

Testimony of Jesse Hendrich
New York City Districting Commission
Dennis M. Walcott, Chair
New York City Technical College (285 Jay Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201)
June 29, 2022, 4pm

Good afternoon,

My name is Jesse Hendrich and I live at [REDACTED] Sterling Place, Apartment 18, Brooklyn NY. I currently live in the 35th Councilmanic District, which includes the neighborhoods of Prospect Heights, Fort Greene, Clinton Hill and parts of Crown Heights and Bedford-Stuyvesant.

Thank you to Chair Walcott, Executive Director Flateau, and the New York City Districting Commission for the opportunity to provide testimony regarding the Commission's upcoming work to draft a new districting plan for New York City Council districts.

I have lived in this district since 2004, when my wife and I moved here and started our family (we now have two children). We have been active members of our coop board, our block association, our school PTO and SLT, and our local civic organizations (P.H.N.D.C.). We are very politically active and committed to the benefit of all the members of our community.

The strength of our diverse community is what makes the 35th District home. Historically, the 35th District has included a myriad of residents from different backgrounds. We have more than 14,000 public housing residents, multi-generational Caribbean immigrant families, and the Lubavitch community all in this district.

We need to work to ensure the 35th District maintains its diversity. Over the past decade, our district lost one in five Black residents and is a plurality white for the first time in generations. The Commission should prioritize the needs of the very communities that have never been prioritized before and ensure Central Brooklyn retains its unique characteristic as home to a myriad of Brooklynites from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds as it has for generations. As such, though we may not be able to make this district majority Black again given the mass exodus and displacement we've seen over the past decade, we can ensure districts like the 35th retain their diversity.

As such, I urge you to keep the district lines as similar as possible to what they are currently. This district has a population deviation from the ideal population (172,631) of less than 5 percent under the current lines and should not need to see radical changes to its boundaries to fit the charter-required deviation.

Lastly, I urge you to ensure main arteries like Flatbush Avenue remain the boundaries of this district to maintain the integrity of existing communities. As state and Congressional boundaries split neighborhoods and have resulted in my district having four members of Congress whereas

it previously had two, it is imperative that we ensure Council districts truly include entire neighborhoods and communities.

Thank you,
Jesse Hendrich