 communities or violating any principles of fair
19 apportionment.

20 Within each community throughout the city
21 is a vibrancy civic historical cultural richness
22 of many diverse groups that deserve to be
23 preserved through political empowerment.
24 Rejoining Congressional Lines without

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2 understanding the many contributions brought
3 forth by the influence of minority and ethnic
4 groups will have a lasting and possible
5 detrimental impact on future generations to come.

6 For example, in the area that I live in
7 and that I represent, Northern Manhattan
8 including Washington Heights and Inwood,
9 Dominicans have been a longstanding and integral
10 part of our neighborhood. The increase of not
11 for profit serving this particular population and
12 Dominican-owned small business together with
13 representational community boards, school parents
14 association, and the like are testaments of the
15 civic power and potential.

16 And I looked at someone's testimony
17 earlier about the elected officials at the local
18 level as far as City Council, State Assembly, and
19 State Senate it clearly reflects that. And that
20 also if you look at, over the last decade due to
21 the pricing out residents in Northern Manhattan
22 because of the high rents, many Dominicans and
23 others have moved over to the Bronx. And thus
24 also the Dominican American population in Corona,

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2 Jackson Heights, and Queens has also been
3 flourishing and continues to have strong
4 socioeconomic ties to their counterparts in the
5 two boroughs of the Bronx and Manhattan. And
6 thus, I ask you to consider fusing that together
7 to have a strong Latino representation in
8 Congress.

9 Another example is the vibrant ethnic
10 group earning the preservation of its voting
11 power is the African American community.
12 Historically, the 15th Congressional District
13 which I live in which includes at the heart of it
14 Harlem and stretches into Northern Manhattan and
15 parts of the upper Westside. Understanding the
16 historical aspects of that particular District,
17 which has been represented by, then Adam Clayton
18 Powel, Jr., the first African American to be on a
19 Congressional Committee, and then of course our
20 current Congress Member, Charles Rangel who is
21 the only African American, as a Chairman of the
22 Ways and Means Committee, I ask you to look at
23 that in order to preserve the legacy and preserve
24 the heart of this particular Congressional

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2 District.

3 And it has been talked about by me and
4 previous submissions and also by others, NAACP
5 and others elected as far as moving that District
6 into the Bronx and up in Westchester County in
7 order to maintain that type of unity within the
8 15th Congressional District. And also to be
9 supportive of overall the type of diversity that
10 we want to see in our great city.

11 And obviously last but not least, Mr.
12 Chair and Members of the Panel, the Asian
13 community and some people do not know when I tell
14 them --

15 FEMALE VOICE [1]: [Interposing] Five
16 minutes.

17 COUNCILMAN JACKSON: I am sorry. I will
18 wrap up, just give me one minute if you do not
19 mind.

20 FEMALE VOICE [1]: Okay.

21 COUNCILMAN JACKSON: I appreciate it very
22 much. The Asian Community--many of you do not
23 know that my dad was Chinese. People look at me
24 and say what you do not look Chinese. Well, my

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2 dad was Chinese and I am part Asian also.

3 And looking at the growing Asian
4 population in New York City especially in the
5 downtown area and the Queens area, I ask you to
6 look at that as far as empowering from an
7 electoral point of view a Congressional seat for
8 the Asian Community.

9 Panel Members, I thank you for the
10 opportunity to testify in front of you. And I
11 look forward to your deliberations. And
12 hopefully they will be inclusive of all of the
13 communities of our great city. Thank you very
14 much.

15 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Thank you.

16 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you Councilman.
17 Angela Augugliaro.

18 ANGELA AUGUGLIARO, PRESIDENT, QUEENS
19 COLONY CIVIC ASSOCIATION: Good afternoon Panel
20 Members. My name is Angela Augugliaro. I am
21 here today as the President of the Queens Colony
22 Civic Association in Bellerose, Queens.

23 On January 27, 2012, the new Assembly and
24 Senatorial Lines were release to the public to

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2 see. I was especially shocked and outraged when
3 I saw what has been proposed for the 24th
4 Assembly District. The new Maps are horrendous
5 and are gerrymandered to break up our communities
6 rather than to comply with our request to be
7 united.

8 The Members of LATFOR have totally
9 rejected Eastern Queens United's Pro-Community
10 Message of Unity. The civic associations and
11 other organizations that make up Eastern Queens
12 United have worked together for many years on
13 issues of major concern that affect the quality
14 of life of our members and share a commonality of
15 interests and issues.

16 Rallies were held and we have met with
17 elected officials in an effort to impress upon
18 them a desire to remain united within a single
19 Assembly and Senatorial Legislative District.
20 Our platform stated that we did not wish to
21 divide district lines along racial, ethnic, or
22 religious boundaries.

23 Eastern Queens United has asked that our
24 communities that are civic minded and ethnically

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2 diverse be respected and that we be united into
3 one Assembly District during the redistricting
4 process. Currently we are divided in to three
5 Assembly Districts, which leaves us on the
6 outskirts of all three and results in poor
7 Assembly representation for us and our causes.

8 The members of Eastern Queens United
9 provided LATFOR with detailed maps, names of
10 communities, and census tracks that desired to
11 remain together in single Assembly District.
12 Instead of considering and granting Eastern
13 Queens United's request, LATFOR ignored it
14 entirely and carved up a dozen or so civic
15 associations of Eastern Queens in way that will
16 continue to dramatically neutralize their ability
17 to be heard as one voice and work together on
18 quality of life issues.

19 On an aside, Queens Village which is part
20 of Eastern Queens United and the 11th Senatorial
21 District has been cut in half. And some of the
22 streets--literally the District goes up one side
23 of the street and comes down the other for
24 several streets. The new 24th Assembly District

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2 breaks apart many communities that have a long
3 history of working together for the betterment of
4 their areas. And unbelievably runs along the
5 entire length of Queens covering neighborhoods
6 that are many different community boards, police
7 precincts, and school districts.

8 It is felt that the members of LATFOR did
9 this to benefit elected officials rather than the
10 voting public. Eastern Queens United is
11 strenuously opposed to this destructive attempt
12 by LATFOR to obliterate and/or neutralize the
13 voting power of residents in our communities.

14 We would very much like to have this
15 District modified to reflect our request for
16 unity. We have collected many letters in our
17 position to this proposal that are being sent to
18 the Governor that are also being given to you
19 today. Thank you very much.

20 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENEY: Thank you.

21 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you very much.

22 Senator Toby Stavisky. Good afternoon Senator.

23 NEW YORK STATE SENATE MEMBER TOBY

24 STAVISKY: Thank you. Good afternoon. It is

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2 good to see you all again. We spent some time
3 together this morning in the - -

4 A couple of weeks ago I saw this ad in
5 the New York Times. It says become involved,
6 help us draw the lines. It was ad in the New
7 York Times and I am here gentlemen to help you
8 draw the lines, because they have to be better
9 than the lines that you have started out with.

10 You have copies of my statement, but let
11 me skim through it very briefly and say that I
12 have always been a supporter of fair and
13 independent redistricting. We need fair
14 Districts not more Districts. I supported and
15 co-sponsored legislation promoting independent
16 redistricting. I also signed former Mayor Ed
17 Koch and New York Uprising's Fair Independent
18 Redistricting. And my position is simple.

19 Legislative Districts should be
20 continuous, compact, and represent a community of
21 interests, and enhance minority voting. In
22 short, voters should choose their representatives
23 not the other way around. To do otherwise is not
24 only unfair to our constituents, but also an

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2 assault on our Constitution the foundation of our
3 democracy.

4
5 My current District, the 16th Senate
6 District is a prime example of what not to do.
7 It is reminiscent of a raw shock inkblot test
8 with shape that defies easy description. And
9 your new lines are not any better. My current
10 District begins as the Astoria Power Plant on the
11 East River and meanders in a wobbly X-shape
12 through Central Queens. And it's Eastern most
13 edge is a section of the Cross-Island Parkway
14 very close to Nassau County.

15 It can be complicated to balance the
16 needs and concerns of the current residents of
17 Flushing and those of new arrivals or needs of
18 the Orthodox Jewish Community in Q Garden Hills
19 with those of more secular Jews in Whitestone or
20 to craft legislation that benefits the District
21 as a whole. I would like to see more compact and
22 continuous Districts so that I am not
23 representing a slice of Elmhurst, a snippet of
24 Whitestone, and smidge of Bayside.

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2 Fair Districts would keep neighborhoods
3 together instead of slicing them up. Under the
4 current proposal, the neighborhood of Flushing is
5 split in to two separate Senate Districts, and
6 Forest Hills in to three Districts. Slicing and
7 dicing Districts this way makes it overly
8 confusing and complicated for constituents to
9 figure out whom their representative is.

10 There are many reasons to push for
11 redistricting and independent redistrict in New
12 York and the chief among them is fairness and
13 equality in representation. It is the right
14 thing to do, and we cannot wait ten years for
15 fairness and equality. I strongly believe that
16 voters should be easily able to understand where
17 their Districts begin and where they end; that
18 neighborhoods should be treated with integrity in
19 drawing these lines; and that new communities be
20 recognized for their voices.

21 My voting record on the issue is clear
22 and speaks for itself. So I have summarized my
23 testimony. And I am not going to read the whole
24 thing, but I do thank you. And I certainly thank

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2 the people in the room for coming, for expressing
3 their concerns. This is not something where we
4 are going to sit idly by and have another fiasco.
5 It is time to pay attention to the Notice that
6 you put in the paper.

7 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you Senator.
8 Jerry Wind. Good afternoon.

9 JERRY WIND, PRESIDENT, BELLEROSE HILLSIDE
10 CIVIC ASSOCIATION: Good evening. My name is
11 Jerry Wind and I am President of the Bellerose
12 Hillside Civic Association. I along with my
13 neighboring civic associations have worked
14 together for many years to better our community.
15 We have common interests and problems. We speak
16 with a common voice. We attend each other's
17 civic meetings.

18 We joined Eastern Queens United because
19 we do not want our areas sliced and diced between
20 several elected officials as has been done in the
21 past. The officials who only have a small part
22 of our area tend to ignore us. The preliminary
23 Maps that were recently released are a disgrace,
24 and appear to be politically--

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2 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: [Interposing] There is
3 a murmur of constant conversation in the back of
4 the room. Please take those conversations out
5 into the hall. I am sorry Mr. Wind, please
6 proceed.

7 MR. WIND: That is quite all right. The
8 preliminary Maps that were recently released are
9 a disgrace, and appear to be politically
10 motivated rather than following the mandate of
11 the community. I suggest strongly that LATFOR
12 literally go back to the drawing board and listen
13 to the people and not to political interests.
14 Thank you for your time.

15 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you. Darrel
16 Sudkheo. Good evening.

17 DARREL SUDKHEO, VOLUNTEER AND COMMUNITY
18 ACTIVIST, INDO-CARIBBEAN ALLIANCE: Good
19 afternoon to you all. I am Darrel Sudkheo. I
20 have lived in Richmond Hill for the past 15
21 years, in fact more than 15 years. I was part of
22 the last Task Force during the 2000 Census that
23 advocated for new district lines. Nothing was
24 done.

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2
3 I have been a community organizer and
4 advocator since 1998 and have worked long and
5 hard to bring out the vote, build connections of
6 associations, and help foster the tremendous
7 growth and civic participation that now exists in
8 South Koreans particularly in Richmond Hill,
9 Ozone Park, and South Ozone Park.

10 I am here today to advocate for one
11 District for Richmond Hill, Ozone Park, and South
12 Ozone Park. The current Lines on the proposed
13 Maps do not do that.

14 I have been a community activist for more
15 than 12 years and I represent several local
16 organizations, including the - - Cultural
17 Center, the Indo-Caribbean Alliance, the Richmond
18 Hill Economic Development Corporation, Taking Our
19 Seat, Aqueduct Free Market Vendors Association,
20 the Hindu Festivals Committee, the Progressive
21 Hindu Movement, the City Coalition, Grow Richmond
22 Hill, the American Cancer Society as well as
23 several citywide agencies that represent our
24 community; including from whom you have heard,

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2 the Asian American and Asian Research and See
3 Truth of the City University of New York, from
4 whom you have also heard; Saki for South Asian
5 Women, Families for Freedom, South Asian Youth
6 Action.

7 And by a conservative estimate, all of
8 these organizations have served more than 13,000
9 residents of these three communities; Richmond
10 Hill, Ozone Park, and South Ozone Park. We also
11 reached 60,000 people.

12 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Are you referring to
13 Senate or Assembly just for the record?

14 MR. SUDKHEO: Both.

15 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Both.

16 MR. SUDKHEO: Yes.

17 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you.

18 MR. SUDKHEO: Our proposed district
19 lines, which you have received from Taking Our
20 Seat-- by the way, just a point of notice Rachana
21 Shah from Taking Our Seat was in an accident.
22 You called her name earlier. I hope you will
23 give her an opportunity to speak when she does
24 get here. She is still going to try to get here.

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2
3 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: With anybody that we
4 have missed, we go over the list before we leave.

5 MR. SUDKHEO: Our proposed district lines
6 as outlined by Taking Our Seat is much more
7 equitable and includes more than 30 gerrymanders,
8 more than a dozen Mosques and at least 6 - - .

9 As immigrants with first generation
10 children, we need new representation because the
11 existing politicians do not help these
12 communities. An examination of the discretionary
13 funds of these representatives shows that no
14 allocations have been made to the South Asian
15 community within the proposed Districts of
16 Richmond Hill, Ozone Park, and South Ozone Park.

17 Our proposed neighborhoods have
18 significant common characteristics. This
19 neighborhood is home to a large South Asian
20 population, including the Indo-Caribbean
21 community, Bengali's, Bangladeshi's, and many
22 other South Asians with a strong identity which
23 are currently disenfranchised.

24 We are a significant part of the fabric

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2 of America. President Bill Clinton said and I
3 quote, "The most important family policy, urban
4 policy, labor policy, minority policy, and
5 foreign policy to America, is to have and to
6 ensure representation by all peoples." Currently
7 the proposed Maps do not afford that for all
8 peoples.

9 I am here today to ask you to help us to
10 move toward more fair representation for South
11 Asians and all immigrants here in New York City.
12 We are vital part of the economic engine of New
13 York State. We pay more taxes; spend more money;
14 and certainly need more resources than the
15 average numbers for all of New York State.
16 Please look closely at your proposed district
17 lines and make these adjustments so that we can
18 contribute further to New York State with one
19 district encompassing Richmond Hill, Ozone Park,
20 and South Ozone Park. Thank you for your time.

21 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENEY: Thank you.

22 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Norman Silverman.

23 Good evening.

24 NORMAN SILVERMAN, BAYSWATER CIVIC

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2 ASSOCIATION: I am Norman Silverman. I am the
3 former Secretary of the Ore Rockaway Planning
4 Council and that is the position in which I feel
5 is most closely related to the issue which I
6 would raise today. I am currently a Board Member
7 of Bayswater Civic Association, Good Government,
8 the Regular Democratic Club. I served as
9 Political Action Chair of the Far Rockaway NAACP
10 and the Democratic State Committeemen.

11 I will address myself of course to all of
12 our elected officials who are up here, but just
13 to see the people in the room; is there anyone
14 from the Rockaway portion of the new 31st
15 Assembly District who is here? If I see any
16 hands, I will be so proud. As I look around-- is
17 there?

18 MALE VOICE 1: He is here.

19 FEMALE VOICE 2: I am here.

20 MR. SILVERMAN: Okay. I will be happy to
21 meet with you later. Yes I am going to say
22 something about that that they way in which this
23 District was drawn, we have taken all of the
24 public housing developments and other

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2 developments with similar demographic features
3 and put them into one district and adjacent areas
4 in which higher income and educational levels are
5 separated in these areas.

6 I do not believe that this is an issue
7 which is often raised in forums like this. And I
8 understand very well and I have worked on the
9 efforts to increase minority representation. I
10 never heard of anyone advocating having areas of
11 poverty and areas in which the people, if they
12 are successful in their educational and
13 employment and rise with income, are forced to
14 move out. And you leave the remaining people as
15 a legislative district.

16 Most of the people in the district would
17 not be aware that this is going on. They
18 probably are not aware of the subject of
19 reapportionment and anything like this. A
20 community works best when the whole community
21 works together. I mentioned an Ore Rockaway
22 Planning Council when in the past we had brought
23 together the people from different parts of the
24 community; people who have different abilities,

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2 different backgrounds, and work to solve the
3 problems of all of them.

4 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENEY: Oh, okay.

5 MR. SILVERMAN: The situation now where
6 groups would be divided puts people out of mind.
7 People who have the ability to work with others
8 find themselves in a different milieu, in
9 different political clubs.

10 Everyone on the dais obviously knows that
11 New York State political clubs are organized by
12 Assembly District and if you are in a different
13 Assembly District, you may not be welcome; you
14 cannot even sign a petition in somebody else's
15 Assembly District even if that district is the
16 one that is closest to you and is trying to work
17 on your issues, so people tend to be drawn apart.

18 I believe America works best when people
19 are brought together, not separated. And lines
20 that have been drawn not only separate people by
21 race, but you are separating those who are
22 successful. I will give examples without using
23 the names; a Councilman in the District who would
24 have been in the 31st bought a home and moved in

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2 to what is now the 23rd. A Congressman who lived
3 in what would be the new 31st moved to someplace
4 on mainland of Queens and it is a controversial
5 issue on the home, but he is no longer within the
6 area that you are making for the 31st Assembly
7 District in Rockaway.

8 There is a place, what we call the
9 Mainland there, which I believe is South Ozone
10 Park or Rosedale in that area, but those areas do
11 not interact with those in Rockaway. At the very
12 best they would only be supporting the same
13 candidate but do not work together. And it would
14 be very hard to get them together, people do not
15 travel across, go through Nassau County, and come
16 around to that area.

17 Much has been written on the subject of
18 separation of economic and ethnic groups in
19 America. It poses a situation where you are
20 drawing people apart. I believe that everything
21 that we do should bring people in; bring them
22 together so that they can work together and
23 benefit from those around them. And I would say
24 in this area, I would--

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2 FEMALE VOICE 1: [Interposing]

3 Mr. Silverman?

4 MR. SILVERMAN: Have very few people with
5 professional backgrounds; lawyers, architects,
6 engineers, accountants. How will we get the
7 organization necessary to do--

8 FEMALE VOICE 1: Mr. Silverman, you have
9 exceeded your five minutes, please sum up.

10 MR. SILVERMAN: Okay.

11 FEMALE VOICE 1: Thank you.

12 MR. SILVERMAN: At this point, I will
13 hope find, I appreciate your attention and I
14 realize that I have raised a little different
15 than is usually mentioned here. I hope that you
16 can find a way to improve this situation. If
17 there is no improvement, I will hope that the
18 Governor sticks to his word and details the
19 entire plan and we start over, which others which
20 I see here I have not studied--

21 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: [Interposing] Okay.

22 MR. SILVERMAN: That I see are available.

23 FEMALE VOICE 1: Thank you.

24 MR. SILVERMAN: I appreciate your time -

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2 -

3 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you Mr.
4 Silverman. Steven Greenberg.

5 MR. STEVEN GREENBERG: Thank you
6 gentlemen, and thank you for your hard efforts
7 here. I know that this is not a fun thing to
8 have to go through. My name is Steve Greenberg.
9 I represent the 28,037 shareholders of Breezy
10 Point Cooperative, a private cooperative
11 community on the far west end of the Rockaway's.
12 I am a past Chairman of the Board of that
13 organization.

14 I also served as a Member of the
15 Community District 27 School Board for 13 years
16 of which I was President for five years. That
17 community encompasses the Rockaway's, Broad
18 Channel, Howard Beach, Ozone Park, South Ozone
19 Park, Woodhaven, and Richmond Hill, and I may
20 have missed a town, I do not know.

21 And most recently I served on Mayor
22 Bloomberg's Task Force for the Rockaway's. I
23 tried to put together a list of things that
24 Rockaway needed as to-- previous people have said

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2 that Rockaway is a disenfranchised place, and I
3 think that we have made some progress with the
4 Mayor on some of these issues.

5 Frankly, we are now served in Senatorial
6 District 14. Malcolm Smith is a wonderful man.
7 He has served us very well. But the fact of the
8 matter is if I were today advocating Rockaway, I
9 think that Rockaway should be one district for
10 all, there should be one district for every
11 branch. But the fact of the matter is our
12 Assembly, our Council, our Congressional Seat;
13 Rockaway is split in half. There are two
14 Congressmen, two Assembly people, and two--

15 FEMALE VOICE 1: Senators.

16 MR. GREENBERG: Congressmen represented--

17 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Mr. Greenberg will you
18 stop for a brief interruption please, not on your
19 time. There is a lot of noise that is filtering
20 out here that is distracting the Speaker. I
21 think if that continues, we will have to shut the
22 doors [background noise] [crosstalk]. Thank you,
23 Mr. Greenberg.

24 MR. GREENBERG: Thank you. What I am

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2 asking here tonight is that the people of Breezy
3 Point are happy; that you have included us in
4 District 15. And that we feel that we are
5 represented, that you will give us equal
6 representation with the people in the Mainland as
7 far as our, once again, our Congressman, our
8 Councilman, and our Assembly people are
9 concerned.

10 Once again, I advocate that Rockaway be
11 one. But if Rockaway is not, it is best for our
12 community that we be part of District 14-- number
13 15. Thank you very much.

14 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you.

15 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENEY: Thank you.

16 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Marie Torniali.

17 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENEY: He does not look
18 like Marie Torniali.

19 FEMALE VOICE 1: Are you Marie?

20 GEORGE STAMATIADIS, STEINWAY ASTORIA
21 PARTNERSHIP: No I am not. Hi I am not Marie
22 Torniali. My name is George Stamatiadis. Marie
23 is the Executive Director of Central Astoria
24 Local Development Coalition. I am the President;

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2 she had to get back to the office so she asked me
3 to step in for her.

4 You have heard about 35 different reasons
5 why this plan is not good for the Borough of
6 Queens. So I am not really going to make it 36.
7 I will go 36 1/2.

8 Astoria Long Island City is one
9 community. We work together. We play together.
10 We eat together. We fight together. And when we
11 are done fighting, we kiss and make up together.
12 And that is what makes Astoria great, being one
13 community, not two as the proposed lines are now
14 attempting to do.

15 We are one community. We were one
16 community when we fought the State takeover of
17 Rikers Island. We were one community when we
18 fought the power plants burning coal, which
19 affected the entire City of New York. We fought
20 for the City of New York. We were one community
21 when we fought the expansion of LaGuardia Airport
22 that would have brought havoc onto the community.
23 We are one community every single day.

24 There is one thing for sure about this

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2 plan; if you look on the map very carefully, what
3 is being done, if you look at it real carefully,
4 you are going to see it is in the shape of an F.
5 Just look at it. It is an F. Any grammar school
6 principal would have given--

7 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Senate or Assembly?

8 MR. STAMATIADIS: Senate.

9 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Okay.

10 MR. STAMATIADIS: I am sorry it is
11 District 12. It is the shape of an F. Any
12 grammar school principal would have given this
13 course an F, and you guys did it.

14 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENEY: Thank you.

15 MR. STAMATIADIS: Thank you very much.

16 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you [background
17 noise] [crosstalk]. Debra Markel-Klinert
18 [phonetic] [background noise] [crosstalk].
19 Assembly Woman Samotis [phonetic] is here?

20 FEMALE VOICE 1: I do not know who she
21 is.

22 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Oh, okay. She is not
23 back from Albany yet. Matthew Silverstein.

24 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENEY: Okay, now we are

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2 talking Turkey here.

3 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Okay. Mustafa El
4 Sheik [phonetic] [background noise]. Richard
5 Thuzami [background noise] [crosstalk].

6 FEMALE VOICE 1: It is number 37.

7 RICHARD THUZAMI, MEMBER, QUEENS GENERAL
8 ASSEMBLY: Yes, Panel my name is Richard Thuzami
9 and I am a Member of Helen Marshall's, Alumni
10 Member, of her General Assembly, which was an
11 organization put together to foster good
12 relations and communications between different
13 ethnic groups in Queens. But today I am actually
14 speaking to you more as a resident of Astoria and
15 specifically the districting that you have put
16 together.

17 It is important that you understand that
18 the Astoria community is best served by keeping
19 Astoria whole and contained in one district so
20 that its community members can be represented by
21 someone who understands what the various groups
22 need and how to serve them. Splitting the
23 community apart would weaken Astoria's
24 community's voice in government and form being

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2 served fairly and with the community's best
3 interest at heart.

4 Separating the community in to two
5 different districts would also hurt the
6 harmonious relationships currently existing
7 between the various ethnic, racial, and religious
8 groups that live in Astoria by separating them in
9 to different districts with different groups that
10 have no real relationship with each other. These
11 groups also have different interests and are
12 served differently by their representatives.

13 In recent history, if ever, Astoria has
14 never been split in to two districts. Astoria
15 and Long Island City, as was stated before, is an
16 entity onto itself with a common shoreline; with
17 a common mentality, and is also known as one of
18 the most vibrant areas in New York City.

19 Astoria is a community of interest also
20 with an extremely large Eastern Mediterranean,
21 Muslim, and immigrant population that should be
22 kept whole. Splitting these communities apart
23 would hurt residents whose needs would not be
24 fulfilled by someone who represents other

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2 communities. And also Astoria has been a well
3 defined community. Splitting it apart would hurt
4 individuals and business here.

5 My thoughts are that gerrymandering to
6 keep incumbency I think leads to a legislative
7 gridlock that we find throughout the country
8 today in the National government also. When you
9 do not have to worry about re-election, your
10 priority becomes a special interest. You are not
11 accountable to the people. And also the
12 possibility of corruption increases many times.

13 To this end Senator Gianaris, our
14 Senator, has been a strong critic of energy
15 providers. He has been a strong advocate for
16 green and safe energy. And your new plan is
17 removing all these plants from his District. I
18 do not know what the motive behind this is, but I
19 do not like the implications that it creates.
20 You know Astoria has over 60% of the energy
21 provided in New York City; it is in plants in
22 Astoria.

23 Now also historically, separating
24 cultures and different ethnic groups politically

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2 has long been a means of disenfranchising people.
3 And not only is their political influence
4 reduced, they spend most of their time and energy
5 competing with each other and with other local
6 groups instead with those who hold the real
7 political power.

8 In history, this is a favorite tactic
9 with the British in the Middle East creating
10 artificial countries such as Iraq to pit
11 different ethnic and religious groups against
12 each other. The results have been a catastrophe
13 for both America and the whole world. This
14 mentality must end. Our common interests must
15 again be our priority. Keep the integrity of our
16 communities. This is our strength.

17 The Governor must veto any lines drawn
18 through this Panel's process since it is
19 absolutely unfair and only serves as centering
20 the Republican's interests over the interests of
21 the people in this community and of New York
22 State. Thank you.

23 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Joseph Lynch.

24 MR. JOSEPH LYNCH: Good evening. My name

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2 is Joseph Lynch and I have resided in the
3 Rockaway community for over 50 years. Rockaway
4 is indeed a close knit community of hardworking
5 middleclass families who have always supported
6 the City and the State when called upon
7 financially, economically, or in any other way.
8 We also pay our fair equity share of taxes.

9 I currently serve on the Board of
10 Directors and I am also the Chairman of the
11 Breezy Point Cooperative, the largest cooperative
12 of single family residential homes in the City
13 and the State. Our cooperative is nested on the
14 extreme western tip of the Rockaway Peninsula.

15 It consists of 2,837 paying middleclass
16 families. This includes families from the
17 People's Association of Roxbury, the Rockaway
18 Point Association, and the Point Breeze
19 Association.

20
21 Our community has a very historically
22 positive record on voter turnout in past
23 elections. I speak tonight on behalf of myself
24 and our cooperative.

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2 Two quick points, I feel strongly that a
3 district should be comprised of neighborhoods
4 that include common agendas and uniformity of
5 issues and values. It seems only equitable to me
6 that our community be included in district lines
7 with other Queens areas with similar goals and
8 objectives.

9 The goal of redistricting must always be
10 the better representation of the citizens and the
11 individual communities have all be included in
12 the changes. Redistricting must not be based on
13 a political agenda or politics but must
14 prioritize what is best for the individually
15 involved communities and the citizen base.

16 I know that it takes a lot of effort to
17 come up with a fair, equitable and effective
18 redistricting plan. I commend and wanted to
19 thank for the proposed draft of redistricting
20 State Senate District 15, which in my opinion
21 meets those three objectives. The plan also
22 appears to prioritize the needs of the involved
23 communities, which to me should be the only real
24 objective of any plan.

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2 The grouping of homogeneous and similar
3 communities in a district is only logical. It is
4 also positive in the representation process. It
5 makes only common sense to include Breezy Point
6 and the Rockaway community with other inland
7 sections of Queens such as Middle Village and
8 Glendale with similar beliefs in a redistricting
9 plan or realignment. The people and citizen base
10 of these four communities reflect a commonality
11 that should be the goal of any redistricting
12 plan.

13 The four communities represent
14 middleclass families with a historical,
15 documented work ethic; real involved in their
16 communities; pride in their country; similar
17 ethnic and religious beliefs; and an ongoing
18 commitment to the protection of their families'
19 homes and neighborhoods.

20
21 Many City workers, firefighters, police
22 in cities as they are in Breezy Point are the
23 true backbone of these communities. I have never
24 really understood how the past Senate District

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2 evolved nor how it could be perceived to be real
3 positive for the residents of Breezy Point.

4 To include a shoreline community in a
5 district with other inland communities with very
6 little if any similar homogeneous traits appears
7 counterproductive to our interests and is also
8 smacking of politics.

9 I believe that the new updated district
10 that we have recommended, especially the
11 commonalities of the communities will be an
12 improved district and positive for the residents
13 of Breezy Point. I thank you for your impartial
14 and equitable efforts in this regard. And I
15 strongly encourage you to keep Breezy Point in
16 District 15. I appreciate the opportunity to
17 talk to you tonight.

18 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you Mr. Lynch.

19 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENEY: Thank you.

20
21 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Carol Sarano. Good
22 evening.

23 CAROL SARANO, DISTRICT LEADER, ASSEMBLY
24 DISTRICT PART B: Good evening. My name is

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2 Carolyn Sarano and I am the female lead in the
3 36th Assembly District and the 12th Senatorial
4 District and I have lived in this vicinity all of
5 my life. I was born and raised there. I am
6 strongly opposed to the proposed Senate lines for
7 District 12.

8 Astoria is a multicultural community and
9 it consists of a large Greek, Muslim, and
10 immigrant population. Astoria has always been a
11 community of harmony between various ethnic,
12 religious, and racial groups.

13 Splitting this community apart is not in
14 the best interests of the individuals residing
15 within the district. It would weaken the Astoria
16 community's voice in government and keep the
17 voters from being served fairly. This must
18 community must be represented by a legislator who
19 understands the needs of the various groups
20 living within this district and how best to serve
21 them.

22 Astoria has always been a well defined
23 community and splitting it apart is not in the
24 best interests of the businesses or the people

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2 residing within this district. Once again, I
3 would like to voice my strong opposition to the
4 lines proposed to this district. Thank you very
5 much.

6 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENEY: Thank you.

7 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: George Malandrakis.
8 Good evening.

9 GEORGE MALANDRAKIS, DIRECTOR OF
10 DEPENDENCY PROGRAM, HANAC: Good evening. Good
11 evening Panel and everyone in the room. My name
12 is George Malandrakis. I reside in Astoria. I
13 am very grateful to share that I also work with
14 Hanac, a community group located in Astoria for
15 the last 23 years. I am born and raised in
16 Astoria. I live in a district that seems to be
17 looked at to be changed. I live in the upper
18 Ditmars area.

19 I have submitted testimony also from our
20 Executive Director who is not here today, his
21 written testimony. I was told not to read it,
22 but just to give my testimony today in how
23 uncomfortable I am knowing that this is a change
24 that could happen to me and my neighborhood.

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2 To begin in recent history, if ever,
3 Astoria has always been a well defined community
4 and splitting it apart would hurt individuals and
5 businesses here. The Astoria community is best
6 served by keeping Astoria whole and contained in
7 one district so that its community members can be
8 represented by someone who understands what the
9 various groups here need and how to best serve
10 them.

11 I am hopeful that the Governor will veto
12 any lines drawn through this Panel's process
13 since it is absolutely unfair and only serves
14 your political interests over the interests of
15 the people of this community. Splitting the
16 community apart would weaken our voice in
17 government and all of us from being served
18 fairly.

19 Separating the community in to two
20 different districts would also hurt the
21 harmonious relationships currently existing
22 between the various groups living in Astoria. By
23 separating some groups in to a different district
24 with different groups that have no real

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2 relationship with each other would undermine the
3 concept of communities of interest.

4 This is a community with an extremely
5 large Greek, Muslim, and immigrant population.
6 As such, it is a community of interest and should
7 be kept whole. Splitting the community apart
8 would hurt the residents here whose needs would
9 not be fulfilled by someone who represents
10 different communities of interest.

11 I live in upper Ditmars and would like to
12 see the lines stay where they are. Do not change
13 something that works. Thank you.

14 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENEY: Thank you very
15 much.

16 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you. Joseph
17 Connelly [phonetic]. Joseph Connelly. Patricia
18 Babbar [phonetic]. Patricia Babbar. Joe
19 DiPiatro [phonetic]. Joe DiPiatro. Frank Toner.
20 Good evening.

21 FRANK TONER, PRESIDENT, ROCKY HILL CIVIC
22 ASSOCIATION: Good evening Task Force Members.
23 My name is Frank Toner, President of the Rocky
24 Hill Civic Association, an association of over

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2 900 homeowners which is located in Bellerose
3 Manor and Eastern Queens.

4 I suppose my testimony is similar to some
5 of the other testimony give already by members of
6 the Bellerose United, Eastern Queens United
7 rather. But that is the point, we have similar
8 interests. I come to you today as a citizen, a
9 civic leader, and a member of the coalition
10 called Eastern Queens United.

11 My purpose is to strongly encourage you
12 to keep within one Assembly District and one
13 Senate in the area of Eastern Queens that is
14 represented by the 11 civic associations in this
15 Coalition. I have supplied the details of that
16 area on the attachment to my speech that I
17 submitted.

18 I have been President of Rocky Hill Civic
19 Association for six years. When I assumed the
20 job the former President, Bernard Akaleno
21 [phonetic] told me that the job did not pay much,
22 zero dollars to be exact with a pension that
23 fully matched my salary, and a yearly cost of
24 living increase, anything I want. He did say

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2 that it would be rewarded by the knowledge of the
3 good things that I would accomplish for the
4 others in our community. And that I would also
5 have the opportunity, as he had, to work with
6 some of the best and most committed people I will
7 every meet, the officers of the surrounding
8 civics.

9 Over the years, this has proven to be
10 true; we found that we have multiple common
11 interests. We are all communities of primarily
12 one and two family homes, and of course the co-
13 ops of Glen Oaks. We have the same issues with
14 many City agencies; Sanitation, Fire, Department
15 of Transportation, and Police.

16 We go to the same meetings with the 105th
17 Precinct, Community Board 13, and each other's
18 civics. We share notes with one another on crime
19 issues, often emailing one another to alert
20 others of crimes in the area, or comparing notes
21 of what someone in the Buildings Department told
22 us.

23 When I send my notes my Monthly Bulletin
24 to members to my Association, it is also sent to

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2 my neighboring civics. We are a community of
3 similar interests. We are not one ethnic group.
4 We are many. I do not want us divided by ethnic
5 lines. I for one love the diversity that we
6 have. This is what America is all about. But
7 most of all, I do not want the area split up
8 because it is politically expedient.

9 I read an article recently from an
10 Australian paper that talked about the
11 redistricting process in the United States. It
12 talked of how the United States often lectures
13 other countries on democracy. But that every 10
14 years goes through a redistricting process that
15 is against the democratic process since it is
16 done in a way whereby he politicians pick the
17 people who vote for them rather than the people
18 picking the politicians whom they want to vote
19 for.

20 I visited Australia when I was on R&R
21 from my year of Army service in Vietnam. It is a
22 nice country. It has always been a good ally.
23 But it bothers me that persons outside of our
24 country could see such flaws in our democracy.

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2 It has been a long time since I served in
3 Vietnam.

4 I served not because I believed in war.
5 I served as a Medic and hopefully did some good.
6 I served because of a strong desire to support
7 democracy because I believed in the great
8 democracy that I felt was practiced in the United
9 States. I find that after all of these years, I
10 feel compelled to fight to improve this
11 democracy.

12 I am here today to ask that you make
13 primary the interests of the people. To keep
14 together groups of people who have common
15 interests such as all of the civic groups of
16 Eastern Queens United. To do so I believe will
17 give our communities a stronger voice in
18 government; a stronger sense of empowerment. I
19 ask that you do all that you can to make the
20 democratic process stronger. That is your duty.
21 It is a duty of all of us. Thank you.

22 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENEY: Thank you.

23 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Mr. Toner, before you
24 leave I just want to thank you for your service

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2 to our Nation. [Break in audio] Probably some
3 of them will have arrived or decide to say
4 something.

5 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENEY: Well said.

6 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: I believe 10 years
7 ago, this went to midnight. I do not want to
8 overly intimidate anybody. We are here for the
9 duration whatever it is. Dr. Arthur Flug.

10 DR. ARTHUR FLUG, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, THE
11 HARRIET & KENNETH KUPFERBERG HOLOCAUST CENTER:
12 Good evening Members of the Committee and thank
13 you for giving us the opportunity to meet with
14 you tonight. My name is Arthur Flug. I am the
15 past President of the Jamaica Estates Association
16 and I am here tonight representing our president
17 Martha Taylor.

18 As anticipated, the residents of Jamaica
19 Estates knew the redistricting of the New York
20 State District 11 would not be beneficial to our
21 community. What we did not expect was that it
22 would be most destructive to our neighborhoods.

23 The lines presented in the New York State
24 Redistricting Plan of 2012 have divided the

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2 Jamaica Estates community into a series of
3 pockets that are noncontiguous. These pockets
4 have created a disunity that will undermine any
5 sense of belonging to a functioning community by
6 the 1800 Jamaica Estates residents.

7 While LATFOR has used Grand Central
8 Parkway as boundary for separating the northern
9 part of the Jamaica Estates Community Senate
10 Districts 11 and 15, it is further decimated our
11 community by dividing the area south of Grand
12 Central Parkway in to two distinct Senatorial
13 Districts, 11 and 14. Hence a community that has
14 long functioned as a single effective unit is now
15 torn apart in to three unrelated sections, each
16 to be represented by a New York State Senator.

17 These three separate districts that have
18 been created have deprived the 1800 families of a
19 single point of contact for our community with
20 Senatorial responsibility. With our district
21 ripped in to three separate Senatorial entities,
22 we are now faced with such operational questions
23 as one, how do we establish the unity in
24 addressing the issues confronting our community?

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2 Every neighborhood has to be addressed
3 three times over. This is a guarantee to see
4 that our neighborhood will fail. How can a
5 Jamaica Estates resident respond to a community
6 concern when he or she lives in different
7 district from their neighbor across the street?
8 This is not a once in a while redistricting plan
9 for Jamaica Estates. It is a pattern that
10 replicates itself throughout the entire LATFOR
11 plan for our community.

12 With this disgraceful structuring of the
13 Jamaica Estates Senatorial to be blamed on
14 incompetence, we as residents could understand
15 that. Were it to be based upon New York State or
16 Federal mandates, we could also understand that.
17 And were it based upon some judicial decision
18 attempting to rectify past injustices created by
19 past district lines, such actions would also be
20 understandable.

21 But incompetence has no hand in this.
22 State and Federal mandates do not exist for such
23 actions, nor are there any judicial rulings
24 governing such actions available to this action.

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2 It is a deliberate attempt by the majority party
3 to punish the Senate of the minority party
4 currently representing our community.

5 And in seeking retribution for past
6 political scores, they have effectively and
7 deliberately undercut and disenfranchised the
8 residents of Jamaica Estates. We urge you, the
9 Committee Members, to stop this blatant
10 gerrymandering of the Jamaica Estates community,
11 which will unjustly punish the citizens of
12 Jamaica Estates.

13 We ask you to maintain a unified and
14 cohesive Senatorial District that has always been
15 with our borders. Thank you.

16 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you. Honorable
17 Aravella Simotas.

18 ARAVELLA SIMOTAS, NYS ASSEMBLY MEMBER:
19 Okay, good evening Honorable Members of the
20 Committee. And I apologize for being late. We
21 had session until the late hours in the
22 afternoon. But I am happy to be here to talk
23 about something that is very important, an issue
24 that is really of central concern right now to

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2 Western Queens.

3 Voters should pick their elected
4 officials, not the other way around. This is a
5 principle that politicians of all stripes have
6 paid lip service to in recent years, yet now
7 Senate Republicans will flaunt it in the name of
8 holding on to power.

9 In their proposed redistricting lines,
10 the Senate majority has carved out part of
11 Astoria, dividing Western Queens to accommodate
12 an obviously partisan agenda, and threatening to
13 destroy the unity of a longstanding community of
14 interest. The proposed lines for District 12
15 represent a brazen attempt to exclude Senator
16 Michael Gianaris from a district that he has
17 represented as both a Member of the State
18 Assembly and the State Senate.

19 It is no coincident that Senator Michael
20 Gianaris has been an outspoken opponent of the
21 partisan nature of the reapportionment process
22 and has called on Members of the Senate Majority
23 to uphold their campaign promises and establish
24 an independent system of redistricting.

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2 For his actions, the Senate Republicans
3 have sought retribution. But the true penalty is
4 visited upon the residents of Western Queens.
5 The deliberate division of a cohesive community
6 will cost its residents the unified
7 representation they long have enjoyed.

8 Lifelong neighborhoods will be separated
9 by absurd district lines. Parents with children
10 in the same school will not be able to approach
11 their elected representatives together. Seniors
12 and individuals with disabilities will be unable
13 to travel to far-flung district offices.

14 It is their voice that will be sacrificed
15 due to the Republican Majority's brazen attempts
16 to their grasps at State government.

17 Senator Mike Nizzolio, a Republican
18 colleague from Seneca County and Co-Chair of
19 LATFOR said you have to maintain communities of
20 interest. I could not agree with you more.
21 Astoria clearly forms a community of interest
22 with Long Island City, East Elmhurst, Woodside,
23 and Sunnyside. And to split the neighborhood in
24 two further exposes the selective partisan nature

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2 of this process.

3 Long Island City which historically
4 consisted of Astoria, Hunters Point, Steinway,
5 and Ravenswood was the fourth municipality
6 incorporated in to what is not New York City. In
7 the years since Western Queens welcomed
8 immigrants from Ireland and Germany; Italy and
9 Greece; and more recently from the Middle East,
10 Southeast Asia, and Latin America.

11 In recent years, we have also seen an
12 influx of young professionals from Manhattan who
13 have made their own significant contributions to
14 our community. These diverse groups from a
15 multicultural tapestry in which distinct
16 identities are maintained, but neighborhood
17 cohesion is strengthened; should the proposed
18 Senate lines be enacted, that tapestry will be
19 ripped in two. I hope that Senate Republicans
20 will restore unity to the Western Queens
21 community in its final lines. And should they
22 not, I call on Governor Cuomo to veto any lines
23 that reflect partisan politics rather than the
24 interests of Western Queens residents.

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2 And you should also know that this is
3 quite personal to me as well because my home, my
4 parents' home, and family's home are within the
5 lines you seek to remove from the 12th Senatorial
6 District. Thank you very much.

7 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you.

8 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENEY: Thank you
9 Councilwoman, if you would--

10 ASSEMBLY MEMBER SIMOTAS: [Interposing]
11 Assembly Member, one more point. There is one
12 more point that I want to make.

13 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENEY: Will you answer
14 my question?

15 ASSEMBLY MEMBER SIMOTAS: Of course.

16 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENEY: Thank you. What
17 neighborhood is that? Would you describe the
18 addresses that you just described?

19 ASSEMBLY MEMBER SIMOTAS: In Astoria.

20 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENEY: Your mother's
21 home, your home?

22 ASSMEBLY MEMBER SIMOTAS: Twenty First
23 Avenue--42nd Street between 21st Avenue and
24 Ditmars Boulevard. And my family also lives on

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2 Steinway Street between 21st Avenue and Ditmars
3 Boulevard. And we also have members that live
4 further west.

5 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENEY: Okay, thank you.

6 ASSEMBLY MEMBER SIMOTAS: And all of
7 those have been carved out. The other point that
8 I want to make is some of our representatives and
9 some of community residents had to leave because
10 obviously this is a very important issue. And
11 clearly you are all here and listening
12 attentively to the concerns and comments from
13 residents. I hope that you come back and visit
14 Queens.

15
16 We are a very large community. We have
17 many outspoken advocates. And I would hate that
18 their voice is not heard during this very
19 important process. Thank you very much.

20 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENEY: Thank you
21 Councilwoman.

22 ASSEMBLY MEMBER SIMOTAS: I would like to
23 hand in a petition that so far we have 400
24 residents that have signed that advocate the

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2 points that I have made. There is more to come,
3 but I would like to hand this in right now.

4 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Assemblywoman let me
5 assure you that a number of people from Astoria
6 have viewed similar thoughts and they were
7 listened to. Assemblywoman, thank you very much.
8 Honorable David Weprin.

9 DAVID WEPRIN, NEW YORK STATE ASSEMBLY
10 MEMBER: Good afternoon Chairman McEney, Chairman
11 Nozzolio, Senator Dylan, Assemblyman Oaks,
12 Executive Directors, Staff people. Thank you for
13 the opportunity to speak today. I am Assembly
14 Member David Weprin representing the 24th
15 Assembly District in Northeast Queens, which
16 currently encompasses parts of Auburndale,
17 Bayside, Bayside Hills, Bellerose, Douglaston,
18 Floral Park, Glen Oaks, Hollis, Fresh Meadows,
19 Hollis Hills, Holliswood, Jamaica Estates, Little
20 Neck, New Hyde Park, and Queens Village.

21 An integral and essential factor in
22 ensuring that any redistricting plan is fair and
23 that it empowers local communities is the need
24 for communities of interest to be kept together.

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2 Communities of interest are generally defined as
3 groups of stakeholders that share common needs
4 and concerns in their respective communities.

5 It is imperative that any Maps drawn
6 reflect the shared values, concerns, and
7 interests of the constituents that reside in that
8 specific district. In keeping these groups
9 together, we ensure that their political power is
10 not diluted and that they enjoy the benefits of
11 mutual civic participation.

12 I am here today advocating for a Map that
13 truly represents the unique character of
14 Northeast Queens. Northeast Queens is a special
15 and distinct geographical area whose residents
16 have voiced their desire to be kept together in a
17 compact and contiguous district rather than be
18 divided.

19 Currently my Assembly District 24 is
20 compact and rectangular in shape. It covers
21 neighborhoods, including Jamaica Estates,
22 Auburndale, Holliswood, Bellerose, Douglaston,
23 Little Neck, Glen Oaks, Floral Park, and Bayside.
24 It also covers three community Boards, 8, 11, and

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2 13. Much of Glen Oaks and Floral Park, for
3 example, share the same zip code, and the western
4 section of Glen Oaks share the same zip code as
5 Bellerose.

6 The proposed district map is much less
7 compact than my current one. It would begin in
8 Richmond Hills, encompassing only part of the
9 area and then follow the Grand Central Parkway
10 east through Jamaica Hills, Jamaica Estates,
11 Holliswood and Hollis Hills, Windsor Park before
12 ending in Bellerose, Floral Park, and Glen Oaks.

13 This Map would also divide Richmond Hill
14 cracking the South Asian community. This is a
15 proposed map of my new district. The old
16 district was relatively compact in this general
17 area of the current district. Obviously this
18 district is much less compact and obviously goes
19 from one end of Eastern Queens to Western Queens.

20 From just looking at the map, you can see
21 the different shape; it would be long and thin
22 and barely meets the criteria for being
23 contiguous compared to my current district which
24 is more rectangular in shape and compact.

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2 The proposed Map for Assembly District 24
3 would pull in more community boards across my new
4 district and delude the ability of community
5 boards to ensure their voices are heard. As we
6 all know, community boards are important by which
7 communities exert political power and ensure
8 their voices are heard within local government.

9 The new Map would thus breakup
10 communities of interest that share a history of
11 collaborative advocacy and civic engagement.
12 Instead legislative districts would now include
13 numerous community boards, police precincts and
14 school districts splitting these groups among
15 numerous legislators.

16 The Eastern Queens portion of my district
17 is already somewhat divided splitting communities
18 in to several Assembly Districts. Currently,
19 Glen Oaks, New Hyde Park, Bellerose, Floral Park,
20 and Queens Village are represented by three
21 different Assembly Representative, Ed Bruinstein
22 [phonetic], Barbara Clark, and myself.

23 Glen Oaks Village located within Glen
24 Oaks, one of the largest cooperative housing

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2 developments in New York State with a population
3 of about 3,000 families is also divided. The
4 group represents over 75,000 Queens residents
5 who, while diverse in their makeup, have a long
6 history of shared political advocacy and civic
7 participation.

8 Many representatives of civic
9 associations across Eastern Queens affected and
10 divided by the proposed new district lines will
11 be testifying today. In the aforementioned area
12 of Eastern Queens another community of interest
13 emerges that of the South Asian community.

14
15 Today you will also hear from groups who
16 have identified various clusters of South Asian
17 communities within New York State. According to
18 the 2010 Census, they are almost 351,000 South
19 Asian Americans living in New York City.

20 FEMALE VOICE 1: Conclusion.

21 ASSEMBLY MEMBER WEPRIN: Of that
22 population almost 60% live in Queens County.
23 Emerging clusters of South Asian Americans
24 identified is found within the communities in the

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2 East, Bellerose, Queens Village, Floral Park, and
3 my current district, and the proposed district
4 liens split this emerging cluster of South Asian
5 American voters almost in the middle.

6 I have always been a voice for a voice
7 for an advocate of an independent redistricting
8 commission. I continue to voice my support for
9 the creation of such a commission in order to
10 ensure that communities of interest are kept
11 together and the lines are drawn in a non-
12 politicized way.

13 Many have come here today and have
14 previously testified at the various hearings
15 across New York State to voice their concern at
16 the way in which these Maps were drawn. A set of
17 lines within Queens have been blatantly
18 gerrymandered. One key example is the way in
19 which Woodhaven, a one square mile neighborhood
20 has been split among three different State
21 Senators. Another is the Flushing has been
22 carved up. I am going to sum up.

23 The proposed draft map for my Assembly
24 District is a gerrymandered map which fails to

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2 live up to criteria set forth by this Committee.
3 It does not keep communities of interest
4 together, and divides the Eastern part of the
5 district.

6 I look forward to continuing to work with
7 my colleagues in government and communities
8 across Queens and New York City to create maps
9 that are better representative of the communities
10 of interest indentified across the Borough. I
11 thank you for your attention and I would be happy
12 to answer any questions.

13 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you.

14
15 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENEY: Thank you very
16 much Assemblyman.

17 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Aminta Kilawan
18 [background noise] [crosstalk]

19 AMINTA KILAWAN, RESIDENT: Honorable - -
20 Helen Marshall, Members of the Task Force, good
21 evening. My name is Aminta Kilawan, you got that
22 right on the money, and I have a passion for
23 justice that is for that which is right. And
24 with all due respect, I do not believe that the

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2 lines you have drawn are right.

3 For the last 20 years, I have been a
4 resident of Queens County. And for the last 20
5 years I have yet to live in a distinct and
6 unified district with regard to both the Assembly
7 and the State Senate.

8 I speak before you today with one concern
9 in mind namely that Richmond Hill and South Ozone
10 Park be kept together. When your Task Force goes
11 back to the drawing board, and puts pen to paper,
12 and redraws those lines. These areas
13 collectively represent a community of interest
14 which has already been defined by several
15 speakers before me, so I will not get in to that.
16 But the reality is Richmond Hill and South Ozone
17 Park collectively embodies each and every one of
18 the aforementioned factors as I will detail.

19 And as many of the people in my community
20 have already voiced, and as I will echo today, I
21 ask that you do not splinter us. Firstly with
22 regard to economic status; generally we are
23 middleclass.

24 We migrated to New York for a promise of

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2 opportunity. We have made this land namely
3 Richmond Hill and South Ozone Park our own land,
4 opening up small businesses that reflect our
5 cultural. We run countless Roti [phonetic] shops
6 and we sale countless ethnic garbs in countless
7 stores.

8 We even have beautified the neighborhoods
9 we live in by renovating them; renovating our
10 structures and our landscapes and we take pride
11 in our neighborhood. We utilize common media
12 markets. We several local newspapers circulating
13 across the areas of Richmond Hill and South Ozone
14 Park, including the West Indian and the Caribbean
15 New Yorker.

16 Members of our communities of interest
17 also host radio programs targeted to the needs of
18 our population. We share community services and
19 organizations.

20 When I get on the A-train where I go to
21 school at Fordemoix [phonetic], by 59th
22 Street/Columbus Circle, I can tell by looking at
23 the sign on the A-train whether it is a Leopards
24 Boulevard A-train just by the people that are on

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2 that train.

3 We use the same means of transportation,
4 buses and trains alike. We also congregate in
5 the same places of worship heavily populating
6 Mundirs [phonetic], Mosques, Gudwars [phonetic]
7 dispersed all across Richmond Hill and South
8 Ozone Park. We go to the same High Schools
9 namely John Adams and Richmond Hill. We share a
10 common country of origin, language, and dialect.
11 We identify as Americans who can trace our
12 ancestry back to South Asian or the South Asian
13 Diaspora to the Caribbean, which includes the
14 place that I am from, Guyana, Trinidad Tobago,
15 and Surinam.

16 We speak the same languages, Creoles and
17 Hindi. And talking all of this as a cohesive
18 whole, you can see that we share the same
19 cultural background. We share the same identity.
20 The bottom line is that we are a community of
21 interest; bottom line, if Richmond Hill and South
22 Ozone are not kept together, your Task Force will
23 be egregiously deluding our voting power under
24 Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act.

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2 Thank you. And I thank you for affording
3 me this opportunity to speak today. I ask that
4 you please fulfill your civic duty by allowing us
5 to fairly partake in ours.

6 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you very much.
7 Richard David. Good evening.

8 RICHARD S. DAVID, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
9 INDO-CARIBBEAN ALLIANCE INC.: Good afternoon to
10 each of you and thank you for giving us this
11 opportunity to testify before you. And at this
12 point I feel like I am going to be beating a dead
13 horse because almost every speaker that has come
14 up before you have pointed out the gerrymandering
15 that has happened in Richmond Hill.

16 And I, unfortunately, am not afraid to
17 continue for a full five minutes and repeat that
18 same message because we have come before you in
19 numerous occasions, and we feel like we have been
20 completely ignored.

21 I sincerely hope this reflects a genuine
22 effort to listen to the communities and people
23 impacted by your decisions. Based on my
24 testimony today and those of my colleagues, I

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2 believe it will be fair to make further
3 adjustments in some cases, significant
4 adjustments to the proposed 2012 New York State
5 Assembly and Senate District Maps.

6 I am Richard David. I am a resident of
7 Ozone Park. I am a Member of Community Board 9,
8 and I have the privilege of being the Executive
9 Director of the Indo-Caribbean Alliance or ICA.

10 ICA is a leading nonprofit organization
11 dedicated to empowering South Asian residents of
12 Indo-Caribbean origin. We are a 501c3 Nonprofit
13 Nonpartisan Organization. As I mentioned,
14 previously submitted testimony asking that this
15 Task Force follow its own guidelines and keep the
16 neighborhoods of Richmond Hill and South Ozone
17 Park in a single Assembly and Senate District, in
18 fact we have five.

19 And by my account in every single
20 testimony that we have had today, we are the
21 winner if you are counting who has the most
22 gerrymandered district in New York City.

23 I am here to inform you of the importance
24 of keeping the neighborhood of Richmond Hill and

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2 South Ozone Park, both in Southeast Queens,
3 significantly together in the Assembly and Senate
4 Maps. In fact we have organized to have several
5 of our residents attend the hearing here today,
6 and to demonstrate visibly before you the need
7 that we felt for so long to have this community
8 unified.

9 And I am so flattered and inspired by all
10 the residents and students and community
11 organizations who have joined us in Richmond Hill
12 United to come out testify here before you today.
13 I ask if any of you have actually been to
14 Richmond Hill or South Queens. I think you will
15 see a lot of the description that I am going to
16 go in to.

17 The South Asian community of Indo-
18 Caribbean origin has the largest presence in New
19 York City, larger than anywhere else in the world
20 with the exception of the Caribbean where a lot
21 of our people are from. These residents and
22 their families have called the neighborhoods of
23 Richmond Hill and South Ozone Park home since the
24 1960s.

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2 Today this community contributes more
3 heavily to the socioeconomic and political
4 vibrancy that we see in New York City than in any
5 other time in the history of New York City.
6 While many have heard of Chinatown or Little
7 Italy, all here in New York City, we have what
8 has been called popularly, so-called Little
9 Guyana in South East Queens.

10 This so-called Little Guyana is anchored
11 by a commercial strip that runs along Liberty
12 Avenue from the Vanderk [phonetic] Express Way to
13 Woodhaven Boulevard. The surrounding areas
14 between Jamaica Avenue to the North, Bell Parkway
15 to the South, Woodhaven Boulevard to the West,
16 and Vanderk Express Way to the East, is an
17 expansion of this so-called Little Guyana of
18 cultural and commerce hub.

19 Residents in these areas attend churches,
20 Mundirs, which are Hindu places of worship, and
21 Mosques within this area. It creates a
22 relatively homogeneous area with residents having
23 similar education backgrounds, transportation
24 options, and income ranges similar to the

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2 testimony that you just heard form Aminta
3 Kilawan.

4 This is a cohesive area where residents
5 are networked together and families send their
6 children to school; where they come to
7 organizations like mine, the Indo-Caribbean
8 Alliance for social services like youth programs.

9 The Maps as they are currently proposed
10 completely ignore these similarities. In fact
11 they are contradictory to those similarities.
12 They split our area in to five Assembly Districts
13 and two Senate Districts. It is difficult to
14 understand the logic behind these divisions, and
15 it is contrary to the purpose of your
16 organization.

17 You have made it so easy for people to
18 label this Body as a gerrymandering organization
19 simply by looking at Richmond Hill, Queens and
20 South Ozone Park. How else would it be plausible
21 that a homeowner in the course of their shopping
22 on a Sunday afternoon can walk with their
23 children through five different Assembly
24 Districts on the way through shopping; going to

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2 bank, and going to a park?

3 I appeal to each of you to further adjust
4 these maps to keep these families together in the
5 neighborhoods. The consequences of your actions,
6 as you know and everyone in this room knows will
7 have a lasting impact until 2022.

8 The last time these lines were drawn the
9 neighborhoods were completely divided. Ten years
10 later the impact of those decisions are before
11 us. We have failing High Schools. We have high
12 crime rates. And we believe that there is a
13 direct correlation between the continued
14 disenfranchisement of residents in Richmond Hill
15 and the social problems that we continue to see
16 before us.

17 Again, I appeal to this Body to adjust
18 the proposed Map to keep Richmond Hill and South
19 Ozone Park together or significantly together. I
20 thank you for your time. And I thank you for
21 your consideration.

22 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you very much.
23 Donna Raymond [crosstalk].

24 DONNA RAYMOND, PRESIDENT, NORTH QUEENS

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2 HOMEOWNERS CIVIC ASSOCIATION OF JACKSON HEIGHTS:

3 Hello. My name is Donna Raymond. I am the
4 President of the North Queens Homeowners Civic
5 Association and I am here to speak to you about
6 the new proposed Assembly lines and in particular
7 the 34th Assembly District.

8 We love our community and we are grateful
9 that LATFOR has kept the 34th Assembly District
10 pretty much in tack. Jackson Heights, East
11 Elmhurst, and Woodside are made up of residents
12 representative of over 70 countries.

13 By the way, our section of East Elmhurst
14 is not East of Elmhurst and in fact from the
15 early 1900s and until a few years ago when the
16 Postmaster General changed the designation of our
17 zip code from 11370 to East Elmhurst, our
18 community was also called Jackson Heights.

19 My organization and other civic groups
20 are still fighting to get back our identity and
21 our designation of being called Jackson Heights.

22 Jackson Heights has a long established
23 history of being one of the most ethnically
24 diverse Districts, and I submitted newsletters

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2 and a State report with my testimony.

3 We are also the home to the largest LGBT
4 population outside of Manhattan's Greenwich
5 Village. The housing stock includes; Garden
6 Apartments, co-ops and condos; attached and semi-
7 detached private homes. The business sector is
8 mostly comprised of what we call Mom and Pop
9 stores locally and are mostly immigrant owned and
10 operated small businesses.

11 A recent study by the New York State
12 Controller, Thomas Senopoly [phonetic] states
13 that the Northwestern Queens neighborhoods of
14 East Elmhurst, Woodside, and Jackson Heights have
15 one of the greatest concentrations of immigrants
16 in all of New York city, and have experienced
17 strong economic growth during the years leading
18 up to the Recession due largely to its diverse
19 immigrant owned small businesses.

20 Our business community reflects the
21 diverse heritage of the residents; Judaism,
22 Islam, Sikhism, Hinduism, and many Christian
23 denominations make up this area. Just imagine a
24 locate Jewish Center hosting Muslim and Islamic

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2 services, and a Methodist Church serving as a
3 community center where groups of every religious,
4 cultural, and ethnic backgrounds hold their
5 meetings and functions.

6 We have learned to support each other's
7 rights to religious freedom and our community of
8 tolerance and acceptance. According to a New
9 York Times article, Jackson Heights, a
10 middleclass neighborhood is so ethnically and
11 culturally diverse that some people call it a
12 Utopia of diversity. A New York news article
13 decries that Jackson Heights is the cutest Hood
14 in the Borough. My organization agrees.

15 However there are a couple of blocks
16 where members of my organization lived that has
17 moved and place in another district. 70th and
18 30th Avenues, 71st Street also between 25th and
19 30th Avenues currentely are within the boundaries
20 of the existing 34th Assembly District.

21 It really serves no purpose to have these
22 few residents ostracized from the rest of the
23 neighborhood and their membership in our
24 organization. I ask that you rezone them back

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2 into the 34th Assembly District.

3 We are happy with our community and wish
4 to keep it as it is. Thank you for allowing me
5 this time, and thank you for your consideration
6 to our request.

7 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you. Rachana
8 Shah.

9 RACHANA SHAH, TAKING OUR SEAT: Thank you
10 very much for letting me speak. Good evening.
11 My name is Rachana Shah and I am with Taking Our
12 Seat. Taking Our Seat is a Queens based
13 nonpartisan, not for profit civic organization.

14 We were founded to empower South Asian
15 Americans in this electoral process by
16 eliminating South Asian voter delusion through
17 the registering process. Taking Our Seat is also
18 a Charter Member of the Asian American Community
19 Coalition on Redistricting and Democracy, and we
20 thank you for the opportunity to speak this
21 evening.

22 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: You had an accident on
23 your way here?

24 MS. SHAH: Yes.

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2 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: We are very glad--you
3 look fine.

4 MS. SHAH: I am fine, everything is okay.
5 So thank you for letting me come in now.

6 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Just relax and give us
7 your testimony.

8 MS. SHAH: You have heard about the many
9 issues for regarding voter dilution in the
10 neighborhoods from all other people who have
11 spoken today. I am going to jump straight in to
12 the section of our testimony that talks about the
13 actual lines and our recommendations on the
14 changes to those lines.

15 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: More specific.

16 MS. SHAH: More specific, yes. For the
17 purposed 24th Assembly District; now LATFOR has
18 proposed a number of districts that cover South
19 Asian American neighborhoods. This new 24th
20 District does hold the promise of uniting three
21 distinct South Asian American neighborhoods such
22 as Richmond Hills, Briarwood, and Bellerose.

23 In this particular proposed district the
24 Asian non-Hispanic population is nearly 33%. And

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2 we know that from our own analysis that the vast
3 majority of this Asian non-Hispanic number is
4 actually South Asian, South Asian American. We
5 think that the final boundaries may actually
6 offer a viable opportunity to maximize the value
7 of South Asian American voters, but we suggest a
8 few changes.

9 First we recommend that portions of the
10 proposed 24th District found in its Western
11 terminus in Richmond Hill be removed and added to
12 a District that is entirely and exclusively
13 encompassing Richmond Hill and South Ozone Park.
14 Our analysis shows that the area that we seek to
15 remove from the proposed 24th District
16 encompasses approximately 41,000 people.

17 To account for the loss of population
18 from loosing sections in Richmond Hill, we
19 propose the 24th District be expanded in Queens
20 Village in Bellerose by adding the following
21 boundaries. Where Hillside Avenue intersects
22 with Francis Lewis Boulevard, move the boundaries
23 South on Francis Lewis Boulevard until it
24 intersects with Jamaica Avenue.

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2 And then move that boundary east on
3 Jamaica Avenue to the Nassau County Line. And
4 then at the proposed Union Turnpike boundary,
5 extend that boundary to the Nassau County Line.

6 The small modification to the 24th
7 District will add approximately 46,000 people
8 from Bellerose and Queens Village and it will
9 account for the total loss in population in
10 removing the Richmond Hill sections. The
11 alterations will result in a District that is
12 within the accepted deviations.

13 This reconfiguration reduces the number
14 of communities of interest in the 24th from three
15 to two. Briarwood and Bellerose share a common
16 thoroughfare on Hillside Avenue, which is the
17 main arterial road and the location of two subway
18 lines, and numerous bus lines.

19 The boundaries of the 24th as Taking Our
20 Seat proposes is also home a large immigrant
21 populations who share the same concerns about
22 education, employment, and access to government
23 services.

24 For the Richmond Hill Assembly District,

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2 Richmond Hill and South Ozone Park together
3 should be the home of one distinct and unified
4 Assembly District. We are look at it is a home
5 of a large Indo-Caribbean Community and a large
6 Sikh community among others.

7 The boundaries compact and contiguous and
8 share a common thoroughfares with Atlantic
9 Avenue, Jamaica Avenue, Liberty Avenue, Woodhaven
10 Boulevard. There are common transportation
11 characteristics with A, J, and Z subway lines and
12 the Q7, 8, 10, 11, 21 and it goes on.

13 Also as you heard the community high
14 schools are Richmond Hill High School and John
15 Adams High School which has a significant number
16 of its population coming from this distinct
17 neighborhood. Moving forward now towards the
18 proposed Senate District 16; we support the need
19 to reflect the growth in the Asian American
20 population in Queens County by drawing in concept
21 a legislative district that encompasses a
22 majority of Asian Americans.

23 Although the proposed Senate District 16
24 achieves the majority population requirement, it

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2 does so by disregarding neighborhood lines.

3 Commentariially the proposed boundary of Senate
4 District 16 also dilutes the South Asian American
5 vote by only partially key South Asian American
6 neighborhoods in Jackson Heights and Elmhurst.

7 Taking Our Seat joins a number of groups
8 present today in asking that the proposed Senate
9 District 16 be reconfigured with proposed Senate
10 District 11 to keep downtown Flushing and its
11 surrounding neighborhoods whole while maintaining
12 the Asian American majority.

13 With regards to Senate District 11; the
14 proposed Senate District 11 in Queens continues
15 to dilute the South Asian American vote.

16 Although the neighborhoods of Bellerose, Glen
17 Oaks, and Floral Park are kept whole, the
18 adjacent neighborhood of Queens Village is
19 shredded with jagged boundaries and it works--
20 Yes.

21 PRESIDENT MARSHALL: Time please.

22 MS. SHAH: Okay, certainly. The boundary
23 in Queens Village has diluted the South Asian
24 American vote in the proposed district. We also

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2 propose a way to keep these major South Asian
3 American clusters together on the Senate level by
4 including the Richmond Hill area; the Briarwood
5 through the Jamaican Hills area; and the
6 Bellerose, Queens Village Floral Park, and Glen
7 Oaks cluster and we see that as a way of moving
8 forward keeping the South Asian American
9 communities together in a larger Senate District.
10 Thank you so much for your time and the exact
11 boundaries are here. Thank you.

12 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENEY: Thank you.

13 Thank you for your input.

14 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you very much.

15 Frances Luhmann McDonald.

16 FRANCES LUHMANN MCDONALD, COMMUNITY

17 ACTIVIST: I applaud all of the speakers who came
18 before me and I promise I will not reiterate. I
19 did make a little finding that people from North
20 Queens, East Queens, West Queens, and South
21 Queens do not like your plan. There was one guy
22 that kind of liked it and he was from Manhattan.

23 [Laughter]

24 MS. MCDONALD: My name is Francis

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2 McDonald. I reside in what currently the 12th
3 Senatorial district and this is about my seventh
4 or eighth reapportionment hearing. Yes I am that
5 old and there is old saying that says the more
6 things change the more they remain the more it
7 remains the same. I am a master of clichés and
8 also telling you what they are saying behind your
9 back. That is my strong suit the plan begs to
10 question what were they thinking. Usually the
11 answer is they were not thinking. Let me tell
12 you, I know what you are thinking. What for?
13 You know that you cannot play that word on Words
14 with Friends. What for?

15 Our demographic research and
16 reapportionment-- the Task Force I believe was
17 created by the New York State legislature. Their
18 task is to redraw the current lines, which the
19 same legislators were elected under. In other
20 words, their own lines. I can be appalled, but I
21 am not surprised.

22 About Queens; at your own public hearing
23 earlier many local residents testified that they
24 wanted their neighborhoods to remain in tack.

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2 Divisions of the neighborhoods reduces political
3 accountability. Queens is as a diverse county
4 with diverse ethnicity; it is diverse
5 economically; it is diverse age related; and it
6 is even diverse sexually oriented. You are not
7 going to get more diverse than that.

8
9 Now about State Senate District 12, where
10 I reside. Now that is going to change and I am
11 not moving. There is something wrong with this
12 picture.

13 Astoria Long Island City Sunnyside and
14 Woodside as classic example; almost a role model
15 for ethnic diversity; middle working classes;
16 about 30 or 40 years ago, that community welcomed
17 the community from Greece. It became the largest
18 concentration of Greek population this side of
19 Athens.

20 Currently, we have a little district, not
21 too little on Steinway Street that is referred
22 to, quite accurately, as Little Egypt. And in
23 general, Astoria does not have any trouble with
24 that. The whole situation especially in the

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2 State Senatorial Districts is clearly unbroken
3 and does not need to be fixed, especially for
4 political power purposes.

5 I want you to go back to your drawing
6 board and look at you pallet. Remove from you
7 pallet personal political power; personal
8 political incumbency; and personal political
9 revenge so that New York State--our voters will
10 not have to call Governor Cuomo to veto this
11 plan. Because he is going to have to veto it in
12 order to attempt to restore confidence in New
13 York State government.

14 If you want to know how to do it better,
15 I will give you my email address. Email me and I
16 will come and help you. My email address, not
17 surprisingly is politicaljunky2011@hotmail.com.
18 [Applause] [Laughter]

19 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENEY: Before you sit
20 down, Ms. McDonald--you have not sat down.
21 Before you leave, we would welcome your specific
22 suggestions. The time is gone tonight to do
23 that, but feel free; that your candid and
24 uplifting testimony is very welcome as would be

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2 our specific suggestions.

3 MS. MCDONALD: My specific is about the
4 12th Senatorial District.

5 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENEY: Whatever
6 specific suggestions you have, the Task Force
7 would welcome your opinion.

8 MS. MCDONALD: Thank you very much.

9 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENEY: Thank you very
10 much.

11 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you. Albert
12 Baldeo.

13 ALBERT BALDEO, PRESIDENT, UNITED
14 COMMUNITIES ALLIANCE, DISTRICT LEADER 38TH AD:
15 Good evening Members of this Honorable
16 Commission. Good evening everyone. I am an
17 elected Democratic District Leader of the 38th
18 Assembly District, a Delegate of the Judicial
19 Convention, County Committeeman, political
20 advocate, and an Attorney at Law. I am also the
21 President of United Communities Alliance and
22 organization that empowers and improves the
23 quality of life of all residents regardless of
24 race, religion, or National origins; living in

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2 Queens the place that best defines us as a Nation
3 of immigrants.

4 I also share a common heritage of with
5 our President, Helen Marshall. She was here
6 earlier.

7
8 Our goals are to consolidate residents of
9 a district in to active participation for the
10 betterment of the district; to fight unfair
11 redistricting and social injustice, and to
12 develop coalitions on neighborhood organizations
13 and groups; to foster a greater civic voice for
14 the community; and to solve common issues and
15 problems confronting our family of neighborhoods;
16 Richmond Hill, Ozone Park, Woodhaven, Briarwood,
17 Jamaica Hills, Jamaica Estates, Bellerose, Queens
18 Village, Floral Park, and Glen Oaks. I refer to
19 Exhibits A, B, and C. The maps are with my
20 testimony.

21 I have run for office several times
22 before and my interaction with residents in these
23 communities both as an attorney and grassroots
24 organizer, and as a community leader has given me

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2 a deep understanding of the common issues,
3 problems, concerns, and solutions that concern
4 there residents collectively.

5 Gerrymandering has cracked these natural
6 communities of interests in to unrecognizable
7 portions with incumbency suppression from
8 politicians on the basic structures of
9 government. Common problems abound, but common
10 issues are ignored, and common solutions are
11 impossible to achieve.

12 Rampant home foreclosures; closure of
13 hospitals, medical centers and schools; kids
14 being subjected to filthy overcrowded trailer
15 parks and locker rooms for classrooms; spiraling
16 unemployment; increased taxes; and the cost of
17 living have marginalized communities of interest
18 from government services and funding.

19 Their need for representation at all
20 levels of government has never more compelling.
21 Our plight is best understood with the closures
22 of our area hospital like Mary Immaculate and St.
23 Johns; the threatened closures of our high
24 schools; 10% rate of unemployment; high home

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2 foreclosures and small business closures in our
3 districts.

4 We did not even have health clinics,
5 community centers, daycare centers, senior
6 centers, social service centers, or even job
7 training centers. No other community comes close
8 to this paradigm of utter despair, yet I am
9 living testimony that people looking at someone
10 like me as electable and serve the public
11 interests in this majority/minority district.

12 In 2006, we almost won a State Senate
13 seat. When I came within 1% of 483 votes on
14 defeating a 20-year old incumbency, Senator
15 Serphin Maltese; I repeat in 2006, we almost won
16 a State Senate seat when I came within 1% of
17 defeating a 20-year old incumbency, Senator
18 Serphin Maltese.

19 In fact if the election was governed by
20 the rules applied to other states, my worthy
21 opponent could not have combined the third-party
22 lines or the votes from the smaller parties. And
23 at is main party line and as the Daily News and
24 the New York Times and so on, if you Google it

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2 you can see it, he speaks past me.

3 Currently, original Ozone Park, South
4 Ozone Park, Woodhaven, Briarwood, and these
5 communities are cracked in to numerous City
6 Council Districts, Assembly and Congressional
7 Districts. Consequently they have reduced the
8 effectiveness of problem solving. Share bonds
9 are destroyed and constituents are reduced to
10 mere statistics. Richmond Hill, Ozone Park,
11 South Ozone Park, and Woodhaven should constitute
12 one Assembly District. And Briarwood, Jamaica
13 Hills, Jamaica Estates, Bellerose, and Queens
14 Village, Floral Park, and Glen Oaks should
15 constitute another adjoining Assembly District.

16 And I have shown the maps there and the
17 date that it supposed that. Therefore it is
18 respectfully submitted that office has not fully
19 complied with all of the factors. The Supreme
20 Court has recognized in the drawing of districts,
21 one compactness and contiguity; respect in
22 political subdivision; preserving communities of
23 interest's raised; meeting political goals.

24 Federal Courts have recognized cultural

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2 background; economic status; common media
3 markets; shared community services; other
4 organizations, including health clinics, stores,
5 public transportation; - - places; voting
6 patterns; common language and dialects; and
7 common country of origin as factors; and shared
8 community concerns in drawing district lines.

9 The sanction that propose 83rd and 24th
10 only short changes these vibrant communities of
11 interests. Here we are not asking you to
12 configure districts in two counties or three as
13 it was done in Congressional Districts 7th and
14 12th, respectively, where the Courts upheld the
15 community of interest adoption as legal, and have
16 kept these communities across different county
17 lines of Queens and the Bronx, and Queens and
18 Manhattan, and Brooklyn, respectively.

19 In Diaz & Silva and the Constitutional
20 Challenge of New York's 12th Congressional
21 District, it was successfully argued that Asian
22 American in Manhattan's Chinatown and Brooklyn's
23 Sunset Park neighborhoods constituted a community
24 of interest that should be kept together within a

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2 single district across county lines.

3 Rather, we are merely advocating raised
4 rhythms that you have heard today that you keep
5 this one, keep Richmond Hill, Ozone Park, South
6 Ozone Park, and Woodhaven together utilizing this
7 map. And if I can hear from the audience, is
8 there anyone in agreement with me that we keep
9 Ozone Park, Richmond Hill, and South Ozone Park?
10 [applause] [crosstalk], there you have very
11 strong chorus from them. They really want you to
12 keep this community of interest together. And I
13 thought that would be the best way of defining
14 the clamor for it.

15 And secondly, to make Briarwood, Jamaica
16 Hills, Jamaica Estates, Bellerose, Queens
17 Village, and Floral Park, and Glen Oaks another
18 Assembly District with another 185,000
19 constituents. And logically you can create a
20 State Senate District by adding these two
21 communities of interest, plus using both of these
22 Assembly Districts which conforms to size,
23 compactness, and contiguity with 377,000
24 constituents, give or take.

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2 This where the critical mass of this
3 community of interest is, and I challenge the
4 same Panel to produce and more compact and
5 contiguous district.

6 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Mr. Baldeo it is over
7 six minutes, could you attend to summarize?

8 MR. BALDEO: Sure. I just want to
9 mention to that in Richmond Hill we have two
10 district leaders. And you know that two
11 districts leaders constitutes and Assembly
12 District. We have Dr. Taj Rajkumar, District
13 Leader in this same district and myself. So if
14 you wanted to the math demographically or
15 otherwise. You have enough statistics. You have
16 enough stuff. You have heard Assemblyman David
17 Weprin testify also to keep Richmond Hill whole.

18 And I therefore behoove this Panel that
19 you keep that community together. Inasmuch as we
20 have been legally advised that we have legal
21 ground for redress, I have confidence that this
22 Committee will do the right thing. And it will
23 draw us a Map that is contiguous, concise, and
24 compact. And that you will do what you are

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2 legally mandated to do. I thank you very much.

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENEY: Thank you Mr.
4 Baldeo.

5 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you. Ashook
6 Ramsarran. You will be happy to know that you
7 are the 50th person to testify.

8
9 ASHOK RAMSARRAN, GLOBAL ORGANIZATION OF
10 PEOPLE OF INDIAN ORIGIN: I thought that it was
11 51, but thank you for reducing it.

12 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you.

13 MR. RAMSARRAN: Co-Chairman, Members of
14 the Redistricting Task Force, ladies and
15 gentlemen, thank you for this opportunity to for
16 me to speak at this Hearing today. I would have
17 liked the speakers for the respective communities
18 be lumped together so the audience can have a
19 better understand of the respective communities,
20 but that is moot right now.

21 I would have also liked an independent
22 Panel rather than what it is now. But beyond
23 that, my name is Ashook Ramsarran. I was born in
24 Guyana and I am a longtime resident of Queens for

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2 45 years.

3 I am President for the Global
4 Organization of People of Indian Origin, also
5 known as GOPO, with worldwide chapters and
6 membership advocating fairness and equitable
7 rights of people of Indian origin globally. I am
8 a Board Member of the Fresh Meadows City
9 Homeowners Association, and I am on the Board of
10 several local, regional, and global civic
11 organizations, academic institutions, and member
12 of several others.

13 GOPO has been requested to support its
14 initiative to keep the neighborhoods of Richmond
15 Hill, Ozone Park, and South Park in tack, and we
16 are gladly doing so. I have previously testified
17 at several hearings, including RTA Rezoning of
18 Fresh Meadows and the Land marking of Brinkerhoff
19 Cemetery, and others.

20 Regarding the South Asian community of
21 Richmond Hill, Ozone Park, and Woodhaven I am
22 advocating and adding to those who have spoken
23 before and that will speak afterwards on the
24 critical need to retain a single contiguous,

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2 compact, cohesive community for fair equitable
3 and effective representation of people with
4 similar backgrounds and interests; families and
5 friends with shared interests, concerns, shared
6 values, shared culture, history aspirations, and
7 community spirit in a singular district in order
8 to keep community area in tack socially,
9 culturally, economically, and politically.

10 Your proposal as shown would split that
11 community six ways. The United States
12 Constitution would be traverse if you were to do
13 that. The United Nations Universal Declaration
14 of Human Rights, Articles, 21,27, and 29 affirm
15 the rights of people to take part in government
16 of its country directly or through freely chosen
17 representatives--underline freely chosen.

18 People choose their representatives. The
19 representatives should not be choosing the
20 people. What better way to be in compliance than
21 to provide the means for chosen representation by
22 keeping the community in tack. In California the
23 Citizen Redistricting Commission states that it
24 is critical to ensuring district lines are drawn

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2 to keep a community whole and grouped with nearby
3 communities with similar interests.

4 That ensures that your voice is heard by
5 your elected leaders in certain decisions as
6 equality of your child's schools or high or low
7 your taxes should be.

8 Recently several New York Editorials have
9 voiced their support for retaining communities in
10 tack. The New York Times said, draw a
11 straightforward fair Maps for State Legislative
12 Districts by keeping communities in tack and
13 respecting local jurisdictional lines. News Day
14 said, also proven that the same boundaries are
15 possible. The Daily News said, a glimpse of that
16 alternative reality and it looks good, damn good.

17 You have a tough job. We will help you.
18 We are here to help you. Listen to all the
19 speakers asking for the same thing and use their
20 support, use their advice. It is critical to
21 keep and unified compact district with natural
22 and sensible boundaries. It makes no sense to
23 partition and divide this community, ripping
24 apart neighborhoods, and destroying long

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2 partnerships shared by those who live in this
3 community. It is the right thing to do.

4 New York State must not become Texas.
5 Please do not divide, dilute, or disrupt. Do not
6 draw dizzying lines. It is not in the people's
7 interest. I am hopeful that you will consider
8 this in a positive way and give us the in tack
9 community that we require. Thank you.

10 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you very much.
11 Vishnu Bisram [phonetic]. Vishnu Bisram.
12 Michael Duncan. Michael Duncan. Kris Gounden.
13 Kris Gounden. Good evening Mr. Gounden.

14 KRIS GOUNDEN, COMMUNITY ACTIVIST: Good
15 evening ladies and gentlemen. I would like to
16 thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak
17 on a matter that everyone has been very
18 boisterous about. My testimony is basically when
19 it does not work, when the redistricting does not
20 work. And Ozone Park, Richmond Hill is a
21 community that my family has been in since 1976.
22 And we have been victims of redistricting that
23 redistricting that did not work. I going to move
24 on with my testimony.

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2 My family has been in South Ozone Park
3 since the mid-1970s. My wife's family has been
4 in Ozone Park since 1976. The Caribbean, West
5 Indian community has grown throughout Ozone Park
6 through our will to live together. Because of
7 the shape of the voting district, we cannot vote
8 to elect someone who is born of us. We cannot
9 vote for someone who is more likely to speak of
10 our interests.

11 We can raise our children together, but
12 we cannot vote together for one of us born of us
13 who all raises children in the community.
14 Instead the schools in our community do not talk
15 to our child about how we came to America many
16 years ago.

17 The schools in our community act like we
18 have no history and no voice in the City Council
19 to demand that our past be included in our
20 curriculum so that we can have pride and self-
21 respect. This is what school is supposed to be
22 about; self-esteem, self-respect, self-
23 confidence. It is just not other people's
24 history that makes them feel good about

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2 themselves. We deserve to feel good about
3 ourselves too.

4 Right now, part of my property has been
5 taken without compensation. Former City
6 Councilman of Howard Beach, Joseph Addabbo, the
7 land grabber--there was no easement on my
8 property on official map as required by law.
9 There was no hearing on the taking of my property
10 as required by law. There was no notice on the
11 taking of my property as required by law.

12 Eminent Domain Law §208 was never
13 complied with and these local politicians and the
14 judges act like the Law does not have to be
15 complied with when it comes to the Caribbean
16 community.

17 I took my case to Court. Michael
18 Difernio [phonetic], a City employee, got up on
19 the witness stand and admitted to the Court;
20 admitted to the City; admitted to all of you that
21 he had no knowledge of the facts of an Affidavit
22 that he signed.

23 That is perjury. Judge Cogan did
24 absolutely nothing about the perjury. The City

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2 did nothing about the perjury. The now State
3 Senator, Joe Addabbo, did nothing about that.
4 The current City Councilman, Eric Ulrich did
5 nothing about the land-grab on my property.

6 This is what had been done to the
7 American Indian, now it is being done to the West
8 Indian. And if we do not get some representation
9 that we can trust, it is going to keep happening.
10 We need districting that allows us a voice in the
11 machine.

12 You have heard the case about Ms.
13 Persaud; it was an outright business grab, grand
14 larceny. The crime was perpetrated by a sitting
15 Judge. Where is our voice to speak out on the
16 conspiracy between the Judges and those outside
17 of our community?

18 Our voice is in the redistricting of the
19 voting lines. Our voice is ourselves. Our voice
20 must be heard just like Councilman Barron's voice
21 is heard in his community. As matter of fact,
22 Councilman Barron came out of his district to my
23 house to put a stop to the White Supremacy that
24 is running rampant.

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2 We need to select our own Councilman who
3 can go out of his or her district to his or her
4 house when he is under attack by who will not
5 represent him; harassed, abused, tortured by
6 politicians; City agencies without repercussions.
7 We have no way to address our concerns other than
8 doing a lawsuit.

9 The police do their job as per community
10 meetings, which we are not part of. The District
11 Attorney rubber stamps the behavior of which the
12 Judges have zero tolerance attitude for our
13 people. We have lived on this reservation-type
14 neighborhood to the point that we self-deport
15 ourselves to other U.S. States and other
16 countries.

17 We come together on the Internet to share
18 our experiences of the discrimination by the
19 ruling class that is presented during the John
20 Gotti crime spree that goes back before JFK
21 Airport was Idlewild Airport. NYPD 106 Howard
22 Beach Precinct disbanded for assisting these
23 individuals.

24 Politicians are profiting from their

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2 relationships with these activities; politicians,
3 criminals, police within blocks of each other,
4 co-existing with each other all of the same color
5 and kind.

6 The Federal Government had to come in and
7 stop this blatant abuse of Civil Human Rights to
8 the minority community here in Richmond Hill and
9 Ozone Park. We have been victims of this for
10 much too long of this abuse. Our community needs
11 representation. Our voice is falling on deaf
12 ears without political presence.

13 Our children need to be empowered to see
14 a future here instead of elsewhere. Our people
15 have been bled of our aspirations with the
16 ongoing barrage of ticketing, Summons,
17 violations; and disciplinary action the City
18 wants to impose on us selectively.

19 This system only hurts us when this
20 system is supposed to help us and protect us.
21 Police have memory problems and refuse to enforce
22 the Law. The City refused to produce foiled
23 documents and create damaging paperwork.

24 The District Attorney sleeps on our cases

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2 and moves quickly to punish us.

3 PRESIDENT MARSHALL: Mr. Gounden you need
4 to summarize, please. [Break in audio] I can
5 assure you that your written testimony becomes
6 part of the record.

7 MR. GOUNDEN: Yes Ma'am. If the Borough
8 President were here, she would actually concur
9 with me that we had meetings and it just got
10 worse. It is blatant without representation. I
11 have to go to Harlem. I have to go to Eastern
12 New York. I have to go wherever a politician
13 might even listen to me and give me advice that
14 your people have no representation; I cannot go
15 against the established politicians that bend the
16 Law, that twist the law.

17 I have to go to the Federal Court of
18 Appeals. I have become a lawyer now. I am not a
19 lawyer. I am an airman. I am a aircraft
20 technician. I am an instructor. I am an
21 inspector. I made inspector. I made inspector
22 with the FAA.

23 We are professional people. We are law
24 abiding citizens. We have family in law

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2 enforcement. My father retired from the City.
3 We are honest hardworking people, but we see not
4 fruits of our labor. And this is passionate
5 because it has taken everything that I ever
6 worked for this. It is being made into a
7 documentary, and you will see that Holding Out
8 for Justice; the named it Holding Out for
9 Justice. That is all I want is justice. All I
10 have asked for is equal treatment. Equal
11 treatment, that is all that I have asked for.

12 That is all everyone here has ever asked
13 for is that you keep the lines so that we can be
14 productive individuals, not leave the country and
15 say how bad it was here. We are the type of
16 people from the Caribbean, wherever we go we will
17 survive. That is my testimony. Thank you very
18 much.

19 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you very much.

20 ROHAN NARINE, SHRI TRIMURTI BHAVAN

21 MANDIR: Good evening.

22 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENEY: Good evening.

23 MR. NARINE: How is everyone today?

24 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENEY: Good how are

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2 you?

3
4 MR. NARINE: I am not bad. I am in Sales
5 so I tend to establish a very good rapport with
6 the people look at. Just to comment briefly on
7 Kris' testimony. It was my dad that actually
8 interviewed him for the newspaper and listened to
9 his story. And I see partly where he is coming
10 from.

11 I am here to deliver a message of good.
12 The burial of our ideas will in time cease to
13 exist. As you can tell, I am somewhat of an
14 Orator. I have got this timed. I only have one
15 shot. And I am resurrecting my ego only for four
16 minutes. So trust me, this message of good will
17 be good.

18 In my past life, I was buried upside
19 down. I saw with my Third Eye what lied deep
20 underneath the earth. I saw bones; insects
21 eating those bones; and bacteria eating away at
22 those insects. This is my metaphor for our
23 current political system here in Richmond Hill
24 and Ozone Park.

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2 Our politicians have shaken too many
3 hands at the top. And it has trickled down from
4 their bacteria to our own. As for me though, I
5 carry antibacterial. I did not know much of what
6 was going on in my own backyard. That soon
7 changed. I listened with two ears, and spoke
8 only when spoken to.

9 My two ears brought me all the way here.
10 I represent the Indo-Caribbean people who have
11 descended from India; from the Indus Valley; from
12 Krishna. My backyard is no longer a foreign
13 land. I know what is going on now. I know what
14 has to be done, Briarwood and Bellerose for a
15 Senate seat.

16 I hear that we should, and I agree,
17 according to the non-profit organization taking
18 our seat advocate for the creation of an entirely
19 new Assembly District in Richmond Hill. This in
20 theory grants access to resources that are
21 currently unavailable to us. However if that
22 theory does not turn into fact, the burial of our
23 ideas will in time cease to exist.

24 As we utilize the political equity in the

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2 term South Asian American. We will unify to
3 achieve our goal, which after many generations is
4 finally now a common one.

5 With that said, I kindly ask you, Senator
6 Nozzolio and Assemblyman McEney to remember our
7 testimonies when you begin to gerrymander our
8 neighborhoods.

9 You are all smart people. You do what is
10 right not only at work, but also in social
11 settings, and at family gatherings. It takes
12 extraordinary character to do that. I know
13 because I see this happening in my own community.

14 Richmond Hill comprising of a large
15 population of Punjabis, and South Ozone Park
16 comprising of a large population of Guyanese and
17 Trinidadians will unite to create a majority of
18 the minority.

19 Must we come together and begin to call
20 ourselves a community of interest? Must we do
21 what is right not only at work, but also in
22 public and in private? Is this the answer?
23 Wait, it is not as simple as that, is it?

24 To conclude in my present life my

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2 greatest fear is being buried upside down. I am
3 scared to death of it. So now I only do things
4 to ensure that I will get buried right side up.
5 I say only good thing? I eat only the right
6 foods. I live a descent life like all of you.

7 One day last week, my dad got a phone
8 call and someone told him that his son should run
9 for public office. When my dad called me and
10 told me that, I replied to him in utter
11 confusion, did she mean run for office now? I
12 thank you for taking the time to listen to my
13 timed speech. Have a pleasant evening. And I
14 wish you fortitude for the remaining hearings in
15 Smithtown and Syracuse. Thank you again.

16 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENEY: Thank you very
17 much.

18 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you very much.
19 Thank you for your wishes regarding Smithtown and
20 Syracuse. I hope you extend good wishes to us
21 for Rochester and Buffalo as well because we are
22 going to be there too. Thank you very much.
23 Rodi Sarchese [phonetic]. Rodi Sarchese.
24 Michael O'Keefe.

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2 MICHAEL O'KEEFFE, PRESIDENT, CREEDMOOR

3 CIVIC ASSOCIATION: Good evening. My name is
4 Michael O'Keefe. I am President of the
5 Creedmoor Civic Association. It is in Eastern
6 Queens. My civic is part of Eastern Queens
7 United, which is a coalition that you have heard
8 a lot about today, seeking to united communities
9 of common interest and contiguous boarders within
10 both the Senate and Assembly Districts.

11 Not to depart too far from the text for a
12 second. This will be pretty quick. District 24
13 has been talked about a lot tonight and I think
14 there is one point I would like to make and it
15 kind of echoes what David Weprin said about a
16 half an hour ago.

17 It is a very long narrow district and it
18 runs through five separate community boards and
19 precincts.

20 And in life in Queens you know being part
21 of the community board is very important. The
22 civic leaders that I work with in Easter Queens
23 are all part Community Board 13 and we go to the
24 meetings. A lot of us are on the Board and the

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2 precinct is the other kind of central hub hat we
3 work, and we are also in the same precinct.

4 The 24th District as drawn; actually
5 there was five other precincts also. I think the
6 important part of being an elected official is to
7 have a rapport with important people in the
8 community. I think that a community board
9 chairperson is one of those people.

10 And I think that it is very hard for an
11 Assembly person to have the kind of rapport with
12 five separate community boards so I think on that
13 basis the ideas of reconsidering the 24th and
14 possibly making it less long might be a
15 worthwhile proposition.

16 And just again to reiterate a lot of
17 people from different persuasions, different
18 ethnic backgrounds have asked to unify Bellerose,
19 Floral Park, Glen Oaks, Hyde Park, and Queens
20 Village and I would like to add my voice to that
21 group and you have my testimony and that is it.

22 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENEY: Thank you.

23 SENATOR NIZZOLIO: Thank you very much.

24 MR. O'KEEFFE: Thank you. Boshanan

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2 Ramarran [phonetic]. Boshanan Ramarran. Steven
3 Anthony

4 STEVEN ANTHONY BEHAR, ESQ. Good--I guess
5 it is evening, good evening and thank you for
6 letting me testify. In 1987 as young Political
7 Science Undergraduate student at University at
8 Albany, I wrote a paper whereby I suggested that
9 New York State implement a system of independent
10 redistricting of State and Congressional
11 Districts.

12 At that time, the State of Iowa was the
13 only state with such a system. Today in the year
14 2012, I would like to thank LATFOR for
15 unquestionably proving the thesis of my college
16 paper. LATFOR by proposing these lines has shown
17 the citizens of New York that our government in
18 Albany is incapable of controlling itself. And
19 the New York State Senate and the New York State
20 Assembly are incapable of representing their
21 constituents and are instead more interested in
22 political self-dealing and political self-
23 preservation.

24 The district lines proposed by LATFOR are

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2 despicable. Over the years, the Brennan Center
3 for Justice has called our New York State
4 legislature most dysfunctional State government
5 in the Nation. The district lines we are
6 discussing today are prima facie evidence that
7 this dysfunction is still alive and well.

8 In a state where it seems every other
9 week, an elected official in Albany is either
10 indicted or convicted. It is time for our
11 legislators to show some interest in good
12 government. Albany has become a cesspool of
13 corruption.

14 The lines that have been produced by
15 LATFOR are clearly designed incumbents from being
16 challenged. To protect majorities in each House
17 of the legislature and to punish the political
18 enemies of the Party in each House.

19 This is no way to resolve the
20 dysfunction that prepays our government. In 2010
21 when I was a candidate for the New York State
22 Assembly, I signed a pledge to a group led by
23 former Mayor Ed Koch that if I was elected, I
24 would support independent redistricting.

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2 Nearly every member of the Senate and the
3 Assembly signed that pledge. Where is the
4 independent redistricting that you promised? Do
5 you have to make it some obvious that you
6 promises mean nothing?

7 The New York State Constitution
8 establishes that the Districts must be in as
9 compact form as practicable. Does anyone in his
10 or her right mind believe that these districts
11 are compact in any sense of the word? These
12 lines represent a complete departure from any
13 understanding of compactness using the words of
14 the 1972 Decision in Snyder v. Rockefeller, the
15 citizens of New York deserve districts that are
16 compact.

17 The State Legislature also requires that
18 the State Legislative Districts be comprised of
19 contiguous territory. A contiguous district is
20 one in which it is possible to travel from any
21 point in the district without crossing a district
22 boundary. Historically LATFOR has twisted this
23 idea of contiguity using highways and
24 inaccessible shorelines to connect unrelated

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2 towns and neighborhoods into one district.

3 The citizens of New York deserve
4 districts that are contiguous. New York State
5 districts are also supposed to be drawn with
6 great deference to municipal boundaries and
7 county boundaries. And in Queens this should
8 extend to our distinct neighborhoods in Queens,
9 which are very different traveling from one
10 neighborhood to the next.

11 The lines drafted by LATFOR clearly have
12 not given such deference to such boundaries.
13 Districts have been drafted to cross boundaries
14 for nothing other than political gain. The
15 citizens of New York deserve districts that show
16 deference to these boundaries.

17 So where does this leave us today? Since
18 we are up against the time constraints brought
19 about by the upcoming primaries, LATFOR must go
20 back to the drawing board and draft new lines
21 that not only follow the New York Constitution,
22 but also draft lines that are not politically
23 motivated, and show the rest of the Nation that
24 New York is no longer interested in being the

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2 most dysfunctional government in the Nation.

3 If this proves impossible for the
4 Legislature, then the Governor must veto these
5 districts. Frankly, a Court drawn Map is better
6 than a politically motivated gerrymandered Map
7 drawn by LATFOR.

8 Going forward New York State needs to
9 pass a Constitutional Amendment taking control
10 over the ridiculous redistricting process away
11 from the Legislature and giving it to and
12 independent commission.

13 PRESIDENT MARSHALL: Mr. Behar please
14 summarize.

15 MR. BEHAR: Okay, I am on my last two
16 sentences.

17 PRESIDENT MARSHALL: Thank you.

18 MR. BEHAR: Many states including Iowa
19 can serve as the model. Independent
20 Commissioners should be appointed from a pool of
21 qualified candidates. And no district lines
22 should be drawn based upon party enrollment of
23 the voters or of the incumbent Legislators.
24 Districts should be compact, contiguous, give

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2 deference to boundaries, and continue the
3 protections of the United States Constitution and
4 of the Voting Rights.

5 It is time for the citizens of New York
6 to stand up and say enough is enough, we want
7 good government now.

8 FEMALE VOICE: Thank you.

9 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Mohammed Sadiq.

10 MOHAMMED SADIQ, DIRECTOR, TAKING OUR
11 SEAT: Good evening. My name is Mohammed Sadiq
12 and I am a Board Member of the organization
13 called Taking Our Seat. I would like to put my
14 testimony about the proposed Assembly District
15 34.

16 I worked with the Census 2000. And as a
17 Member of the Community Board and a civic member
18 in 2001, I testified during the Redistricting
19 Hearing where I had drawn the lines for Southeast
20 Queens boundary by the - - back in the North, - -
21 to the South, Vanderk Expressway to the West, and
22 a City line to the East.

23 After 10 years, these reasons of Queens
24 Village, Hollis Hills, Bellerose, Floral Park,

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2 Glen Oaks, Hollis, Jamaica Hills, Briarwood has
3 seen tremendous growth of the community of
4 interest from the South Asians, including Indian,
5 Bangladeshi, Pakistani as well as Guyanese,
6 Trinidadians, and Indo-Caribbean of South Asian
7 descent. Today, when I see the boundary lines of
8 LATFOR proposed Assembly District 24, which very
9 close to what I proposed in my redistricting on
10 the 2001.

11 I would like to thank that 2001 Panel
12 Committee for their support, but this does not
13 bring me any surprise, but instead gives me some
14 peace of mind that common people with common
15 interests are going to live in a common district.

16 The economic network has a very vital for
17 this neighborhood as well as for the religious
18 institutions. I have seen more and more that our
19 neighborhood people are participating in the
20 civic associations and take leadership roles on
21 the Community Boards, - - , and recognizable
22 religious leaders all have made some progress to
23 getting involved as a representative of their
24 community.

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2 There is more to be done, but as with any
3 new immigrant community, there is a learning
4 curve and more resources needed to have a voice
5 in order to take a stand. Finally, I would like
6 to request the Committee to redraw and the extend
7 the lines a little more South and bring the
8 people of common interests by adding Bellerose,
9 Queens Village, and Hollis within the boundary
10 line of the proposed Assembly District 24 with a
11 cut line of Jamaica Avenue.

12 And also to take out the Richmond Hill
13 west of the Vanderk Expressway. Thank you.

14 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENEY: Thank you very
15 much.

16 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Elias Tsekerides.

17 ELIAS TSEKERIDES, PRESIDENT, FEDERATION
18 HELLENIC SOCIETIES: My name is Elias Tsekerides
19 and I am President of the Federation Hellenic
20 Societies created in New York with offices on 22-
21 51 29th Street, in Astoria Queens.

22 A lot of people talked about the same
23 things of what I am going to say, but it is worth
24 repeating, I believe. Astoria community is best

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2 served by keeping Astoria whole and contained in
3 one district so that its community members can be
4 represented by someone who understands what the
5 various groups here need and how to best serve
6 them.

7 Splitting the community apart will weaken
8 Astoria community's voice in government and keep
9 it from being served fairly and with community's
10 best interest at heart. Separating the community
11 in to two different districts would also hurt the
12 harmonious relationship currently existing
13 between the various groups, ethnic, racial, and
14 religious, that live in Astoria.

15 Those groups also have different
16 interests and are served differently by their
17 respective representatives.

18
19 In recent history, if ever, Astoria has
20 never been split in to two different districts.
21 Astoria is a community of interest with and
22 extremely large Greek, Muslim , and immigrant
23 population that should be kept whole. Splitting
24 the community apart would hurt the residents

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2 whose needs would not be fulfilled someone who
3 represents a different community of interest.

4 Astoria has always been a well defined
5 community and splitting it apart would tear the
6 fabric of this community and hurt the individuals
7 and business in Astoria.

8 I hope that you go back the drawing board
9 and do something with redistricting. And if you
10 do not, I hope that the Governor keeps his
11 promise and veto your bill. Thank you.

12 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you Mr.
13 TSEKERIDES. Paul Halvatis [phonetic]. Paul
14 Halvatis. Terry Hughes. Terry Hughes. Samuel
15 Massol. Good evening.

16 SAMUEL MASSOL, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, COMMON
17 CAUSE NEW YORK: Good evening. My name is Sam
18 Massol and I am the Associate Director of Common
19 Cause New York. I want to thank you for the
20 opportunity to testify here in Queens.

21 At each LATFOR meeting Common Cause has
22 provided testimony comparing the LATFOR draft to
23 Common Cause's Reform Plan. Today I would like
24 to start with a discussion of the criteria of

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2 that guides Common Cause's Reform Plan and inform
3 our criticism of the LATFOR draft lines.

4 Although discussion of our criteria has
5 been available on our Website for many months, we
6 realize that we have not detailed these criteria
7 in testimony to LATFOR and we apologize for any
8 confusion that this may have caused.

9 First we seek to follow all the
10 applicable Federal and State Constitutional Laws.
11 On the Federal side, this includes compliance
12 with the Voting Rights Act and the principle of
13 one person one vote. On the State side, this
14 includes binding rules like Block on Border and
15 Town on Border as well as the guidelines to
16 minimize the division of counties, maintain
17 strict contiguity, and draw districts that are as
18 compact as practical.

19 We take these guidelines very seriously.
20 The Federal Principle of one person one vote is
21 reinforced on the State Constitution by the words
22 each district shall contain as nearly as may be
23 an equal number of inhabitants as practical. In
24 the Common Cause Reform Plans we follow strict

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2 numerical standards, no district may deviate by
3 more than plus or minus 3% with the ideal value
4 and the Mein absolute deviation from the entire
5 plan must be less than 1.5%.

6 These rules prevent the kind regional
7 apportionment that Upstate and New York City
8 LATFOR lines have drawn. The majority party in
9 both Houses, we take the State's Constitutional
10 Guidelines to respect county and town boundaries
11 as step further. The Common Reform Plan also
12 maintains respect for City, Village, and school
13 district boundary lines whenever possible.

14 Respecting these important local
15 jurisdictions is part of our over-arching
16 emphasis on communities of interest. The Common
17 Cause Reform Plan seeks to protect communities of
18 interest by joined district lines that reflect
19 the social, cultural, ethic, and economic
20 interest common to the population of an area.

21 We find a community of interest as a
22 local population with common social and economic
23 interests that would benefit from the unified
24 political representation provided by inclusion

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2 within a single political district.

3 Within New York City this principle often
4 translates in to respect for the neighborhood and
5 the neighborhood boundaries keeping distinct
6 local communities together and in one district so
7 they can effectively engage in civic life.

8 In public meetings we have heard the
9 members of this Panel voice support for all of
10 these criteria in principle. And we encourage
11 you all to look carefully at what we provide
12 here.

13 The key difference between the plans
14 produced by this Panel and the Common Cause
15 Reform Maps; the Common Cause plans do not let
16 partisanship or incumbent protection get in the
17 way of keep neighborhoods together and ensuring
18 that every New Yorker across the State gets a
19 chance at fair representation and participation.

20 We follow a rigorous incumbent-blind
21 process and do not use any political data
22 whatsoever in drawing our lines. Only after
23 completing the plans, did we examine the affect
24 on incumbents.

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2 In light of last week's testimony in
3 Manhattan we would like to make it clear for the
4 record that Common Cause's Reform Plan does not
5 target specific incumbents of any race,
6 ethnicity, or political affiliation. Incumbent
7 pairings are spread across all regions of the
8 State and do not follow any pattern. Let me know
9 turn to the analysis of the LATFOR Queens draft
10 starting with the Assembly.

11 First we would like to recognize the
12 improvements to the 25th Assembly District in
13 Eastern Queens. Reorienting the District to run
14 East to West instead of North to South leads to a
15 significant improvement to Asian American
16 representation and better reflects how these
17 communities live and associate. But there are
18 still numerous areas on Queens in which this
19 draft stands for improvement.

20 This Panel received testimony from
21 numerous community representatives in Bellerose
22 and Richmond Hill asking that their neighborhoods
23 be kept together in a single district. In
24 Bellerose, this draft plan shows not improvement

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2 from the current plan in this regard. In
3 Richmond Hill there is some improvement, but the
4 area is still sliced in to four districts.

5 We know how difficult to be to balance--

6 PRESIDENT MARSHALL: Samuel you are
7 exceeding five minutes, you need to summarize
8 please.

9 MR. MASSOL: Okay. So we are going to
10 skip to the Senate to make it really fast, and I
11 can talk really fast if you like.

12 PRESIDENT MARSHALL: Five minutes.

13 MR. MASSOL: Okay.

14 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: And I think what you
15 should do is certainly submit your written
16 testimony for the record, and just summarize it.

17 MR. MASSOL: Absolutely, so let me just
18 summarize in saying partisan politics is not
19 allowed to trump a community's interest. And
20 this is the key difference between the LATFO
21 lines-- I am sorry. Go want to go all the way up
22 there? That is all right. You want to go up
23 here then? All right, fair enough. I am going
24 to follow my esteemed colleague here.

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2 The partisan gerrymandering of Senate
3 Districts 11 and 15 has a domino effect on the
4 rest of Queens, of the Queens Senate Districts
5 causing Senate Districts 12, 14, and 16 to twist
6 and turn in contorted jigsaw shapes.

7 The long tail of Senate District 12 that
8 stretches all the way into Woodhaven and Astoria
9 looks drawn to more democratic leaning voting
10 Block form Senate District 15. And the Northern
11 tentacle of Senate District 16 into Bay Terrace
12 is clearly drawn to allow Senate District 11 to
13 lean more conservative.

14 Neighborhoods across the Borough from
15 Richmond Hill to Forest Hills to Astoria are
16 awkwardly chopped up and disenfranchised in order
17 to maximize the Senate Majority's Party chances
18 at re-getting a seat in Queens. Thank you.

19 PRESIDENT MARSHALL: Thank you.

20 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you very much.

21 Emile Vudi [phonetic]. Kwal Tortaram. Good
22 evening.

23 KAWAL TOTARAM, ESQ.: Good evening.

24 Thank you Mr. Chairman and Members of the

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2 Committee. My name is Kawal Tortaram and I live
3 in South Ozone Park. I have been a practicing
4 attorney for over 25 years. My office is located
5 on Liberty Avenue. I live three minutes away
6 from my office, yet still am divided within two
7 Assembly Districts.

8 We are comprised of our--I am testifying
9 here on behalf of the Queens Caribbean Bar
10 Association of which I am currently the
11 President. The past president was Trevor Rupnarin.
12 The Public Relations Officer is the next guy
13 here.

14 Our Bar Association has 30 lawyers,
15 collectively over three hundred years of legal
16 experience. We have practicing in Richmond Hill
17 for over 25 years, and we are very cognizant of
18 the community.

19 We know the ills. We know the problems
20 of this community. We know are failing schools.
21 We know the of the health problems. We know of
22 the lack of community centers and services, poor
23 and deplorable sanitation conditions, and
24 traumatic question of foreclosure that recently

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2 articulated it the New York Times. And we also
3 know of successes in the community.

4 But Richmond Hill has been unfairly
5 truncated into several, 80 districts. I
6 personally and our association do not believe
7 that you have a political agenda. I just think
8 that you have misaddressed and you have not
9 looked at it properly.

10 There were over 10 people who spoke in
11 favor of holding Richmond Hill together, South
12 Ozone Park, Ozone Park, and Woodhaven. Not a
13 single member came here and testified against
14 that. Therefore I urge you to look at it so they
15 can bring a community of interest. Richmond Hill
16 is not an Indo-Caribbean area, it is also
17 Hispanic, in fact I have the latest figure here;
18 it is 22% Asian, which includes us; 13% Black;
19 30% Latino; 15% White; and 12% other.

20 So it is a community of interest of
21 people of all races coming together, immigrants
22 and whatnot coming together. I recall testifying
23 before you a decade ago. At that time our
24 community was divided in to seven districts,

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2 today it is five.

3 It was asked of me by a Member of the
4 Committee of the more the merrier. The more the
5 merrier has resulted in the fracturing of this
6 community. And therefore I urge you to go back
7 and look at the Map. And the Bar Association is
8 prepared that if we do not have a favorable Map,
9 we are prepared to challenge this right up to the
10 Supreme Court. I thank you for our time.

11 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you very much.
12 Gerpaul Singh [phonetic]. Gerpaul Singh.
13 Gerpaul Singh. Frank Singh. Frank Singh. Taj
14 Racokmahr [phonetic]. Taj Racokmahr. Pritha
15 Singh [phonetic]. Pritha Singh. Karpeet Singh
16 [phonetic]. Karpeet Singh. Phil Konigsberg.

17 PRESIDENT MARSHALL: Bingo.

18 [Laughter]

19 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Good evening.

20 PRESIDENT MARSHALL: Good evening.

21 PHIL KONIGSBERG, VICE PRESIDENT, BAY
22 TERRACE COMMUNITY ALLIANCE: Good evening. Hello
23 everyone. I wanted to before I go into my brief
24 statement, I wanted to endorse the people that

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2 have spoken for combining or keeping the
3 neighborhoods of Richmond Hill, Rockaway,
4 Astoria, and the Eastern Queens United
5 communities that have spoken before.

6 I live in Bay Terrace Queens. I am part
7 of Community Board 7 and also the Vice President
8 of the Bay Terrace Community Alliance Club, but
9 that is not really relevant here. Someone said
10 politics is local and I am just feeling in this
11 case that politics has to be completely separated
12 from this issue, which is local; local to me.

13 Bay Terrace has been in--I am taking
14 about the Senate, Senate District 16 previously
15 was part of 12 and Warren Schreiber who is the
16 President of the Civic Association that I am Vice
17 President with, has suggested to you about a
18 Senator who lived in Astoria and when we as an
19 organization have these candidates assigned as a
20 public service for our community, we had to
21 basically explain where Bay Terrace was coming
22 from the district being so stretched out.

23 Bay Terrace should be part of Eastern
24 Queens. It should be part of District 11 and I

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2 am hoping that you will take back all of the
3 testimony that you have heard tonight; and it
4 sounds like you got a lot more to follow after I
5 do. So what I would suggest is--here all we have
6 to say is go back to the drawing board and please
7 listen to what you have heard here tonight.
8 Thank you.

9 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you very much.
10 Flores Lords [phonetic]. Flores Lords. Barbara
11 Jackson. Barbara Jackson.

12 BARBARA JACKSON, LEFRAK CITY: Good
13 evening.

14 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Good evening.

15 MS. JACKSON: My name is Barbara Jackson.
16 I am a District Leader in the 35th Assembly
17 District, Part B. My State Senate District is
18 Senate 13. And I think that you heard a lot from
19 the people of Astoria earlier on that these two
20 Senate Members have been drawn in to the same
21 District.

22 What I am asking is that you leave their
23 District in tack, and leave our District in tack.
24 So I come to you today to request that you

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2 consider this proposed New York State Senate
3 Line.

4 The process of redistricting should be
5 done equally and with fairness. This should not
6 be about political fights, but about what is good
7 for the people of New York State. These lines
8 are a mockery of the State wide effort to have a
9 fair redistricting process.

10 They disenfranchised the voters; this is
11 wrong it is a flawed process. Therefore I am
12 requesting that you please go back over the
13 proposed lines and keep communities of interests
14 together.

15 I stand with Governor on vetoing the
16 proposed United States Senate Lines. So my
17 testimony here today is to please that you
18 straighten to two Senate Districts, the Garnairis
19 District and the Parnell District. I thank you
20 so much for your kind attention.

21 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: James Trikas.

22 JAMES TRIKAS, VICE PRESIDENT OF THE EAST
23 FLUSHING, CIVIC ASSOCIATION, BOARD MEMBER -
24 ZONING AND LAND USE, CHAIR FOR HOLLY CIVIC

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2 ASSOCIATION, MEMBER - QUEENSBORO HILL

3 ASSOCIATION, BOARD MEMBER - KISSENA CORRIDOR PARK

4 CONSERVANCY: Good evening. My name is JAMES

5 TRIKAS. I will just get right to it, because

6 there is a lot to talk about. I will not go

7 through my titles and the many civic associations

8 I represent and the many people in the community.

9 The Assembly, the Senate, and future
10 Congressional Districts in all burroughs must be
11 redrawn fairly and equally to all nationalities.

12 No district should be created to have any
13 nationality be the dominant nationality in the
14 district so that their own can get elected--
15 creating biased communities and resentment in
16 commuinitities and promoted segregation.

17 It is imperative that districts be
18 created politically balanced and should be--and
19 shouldn't be dominated by any political party.
20 All need to work together or they will continue
21 to oppose each other causing issues not to be
22 addressed or resolved.

23 No elected offical should be asked or say
24 how they want the lines drawn to favor their own

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2 or reelection. Elected officials should represent
3 everyone fair and equal, not create districts to
4 cater to one nationality or their own.

5 Many different nationalities make up
6 communities. All nationalities and political
7 parties need to work together to vote for one
8 representative for everyone, not create districts
9 dominated by one nationality to guarantee the
10 candidate of the same nationality win.

11 The behavior to promote one nationality
12 or group to be more dominant may encourage others
13 to promote and display other foreign languages--
14 to also want their language more dominant on
15 store information signs, like in Flushing, New
16 York.

17 Store signs must be displayed at least
18 60% or more in our primary English language and
19 second foreign languages no more than 40% and I
20 direct you to page 6 so you can see what the
21 Asian community and the Korean community have
22 done, destroying Flushing.

23 Creating foreign dominated areas change
24 the character and appearance of communities,

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2 promote foreign looking areas on the streets of
3 New York, ignoring our primary English language
4 displayed, implying they dominate the area,
5 catering to their own. English is a universal
6 language, taught and known worldwide and should
7 be displayed for the benefit of all
8 nationalities. The official language of 31 states
9 and 4 pending proposed states of the United
10 States. It is the official language of those 31
11 states and 4 pending. Unfortunately New York is
12 not one of them.

13 It appears most New York elected
14 officials don't support English to be the
15 official language of New York and some have voted
16 no. Voters should not reelect them. Districts
17 with one nationality dominance promotes store
18 information signs to be used to display the
19 nationality catered to and the cultural display
20 of one's nationality dominance.

21 Regardless of one's nationality, we
22 should be blank Americans. The key word is
23 Americans--not divide districts to be dominated
24 by one, separating all other nationalities in the

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2 district.

3 The creation of a district dominated by
4 any nationality promotes racism and biased
5 behavior to segregate other nationalities by
6 those that created influence or support the new
7 districts or by those that do not verbally oppose
8 them and must be redrawn.

9 The only fair and nonbiased solution is
10 to create districts by balancing adjacent
11 districts to spread as equal as possible a fair
12 distribution of all nationalities and political
13 parties to have a balanced district, where that
14 representative can truly represent all members in
15 the district and segregate, well it should be--and
16 not segregate by nationality or party.

17 Examples, adjoining senate districts and assembly
18 districts. I

19 f you look at your figures that we have
20 on the next adjoining pages, it says take Whites
21 from the proposed Senate District 11, add to 14
22 and 16 to be balanced. Take Asians from the
23 proposed Senate District 16 and add to 11 and 14
24 to be balanced. Take Blacks from the proposed

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2 Senate District 14 and add to 11 and 16 to be
3 balanced.

4 Take Asians from the proposed Assembly
5 District 40 and add to Districts 25, 26, and 27.
6 Now let us look at the numbers so you get a good
7 idea. Senate District 11, 1.89 Whites to 1
8 Asian, 3.48 Whites to 1 Hispanic; Senate District
9 14, 1.26 Asians to 1 White, 1.44 Hispanics to 1
10 Asian, 4.86 Blacks to 1 White, 3.86 Blacks to 1
11 Asian; Senate District 16, 1.95 Asians to 1
12 White, 3.22 Asians to 1 Hispanic, 17.36 Asians to
13 1 Black.

14 Now all these adjoining areas in the
15 Assembly District 40, 3.69 Asians to 1 White,
16 3.91 Asians to 1 Hispanic, 23.57 Asians to 1
17 Black. All these adjoining areas clearly can be
18 moved over slightly to get a balanced area and
19 that is the only way to get a truly effective
20 one.

21 I know I do not have any time but I
22 address you to look at the page 6 showing the
23 signs store signs that are in foreign languages
24 that have been destroying Flusing and I am very

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2 upset that you are listening to the Asian
3 community as Asian Americans knowing this is
4 their intent and you guys have your eyes closed
5 to not see it. You need to drive down Main
6 Street, drive down Northern Boulevard--see what
7 they are doing and you tell me they are thinking
8 of only--everyone. No. They are creating
9 districts solely for their own. Now the other
10 thing too, we have an Asian in the Assembly, an
11 Asian in the City Council, Asian in the
12 Controller's Office, and now they want an Asian
13 in the Senate District.

14 What right do the Asian community have to
15 monopolize every elected official? I have lived
16 in Flushing for 53 years. How dare you allow
17 lines to be drawn up like this, to allow this to
18 take place. This is totally ridiculous. You
19 need to read what Theodore Roosevelt wrote in
20 1907 that you have on your pages because none of
21 you are abiding by it. He would roll over in his
22 grave if he saw what you guys are doing. This is
23 ridiculous.

24 You are not for fairness and equality and

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2 this makes it very biased for anybody to
3 represent a community fairly because you are
4 clearly making it so that only one group get
5 elected. How dare you do that. Now you guys
6 must have been sleeping because this is very
7 annoying and I ran for District Leader last year
8 and lost by 36 votes among this heavy Asian
9 community, heavy Asian community. So how dare
10 you destroy it and think that the Asian Americans
11 or ALDEF is influencing you the wrong way. You
12 are definitely out of touch and you are listening
13 to the wrong people.

14 You need to change these lines, make it
15 more fair, make it balanced, and do the right
16 thing because people like me are going to be out
17 there-- already notified Cuomo two weeks ago to
18 knock down this line because this is totally
19 ridiculous and I want you to change it and I have
20 a lot more to say, but apparently I cannot talk,
21 but this is quite ridiculous.

22 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENEY: Mr. Trikas,
23 thank you very much. It is about 3 minutes over
24 your allotment.

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2 MR. TRIKAS: Well, at least it was not
3 like ALDEF and took 9 minutes.

4 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENEY:

5 If you would submit whatever you have for
6 the record we would be--

7 MR. TRIKAS: [Interposing] I have
8 submitted it--

9 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENEY: [Interposing] We
10 would be glad to entertain it and thank you very
11 much for your testimony.

12 MR. TRIKAS: You are welcome.

13 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Mr. George Stamitedes
14 [phonetic]. Manny Karijuana [phonetic]. (ela
15 Morat [phonetic]. Kashi Thomas[phonetic].
16 Sarif Ali [phonetic]. Council Member Karen
17 Koslosowitz[phonetic]. (Council Woman
18 Koslosowitz. Where is she? However you
19 pronounce it, she is not here. Virginia Salow
20 [phonetic]. Leroy Gadsen. Good evening.

21 LEROY GADSEN, PRESIDENT-JAMAICA BRANCH
22 NAACP: Good evening. I am LEROY GADSEN,
23 President of the Jamaica Branch of the NAACP.
24 First and foremost I must say I remain offended

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2 as an American that this body with such an
3 awesome legislative task and duties of the
4 highest standard is devoid of any African
5 Americans and only one woman is seated on this
6 panel. Truly we have evolved beyond the 1950s.
7 If we were to turn back the hands of time 100
8 years to 1912, this is exactly how this panel
9 would look. This is a troubling indictment upon
10 the leadership of the state and I do not fault
11 you for answering the call of serving in this
12 capacity; however, I question the manner of
13 composing a segregated panel with the purpose of
14 creating and making redistricting decisions in
15 the just and fair interests of all the citizens
16 of New York State. This is a terrible indictment
17 upon the great state of New York.

18 How are we expected to have trust in a
19 system that discriminated against us in the very
20 onset of it's creation, excuse me.

21 We had very little expectations of this
22 panel and you have failed to live up to those
23 expectations. I thank you. I give you my upmost
24 respect for agreeing to serve in such a capacity,

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2 but you failed.

3 In this democracy, the most sacred and
4 cherished part is the right to vote or the right
5 to pick the people who govern you. There is no
6 greater right than that right to vote in a
7 democracy. Here in the NAACP, we view and
8 cherish this concept of good government.

9 Since our inception some 102 years ago
10 until the present minute, we have always
11 recognized and valued the right to vote. America
12 has always valued this choice of good government.

13 In fact the nation was based and founded
14 on this principle. However, when it comes to
15 African Americans or black folks, America has
16 always had a double-standard of what is good and
17 beneficial to the rest of the country as opposed
18 to what is good and beneficial for African
19 Americans.

20 So while the colonists and the eventual
21 Americans were enjoying the fruits of a
22 representative government, people of color were
23 still living in a so-called--usually democracy
24 with no right to vote and though not restricted,

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2 such existence was usually found on the
3 plantation. Prior to the Civil War, the South
4 wanted to count Black slaves for representation
5 in Congress, but deny them representation or any
6 right to participate in government.

7 In this recent New York State Senate
8 redistricting proposal, you have basically
9 duplicated the attitude of the South. Now, when
10 we look back on our past, we see first we could
11 not vote and then when it was legal to vote, we
12 were denied the opportunity to vote.

13 There were all kinds of rivers and
14 hurdles to cross, such as Coon and Gibbon, etc.,
15 but the right to vote is only half of the answer.
16 Full participation means the ability to cast a
17 deciding and meaningful vote and influence who
18 will represent you and have a say so in the
19 government of structure.

20 We are looking at this 63rd seat that you
21 have proposed to create. In 1965, the United
22 States Congress passed the Voting Rights Act. In
23 your action, you trivialize the Voting Rights
24 Act. This Act did not come by as a good will

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2 gesture, but this Act was a result of many tears,
3 the shedding of blood, and even the loss of
4 property and life.

5
6 Our ballot, unlike any other ballot, was
7 covered with blood of those both White and Black
8 of a greater conscience who layed down their
9 lives just to show that we only have access to
10 the ballot box, but no meaningful access and
11 involvement in deciding who is going to represent
12 us in government.

13 Key wording in this landmark 1965 Voting
14 Rights legislation includes wording which
15 attempts to dilute African American voting
16 strength. We remind you that the need and the
17 intent of the 1965 Voting Rights Act was to
18 protect and ensure the constitutional voting
19 rights of those persons in America who were
20 traditionally discriminated against at the ballot
21 box.

22 This Act is still on the books and in
23 full effect and the people whom those laws were
24 designed to protect are still here and in need of

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2 that same protection and guarantees of their
3 right to vote.

4 The creation and addition of an upstate
5 seat in a predominantly White area dilutes the
6 voting strength of the downstate predominantly
7 Minority area, thus in direct contradiction to
8 the 1965 Voting Rights Act.

9 Your redistricting of gerrymandering
10 proposal for New York State weakens the heavily
11 populated downstate Minority voting strength
12 while strengthening the less populated
13 predominantly White, I am sorry, the less
14 populated White upstate voting district in the
15 violation of one, the Equal Protection Clause of
16 the 14th Amendment of the United States
17 Constitution, as well as the Voting Rights Act of
18 1965.

19 Keep it in mind, the New York - - State
20 the requires 62 Senate seats. We strongly
21 believe that any deviation or departure from the
22 62 Senate seats will be in violation of the
23 Voting Rights Act. We also remind you that
24 according to the laws of New York State, all

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2 prisoners must be counted in the city of home
3 jurisdiction.

4 Redistricting lines should have been
5 drawn in compliance with this new population
6 shift from upstate to downstate. We fail to
7 understand how we can have nearly a 50,000
8 population shift in count and that same area
9 upstate has an increase in seats and downstate
10 has a decrease in seats. We cannot understand
11 that population count.

12 PRESIDENT MARSHALL: Mr. GADSEN, please
13 summarize.

14 MR. GADSEN: We challenge you to remain
15 true to the intent of the Equal Protection Clause
16 of the 14th Amendment and also the Voting Rights
17 Act of 1965.

18 If such lines were drawn, they should
19 reflect the population change. We should have
20 seen a decrease in upstate representation and an
21 decrease in downstate representation. Any
22 deviation from that, we believe is in violation.
23 We ask you to go back to the board. We will ask
24 the Governor, have asked the Governor to veto

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2 this proposal.

3 We are going to stay on that, if we have
4 to go to court to try to stop this. We believe
5 this discrimination, just like it was in 1965, we
6 see here in New York in 2012. We ask you to go
7 back and draw legislative districts that will not
8 dilute the ability of Minority group voters to
9 elect the representatives of their choice or to
10 influence electoral outcomes. Thank you for
11 giving us this opportunity.

12 PRESIDENT MARSHALL: Thank you.

13 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENEY: Mr. Gadsen, I
14 believe with the exception of the issue of the 62
15 versus 63, you basically gave the same speech
16 that you gave in the Preliminary Hearing. Is
17 that right?

18 MR. GADSEN: To the extent we asked you,
19 we give you reasoning--

20 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENEY: [Interposing]
21 Well--

22 MR. GADSEN: [Interposing] We will hold
23 that--not--be in violation--

24 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENEY: [Interposing]

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2 Well, as far as the make up of this panel, I do
3 not know of any person of color who is a member
4 of the New York State Assembly who wanted this,
5 basically thankless job, or had 40 years
6 experience as I have. As a long time member of
7 the NAACP, I am not going to apologize for either
8 my skin color or my anatomy.

9 I represent, as a member of the New York
10 State Senate, a very diversified group of people,
11 Black, White, Hispanic, Asian. The people that
12 work, that do the gut work of checking the math
13 and putting these maps together, again and again,
14 come from an integrated group, both in gender and
15 in race, and I think that is a cheap shot and as
16 a member of the NAACP, I think I want you to know
17 I take offense.

18 MR. GADSEN: Well Sir, we understand you
19 might feel that way. Keep in mind, I have been
20 Black all my life and when I see a panel composed
21 of an all White panel, we never insulted you
22 personally. We call issue to the fact that here
23 in 2012, we cannot find one African American to
24 serve on the panel. You sit Sir and you come

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2 back and tell us you will make laws we have to
3 live with for the next 10 years, yet still not
4 one of us, not one of my people that looks like
5 me is not qualified to serve. Yes Sir, I must
6 say something. As long as I am a member of the
7 NAACP, we will say something. Sir, since we
8 first got here on the first boat, it was a panel
9 make up like yours that was on the boat, that ran
10 the boat, that owned the boat, that owned the
11 plantation that got us here Sir. So therefore,
12 it was not for you to take personal.

13 As I said, I thank you all for serving.
14 I did not blame you, I blame a system that put
15 you all here. I never called any of you a
16 negative, derogatory term. I do question that
17 system Sir and that, I also will not apologize
18 for--We think there should be diversity. If we
19 are talking about justice and equality and
20 liberty, the right to vote, the most important
21 thing in America.

22 If we must live by it, it must be
23 diversified. We found out when other people make
24 decisions for us we do not get the benefit of the

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2 doubt, we get the short end of the stick Sir.

3 That is why we raised that issue; we want to send
4 a message loud and clear. When any kind of panel
5 comes in the future, we want it diversified.

6 We are not questioning the integrity of
7 you individuals, we never did that--We questioned
8 the make up of the panel, and the fact that--why
9 we cannot serve. Are we not good enough? Did we
10 not die for this country? Did we not build this
11 country for free--

12 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: [Interposing] MR.

13 GADSEN--

14 MR. GADSEN: [Interposing] Did we not
15 fight in the every war Sir?--

16 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: [Interposing] MR.

17 GADSEN--

18 MR. GADSEN: [Interposing] I am
19 responding to his question Sir. He asked me a
20 question--

21 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: [Interposing] Let us

22 know what you are--

23 MR. GADSEN: [Interposing] I am trying to
24 explain Sir--

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2 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: [Interposing] I have
3 other questions and I do not want to spend all
4 the time having you give additional speeches--

5 Mr. GADSEN: [Interposing] Sir, wait a
6 minute Sir, I'm sorry. I am not trying to
7 disrespect you--

8 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: [Interposing] You made
9 your point--

10 MR. GADSEN: [Interposing] Answer me one
11 last thing--

12 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: [Interposing] You made
13 your point--

14 MR. GADSEN: [Interposing] Do you think
15 African Americans are qualified to serve on this
16 panel and make decisions for us?

17 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: I asked you was--

18 MR. GADSEN: I asked you a question.
19 Please answer my question. I answered your
20 question, now answer my question sir. Are we
21 qualified to serve on this panel?

22 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENEY: I think that
23 there might be. I do not remember anyone coming
24 up forward and--

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2 MR. GADSEN: [Interposing] But that was
3 not my question.

4 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENEY: [Interposing]
5 Asking the Speaker for the appointment. And
6 there are no African Americans in the minority.

7 MR. GADSEN: You took my position the
8 wrong way. I asked you the question, sir. Do
9 you think that African Americans of the great
10 State of New York are qualified to serve on this
11 Panel?

12 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENEY: The great State
13 of New York?

14 MR. GADSEN: Yes sir.

15 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENEY: I am talking
16 about the two elected positions.

17 MR. GADSEN: You have not answered my
18 question sir.

19 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENEY: In the great
20 State of New York, you mean an African American
21 Assembly person?

22 MR. GADSEN: A Senator, do you think
23 there is one qualified to serve on this Panel.

24 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENEY: I do not speak

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2 for the Senate and the Senate does not have one
3 single African American that could take the
4 Senator's position.

5 MR. GADSEN: Can I ask one little
6 question sir and then I will leave the issue--

7
8 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENEY: Where did you
9 get this from?

10 SENATOR NIZZOLIO: We are still on this I
11 mean I think you have asked a couple of
12 questions. You have also had about eight minutes
13 to speak. I would like to a question, a series
14 of question, a series of comments that you threw
15 a lot of blanket in terms of charges over there.
16 I first want to touch base on the issue of the
17 prisoner count.

18 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: You came here last
19 September?

20 MR. GADSEN: Yes sir.

21 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: And told us of you
22 prior to see this established, and this Task
23 Force without any owner's manual, without any
24 regulations, without any definitions in this law,

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2 which I think is a very questionable law in terms
3 of its specific, in terms of its guidance, in
4 terms of its direction.

5 It was hatched out of a budget bill and
6 back door of a Rider that the Governor put on
7 without hearings, without any type of review, yet
8 it became a law of this State. And it was a law
9 that you advocated for and that is the relocation
10 of prisoners to the place of their last known
11 address. We have spent literally months on
12 complying with this law, counting every single
13 prisoner, inmate we could possibly identify and
14 their last known address, which for many because
15 of the lack of regulations; the lack protocols;
16 the lack of understanding of this statute was
17 even in affect by the Department of Corrections,
18 we Geocoded to the last known address the vast
19 majority of prison inmates in our prison system.
20 And if they could not be found at their last
21 known address, they were not counted at all at
22 your request, which I think was a tremendously
23 inadequate--you basically, in advocating for that
24 law said to those prisoners if you could not find

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2 their address, they did not exist. Where's the
3 humanity in that?

4 The second issue that I need to address
5 with you is the issue of the compliance of the
6 Voting Rights Act of which you and I are in total
7 agreement that I believe very strongly as we must
8 comply with prisoner counting issue; we
9 absolutely must comply with the Federal Voting
10 Rights Act.

11 There are 100,000 even with--and by the
12 way, to answer one of your questions these lines
13 were drawn with that prison recount and
14 relocation.

15 Even with that there were 100,000 more
16 blacks in New York City today than there were 10
17 years ago, yet there is not one single district
18 that has proposed in this Plan for the Senate,
19 and I can only speak for the Senate on this
20 issue.

21 But for the Senate there is not one
22 single district that retrogresses for black
23 majority to black minority because of the lines
24 that were drafted.

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2 And those who are complaining about
3 shapes and sizes, many of those complaints; I
4 certainly understand them, but many of those
5 complaints are based on the compliance strictly
6 with this Voting Right Act as we needed to do.
7 Tell me, sir, what specific Districts do you
8 contend that there was any black retrogression in
9 the City of New York?

10 MR. GADEN: Can I speak now, sir?

11 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: That is the question.

12 MR. GADSEN: You asked me three
13 questions, let me respond to all three issues.
14 First of all--

15 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Let us start with that
16 one.

17 MR. GADSEN: No wait a minute, you asked
18 me three questions, sir.

19 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: What were the other
20 two?

21 MR. GADSEN: First you attacked me on the
22 prison gerrymandering.

23 [Crosstalk]

24 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: I think it is a good

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2 point; the gentlemen makes a good point. I guess
3 what I would ask you as you leave the podium
4 today provide this Task Force with your specific
5 answers to those three questions.

6 MR. GADSEN: Okay sir.

7 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: That we would be glad
8 to take them and to review them and place them on
9 the record.

10 MR. GADSEN: Okay.

11 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: And I thank you for
12 your time.

13 MR. GADSEN: Sir, that is unfair to the
14 NAACP. We were invited here to give testimony.
15 And it is my understand of all the purpose was
16 that you all would listen to us. I did that on
17 behalf of the organization.

18 You all have questioned me. You have
19 accused of me of misleading the people. It is
20 only fair that I have a chance to respond.

21 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: No one accused you of
22 misleading anyone [crosstalk]. Let me summarize
23 the question.

24 MR. GADSEN: Okay can I answer that, go

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2 ahead sir.

3 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: You know what why
4 don't you summarize them for me.

5 MR. GADSEN: Okay. Sir you had final say
6 so. I wanted to respond. It would be very
7 unfair for you make whatever you want to call,
8 let's say don't call it that, call it whatever.
9 Let say the things you said and I did not have a
10 chance to respond - -

11 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: And please if you
12 cannot do it in two minutes or less, submit those
13 responses for the record.

14 MR. GADSEN: The prison gerrymandering,
15 sir, regardless of whether you like it or not,
16 that was a law of New York State. And what we
17 asked for was that was being held and considered
18 in the count. That was the first issue, what you
19 talked about. The second thing was sir you said
20 yourself, in your words that you did take the
21 prison count. If you took just one from Upstate
22 to Downstate, sir, that is a decrease in
23 population.

24 We fail to know if you have a decrease in

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2 population Upstate how you can have an increase
3 in representation Upstate. That is what we
4 raised that issue on. And third about the equal
5 issue on the Voting Rights Act, if Downstate is
6 heavily populated, minorities including African
7 Americans we are not equal when it comes to
8 Upstate. A person Upstate sir base on this
9 proposal has more voting right and power than a
10 minority person Downstate. If anybody can add
11 sir, that is in plain black and white. That is
12 plain fourth grade math, simple as that.

13 You have taken the less populated
14 District Upstate, you created that seat. That
15 District should have been Downstate. If w are
16 going to be equal in voting rights and power,
17 that District should have been Downstate where if
18 it is only one prison power, if we increase the
19 population in increasing representation, sir
20 should of went Downstate. That's my response.

21 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank very much.

22 MR. GADSEN: Thank you sir and ma'am

23
24 SENATOR MICHAEL F. NOZZOLIO: Archie

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2 Springer. Archie Springer. Spigner. Spigner.

3 Is Mr. Spigner here?

4 FEMALE VOICE: He's not here.

5 SENATOR MICHAEL F. NOZZOLIO: Thank you.

6 Reverend Charles Norris.

7 REVEREND CHARLES NORRIS: Good evening.

8 Good evening. My name is Reverend Charles L.

9 Norris Sr. I'm the pastor - - of Bethesda

10 Missionary Baptist Church of Jamaica. I also

11 serve as the executive secretary for Clergy

12 United for Community Empowerment. Since that

13 rainy day at SUNY Old Westbury, it seems as

14 though this task force has not listened to any of

15 the requests that were made there by those of us

16 who testified. One of the things, I see you have

17 added a woman to the task force; I don't know if

18 she's staff or senate. You were there? Bless

19 your heart. But what we're trying to say, and I

20 don't want to get into what Mr. Gadsen was

21 talking about, but we still feel, I guess because

22 there are no African-Americans on the panel,

23 because there are no African-American Republican

24 Senators, and that's understandable, and that may

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2 need to be changed by trying to get someone or
3 get some Republicans--I beg your pardon? I can't
4 hear you.

5 MALE VOICE: Or assembly.

6 REVEREND CHARLES NORRIS: Or assembly,
7 yeah. But let me say this. It seems as though
8 what we made, the suggestions that we made in Old
9 Westbury didn't amount to a hill of beans,
10 because we got lines that were drawn. In fact,
11 the line that was drawn in the 10th Senatorial
12 District, all but gerrymandered my senator, State
13 Senator Shirley Huntley, out of her district.
14 They really had to look at it again and put her
15 street back in the District so she would remain
16 in the District. It seems as though this scheme
17 that the Republicans have going is really not a
18 plan, it's a scheme for them to maintain their
19 power as a majority in the Senate. And the
20 Senate Republicans are willing to disenfranchise
21 voters across New York State simply to protest--
22 to protect their own interest. I think that's a
23 shame in this country that's supposed to be a
24 democracy, where we should really have equal

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2 protection under the law. We're going to really
3 support the Governor, and I may make my testimony
4 short, because you really have listened to a
5 number of things that are really saying the same,
6 that I don't know who came up here and really
7 complimented or commended this task force for the
8 job that you've done, which indicates that you've
9 done a lousy job. That's what it indicates. And
10 because of that, because of that, we're going to
11 try to get at least 40 or 50 thousand people to
12 send a statement like this to our Governor. And
13 I want to put his on the record. "Dear Governor
14 Cuomo, Thank you for all your hard work and
15 dedication to New York State. I am writing to
16 ask you to stop the State Legislature from
17 continuing to draw unfair district lines. They
18 are taking away the power of my vote. Please
19 hold politicians accountable for their promises
20 to enact fair and independent redistricting for
21 this year's election. We cannot wait ten more
22 years for their action. District lines must be
23 drawn by an independent body, and not following
24 the requirements laid out in the legislature."

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2 There are several other things, but we're going
3 to try to get at least 50,000 people to sign a
4 statement similar or same as this, and send it to
5 the Governor, so that he will veto the bill that
6 you may submit for him to sign for redistricting.
7 Finally, I would trust, and I made this request
8 then, that there be no district that will combine
9 Queens and Nassau together. The last time that
10 was done, we had a State Senator from one of the
11 five towns, and I say one of the five towns,
12 because we always called it four towns plus one,
13 and that one town is Inwood where African-
14 American's live. And this State Senator did not
15 come from Inwood. She either came from Hewlett,
16 Woodmere, Cedarhurst or Lawrence, but not from
17 Inwood. And she did nothing to benefit St.
18 Ulvin's, or that area of Queens that was covered
19 by her, or even that part of Inwood where she was
20 also the Senator. Beg your pardon?

21 MS. DEBRA LEVINE: You need to sum up,
22 please.

23 REVEREND CHARLES NORRIS: Thank you,
24 ma'am, will do that. I'm only saying that we

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2 don't need a district that will encompass Queens
3 and Nassau. I thank you very much for your time,
4 and I would trust that you will be able to at
5 least hear some of what all of us have said. And
6 again, I repeat, I haven't heard one person come
7 up and commend this task force for the work that
8 you've done. Maybe for the service you've
9 rendered, but not for the work. Thank you very
10 much. God bless you.

11 SENATOR MICHAEL F. NOZZOLIO: Thank you
12 very much. Peter Cipriano.

13 MR. PETER CIPRIANO: I notice the
14 Assemblyman Oaks isn't here anymore. Is he
15 coming back or--

16 SENATOR MICHAEL F. NOZZOLIO: I'm not
17 sure.

18 MR. PETER CIPRIANO: No? Okay.

19 FEMALE VOICE: - -

20 MR. PETER CIPRIANO: He does, okay.
21 Well I do hope that he sees it. Firstly, thank
22 you so much, gentlemen, and gentle lady, for
23 still being here this evening. Originally I'd
24 written good afternoon, but that seems obsolete

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2 now. In the 2010 election, I ran for the New
3 York State Assembly in the 49th District in
4 Southwest Brooklyn, so notably I'm going to be
5 changing the topic quite a bit here. I couldn't
6 make it to the Brooklyn hearing.

7 ASSEMBLY MEMBER JOHN J. MCENENY: Anyone
8 can talk about anything in the whole state.

9 MR. PETER CIPRIANO: Okay, thank you,
10 Chairman.

11 ASSEMBLY MEMBER JOHN J. MCENENY: And
12 usually do.

13 MR. PETER CIPRIANO: As a candidate I
14 signed on to former Mayor Ed Koch's reform
15 pledges, and ran proudly as a hero of reform.
16 While I did not win my election, it is in honor
17 of that pledge that I speak before you this
18 evening. Unfortunately, it is clear to most of
19 us that the process utilized by the legislature
20 and carried out by this task force is broken.
21 There can be little question that despite the
22 legislature's insistence to the contrary, New
23 York's reapportionment process is driven by
24 partisan ambition. One of the most blatant

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2 examples of this lies in my community in
3 Southwest Brooklyn. Firstly, let me point out
4 that the 49th Assembly District, which is my--the
5 District that I ran in, has been completely
6 dismantled in this first round of maps. The 49th
7 A.D. has existed in roughly the same geographic
8 orientation for decades, simply shrinking around
9 the edges every ten years to account for
10 population increase. The 49th has existed for so
11 long that even our still-living Assemblyman from
12 the 1950s can tell you that when he represented
13 us, his District was virtually the same to the
14 one I ran in in 2010. The Republicans were
15 actually in the majority at that time,
16 Assemblyman McEneny, so to give you an idea of
17 how long that is. Despite its long history and
18 functionality, however, this task force has
19 ripped the 49th A.D. apart. I understand that
20 the explanation provided is that the Assembly
21 felt an Asian majority district was in order, and
22 Southwest Brooklyn was the place to put it.
23 While I understand this argument in the context
24 of the current law, I must say, and, you know,

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2 this has become all the more important after
3 sitting here since 3 o'clock listening to all the
4 testimony. I see, unfortunately, a strong racial
5 charge in a lot of people's comments. And I
6 don't look at this racially. And going back to
7 my testimony, I must say that as a proud
8 American, I truly do not look at my neighbors as
9 Asian, black, white, or other. I look at them
10 simply as neighbors. Likewise, I do not vote
11 according to race, never have, nor would I ever.
12 I vote according to ideas, and if an Asian
13 American with good ideas asked for my vote to
14 join you gentlemen in the legislature, I would
15 not hesitate to grant it to him or her. Rather,
16 I would hope that he'd get to Albany and give you
17 all as much - - as possible. That being said, I
18 believe the real problem lies in the surrounding
19 Assembly Districts and the obvious partisan
20 agenda behind their creation. For starters,
21 let's be quite frank: The current incarnation of
22 Assembly Districts 47 and 49 in Brooklyn
23 delivered winning margins for the Republican
24 presidential candidate in 2008. The new

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2 districts, however, would have delivered a
3 Democrat victory in 2008. Again, it has been
4 established that the 49th had to change due to
5 necessity. I accept that. But it is clear that
6 the surrounding neighborhoods were divided to
7 dilute Republican votes. Case in point, the new
8 47th A.D., of which I am apparently now a
9 resident, encompasses the entire Bath Beach
10 neighborhood, going down Bath Avenue. That's the
11 first sign that that's happened in many decades,
12 in living memory. However, there is one enclave
13 of Bath Beach, which constitutes--Senator
14 Nozzolio, I want you to take particular notice of
15 this--it constitutes just a few blocks, you have
16 the entire neighborhood, except for a few blocks
17 which are adjacent to the golf course, that have
18 been left out of the District. Now, the Assembly
19 can suggest any number of reasons, I would
20 imagine, as to why this happened, VRA, or
21 whatever else. This is a white majority
22 district, so I don't see how VRA would have
23 anything to do with it. But as a lifelong
24 resident of the community and somebody who's been

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2 electioneering since he's 14 years old, I know
3 exactly why it is. It's because those few blocks
4 contain multiple single-family homes that have a
5 very high Republican vote turnout, and putting
6 those blocks in the District would have made this
7 new proposed map a slight Republican favorite,
8 ever so slightly. I mean, we're really talking
9 about a very fair competitive District either
10 way, but under the current lines it's 50%--50 and
11 some change for the Democrat in the last
12 presidential election. If you put those blocks
13 in, it becomes 50 and change for the Republican,
14 and 49 for the Democrat. So, I mean, it's an
15 obvious partisan ploy in my--from what I can see.
16 Unfortunately, that's only the tip of the
17 iceberg. The aforementioned abomination--well,
18 aforementioned, going back to my speech, the 46th
19 Assembly District, which is where those blocks
20 that I'm describing go to, they go into the 46th
21 Assembly District, is a grotesque example of
22 gerrymandering. How on earth could this task
23 force claim that the southern-most election
24 districts of Dyker Heights, which once again are

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2 heavily populated by single-family homes, share a
3 link with Coney Island? How on earth can this
4 task force seriously propose yet again, or maybe
5 more appropriately, I should say, how can the
6 Assembly propose, the Assembly majority propose
7 that a map which connects Dyker Heights and Bay
8 Ridge to Coney Island by way of one lane of the
9 Belt Parkway, rather than simply joining it to
10 neighboring Bath Beach and Bensonhurst? I do not
11 understand the Assembly majority's agenda, or
12 Speaker Silver's agenda, other than to conclude
13 clearly that it's partisan, Assemblymen. I'm
14 being quite frank with you. And if you can
15 provide another argument, I'd be happy to hear
16 it, but I would find it hard to believe.
17 Partisan intent is clearly the culprit. Any
18 sensible person would recognize that the creation
19 of the new Asian majority District in Southwest
20 Brooklyn provided an opportunity to unite the
21 rest of Dyker Heights, Bath Beach, Bensonhurst
22 and possibly even Gravesend to a neat and
23 cohesive district.

24 MS. DEBRA LEVINE: Mr. Cipriano, you

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2 need to summarize.

3 MR. PETER CIPRIANO: I'm almost done.

4 But this task force in the assembly
5 instead decided to play games and do anything
6 they could to break it up. Senator Nozzoli, I
7 saw your recent interview on New York NOW with
8 Karen DeWitt. In it you spoke of the importance
9 of communities of interest in maintaining them
10 throughout the process. I realize that in the
11 press it is you and Senate Republicans who have
12 gotten most of the heat. While I do not condone
13 the current redistricting process for either
14 party or either chamber, I do feel that the
15 Assembly Democrats deserve a lot more criticism
16 than they've been getting. My community is a
17 prime example of their handiwork. And
18 Assemblyman McEneny, would I see you go back and
19 look at Southwest Brooklyn and see what I'm
20 talking about. Assemblyman Oaks, if he were
21 here, I would tell him that I would ask that he
22 show these maps to his colleagues and explain to
23 them this is exactly why Republicans will always
24 be the minority conference in the assembly.

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2 Prove to New Yorkers that this process is not
3 broken nor crooked. Redraw Southwest Brooklyn
4 and the 46th AD to make more sense and show my
5 community and the people of this State the
6 goodwill they deserve as indeed you all have been
7 granted the goodwill of thousands of New Yorkers
8 and it is you that you have to thank for the
9 opportunity to sit where you are this evening.
10 Again thank you for being here so late and
11 Godspeed in your work.

12 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you Mr.
13 Cipriano. Maf Misbah Uddin.

14 MR. MAF MISBAH UDDIN: Finally. Good
15 evening to you all. All and Community Members.

16 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: How close was I in
17 pronouncing your name correctly?

18 MR. UDDIN: Yes, you did very well. I
19 think that--

20 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: [interposing] Well
21 thank you very much.

22 MR. UDDIN: According to the Senator,
23 he's presumed thanks to Senator Martin Malave
24 Dilan. It is good to have a friend on a

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2 committee how [phonetic] do you testify. My name
3 is Maf Misbah Uddin. I am the Founder and
4 President of the Alliance of South Asian American
5 Labor (ASAAL). I'm also the President of Local
6 1407, New York City Accountants, Statisticians &
7 Actuaries and also the Treasurer of District
8 Council 37, the largest Municipal Union in the
9 City of New York and that of the State of New
10 York. A solid community-based organization whose
11 membership include trade unions that are of South
12 Asian Heritage. Our mission is to increase the
13 culture of civic participation in the largest
14 South Asian American Community based on our
15 organizing experience in the labor movement.
16 ASAAL's membership dispend the five bottles
17 [phonetic] of the city and our membership is the
18 largest in the bottle of Queens. Our
19 organization has been advocating for the
20 empowerment of South Asian Americans in the
21 redistricting processes at 2010. History Galim
22 [phonetic] - - Senate Districts have - -
23 neighborhoods whose substantial concentration of
24 Saudization [phonetic] Americans. Our community

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2 has been very involved in the current process
3 hoping to see a different outcome. Under the
4 current proposed - - Assembly District 24 is the
5 first district ever created with the heaviest
6 Saudization Concentration. The District is 34%
7 Asian. This statistic incurs mostly South Asians
8 as evidence by the demographics of the
9 neighborhoods of Richmond Hill, Jamaica Hill, and
10 Bellerose [phonetic], which are all included in
11 this District. This creation of a Saudization
12 improves District by this - - is commendable.
13 And is an unprecedented level of political
14 empowerment for the South Asian American
15 Community. Notwithstanding this historic
16 outcome, the Richmond Hill and South Ozone Park
17 communities and the Bellerose and - - Park
18 communities that is still divided. More than
19 they should be. The ball is in your court. We
20 humbly ask legislature [phonetic] to be mindful
21 of this communities and should unite them rather
22 than divide them. Thank you very much.

23 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you very much.

24 Ronnie Minor. Ronnie Minor.

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2 MR. RONNIE K. MINOR: How are you doing?

3 Good evening everyone. Could you hear me there?

4 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Thank you.

5 MR. MINOR: My name is Ronnie K. Minor.

6 I'm a resident of Astoria Houses. I'm the
7 Community Advocate and the President of the Child
8 Advisory Committee for the How to Cope [phonetic]
9 Child Development Center for the Parents Advisory
10 Committee. I was want to just...I'm going to be
11 very brief in regards to the words that we heard
12 this evening. Everybody's badgering the Task
13 Force in regards to the lines. I took a look at
14 the lines myself. There is some problems with
15 the lines but these particular problems are not
16 un-repairable. We can just go back simply so
17 everybody can calm down. And show them that we
18 have a Task Force that we can work in unison
19 together and come about to make this change. And
20 I also just want to say briefly about the Federal
21 Voting Rights Act, which is intended to protect
22 the voting power of certain classes such as
23 ethnic, racial language, and minority groups.
24 This is what the Task Force is about. In my

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2 District when we come at 11:00 where you talk
3 about State Senator Mike Gianaris whose done so
4 much work over here in Western Queens and we need
5 to keep him there. And we need to keep all our
6 politicians that we have currently in these
7 Districts to keep them and near primary
8 districts. This way we don't have all this
9 bickering that we are having now. We have to cut
10 through the chase. We have to..we have to eat a
11 little bit of cheese and little bit of crackers.
12 We can't just re-eating all the cheese and don't
13 mix it with the crackers. We have to do that.
14 So lets try to work together in this regard and
15 that's what I'm here for. I also want to say
16 splitting up these communities especially in
17 Astoria, a neighborhood that was predominant at
18 one time called the hub of the Greeks. Now is a
19 multi-cultural community. We have everybody from
20 across the world living in Long Island City in
21 Astoria. It's a wonderful place. If you take a
22 look at our waterfront, I'm going to be really
23 brief on this. You take a look at our waterfront
24 and you can see what I'm talking about. But I

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2 also want to say for the purposes of
3 redistricting the protected classes today
4 includes African Americans, Asian Americans,
5 Native Hawaiians, Latino Hispanics, Native
6 American, Alaskan Natives, and language also of
7 the minority groups. And quickly just to touch
8 base on the prisoner situation, the one-person
9 one vote requirement is that election district
10 should be nearly equal in their total
11 populations. The populations of an area is
12 defined by the latest United State Census count
13 which we had in 2000 to-date which is 2010; every
14 decennial, which is ten years. The children as
15 well as non-citizens including un-document
16 individuals are to be counted as part of that
17 total population as long as they were counted in
18 the decennial census. Prison inmates, criminal
19 felons serving their sentences may be excluded
20 under some circumstances. I think if we look at
21 the Voting Rights Act and the primary purpose of
22 the redistricting is to ensure that the election
23 districts have equal population sizes and that
24 all the other legally requirements be met as well

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2 when we're doing these border line boundaries.

3 Just to sum it up quickly about my community,

4 which is Astoria Queens. I want to say that we

5 are a community of interests, we always have

6 been. We have never been divided in that

7 neighborhood far as two Astoria. It's always

8 been one Astoria in conjunction with those three

9 other neighborhoods, Sunnyside and Long Island

10 City and Woodside. So on that note, I want to

11 say that in all fairness to all of you there and

12 you are all a bunch of professionals, I have been

13 in here since 3:00 so I heard most of everything.

14 You know I got soar rear end for sitting in a

15 hard chair for that - -. But anyway, I you know,

16 I just want to say with all the blessings and I

17 know everybody is upset. Hey, you know sometimes

18 you spill the milk, you have to, you know you

19 have to clean it up and have to pour a new glass.

20 Just like this when you write down directions you

21 make a mistake on it, you cross it out, and write

22 another one. So lets just go back and everybody

23 just be calm and look at what everybody is saying

24 and lets try to accommodate as much as we

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2 possibly can to keep it fair on the United States
3 Constitution, that's what makes us a great
4 country. And I say please keep our Senator Mike
5 Gianaris at where he's at please. Because we
6 need our Senator there, okay. And also I just
7 have to give this one shot, I have to say this
8 because I can't go home without saying. I want
9 to say all the blessings and all the thanks to
10 the 14 Congressional District to the Honorable
11 Carolyn B. Maloney for all the assistance and the
12 love that she has given and also Peter Vallone,
13 Jr. as well over there at Long Island City in
14 Astoria Queens. They have been great to us and
15 we try to work out a lot more things. So just
16 please, just...you take it easy. You know put your
17 feet up and let's just look at it again. God
18 Bless you all. Okay. Thank you so much.

19 SENATOR NOZZOLIO: Mr. Minor, thank you
20 very much. Thank you. Mel Siegel [phonetic],
21 Mel Siegel.

22 MS. MARIA BECCE: Good evening. I'm
23 sorry I'm not Mel Siegel. Mel was here a lot
24 earlier today. He had to leave I apologize for

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2 that. I hope you'll let me just confirm--

3 ASSEMBLY MEMBER MCENENY: Please state
4 your name for the record.

5 MS. MARIA BECCE: Thank you. My name is
6 Maria Becce, B-E-C-C-E and Mel, I know, had
7 submitted testimony that's part of the record. I
8 just hope you will allow me just a couple of
9 personal notes. I've been—I've been sitting here
10 since 3:30 as well and, and I—I appreciate all of
11 your efforts. I already mentioned that my name
12 is Maria and I'm a—I'm a lifelong resident of
13 Queens, believe it or not, Astoria. So I was
14 really paying quite a bit of interest to—and I
15 hope you don't separate Queens Astoria—but I'm
16 not going to be here talking about that tonight.
17 I am now a homeowner and a resident for the last
18 30 years in a neighborhood called Broadway
19 Flushing.

20 Broadway Flushing, whose boundaries are
21 from 155th Street to 170th Street North of
22 Northern Boulevard, is a community of 1,300
23 single, mostly single family homes, in an
24 incredibly diverse neighborhood, who share the

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2 commonality of preserving this incredible oasis
3 of grace and tranquility in New York City. We
4 are certainly a community of interest.

5 Broadway Flushing is fortunate to have a
6 homeowner's association that was formed about 50
7 years ago, whose sole mission is to preserve the
8 neighborhood by assisting our elected officials
9 and city agencies with enforcing zoning and
10 building department laws and regulations.

11 Broadway Flushing Homeowners Association
12 is a homeowner's association and not a civic or
13 political organization. Broadway Flushing is
14 currently listed on the National and New York
15 State Register of Historic Places. We are
16 currently seeking landmark by the City of New
17 York. Broadway Flushing is zoned for single
18 family detached homes on no less than 40-by-100
19 feet of property. The area can be described as
20 low density and suburban like—actually, quite
21 unique for New York City. That's why I call it
22 an, an oasis.

23 The new redistricting plan would include
24 Broadway Flushing, along with the higher density

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2 and urban like setting of downtown Flushing-of
3 multiple dwellings and very high density.

4 The concerns of homeowners in-in
5 Broadway Flushing-to preserve one family homes
6 and the landscaping that goes along with that-are
7 not the same as the concerns of the residents of
8 downtown Flushing. In addition to the low
9 density New York City zoning, sections of
10 Broadway Flushing are covered by-I'm sorry-are
11 covered by a, a private covenant known as the
12 Rickert Finlay Covenant. Broadway Flushing was
13 one of the first planned communities of New York
14 City, and many of the architects are similar to
15 the homes that are built-that were built in
16 Douglas Manor.

17 The multi-ethnic residents of Broadway
18 Flushing are committed to preserve our one family
19 homes and we respectfully request that our
20 neighborhood of one family homes be included in a
21 similarly designed neighborhood of Douglas Manor,
22 Bayside and Whitestone.

23 In closing and I sincerely mean this,
24 Broadway Flushing Homeowner Association welcomes

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2 the opportunity to meet with this panel and any
3 downtown Flushing organization to help preserve
4 our one family homes. Broadway Flushing welcomes
5 anyone who wishes to live in a beautiful single
6 family, tree lined neighborhood.

7 I also want to take this opportunity to
8 thank Assemblyman Rory Lancman, who's done a
9 wonderful job representing our neighborhood,
10 along with our other elected officials—former
11 Senator Frank Padavan, and now current Senator
12 Tony Avella.

13 We—Broadway Flushing Homeowner
14 Association was founded 50 years ago by some very
15 far sighted people. I'm going to summarize. And
16 we have built our foundation on working with our
17 elected officials. We are trying so hard to
18 preserve a, a very unique neighborhood within the
19 City of New York. We fear that our concerns may
20 not be addressed with the similar concerns that
21 the residents of downtown Flushing need to
22 address—the very important issues that they need
23 to address. We, we just don't feel that we have
24 the same similarities because of the different

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2 types of homes. And that is the only reason why
3 I'm here today--to see if you will help us to
4 preserve this--this beautiful neighborhood.

5 DEBRA LEVINE: Thank you.

6 MS. BECCE: Thank you.

7 MAN: Thank you.

8 MAN: Thank you very much.

9 MS. BECCE: You're welcome.

10 MAN: Paul Graziano [phonetic]. Chesser
11 Frager [phonetic]. Chesser Frager here? Jerry
12 Batondi [phonetic]. Jerry Batondi. Jae Kyung
13 Song.

14 JAE KYUNG SONG: Good evening.

15 KATHERINE PARK: Okay, good evening. My
16 name is Katherine Park [phonetic] and I'll be
17 translating for Mr. Song.

18 MR.SONG: Hi. Good evening everybody.
19 [Foreign audio 05:36:24].

20 MS. PARK: Hello. My name is Jae Kyung
21 Song. I am a Korean American resident of Bond
22 Street in Flushing, New York. I have lived in
23 Flushing for 14 years. Through my participation
24 in Minkwon Center for Community Actions general

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2 meetings, I became aware of how important
3 redistricting is for my community, and that is
4 what brought me to speak here.

5 MR. SONG: [Foreign audio 05:37:09].

6 MS. PARK: I've looked at the two maps
7 for a State Senate and State Assembly, and I want
8 to comment on how these maps affect my
9 neighborhood.

10 I am okay with the Assembly maps
11 however, I don't think the Senate maps make any
12 sense for Flushing.

13 MR. SONG: [Foreign audio 05:37:50].

14 MS. PARK: First of all, Flushing ends
15 up being in both Senate District 16 and 11.
16 District 16 is supposed to be the first Asian
17 majority district, but not all of Flushing will
18 be in it. Flushing is the heart of the Korean
19 American community in New York City, and even now
20 my community is divided almost evenly into these
21 two Senate Districts 16 and 11.

22 That's the current situation in
23 Flushing, and the proposal doesn't make it any
24 better and actually makes less sense than before

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2 because the boundaries between the two are jagged
3 and twisted, especially around my residence.

4 According to the plan, I am in District
5 11 but I am like an island. On three sides of my
6 block everyone else is in District 16. Please
7 see the map I provided you. And the shape of
8 District 16 means that people from Bay Terrace,
9 which is very different neighborhood, will have
10 the same Senator as all my neighbors but I won't.

11 MR. SONG: [Foreign audio 05:40:04].

12 MS. PARK: I've looked at the - - map by
13 - - and it does a much better job of keeping
14 communities unified. I've also looked at the
15 Flushing boundaries submitted by - - . I've
16 included them with my statement. This is--this at
17 least should be included in an Asian American
18 Majority District.

19 MR. SONG: [Foreign audio 05:40:43].

20 Thank you.

21 MS. PARK: You shouldn't divide
22 Flushing. If you draw the lines--draw these
23 lines, it means our community cannot have a
24 strong voice in, in the government--in our

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2 government, and our voices should be heard in
3 Queens. Thank you.

4 MALE VOICE: Thank you very much.

5 MALE VOICE: Celia Merrarro [phonetic].
6 Celia Merraro. Marguerita Vasquez [phonetic].
7 Ernest Curry [phonetic]. Felix Suerro
8 [phonetic]. Ariel Ferrara [phonetic]. Quenya
9 Abru [phonetic]. Roberto De La Rosa [phonetic].
10 Carmen Perez [phonetic]. Miguel Rodriguez
11 [phonetic]. Jalissa Quigma [phonetic]. Karina
12 Claudio Beckincourt [phonetic]. On to the next.

13 MALE VOICE: Mindi Jacobs. Mindi
14 Jacobs.

15 MALE VOICE: There she is.

16 MINDI JACOBS: Good evening, or should
17 it be good night. I'm not sure.

18 MALE VOICE: Good evening.

19 MS. JACOBS: It feels like I've been
20 here very long—for a very long time. My name is
21 Mindi Jacobs. I'm a resident of Briarwood and a
22 member of the Briarwood Action Network.
23 Briarwood is a dense, compact and distinct
24 neighborhood. We're just behind this building

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2 and perhaps approximately two and half square
3 miles.

4 MALE VOICE: These two.

5 MS. JACOBS: Briarwood is split between
6 two Assembly districts in both the current 25th
7 and 27th and the proposed 24th and 27th maps.
8 Splitting the neighborhood dilutes the
9 neighborhood vote and voice in the legislature.
10 This is a common theme. You've heard it tonight.
11 We don't want our voices diluted.

12 Briarwood is grouped together with
13 neighborhoods such as White Stone and College
14 Point, which is disparate from our neighborhood
15 in Briarwood—and also Pomonok. Places that have
16 little in common with Briarwood. Neighborhoods
17 should be grouped with other neighborhoods whose
18 populations have similar interests based on
19 common similarities.

20 The New York State Assembly is the one
21 legislative body where Briarwood is represented
22 by Northern Queens politicians. In the State
23 Senate and the Federal Congress, we're
24 represented by Southern Queens politicians. This

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2 creates problems as Briarwood is more politically
3 aligned with Southern Queens, creating a lack of
4 continuity in policies and actions taken in the
5 different levels of government. An example is
6 the new Racino Project at Aqueduct.

7 What we're asking from you is that the
8 entire neighborhood be represented by a single
9 Assembly person—not two. Again, we're compact.
10 We're distinct. We're small. It makes no sense
11 to be represented by two Assembly people. We
12 want to be in the same Assembly District as
13 neighborhoods that have a common and vested
14 interest in the same things, such as public
15 transportation and schools. Such neighborhoods
16 that we're neighbors with are Kew Gardens—who we
17 were originally part of—Jamaica Hills and
18 Richmond Hill—and to have uniformity and
19 continuity among the representation within the
20 area.

21 What we propose is the reorientation of
22 either the 27th Assembly District to be fully
23 contained with Briarwood, Kew Gardens, Jamaica
24 Hills, Richmond Hill, and Kew Garden Hills—or the

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2 24th Assembly District expanding to include all
3 of Briarwood and Kew Gardens, while shedding
4 Bellerose, Queens Village and Hollis in the East.
5 We're flexible. We want to be together. We want
6 our voices to be heard, and we want to be in
7 similar neighborhoods, not disparate neighbors.

8 And my understanding—and next my
9 understanding—the inclusion of a new 63rd Senate
10 District was based on population growth in Staten
11 Island, Suffolk, Naussau, and of course Queens.
12 The district should be added to the New York City
13 area, and not the Albany area. So the one thing
14 I ask—and I don't know if this is out of
15 protocol—I've been here since 2:30 so if there's
16 any exchange—if you could help me to understand
17 how if the growth is in down state, it's not.
18 You're saying that growth is not—how the, the,
19 it's added.

20 MALE VOICE: Queens just—we were talking
21 up right while you were talking—that Queens
22 basically stayed the same. But that's—

23 MS. JACOBS: [Interposing] okay but—

24 MALE VOICE: - - You're welcome to look

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2 at the numbers.

3 MS. JACOBS: Okay, so the growth was not
4 down state. It was up state.

5 MALE VOICE: The fastest growing areas
6 of the state were in the mid-Hudson through the
7 capitol district.

8 MS. JACOBS: Okay. We will look at that
9 and if I have questions on it, can we come back
10 and ask?

11 MALE VOICE: Certainly.

12 MS. JACOBS: Justice Potter Stewart once
13 said, and I—please forgive me for not quoting—
14 that ethics is the difference between having the
15 right to do something and doing the right thing.
16 It doesn't that what was done with these
17 districts' line is the right thing. I'm going to
18 ask that, again, an independent panel look at
19 this because that's the right thing. And I thank
20 you very much for your patience.

21 MALE VOICE: Thank you very much.

22 Scottie Codes [phonetic], H. Scottie Codes.

23 Azelia Toweris [phonetic]. Azelia, I'm sorry,

24 Arelia Toweris. Arelia Toweris. Henry Euter.

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2 HENRY EUTER: Good evening. My name is
3 Henry Euter. I'm a civic activist in the Bayside
4 and Auburndale communities, and I'm concerned as
5 an—as an ordinary citizen. I, I'm looking at
6 these lines. They don't look right. They look
7 gerrymanded to the average person like me. I
8 think they should be uniting local communities,
9 not dividing them. As an example, I was looking
10 at the 16th Senatorial District. It stretches
11 from Oakland Gardens all the way into sections of
12 Woodside. It snakes around into Bay Terrace.
13 These communities are geographically separate
14 entities. Because they are so far apart,
15 residents of each community also have different
16 sets of issues.

17 And I agree with the people that came
18 from Bay Terrace that that should be part of the
19 11th Senatorial District. That's a more natural
20 fit. They have more in common with Bayside and
21 Auburndale than they do with the other
22 communities in the 16th District.

23 Even when I looked at the Assembly lines
24 in my own area of Bayside and Auburndale, I, I, I

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2 was just astonished that Northern Boulevard was
3 used as a dividing line. You're separating that-
4 those communities in half that really are
5 together. They act together, they're united
6 together, and it really is a problem that they're
7 separated in that manner.

8 I agree with the person that spoke from
9 Broadway Flushing. Broadway Flushing is being
10 cut in half in its Assembly District. It
11 shouldn't be. I, I, I am wearing a shirt here
12 that somebody gave me from Eastern Queens and-and
13 I, I completely sympathize with that-those
14 communities. Those communities should have their
15 own Assembly District, their own Senatorial
16 District.

17 I listened tonight to people from
18 Richman Hill, Ozone Park and South Ozone Park.
19 They should-they are adjacent communities. They
20 should have their own representation. So should
21 communities like Astoria and all the other
22 people.

23 The people that spoke today are, are
24 experts of their own communities, and I'm very

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2 upset that we didn't have a more independent
3 commission because if we had a more independent
4 commission with input from community leaders,
5 from community board members, from civic leaders,
6 we would have had a better plan.

7 So I hope you do go back and, and, and
8 pay attention to all of the ideas that were
9 talked about today, and look them over, and make
10 the necessary changes. And if the changes are
11 not made, I hope that Govern Cuomo will veto this
12 plan, and I think, you know, we really need to
13 work in the interest of the people and the
14 communities that they live in throughout our
15 entire state. Thank you so much.

16 MALE VOICE: Thank Mr. Euter. Aubrey
17 Phillips [phonetic]. Aubrey Phillips. Pamela
18 Thorer [phonetic]. Pamela Thorer. Katherine
19 Muzu [phonetic]. Lizell [phonetic]. Katherine
20 Lizell. John Budnich. John Budnich.

21 JOHN BUDNICH: Good evening. Senator
22 Nozzolio, Senator Dilan, Assemblyman McEney,
23 Commissioner Lopez, if I may, and those who have
24 survived to this far point. God bless you all.

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2 And I, I give you my commendation, and I, I, just
3 for having put up all that you've had to put up
4 with, including me for about another couple of
5 minutes.

6 I bring your attention as a resident of
7 Massapequa Park. That was in the East end of
8 Queens County up until about a century ago.
9 Somehow, the Western part of that village, that
10 incorporated village, has been separated from the
11 body of the rest of the village. I spoke to the
12 mayor and other people who couldn't seem to get
13 here. They're going to try and see if they can
14 get out, but they didn't whether they could on
15 this Thursday, out to the Rogers Building out in
16 - - .

17 The Western part of Massapequa Park,
18 half of one street, the West end of Lakeside, and
19 one section of about four or five blocks, and one
20 section of about 15 or 20 blocks in the South,
21 about four or five blocks from the North, have
22 been cut off from the rest of the 9th Assembly
23 District. I think it may have been because
24 somebody thought that that was the village line.

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2 The village line goes to the West of Lakeshore,
3 and it goes to the Easterly line of the
4 Massapequa Preserve property, okay, that goes
5 down between Western Massapequa and Massapequa
6 Park.

7 We also have a number of people who are
8 distressed, including some village officials I
9 spoke to, that Massapequa is being broken off—the
10 Western part of Massapequa is being broken off
11 from the rest of the Massapequa School District,
12 and being placed into, I think, it's the 17th
13 Assembly District, if I recall, yeah 17th
14 Assembly District. In fact, you can see perhaps
15 a little bit better where, if you look at the
16 map, the 17th Assembly District, where these
17 areas up around Violet Street, Walker Street in
18 the town, along Lakeshore, and down into the
19 Southern part of Massapequa Park, are all cut,
20 cut off from the 9th District, which apparently
21 the rest of Massapequa's are in it. And then, of
22 course, we've taken Massapequa South of Jerusalem
23 Avenue to the water, and put that in the 17th
24 Assembly District.

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2 Some people are very, very concerned
3 about that. Alright? I understand that
4 something—everything has to go someplace and some
5 places sometimes its difficulties, and I hope
6 that you can try and take a very close look at
7 this.

8 I, I must also say that some of the
9 distressing speakers that you've had to listen
10 to, I applaud you for being so calm and clear
11 headed and attempting to focus, them and
12 yourselves, upon what your real task is. Really,
13 you really, guys, kind of put out your all.

14 I must also say two more things. I have
15 been in many community groups, political groups.
16 My grandfather was a Democratic Assembly District
17 Leader until 1940, when our family became
18 Republican saying no third term for FDR. Okay?
19 But I've never let partisanship interfere with
20 the realization that everybody is a human being,
21 and we all have to treat each other as human
22 beings because if we don't, I don't know what's
23 going to happen to this ball of mud we've got—
24 we're on.

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2 I am distressed at a number of the
3 incredibly weird looking districts in the
4 Assembly part of the National County. There's
5 one thing that looks like a horse shoe, another
6 thing that looks like a drill press, another
7 thing that looks like an electric saw, a hand
8 saw, a huge V, a standing ghost running around,
9 and something that looks like a dragon with a
10 huge neck and a large head, and something that
11 looks just like an amoeba stretching out here and
12 there and everywhere—

13 MS. LEVINE: Excuse me. You need to
14 summarize please.

15 MR. BUDNICH: Okay. I want to thank you
16 all very much for listening to me. God bless
17 you. Good luck. And may the good Lord bless and
18 keep you all. Thank you for your time.

19 MALE VOICE: Thank you very much, Mr.
20 Budnich. Let's see, Senator Avella signed up
21 again. Is Senator Avella here? He said he was
22 going to be here all night. I don't see him. Is
23 he here? Senator Avella? Hannah Doddid
24 [phonetic].

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2 MALE VOICE: Dutin.

3 MALE VOICE: Dutin.

4 MALE VOICE: Dutin.

5 MALE VOICE: Deutch? D-E-U-T-C-H.

6 Hannah Deutch.

7 MALE VOICE: Nope.

8 MALE VOICE: Johanna Garcia [phonetic].

9 Johanna Garcia. John Cateris [phonetic]. John
10 Cateris.

11 MALE VOICE: Cateris.

12 MALE VOICE: Cateris. Cateris. We have
13 his testimony. Raynard Hoovier [phonetic]. Ry-
14 it's Richard. Richard Hoovier.

15 MALE VOICE: Hoovier?

16 MALE VOICE: Hoovier? Richard Hoovier.

17 Someone that just signed Harold. Harold, no last
18 name. Rohan Sooklall [phonetic]. Sooklall. S-
19 O-O-K-L-A-L-L. Rohan Sooklall. Betty Braton.
20 Betty Braton.

21 BETTY BRATON: --distinct areas. It's
22 got a large area North of Forest Park in the
23 Cemetery Corridor, a reasonably contiguous
24 middle, and now a large area of the Rockaway

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2 Peninsula and the Island of Broad Channel
3 separated from the mainland by Jamaica Bay. In
4 the North it also extends out to the east where
5 there are further geographical separations
6 created by major highways and more parkland.

7 Neighborhoods located in—and continue to
8 be split into different districts and that is
9 simply wrong. It makes no sense whatever to now
10 add on a Southern segment on the other side of
11 Jamaica Bay into Senate District 15. The
12 Rockaway Peninsula was all in one Senate
13 district, and not it is split among two.

14 In the middle section of the new Senate
15 District 15, the Howard Beach area that was split
16 among two Senate districts is still split among
17 two—they just happen to be different. The Ozone
18 Park area was intact in one Senate district under
19 the old lines. Now it is in three. Woodhaven is
20 now also split. It makes no sense geographically
21 to extend the Northern part of Senate District 15
22 East, past Flushing Meadow, Corona Park, and the
23 Grand Central Parkway, and create further
24 neighborhood splits.

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2 MS. LEVINE: Ms. Braton, please
3 summarize your statement.

4 MS. BRATON: Sure.

5 MS. LEVINE: Thank you.

6 MS. BRATON: Senate District 15 should
7 be a fully mainland district under the new lines
8 as it was under the old lines, and the
9 neighborhoods within it on the mainland should be
10 kept intact within one district as much as
11 possible by keeping zip codes all in the same
12 district. I certainly want to see my
13 neighborhood whole, and I'm sure everyone else
14 does. If you'd like, I can add some testimony.
15 If you'd like me to do it as a separate comment, you
16 know, as the Community Board—

17 MALE VOICE: [Interposing] It is
18 contained in your statement?

19 MS. BRATON: It's contained in my
20 written but—

21 MALE VOICE: Trust me, we pour over
22 these things—

23 MS. BRATON: [Interposing] you can read
24 it. I attached some pretty little maps for you,

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2 but you know, I, I would offer to you, as I heard
3 earlier this evening, it was a considerable
4 amount of talk about Richman Hill.

5 MALE VOICE: Right.

6 MS. BRATON: Some of the geographical
7 boundaries that were used by some people in
8 defining Richman Hill were rather loose, you
9 know, Richman Hill deserves not to be split up
10 the way it is. But in rectifying that situation,
11 you've got to be careful that you're not
12 splitting up other neighborhoods and, you know, I
13 think just to sum it up, you know, in terms of
14 Queens, our Borough President said at the start,
15 this is the most ethnically and racially diverse
16 county on the planet. How on earth you can
17 create districts that respect everybody's
18 ethnicity and racial background is going to be
19 virtual impossibility. I think if you do it by
20 neighborhoods, you will see that you will end up
21 with representation in the legislation that will
22 represent that diversity. Thank you.

23 MALE VOICE: Thank you very much.

24 MALE VOICE: Thank you, Ms. Braton.

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2 Claudia Coger. Three more. C-O-G-E-R. Coger.

3 CLAUDIA COGER: Good evening. My name
4 is Claudia Coger, and I'm the Resident
5 Association President for the Astoria Houses, a -
6 - resident, and I'm here to speak on behalf of
7 the residents which is approximately a population
8 of about 3,200 that live in Astoria Houses. And
9 I've lived in Astoria Houses for approximately 56
10 years in this—on the peninsula or Northwest in
11 Queens.

12 I, we strongly believe that the proposed
13 redistricting would destroy instead of bound in
14 our energy, power and relationships, which I
15 believe are the values of a good sound
16 neighborhood, of which Northwestern Queens is. I
17 believe that this plan will divide and conquer
18 destruction the foundation of our neighborhood
19 that has worked so—that we have worked so hard to
20 build over the many years.

21 The line that was drawn are down Ditmars
22 Boulevard, divides our resources out—our
23 presenters, our representatives—that line takes
24 away our—the working source between our State

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2 Senator and our City Councilman, which
3 automatically our—it disturbs us somewhat because
4 our—with our—we have an older population that
5 live in that Northwestern Queens, and as well as
6 young, and the redistricting sometimes can bring
7 confusion, and it will automatically give people
8 a discouragement to even—to go out to the polls
9 to vote.

10 So we are saying that our—we would like
11 for you to at least look at that border line
12 because we are, are as has been said so many
13 times this evening, in Astoria we work hard over
14 the years to overcome a lot of obstacles. We've
15 agreed to disagree and we fought in the
16 backyards, and we've done these things but in
17 that, we have a very—our networking community and
18 we've accomplished a lot of things over the
19 years.

20 Our State Senator at this time, the part
21 that bothers me is that this happened after we
22 had gone to the polls and elected our State
23 Senator, and now all of a sudden we are facing
24 the possibility of losing our, our—his

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2 representing that segment of people that is so
3 important, which is us. I think that that was a
4 slap in the face for our community, for the
5 voters as well as our elected officials who have
6 vowed to represent a certain segment of important
7 people, meaning us, that have worked, built,
8 sweated, and networked together in this beautiful
9 district of which I've lived for 56 years. I
10 cast my vote—my first vote—I cast it in this
11 district and it really means a lot to me that
12 this district stays whole. My children grew up
13 here—cast their first vote in there, and I still
14 have grandchildren and great grandchildren that's
15 growing in this district. It is very, very
16 important to me, and I would cast my vote again
17 for our Senator Gianaris to stay in this district
18 to represent the people that he loves so much.
19 Thank you.

20 MALE VOICE: Thank you very much. Juan
21 Persod [phonetic]. Juan Persod. Eduardo Geraldo
22 [phonetic]. Eduardo Gera—Geraldo. Geraldo.
23 Costa Constantinides. Jack, I think rather than—

24 COSTA CONSTANTINIDES: Hi. Good

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2 evening. Thank you for the opportunity to
3 testify today. I know it's been a long day for
4 everyone, so I'll do my best not to belabor. I
5 won't read my entire written testimony that you
6 have in front of you.

7 I'm actually a Democratic District
8 Leader in Astoria Queens, and a lifelong Astoria
9 resident. And if you look at Senate District 12,
10 I mean I have—I've been a lifelong resident of
11 Astoria. You can sort of—it's not long that, 37
12 years, but I remember certain things.

13 I remember that, you know, the hospital
14 that we have, it's now Mount Sinai. It used to
15 be called Astoria General. I remember that the
16 big drug store that we have that's now CVS, used
17 to be a Woolworth. We could get a milk, milk
18 shake and on the other side was a Genovese.

19 What I don't remember is a community
20 that was ever divided on the state level. We've
21 never been divided before. We're a cohesive sort
22 of—sort of tight knit community and we're not
23 just—we're sort of the grand tapestry of what New
24 York really is. It's not—we're not a united

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2 community based on ethnicity. We have sort of
3 every ethnicity in Astoria, whether it's Latino,
4 Muslim, Greek; we have sort of wonderful
5 populations that have all found a way to live
6 together.

7 And I you look at our natural borders—if
8 you look on the East, we have LaGuardia Airport.
9 If you look onto the South, you have Northern
10 Boulevard. If you look to the West and North,
11 you have the water. But what this proposal has
12 basically done, is taken away those natural
13 borders and it's divided our community.

14 And now it's made us—instead of, you
15 know, where we were before, we had sufficient
16 political clout and we had a State Senator that
17 was out there fighting for us, we're now in two
18 separate Senate districts which is deeply
19 troubling for the people of the neighborhood.
20 We're now—we're an appendage to both the 12th
21 Assembly—the 12th Senate District and the 13th
22 Senate District.

23 No longer are we one cohesive community
24 where they'll have to listen to our concerns, but

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2 we're now sort of a small piece of two separate
3 districts, one of which, if you look at Senate
4 District 12, which I know Councilman Peter
5 Vallone is named the alien popping out of a
6 baby's stomach, it's, it's, it sort of goes from
7 Astoria all the way down to Shore Boulevard in
8 the Rockaways. That's not a cohesive community.
9 We're a small part of that, where before in
10 Senate District 12 we were a cohesive community.

11 So I ask this Commission to please go
12 back to the drawing boards. Make sure our
13 communities are one. Reunite Astoria, and
14 regardless of the politics, please make sure that
15 community—our voices continue to be heard. And
16 if that can't happen, I urge Governor Cuomo to
17 veto these lines and any other lines that are put
18 forth if that's not going to happen. Thank you.

19 MALE VOICE: Thank you very much.

20 MALE VOICE: We would normally at this
21 time go through the entire list and mention every
22 name, but I think in the interest of time and
23 consideration for everyone in the room, I'm going
24 to ask if there is anyone out there who would

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2 like to come and speak. You sir?

3 MURRAY BERGER: Yep. I signed up 3:00.

4 MALE VOICE: You're next.

5 MR. BERGER: Thank you.

6 MALE VOICE: What is your name sir,

7 because—

8 MR. BERGER: Murray Berger.

9 MALE VOICE: Murray Berger?

10 MR. BERGER: Correct. Dominick Pastoni,
11 our President, signed up with me and he had to
12 leave.

13 MALE VOICE: Thank you, Mr. Berger.

14 MR. BERGER: Thank you.

15 MALE VOICE: For the record, when you
16 begin your testimony, would you let everyone know
17 who you are and where you're from?

18 MR. BERGER: Sure.

19 MALE VOICE: And was there any written
20 testimony given by you?

21 MR. BERGER: - - written testimony.

22 MALE VOICE: We have it. Okay, thank
23 you.

24 MR. BERGER: I am Murray H. Berger,

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2 Executive Chairman of the Kew Gardens Civic
3 Association. Kew Gardens is a small community in
4 Queens. This building is in Kew Gardens. So may
5 I say on behalf of our Civic Association, welcome
6 to Kew Gardens.

7 Kew Gardens was founded in 1910, 102
8 years ago. The Civic Association was founded in
9 1914, and I was born ten years later. You have
10 in front of you—I hope you all have one now—the
11 Kew Gardens Civic Association newsletter which
12 you may choose to read on your way home later
13 perhaps, but it contains a map of Kew Gardens as
14 we understand it, and that was the map that I
15 inherited basically when I came to Kew Gardens 55
16 years ago.

17 So that we have some tenure—some vested
18 interest in—we're not a Johnny Come Lately. We
19 have four—we are an area of under a square mile,
20 and that includes the Long Island Railroad right-
21 of-way, which runs right through Kew Gardens as
22 you can see on this—on the map. We have four
23 Democratic State Legislators, two in the
24 Assembly, two in the Senate. So they're white,

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2 they're black, they're Christian and Jewish. So
3 we're not fighting for any particular retention
4 or change of anything. We want—we want something
5 that makes sense.

6 Ten years ago, and even 20 years ago,
7 when I appeared before a similar committee—and
8 ten years ago it was at York College where we—it
9 was a lot more comfortable in a way—a little less
10 intimate. We tried to get Kew Gardens
11 represented by one less Senator and one
12 Assemblyman, and we failed obviously.

13 A sliver of Kew Gardens was sliced off
14 and given to another Senator and Assemblyman.
15 What it's—what it's meant over the last ten years
16 is whenever we've had an Albany issue, we pretty
17 much ignored the guy who had the one block on the
18 Western side of Kew Gardens—or on the Southwest
19 side in the case of the Senate—that was
20 originally before he was retired, was - -.

21 What we're looking for today, gentlemen
22 and Miss Levine, is to try to get Kew Gardens to
23 be one piece. In any case, whether we're one
24 piece, two pieces, or nine pieces, we are a very

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2 small, almost immaterial segment in the course of
3 the—in the totality of a Senate or Assembly
4 District. We recognize that, but to have to go
5 to—to have to ignore one legislator or be a
6 meaningless constituency to, to a legislator, it
7 does not strike us as being right and should be
8 corrected.

9 And we would suggest to you that the
10 adjustment is an easy one. Solving all the
11 problems both here today and elsewhere, whether
12 by you or by the Court, will be difficult. But
13 Kew Gardens' problems are not difficult. If you
14 look at the maps and compare them with your
15 proposal, you will see that moving the border
16 line by, in some cases one block, in some cases
17 two blocks, in one case four short blocks, would
18 solve our problem. It would make us a contiguous
19 community of Kew Gardens which would be across
20 the water—across the—across Queens Boulevard from
21 Briarwood, which the previous speaker spoke
22 about, which would be another connected community
23 but separate from Kew Gardens.

24 With that, if you have any questions,

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2 I'll be happy to answer them. If not, I thank
3 you for being patient and waiting for me all day.

4 MS. LEVINE: Thank you.

5 MALE VOICE: Thank you for waiting all
6 day, and we appreciate your input very much.
7 Thank you.

8 MR. BERGER: Thank you.

9 MALE VOICE: Sir, you're next. Please
10 state your name.

11 MALE VOICE: My name is Joseph - -

12 MALE VOICE: Oh yes.

13 MALE VOICE: They should have asked you
14 to do that when you were at the microphone.
15 Please-

16 JOSEPH DEPIETRO [phonetic]: My name is
17 Joseph DePietro. I was called two hours ago
18 while I was in the bathroom, so one of those
19 things, when nature calls.

20 MS. LEVINE: Yeah, that's right.

21 MR. DEPIETRO: Anyway, my statement is
22 not long but the point of the matter is, let's
23 leave my district the way it is. We have three
24 wonderful elected official like Senator Gianaris,

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2 Peter Vallone and - -.

3 You know what they say. If it works,
4 don't fix it. Thank you for your time and your
5 patience. Your head--your head is wider than mine
6 so you must have more patience than me. Thank
7 you and good night.

8 MALE VOICE: Thank you.

9 MALE VOICE: Thank you very much.

10 Anyone else wish to testify?

11 MALE VOICE: Mr. Berger, let me talk to
12 you before you go.

13 MALE VOICE: And it--hearing no one else,
14 let me just ask one more time. Does anyone else
15 wish to testify, present testimony?

16 Well thank you very much. I hear - -
17 this Queens hearing at the hour is 9:37. We've
18 been at this for six and a half hours, and we
19 thank all those who have participated. The
20 meeting is adjourned.

21 (The public hearing concluded.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Brian Henderberg, do hereby certify that the foregoing typewritten transcription, consisting of pages number 1 to 45, inclusive, is a true record prepared by me and completed from materials provided to me.



Brian Henderberg, Transcriptionist

February 15, 2012

Committee on Governmental Employees, 3-3-2010

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Wanda Ellis, do hereby certify that the foregoing typewritten transcription, consisting of pages number 46 to 73, inclusive, is a true record prepared by me and completed from materials provided to me.

Wanda Ellis

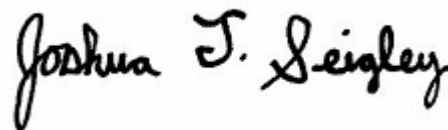
Wanda Ellis, Transcriptionist

2/15/2012 Date

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Joshua Seigley, do hereby certify that the foregoing typewritten transcription, consisting of pages number 74 to 98, inclusive, is a true record prepared by me and completed from materials provided to me.

Joshua Seigley, Transcriptionist

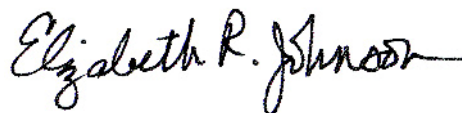
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joshua J. Seigley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J'.

February 15, 2012

Committee on Governmental Employees, 3-3-2010

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Elizabeth Johnson, do hereby certify that the foregoing typewritten transcription, consisting of pages number 99 to 112, inclusive, is a true record prepared by me and completed from materials provided to me.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Elizabeth R. Johnson". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Elizabeth Johnson, Transcriptionist

February 15, 2012

Committee on Governmental Employees, 3-3-2010

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Rebecca Meunier, do hereby certify that the foregoing typewritten transcription, consisting of pages number 133 to 275, inclusive, is a true record prepared by me and completed from materials provided to me.



Rebecca Meunier, Transcriptionist

February 17, 2012 _____ Date

Committee on Governmental Employees, 3-3-2010

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Julie Davids, do hereby certify that the foregoing typewritten transcription, consisting of pages number 276 to 285, inclusive, is a true record prepared by me and completed from materials provided to me.



Julie Davids, Transcriptionist

February 16, 2012 Date

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Maria Eglund, do hereby certify that the foregoing typewritten transcription, consisting of pages number 286 to 295, inclusive, is a true record prepared by me and completed from materials provided to me.

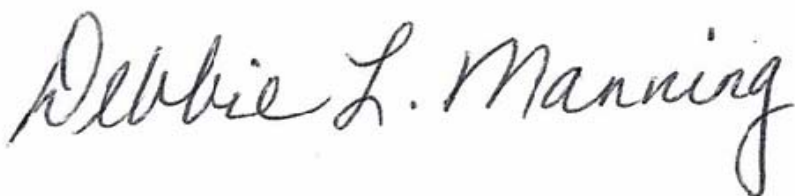
Maria Eglund

Maria Eglund, Transcriptionist

February 16, 2012 _____ Date

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Debbie L. Manning, do hereby certify that the foregoing typewritten transcription, consisting of pages number 296 to 330, inclusive, is a true record prepared by me and completed from materials provided to me.

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Debbie L. Manning, Transcriptionist

February 14, 2012