

Thank you for the privilege of being able to offer this testimony.

I am a pastor and social services director who runs two community help centers on the north shore of Staten Island.

It would not be in the best interest of Staten Islanders living on the north shore if our councilmanic district is cut out into the mid-island or a Manhattan district.

I have preached in all of these neighborhoods and can attest that their needs are very different.

The needs of residents of the current Staten Island Community District 1 are unique, and to dilute that voice would exacerbate existing inequities. These inequities span across health access, food insecurity, immigration legal needs, educational concerns, and many other social determinants of health.

I ran a census outreach program in 2020 to help ensure an accurate count of residents of the north shore. Unfortunately, comments from the President in office at that time, and a nationwide focus on immigration enforcement, contributed to many residents being too fearful to participate in the census, and a likely undercount of the north shore of Staten Island.

My hope is that the city will be able to find an equitable way of mapping the north shore's councilmanic district without cutting into the mid-island or a Manhattan district, so that the unique needs of the residents of the north shore of Staten Island will have adequate voice and representation.

Sincerely,

Rev. Karen Jackson