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Hello there -

I wanted to kindly submit my testimony, shared in the 5/26 public hearing, in written version below.

Thank you for your time and consideration on these important matters.

Thanks,
Arianne

Written Testimony

Hello, everyone. Thank you for the New York Redistricting Committee for hearing us today.

My name is Arianne Maliwanag and I am the NYS Secretary for the National Federation of Filipino American Associations (NaFFAA-NY) and also a part of the APA Voice Redistricting task force which aims to protect APA communities of interest.

But first, allow me to say, Good Evening. And Mabuhay.

Mabuhay. In Filipino, this means Cheers, Welcome, May You Live. Painted on the side wall of a restaurant, Amazing Grace, on the southeast corner of 69th Street and Roosevelt Ave, resides a mural of this greeting. As of 2020 during the height the pandemic, this mural welcomes visitors and locals alike into our neighborhood known as "Little Manila." This was made possible through our friends at Little Manila Queens Bayanihan Art and various artists. Mabuhay.

This evening, I'm here to advocate for our Little Manila community in Woodside & Elmhurst Queens—a community of interest that dates back to the 1970s when Elmhurst Hospital faced nursing shortages and recruited healthcare workers from the Philippines. Through this opportunity, nurses and their families settled into neighborhoods of Woodside and Elmhurst, where they have since thrived.

As of the most recent census, over 89,000 Filipinos and Filipino Americans were estimated to be residing in New York City. In Woodside and Elmhurst, lives the highest concentration of Filipino small businesses of New York State (which includes restaurants, remittance ecneras, bodegas, and faith centers).

During the COVID-19 crisis, the Filipino community took a devastating toll – experiencing an overrepresentation of healthcare worker deaths on the frontlines, and our elders were impacted by the uptick in anti-Asian hate crimes.

In this first hearing, I am here to advocate for the Filipino American community to be kept as whole as possible, particularly in Little Manila, Woodside and Elmhurst Queens, which is an Asian American community of interest. We have been advocating for the Filipino American community to be kept whole as possible on all legislative levels.

Tonight, I advocate for the Filipino American community, so that we - the multiple generations of Filipino Americans – can continue to maximize our voice and be full participants in the democratic process.

Mabuhay. Thank you for your time and consideration.