

Hearings

From: saveflatbush <saveflatbush@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 10, 2013 1:02 AM
To: Hearings
Subject: Brooklyn Hearing

Dear Districting Commission,

The proposed division of our 48th council district will surely result in the loss of votes to Democrats! I urge
You to prevail upon your council members to preserve the integrity of the district.

Respectfully, AbeT

This Message has been sent to you by:

Abe I. Tawil

January 9, 2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Abraham Brown. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a member of the Orthodox Jewish community. I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the Districting Commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. The Orthodox Jewish community, like other ethnic groups in the current 48th district, represents a significant population, but NOT A MAJORITY of the district. Our district serves as a model of the American dream where for the past 10 years each of the voices of diverse populations living together in our district has been heard and responded to by government. The major factor in this remarkable success story is that no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage so that our local government was truly "of the people, by the people and for the people." The preliminary draft map if adopted would ensure that no group would be disenfranchised in the years ahead. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear for no good reason.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and two elected Democratic District Leaders are all Russian-Americans with electoral success in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan, that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest

opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Abraham Brown

1/10/13

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Adam Dweck and I submit this testimony for the purposes of the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Hearing. I am a resident of the 48th Council District and am an active member in my community of Midwood.

I submit this testimony to strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. For the past 10 years, no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage, allowing for the needs of the entire district to be heard. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and Democratic District Leaders Ari Kagan and Mark Davidovich are all Russian-Americans with electoral success stories in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Adam Dweck

1/9/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Ai Lian Ma and I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. For the past 10 years, no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage, allowing for the needs of the entire district to be heard. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and Democratic District Leaders Ari Kagan and Mark Davidovich are all Russian-Americans with electoral success stories in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

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On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Ai Lian Ma

Hearings

From: saveflatbush <saveflatbush@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 10, 2013 1:04 AM
To: Hearings
Subject: Brooklyn Hearing

Hi,

I am a concerned South Brooklyn resident. I recently became aware of the possibility of a change in the Brooklyn districting. I was looking forward to getting a better understanding of the problem that the change is in response to and how the redistricting will rectify the problem.

There is additional concern that the Orthodox Jewish community will be split up which will take away the cohesion that has been a product of generations of hard work from people such my parents and grandparents.

Thank you for all your dedication in representing New York City.

Best,

Allen

allenweinstein [REDACTED]

December 20, 2012

Dear members of NYC Council Districting Commission!

In October I sent my letter to the NYC Districting Commission (please see attached) and asked for a creation of the district in Southern Brooklyn that will ensure that Russian American community will have a fair chance to elect a first Russian-American to the New York City Council. It will be a tremendous milestone for our community and for the whole New York City that we love so much and we were happy that NYC Districting Commission met our request.

Today I want to use a chance and to thank members of your Commission for doing the right thing. The proposed lines of 48th Council District are fair, just and logical. They unite communities and neighborhoods of common interest and at the same time give a real chance for Russian Americans to elect their first representative to the New York City Council.

I truly appreciate your commitment to our vibrant community. Please, do not change the proposed lines of 48th District. Stick to your decision!

Thank you very much.

Inna Stavitsky,

President of American Association of Jews from the former USSR,
AAJFSU.

Dear members of NYC Council Districting Commission!

My name is Inna Stavitsky and I am the President of American Association of Jews from the former USSR, AAJFSU.

AAJFSU is the oldest non-partisan, non-for-profit organization representing thousands of Russian-speaking Jews who are registered voters. We provide annual voting registration drives within the Russian-speaking and other immigrant communities making sure they receive objective information in order to encourage their civic participation and responsibility and to make them an indispensable part of the American electoral process.

Russian-American Community as an integral part of New York City flourished in our great city allowing Russian-speaking immigrants to achieve tremendous success in business, culture, sports, arts, science, medicine and politics.

There are more than 350,000 Russian Americans in all five boroughs and Brooklyn is a home of the largest Russian-speaking community in the United States.

We have in government: NYS Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec BrookKrasny, Democratic District Leaders Ari Kagan and Mark Davidovich, Republican District Leader Boris Pincus. Nevertheless, as of today there are no Russian-Americans in New York City Council and community is eager to change this situation.

When we looked at the proposed redistricting map, it became obvious that the lines of 48th Council District are redrawn in a special way to divide the Russian-speaking voters' power and give no real opportunity to Russian Americans to win elections in this district.

The Commission cut out significantly Russian-speaking Manhattan Beach from 48th district and added to it a significant part of Midwood with predominantly Orthodox Jewish population.

While we value our good relationship with every Brooklyn community, including Orthodox Jews, we strongly believe that 48th District should be able to consolidate the unique, vibrant and active Russian-American community, so that we would be able to give a chance for an immigrant of Russian decent to be elected to New York City Council.

So, I am asking the Districting Commission to take several blocks in Midwood (in areas of Avenue J, K, L, M and others that were added to the current boundaries of 48th District) and to move them back to the 44th District (currently represented by Councilman David Greenfield).

In order to offset the population from these Midwood blocks, I am asking the Commission to include several buildings located along Seabreeze Avenue (with many Russian-speaking residents) into 48th District, excluding them from the current 47th District.

By implementing these actions, you will ensure that Russian American community will have next year a fair chance to elect a first Russian-American to the New York City Council. It will be a tremendous milestone for our community and for the whole New York City that we love so much. As President of one of the major advocacy immigrant organizations, I do hope that the Commission will adhere to the appeal of the community.

Thank you,

Inna Stavitsky.

Hearings

From: saveflatbush <saveflatbush@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 10, 2013 3:05 PM
To: Hearings
Subject: Brooklyn Hearing

Dear Districting Commission my name is Amy Reznik

I reside at [REDACTED] Please keep the 48th Council District intact, and not allow the division and isolation of our community. For the past 10 years the 48th council District has been a model district of the American Dream where voices of diverse populations were living together and has been heard and responded to by government. We urge you to keep the continuity of our Orthodox Jewish residents of Midwood and cultural and ethnicity intact. Thank you.

1/9/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Angel Vi and I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. For the past 10 years, no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage, allowing for the needs of the entire district to be heard. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and Democratic District Leaders Ari Kagan and Mark Davidovich are all Russian-Americans with electoral success stories in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their

own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Angel Vi

1/9/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Ann Chen and I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

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Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. For the past 10 years, no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage, allowing for the needs of the entire district to be heard. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and Democratic District Leaders Ari Kagan and Mark Davidovich are all Russian-Americans with electoral success stories in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

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own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Ann Chen

Hearings

From: ANNETE BLUMENTHAL <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Sunday, January 20, 2013 12:34 PM
To: Hearings
Subject: Redistricting

Dear members of the Redistricting Commission,

I am writing to respectfully request that you do not allow the 48th Council District to be divided and that you include the East 20's and 30's in the district, as well.

Thank you for your kind attention to this matter.

Sincerely,
(Miss) Annette Blumenthal
1 [REDACTED]
Brooklyn, N. Y. 11230-5161

Dear members of NYC Council Districting Commission!

My name is Ari Kagan and I am a Democratic District Leader in 45 Assembly District in Brooklyn.

I am one of the leaders of the Russian speaking community and a resident of Brighton Beach.

I am writing to you because I want to thank you for creating a District where the Russian American Community has the strongest voice. I am talking about 48th Council District in Brooklyn. Your Commission included Brighton Beach, Manhattan Beach, most of Sheepshead Bay, Luna Park, Sea Breeze Avenue and parts of Trump Village, as well as parts of Midwood and Homecrest into one District. I strongly support these lines because they are strengthening our community power and give a fair chance to elect the first Russian speaking Council member in New York City. These neighborhoods have a lot in common and I am glad they would be united in the same district for the next 10 years.

In October, 2012, I testified in front of the Districting Commission and urged you to do exactly what you did. There are more than 350,000 Russian Americans in all five boroughs. Yet we still don't have a single Russian American in the New York City Council.

Your Commission did the right thing. The proposed lines of 48th Council District are fair, just and logical. Thank you very much.

I truly appreciate your commitment to our vibrant community. Please, do not change the currently proposed lines of 48th District.

Democratic District Leader (45 A.D.)
Ari Kagan

Dear members of NYC Council Districting Commission!

My name is Dmitry Margulis and I am President of the Association of East European Jewry.

AEEJ is a non-partisan, non-for-profit organization that is working primarily with Russian speaking Jewish immigrants all over the city. We started our activities in 1993. We specialize on organizing Jewish cultural events like festivals and art exhibitions, forums and seminars about Yiddish literature, celebrations of Chanukah and Purim, memorial events in the Holocaust Memorial Park. AEEJ is one of the oldest and most respected Russian Jewish groups in New York and we have dedicated volunteers who work tirelessly on behalf of our community. We are long time members of the Council of Jewish Emigres Community Organizations (COJECO).

As you know, Russian American Community became an integral part of New York City. Our community flourished in our great city. Russian-speaking immigrants achieved tremendous success in business, culture, sports, arts, science, medicine and politics.

There are more than 350,000 Russian Americans in five boroughs. Brooklyn is a home of the largest Russian-speaking community in the United States. But unfortunately there are no Russian American members in the New York City Council. That is why it's so important that your commission will create a district in Southern Brooklyn where Russian speaking candidate will have a real chance to be elected to the City Council.

We strongly believe that currently proposed lines of the 48th District are best suited for these purposes. By uniting Brighton Beach, Manhattan Beach, most of Sheepshead Bay, Luna Park, Sea Breeze Avenue and part of Trump Village in one district, your Commission did a right thing and created a great district for our community. Also, these neighborhoods have a lot in common and it is logical that they would be represented by the same Council member.

I want to personally thank you for your commitment to the Russian speaking community. Please, do not change the currently proposed lines of 48th district. They are very important for the future of our community in New York City.

Thank you,
Dmitry Margulis

Good evening.

My name is Avi Spitzer. I serve as the Executive Director of the Sephardic Community Federation (SCF). SCF is the umbrella public policy organization representing the Sephardic Jewish community of greater New York. The bulk of the Sephardic community's population is located in Brooklyn and I am here today to testify specifically about areas of concern to the Brooklyn Sephardic community.

I would like to thank the commission for listening to the concerns of the community during the previous hearing and specifically for the lines they submitted to the City Council for the 44th Council District. The Sephardic community initially was very concerned because it appeared that their community was to be divided up. Thankfully, the Sephardic Community is now united in the 44th council district and we are grateful for that. Please try and ensure that the 44th council district lines remain the same as the ones that were submitted so that Boro Park can have two members of the City Council representing it, as opposed to just one. Once again, I thank you for that.

Finally, we share concerns about the Jewish population in the 45th, 46th and 48th districts. The Jewish population has been dispersed in those districts and we encourage the commission to take a second look.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

January 9, 2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Barry Binik. I am a resident of the 48th Council District and an active member of the Orthodox Jewish community. I have served as a liaison between my community and elected officials for 35 years, helping with many charitable and community projects. I was a paramedic for Hatzolah Volunteer Ambulance Service for 25 years. I was actively involved with a community project, Our Place, which services hundreds of "at risk" children in our community.

I submit this testimony to strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. The Orthodox Jewish community, like other ethnic groups in the current 48th district, represents a significant population, but NOT A MAJORITY of the district. Our district serves as a model of the American dream where for the past 10 years each of the voices of diverse populations living together in our district has been heard and responded to by government. The major factor in this remarkable success story is that no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage so that our local government was truly "of the people, by the people and for the people". The preliminary draft map if adopted would ensure that no group would be disenfranchised in the years ahead. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would for no good reason disappear.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and two elected Democratic District Leaders are all Russian-Americans with electoral success stories in the existing 48th Council District. Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

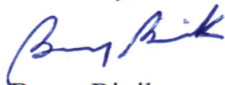
While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest

opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Barry Binik
2505 Avenue I
Brooklyn, NY 11210
tlsbc@aol.com

Hearings

From: Strasser, Ben C. <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, January 16, 2013 9:55 AM
To: Hearings
Subject: 48th Council District Redistricting

I am writing to express my great concern about, and objection to, the proposal to divide the 48th Council District. I urge you maintain this CD as is, and to have it encompass the East 20's and 30's of Flatbush as well. This is a cohesive, productive community with vocal and effective political representation, and any effort to divide this CD would be regarded as a great disservice to its constituents, who are following this issue closely.

Your attention to this matter is appreciated.

Ben Strasser (East 30's homeowner)

This email is intended for the recipient only. If you are not the intended recipient please disregard, and do not use the information for any purpose.

Dear members of New York City Districting Commission,

My name is Alec Teytel and I am the President of the Bensonhurst Business Club. Our Club is a non-for-profit organization with more than 200 members' mostly Russian speaking small business owners and professionals. Our members are actively participating in all local and national elections. We cooperate very closely with JCH of Bensonhurst, Brooklyn elected officials and Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce.

As a club President I support the current lines that NYC Districting Commission approved after last public hearings in October of 2012. As Russian speaking American I feel very strongly about importance of creating a Council District where Russian speaking community has a fair chance to elect one of its members to the New York City Council. There are more than 350,000 Russian speaking New Yorkers today in our city. Russian speaking immigrants achieved tremendous success in business, culture, sports, arts, science, medicine and politics. But until today we have not a single Russian American in New York City Council and community is eager to change this situation.

The best way to ensure that Russian Americans are represented in NYC Council in a fair and just way is to keep recently approved lines of 48 Council District intact. By including Brighton Beach, Manhattan Beach, most of Sheepshead Bay, Luna Park, Sea Breeze Avenue and part of Trump Village in one district, your Commission did a right thing and created a fair district for our community.

I want to personally thank you for your commitment and fairness. Please, do not change the proposed lines of 48th district. They are very important for the future of our community in New York City.

Thank you.

Alec Teytel

12/24/2012

1/9/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Bing Xu and I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. For the past 10 years, no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage, allowing for the needs of the entire district to be heard. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and Democratic District Leaders Ari Kagan and Mark Davidovich are all Russian-Americans with electoral success stories in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their

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Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Bing Xu

January 10, 2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Brandee Weiss, and I am a lifelong resident of the 48th Council District. I am a native-born American, and I am proud to say that my paternal grandparents, both **Russian-language speaking immigrants**, not only have resided in Brighton Beach, but for more than 40 years they also owned and operated the well-known establishment, "Israel's Take Home Food" on Brighton Beach Avenue.

I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission hearing to strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

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Sincerely,

Brandee Weiss

January 9, 2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Brian Berry. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a member of the Orthodox Jewish community. I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the Districting Commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

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At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and two elected Democratic District Leaders are all Russian-Americans with electoral success in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan, that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest

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Sincerely,

Brian Berry

1/9/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Catherine Diaczok and I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Community.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

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Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

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Sincerely,

Catherine Diaczok

Hearings

From: c <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, January 15, 2013 8:40 PM
To: [REDACTED] Hearings
Cc: saveflatbush@gmail.com
Subject: 48th Council District

Hi

My name is chaim aronowitz I live at [REDACTED] brooklyn NY 11210 in the 48th council district.

I would like to ask that the 48CD map lines should not be changed from its current lines since it will affect our community on a very large scale.

Thank you
Chaim

1/9/13

Dear Honorable Members of the NYC Districting Commission,

My name is Chaim Deutsch, and I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing. I moved to Midwood in 1988 where I reside with my wife, five children, father & mother-in-law, daughter and son -in-law and beautiful grandson. In the early 1990s when crime reached unseen new heights, I founded the Flatbush Shomrim Safety Patrol with other members of the Orthodox Jewish community, to improve the quality of life of all the residents of Midwood. Midwood is where I plan on spending the rest of my life. I enjoy its diversity and the fact that multi- cultural families are living together in harmony. This is what the American dream is all about!

Most recently, I have helped form a patrol in the African American community and now I am in the process of forming another patrol in the Pakistani-American Community. I have always admired and respected people from all races and religions and find it most gratifying when diverse groups are able to work together for the common good. After all, this is New York.

It is imperative that any redistricting plan preserve Midwood as a unified multi-cultural community. This is the American Dream, the Way of New York and the Way of Brooklyn. The police department and other city agencies have long recognized the strong bond in my community.

I urge the Commission to unite- **NOT DIVIDE**, to strengthen-NOT WEAKEN, to build – NOT DESTROY an already strong, cohesive and vibrant Community. Please adopt the preliminary district map proposed by this commission.

I strongly urge the districting commission to keep the 48th Council District as the model district it has been for all these years.

Sincerely,

Chaim Deutsch
2714 Avenue I
Brooklyn NY 11210
[917-560-0353](tel:917-560-0353)

January 9, 2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Chaim Israel. I am an active member of the Orthodox community, and have a close connection to the 48th Council District.

I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing to strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

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While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a

number used by Ari Kagan that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

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Sincerely,

Chaim Israel

1/9/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Chak Kwok and I submit this testimony for the **January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing**. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

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Sincerely,

Chak Kwok Wong

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Chaskel Bennett. I serve on the board of several communal organizations that help New Yorkers every day. Organizations like Agudath Israel of America, COJO of Flatbush, Masbia and "Our Place" are just some of the vital social service groups that I am proud to be affiliated with. Today, though, I write you as a concerned citizen and resident of the neighborhood bordering the 48th Council District directly adjacent to Midwood known as the East 30's. Lewis Fidler is my current Councilmember and friend. We work together every day to advance the causes and concerns of the East 30's.

I submit this testimony to strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

My only additional request here is that the preliminary draft map be modified slightly to include the areas directly adjacent to the Midwood community (the east 30's), in the 48th Council District, in order to prevent the disenfranchisement of the residents of this area.

I and my neighbors in the area bounded by Nostrand Avenue on the west, Flatbush Avenue on the east, Avenue I on the north and Kings Highway on the south are submitting testimony seeking the approval of this Commission of a districting plan which will help ensure that the particular needs and concerns of our community be heard and responded to by our City Council Member. As a community leader, I am on the front lines everyday to advocate the needs of my community with elected officials. The current plan cuts my neighborhood out of Mr. Fidler's council district and severely impacts our area in an unfair manner. We wish to remain connected to our fellow community members in the proposed 48CD. Important quality of life concerns have made our particular community vulnerable. Sanitation, snow removal, police and utility issues have made the last few years extremely difficult for our community.

We join the other groups in the current 48th district seeking to maintain diversity in the district by ensuring that diverse groups retain a significant presence in the district and that no one group has a numeric majority guaranteeing the election of a member of that group such that all other groups will be effectively disenfranchised.

Our community is geographically contiguous to the Midwood community. But geography alone does not call for our inclusion with Midwood in the 48th District. **Our community is effectively an extension of Midwood in that we are economically, culturally and religiously compatible with Midwood.** The issues and concerns that we face each day are those that residents of Midwood deal with every day. A district line separating us from Midwood is an artificial boundary having no relevance to the facts on the ground. The Council Member for Midwood is best able to represent us. Together with Midwood in the 48th District we would constitute an important presence in the political process of a diverse multi-cultural district. In the 45th District we will be effectively disenfranchised, as an insignificant minority, easily ignored. I am prepared to testify in person as well. This is a very serious issue and one that directly effects my community.

Sincerely,
Chaskel Bennett

Hearings

From: saveflatbush <saveflatbush@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 09, 2013 8:14 PM
To: Hearings
Subject: Jan 10th Hearing

Hi,

For the past 10 years the 48th council District has been a model district of the American Dream where voices of diverse populations were living together and has been heard and responded to by government.

We urge you to keep the continuity of our Orthodox Jewish residents of Midwood and cultural and ethnicity intact.

Thanks in advance,
Chavi Tyberg

Hearings

From: Chavi Tyberg [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, January 09, 2013 7:42 PM
To: Hearings
Subject: 1/10/13 - Brooklyn Hearing

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Chavi Tyberg. I am a resident of the neighborhood bordering the 48th Council District directly adjacent to Midwood. I submit this testimony to strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

My only additional request here is that the preliminary draft map be modified slightly to include the areas directly adjacent to the Midwood community, in the 48th Council District, in order to prevent the disenfranchisement of the residents of this area.

I and my neighbors in the area bounded by Nostrand Avenue on the west, Flatbush Avenue on the east, Avenue I on the north and Kings Highway on the south are submitting testimony seeking the approval of this Commission of a districting plan which will help ensure that the particular needs and concerns of our community be heard and responded to by our City Council Member.

We join the other groups in the current 48th district seeking to maintain diversity in the district by ensuring that diverse groups retain a significant presence in the district and that no one group has a numeric majority guaranteeing the election of a member of that group such that all other groups will be effectively disenfranchised.

Our community is geographically contiguous to the Midwood community.

But geography alone does not call for our inclusion with Midwood in the 48th District. Our community is effectively an extension of Midwood in that we are economically, culturally and religiously compatible with Midwood. The issues and concerns that we face each day are those that residents of Midwood deal with every day. A district line separating us from Midwood is an artificial boundary having no relevance to the facts on the ground. The Council Member for Midwood is best able to represent us. Together with Midwood in the 48th District we would constitute an important presence in the political process of a diverse multi-cultural district. In the 45th District we will be effectively disenfranchised, as an insignificant minority, easily ignored.

Sincerely,

Chavi Tyberg

Hearings

From: saveflatbush <saveflatbush@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 10, 2013 1:01 PM
To: Hearings
Subject: Brooklyn Hearing

Dear Commission,


For the past 10 years the 48th council District has been a model district of the American Dream.

Voices of diverse populations have lived together and have been heard, and responded to, by government.

I urge you to keep the continuity with the Midwood neighborhood and the cultural and ethnicity of our district intact and not split us into multiple districts.

We ask for so little on a daily basis - we don't cause crime or other trouble. Please help us retain our unified voice via our representation as a single district.

Sincerely,
Chaya Sharf


Brooklyn, NY

1/9/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Chen Hui Lian and I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. For the past 10 years, no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage, allowing for the needs of the entire district to be heard. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and Democratic District Leaders Ari Kagan and Mark Davidovich are all Russian-Americans with electoral success stories in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their

own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Chen Hui Lian

1/9/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Chen Shu Quan and I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. For the past 10 years, no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage, allowing for the needs of the entire district to be heard. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and Democratic District Leaders Ari Kagan and Mark Davidovich are all Russian-Americans with electoral success stories in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their

own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Chen Shu Quan

Hearings

From: Cheski Baum [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, January 09, 2013 6:01 PM
To: Hearings
Subject: 46/48 council district/ hearing in Brooklyn 1/10/13

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

Hello, my name is Cheski Baum. I live in my communiyt along with my wife and 5 children. I write to you as a concerned citizen and resident of the neighborhood bordering the 48th Council District directly adjacent to Midwood known as the East 30's. Lewis Fidler is my current Councilmember (46 CD)and friend. I have resided in the East 30's community for 18 years.

I submit this testimony to strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

My only additional request here is that the preliminary draft map be modified slightly to include the areas directly adjacent to the Midwood community (the east 30's), in the 48th Council District, in order to prevent the disenfranchisement of the residents of this area.

I and my neighbors in the area bounded by Nostrand Avenue on the west, Flatbush Avenue on the east, Avenue I on the north and Kings Highway on the south are submitting testimony seeking the approval of this Commission of a districting plan which will help ensure that the particular needs and concerns of our community be heard and responded to by our City Council Member. The current plan cuts my neighborhood out of Mr. Fidler's council district and severely impacts our area in an unfair manner. We wish to remain connected to our fellow community members in the proposed 48CD. Important quality of life concerns have made our particular community vulnerable. Sanitation, snow removal, police and utility issues have made the last few years extremely difficult for our community.

We join the other groups in the current 48th district seeking to maintain diversity in the district by ensuring that diverse groups retain a significant presence in the district and that no one group has a numeric majority guaranteeing the election of a member of that group such that all other groups will be effectively disenfranchised.

Our community is geographically contiguous to the Midwood community. But geography alone does not call for our inclusion with Midwood in the 48th District. Our community is effectively an extension of Midwood in that we are economically, culturally and religiously compatible with Midwood. The issues and concerns that we face each day are those that residents of Midwood deal with every day. A district line separating us from Midwood is an artificial boundary having no relevance to the facts on the ground. The Council Member for Midwood is best able to represent us. Together with Midwood in the 48th District we would constitute an important presence in the political process of a diverse multi-cultural district. In the 45th District we will be effectively disenfranchised, as an insignificant minority, easily ignored. This is a very serious issue and one that directly effects my community. Please do not allow this to happen.

Respectfully,

Cheski Baum
[REDACTED]
Brooklyn, NY 11210

1/9/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Chiun Chan and I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. For the past 10 years, no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage, allowing for the needs of the entire district to be heard. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and Democratic District Leaders Ari Kagan and Mark Davidovich are all Russian-Americans with electoral success stories in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their

own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Chiu On Chan

1/9/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Chun Min Huang and I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. For the past 10 years, no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage, allowing for the needs of the entire district to be heard. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and Democratic District Leaders Ari Kagan and Mark Davidovich are all Russian-Americans with electoral success stories in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their

own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Chun Min Huang

1/9/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Chung Kat Yue and I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. For the past 10 years, no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage, allowing for the needs of the entire district to be heard. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and Democratic District Leaders Ari Kagan and Mark Davidovich are all Russian-Americans with electoral success stories in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their

own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Chung Kat Yue

1/9/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Cindy Xhang and I submit this testimony for the **January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing**. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. For the past 10 years, no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage, allowing for the needs of the entire district to be heard. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and Democratic District Leaders Ari Kagan and Mark Davidovich are all Russian-Americans with electoral success stories in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their

own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Cindy Xhang

Hearings

From: saveflatbush <saveflatbush@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 10, 2013 1:09 PM
To: Hearings
Subject: Brooklyn Hearing

To the Honored Speaker, Christine Quinn,

For the past 10 years the 48th council District has been a model district of the American Dream where voices of diverse populations were living together and has been heard and responded to by government.

We urge you to keep the continuity of our Orthodox Jewish residents of Midwood and cultural and ethnicity intact.

Respectfully,
Clare Kirschner



1/10/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Dan Li and I submit this testimony for the **January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing**. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. For the past 10 years, no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage, allowing for the needs of the entire district to be heard. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and Democratic District Leaders Ari Kagan and Mark Davidovich are all Russian-Americans with electoral success stories in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their

own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Dan Li

Hearings

From: saveflatbush <saveflatbush@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 10, 2013 3:06 PM
To: Hearings
Subject: Brooklyn Hearing

Dear Districting Commission my name is Dana Reznik

I reside at [REDACTED] Please keep the 48th Council District intact, and not allow the division and isolation of our community. For the past 10 years the 48th council District has been a model district of the American Dream where voices of diverse populations were living together and has been heard and responded to by government. We urge you to keep the continuity of our Orthodox Jewish residents of Midwood and cultural and ethnicity intact. Thank you.

Hearings

From: saveflatbush <saveflatbush@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 10, 2013 1:10 PM
To: Hearings
Subject: Brooklyn Hearing

For the past 10 years the 48th council District has been a model district of the American Dream where voices of diverse populations were living together and has been heard and responded to by government. We urge you to keep the continuity of our Orthodox Jewish residents of Midwood and cultural and ethnicity intact.

[\[Redacted URL\]](#)

David Berger [\[Redacted\]](#)

Hearings

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, January 28, 2013 1:36 PM
To: Hearings
Subject: 48th Councilmanic District

To Whom It May Concern:

We also deserve to be properly represented in the Council. Please leave our district intact.

David Godin

Sent on the Sprint® Now Network from my BlackBerry®

Hearings

From: saveflatbush <saveflatbush@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 09, 2013 8:21 PM
To: Hearings
Subject: Brooklyn Hearing

Dear Sir,

"For the past 10 years the 48th council District has been a model district of the American Dream where voices of diverse populations were living together and has been heard and responded to by government. We urge you to keep the continuity of our Orthodox Jewish residents of Midwood and cultural and ethnicity intact"

Thank You

David Reich

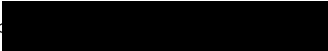

Hearings

From: saveflatbush <saveflatbush@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 10, 2013 12:58 PM
To: Hearings
Subject: Brooklyn Hearing

Dear Commission:

I am registering my opposition to the planned redistricting of the 48th Council district:

For the past 10 years the 48th council District has been a model district. Diverse populations are living together and our voices have been heard and responded to by government. I urge you to keep the continuity of our Orthodox Jewish residents' of Midwood and Flatbush cultural and ethnicity intact.

David Sandhaus <

Hearings


From: saveflatbush <saveflatbush@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 10, 2013 1:12 PM
To: Hearings
Subject: Brooklyn Hearing

To whom it may concern,

For the past 10 years the 48th council District has been a model district of the American Dream where voices of diverse populations were living together and has been heard and responded to by government. We urge you to keep the continuity of our Orthodox Jewish residents of Midwood and cultural and ethnicity intact.

Thank You.



debbie smith <

1/10/13

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Deborah Dweck and I submit this testimony for the purposes of the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Hearing. I am a resident of the 48th Council District and am an active member in my community of Midwood.

I submit this testimony to strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. For the past 10 years, no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage, allowing for the needs of the entire district to be heard. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and Democratic District Leaders Ari Kagan and Mark Davidovich are all Russian-Americans with electoral success stories in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Deborah Dweck

1/10/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is DorLai Louie and I submit this testimony for the **January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing**. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

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For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. For the past 10 years, no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage, allowing for the needs of the entire district to be heard. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear.

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Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

DorLai Louie

January 9, 2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Eli Fischer. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a member of the Orthodox Jewish community. I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the Districting Commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. The Orthodox Jewish community, like other ethnic groups in the current 48th district, represents a significant population, but NOT A MAJORITY of the district. Our district serves as a model of the American dream where for the past 10 years each of the voices of diverse populations living together in our district has been heard and responded to by government. The major factor in this remarkable success story is that no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage so that our local government was truly "of the people, by the people and for the people." The preliminary draft map if adopted would ensure that no group would be disenfranchised in the years ahead. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear for no good reason.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and two elected Democratic District Leaders are all Russian-Americans with electoral success in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan, that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of

any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Eli Fischer

Hearings

From: saveflatbush <saveflatbush@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 09, 2013 8:58 PM
To: Hearings
Subject: Hearing Jan 10

For the past 10 years the 48th council District has been a model district of the American Dream where voices of diverse populations were living together and has been heard and responded to by government. We urge you to keep the continuity of our Orthodox Jewish residents of Midwood and cultural and ethnicity intact.

Respectfully

Eli Schwartz

Alle Processing Corp.

5620 59th Street Maspeth NY 11378

800-245-5620 Ext. 184 <<tel:800-245-5620%20Ext.%20184>>

718-894-2000 Ext. 184 <<tel:718-894-2000%20Ext.%20184>>

718-326-4642 <<tel:718-326-4642>> Fax.

ezs@alleprocessing.com <<mailto:ezs@alleprocessing.com>>

January 9, 2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Elimelech Plotsker. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a member of the Orthodox Jewish community. I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the Districting Commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

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At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and two elected Democratic District Leaders are all Russian-Americans with electoral success in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan, that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest

opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Elimelech Plotsker

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Ellina Kormova . I own and operate a business in the 48th Council District, and am an active member of the Russian-American community. I am proud to say that when I had an issue in the district that needed to be addressed by my local representative, my Council Member, Michael C. Nelson was there for me.

I submit this testimony to strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

I strongly oppose the district lines proposed for the 48th Council District included in the December 4th Draft Plan. The adoption of this plan would be a terrible step backwards for the Russian-American Community and would undermine much of the great progress in the political process which my community has achieved in a relatively short time period. The fundamental defect in the December 4th plan is that by concentrating most of the Russian-American voters in a single district -- the proposed 48th -- **by adding buildings along Sea- Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway seriously diminishes the overall influence of the Russian-American community** for no good reasons. While the few members of the community in the "inner circle" assured that one of their own will be elected to the Council, will reap the benefits, the overwhelming majority of my community will be left out in the cold. Members of my community will not be alone in being disenfranchised from a political process which is no longer responsive to our needs, but in addition many of the remaining groups in the newly constructed 48th District who formerly constituted an important presence in the political process will also be reduced to an insignificant minority easily to be ignored.

I would strongly urge that what is in the best interest of **ALL THE MEMBERS OF THE RUSSIAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITY** is that as many districts as possible be created with a significant Russian American presence. Specifically, in Southern Brooklyn the large Russian-American population west of Ocean Parkway presently in the 47th Council District should **NOT BE COMBINED** with the Russian-American Community in the existing 48th District. It is much more important for **ALL THE MEMBERS OF MY COMMUNITY** that we have influence in as many Districts as possible rather than to have 1 Council Member of Russian-American descent among the 51 Council Members.

Russian-Americans have flourished in the 48th district due in no small part to its diversity. For the past 12 years, the current Councilmember has gone above and beyond to make sure the special needs of every group in my community has been generously met. This is not in spite of the multi-cultural composition of the 48th Council District – but because of it. So long as the 48th Council district is comprised of a variety of ethnic, religious and racial groups, we, as a community not only work together to address our common needs and diverse goals – but we are also in the unique position of having equal

access to our policy makers. No one group has a greater voice than any other, and so we are all in a position of balance and equality. Consequently as selfish as I could be to support a super-Russian district, it would, for no compelling reason, hurt the multi-cultural groups within the 48th district and also negatively impact the Russian-Americans in the 47th district, whose voices would shrink in the process.

Those members of my community who have submitted testimony in support of the December 4th plan recognize the tremendous accomplishments of the Russian American Community. As was stated by Dmitry Margulis in testimony submitted for this January 10th Hearing and reiterated in the same or similar words by others in their testimony:

*“As you know, [the] Russian-American Community became an integral part of New York City. Our community flourished in our great city. Russian-speaking immigrants achieved tremendous success in business, culture, sports, arts science, medicine and **POLITICS (emphasis supplied)**....We have in government: NYS Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, Democratic District Leaders Ari Kagan and Mark Davidovich, Republican District Leader Boris Pincus...”*

While I strongly agree with these sentiments, I STRONGLY DISAGREE with the conclusion that this is an argument in support of creating a district with enough Russian-Americans to insure the election of a Russian-American Council Member. We have already elected many Russian-Americans to public office. Ethnic pride no longer demands this. Having become an integral part of the electoral process, it is important that the redistricting process reflect this by maximizing our influence in as many Council Districts as possible by providing a significant Russian American presence in as many Districts as possible. Based on the success of other Russian-Americans seeking elective office in districts which had a significant number of Russian Americans, BUT LESS THAN A MAJORITY, it is likely that a Russian American will be elected to the Council in the near future. What is certain however is that all the members of the Russian-American community, as well as all members of all other groups will have a voice in government that will be heard by whoever is elected to the Council. I urge you to adopt the Preliminary Draft Plan.

Sincerely,
Ellina Kormova

Hearings

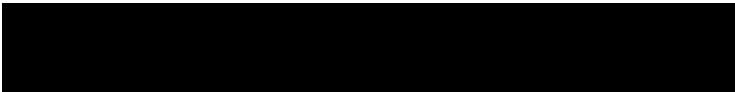
From: saveflatbush <saveflatbush@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 10, 2013 1:07 PM
To: Hearings
Subject: Brooklyn Hearing

To the Honored Speaker, Christine Quinn,

For the past 10 years the 48th council District has been a model district of the American Dream where voices of diverse populations were living together and has been heard and responded to by government.

We urge you to keep the continuity of our Orthodox Jewish residents of Midwood and cultural and ethnicity intact.

Respectfully,
Eric Kirschner

 >

Hearings

From: saveflatbush <saveflatbush@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 10, 2013 1:13 PM
To: Hearings
Subject: Brooklyn Hearing

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Thank You
~Ezriel Flohr

Manager

143

B

p

ww

Hearings

From: saveflatbush <saveflatbush@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 10, 2013 1:03 PM
To: Hearings
Subject: Brooklyn Hearing

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Thank you

Ezzy Mendelovitz

Account Specialist

Dear members of New York City Districting Commission!

My name is Fira Stukelman and I am a Holocaust survivor and a leader of a large group of volunteers. We are involved in many local civic projects as well as in Holocaust memorial ceremonies and in various charity events.

We really appreciate the current lines that NYC Districting Commission approved after last public hearings in October. As Russian speaking Americans we feel very strongly about importance of creating a Council District where Russian speaking community has a fair chance to elect one of its members to the New York City Council. There are more than 350,000 Russian speaking New Yorkers today in our city. But we don't have a single Russian speaking member in the New York City Council.

The best way to ensure that Russian Americans are represented in NYC Council in a fair and just way is to keep recently proposed lines of 48 Council District intact. By including Brighton Beach, Manhattan Beach, most of Sheepshead Bay, Luna Park, Sea Breeze Avenue and part of Trump Village in one district, your Commission did a right thing and created a great district for our community.

I want to personally thank you for your commitment to the Russian American community. Please, do not change the currently proposed lines of 48th district. They are very important for the future of our community in New York City.

Thank you.

Fira Stukelman

Hearings

From: saveflatbush <saveflatbush@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 10, 2013 1:03 AM
To: Hearings
Subject: Brooklyn Hearing

Let 48th Council District stay as is.
Thank you
Gary Zimmerman, CLU, ChFC, CFP

[REDACTED]
Brooklyn, NY 11210
[REDACTED]

January 9, 2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Gavriel Sauer. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a member of the Orthodox Jewish community. I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the Districting Commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. The Orthodox Jewish community, like other ethnic groups in the current 48th district, represents a significant population, but NOT A MAJORITY of the district. Our district serves as a model of the American dream where for the past 10 years each of the voices of diverse populations living together in our district has been heard and responded to by government. The major factor in this remarkable success story is that no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage so that our local government was truly "of the people, by the people and for the people." The preliminary draft map if adopted would ensure that no group would be disenfranchised in the years ahead. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear for no good reason.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and two elected Democratic District Leaders are all Russian-Americans with electoral success in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan, that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest

opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Gavriel Sauer

January 9, 2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Gavriel Yarmish. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a member of the Orthodox Jewish community. I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the Districting Commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

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Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used in previous testimony, that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the

greatest opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

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Sincerely,

Gavriel Yarmish

Dear members of NYC Council Districting Commission!

My name is Gloria Braun and I am the first Russian speaking coordinator of polling site in New York City.

I had worked very hard for many years in order to encourage the civic participation of Russian Americans and to make them an indispensable part of the American electoral process.

The Russian-American Community is an integral part of New York City. Our community flourished in our great city. Russian-speaking immigrants achieved tremendous success in business, culture, sports, arts, science, medicine.

There are more than 350,000 Russian Americans in all five boroughs. Brooklyn is a home of the largest Russian-speaking community in the United States. Yet we still don't have a single Russian American in New York City Council.

I want to use this opportunity to express my gratitude to your Commission for creating a District where Russian Americans will have a real influence and a good chance to elect the first Russian speaking immigrant to the New York City Council.

I am talking about 48th District. By including neighborhoods like Brighton Beach, Manhattan Beach, Sheepshead Bay, Luna Park, Sea Breeze Avenue, part of Trump Village and others, your Commission did a right and a just thing. Basically, you reunited similar neighborhoods and communities in one Council district.

Please, keep the currently proposed lines of 48th District.

Thank you,

Gloria Braun

January 4, 2013

Dear members of NYC Council Districting Commission!

My name is Gregory Davidzon and I am the President of the Russian language Davidzon Radio (620 AM) and also publisher of the only Russian language daily newspaper in United States – Russian-American Reporter. Davidzon Radio and Reporter have more than 500,000 listeners and readers in New York Metropolitan area and provide a lot of educational, news and entertainment programs for Russian speaking immigrants citywide.

Russian-American Community is an integral part of New York City. Our community flourished in our great city allowing Russian-speaking immigrants to achieve tremendous success in business, culture, sports, arts, science, medicine and politics. There are more than 350,000 Russian Americans live in our great city, but there are no Russian American members in New York City Council.

In my previous comments made at public hearing on October 11, 2012 I asked you to include certain neighborhoods into 48th district. Now I want to thank you for taking my proposals into consideration.

We strongly believe that currently proposed lines of the 48th District are best suited for these purposes. By uniting Brighton Beach, Manhattan Beach, most of Sheepshead Bay, Luna Park, Sea Breeze Avenue and part of Trump Village in one district, your Commission did a right thing and created a great district for our community. Also, these neighborhoods have a lot in common and it is logical that they would be represented by the same Council member.

I want to personally thank you for your commitment to the Russian speaking community. Please, do not change the currently proposed lines of 48th district. They are very important for the future of our community in New York City.

Thank you,

Gregory Davidzon

January 9, 2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Harry Klaristenfeld. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a member of the Orthodox Jewish community. I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the Districting Commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

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Sincerely,

Harry Klaristenfeld.

1/10/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Hua Min Liu and I submit this testimony for the **January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing**. I am a proud business owner in the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

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Sincerely,

Hua Min Liu

1/9/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Huang Da Min and I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

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Sincerely,

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Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

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Sincerely,

Huang Bai Xian

1/10/13

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Isaac Dweck and I submit this testimony for the purposes of the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Hearing. I am a resident of the 48th Council District and am an active member in my community of Midwood.

I submit this testimony to strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

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Sincerely,

Isaac Dweck

**Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,
My name is Dr. Israel Zyskind. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a member of the Orthodox Jewish Community.**

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Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used in recent testimony, that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently

represented and also have the greatest opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have no problem whatsoever if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Israel Zyskind, MD

MY NAME IS JACOB GOLD AND I HAVE REPRESENTED THE 44TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT SINCE 1975 AS IT'S DISTRICT LEADER/STATE COMMITTEEPERSON. MY DISTRICT INCLUDES PARK SLOPE, KENSINGTON, BORO PARK, DITMAS PARK AND FLATBUSH. DURING THOSE 38 YEARS, NEW YORK CITY, AS WELL AS KINGS COUNTY HAS UNDERGONE GREAT DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES.

IN THE PAST, THE REAPPORTIONMENT COMMISSION HAS VERY WISELY CREATED COUNCILMANIC DISTRICTS WHICH WOULD ALLOW THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR THOSE NEW AMERICANS A CHANCE TO ELECT ONE OF THEIR OWN.

TODAY WE HAVE AN EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITY TO CONTINUE THIS PRACTICE BY ALLOWING THE CREATION OF A RUSSIAN-AMERICAN COUNCILMANIC DISTRICT.

NEW YORK CITY IS THE HOME TO 350,000 RUSSIAN IMMIGRANTS; OVER 100,000 LIVE WITHIN SOUTHERN BROOKLYN AND OVER 50,000 LIVE WITHIN THE BOUNDARIES OF THE ~~CURRENT~~ ^{PROPOSED} 48 COUNCIL DISTRICT.

THIS NEW POPULATION IS A GREAT ASSET TO THE CULTURAL, SPIRITUAL AND ECONOMIC DIVERSITY OF THE CITY. TO DATE WE HAVE CREATED CARIBBEAN DISTRICTS, SPANISH SPEAKING POPULATION DISTRICTS AND I WOULD URGE YOU TO ALLOW THE CREATION OF A RUSSIAN-AMERICAN COUNCIL DISTRICT.

THIS WOULD MAINTAIN A DISTRICT WITH THE SAME COMMUNITY OF INTEREST. IT WOULD BE THE RIGHT THING TO DO FOR THE POLITICAL PROCESS AND A WONDERFUL THING FOR BROOKLYN AND NEW YORK CITY.

JACOB GOLD - DISTRICT LEADER
44 AD STATE COMMITTEEMAN

7/19 - [REDACTED]

1/10/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is James Tan and I submit this testimony for the **January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing**. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. For the past 10 years, no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage, allowing for the needs of the entire district to be heard. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear.

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Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

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Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

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Sincerely,

James Tan

Hearings

From: saveflatbush <saveflatbush@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 10, 2013 1:02 PM
To: Hearings
Subject: Brooklyn Hearing

For the past 10 years the 48th council District has been a model district of the American Dream where voices of diverse populations were living together and has been heard and responded to by government. We urge you to keep the continuity of our Orthodox Jewish residents of Midwood and cultural and ethnicity intact.

Bakst, Jay <[REDACTED]>

Hearings

From: Yehuda Goldstein [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, January 10, 2013 9:50 AM
To: Hearings
Subject: splitting of the 48th Council district

I am registering my opposition to the planned redistricting of the 48th Council district:

For the past 10 years the 48th council District has been a model district. Diverse populations are living together and our voices have been heard and responded to by government. I urge you to keep the continuity of our Orthodox Jewish residents' of Midwood and Flatbush cultural and ethnicity intact.

Thank You

Jed Goldstein

[REDACTED]
Brooklyn, NY 11210

Hearings

From: saveflatbush <saveflatbush@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 10, 2013 3:01 PM
To: Hearings
Subject: Brooklyn Hearing

Dear Districting Commission my name is Jeff Reznik
I reside at [REDACTED]. Please keep the 48th Council District intact, and not allow the division and isolation of our community. For the past 10 years the 48th council District has been a model district of the American Dream where voices of diverse populations were living together and has been heard and responded to by government. We urge you to keep the continuity of our Orthodox Jewish residents of Midwood and cultural and ethnicity intact. Thank you.

Jeffrey A Reznik
[REDACTED]

Brooklyn NY 11230
[REDACTED]

Member CB#14 for 10 Years

January 9, 2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Jerome Gross. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a member of the Orthodox Jewish community. I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the Districting Commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. The Orthodox Jewish community, like other ethnic groups in the current 48th district, represents a significant population, but NOT A MAJORITY of the district. Our district serves as a model of the American dream where for the past 10 years each of the voices of diverse populations living together in our district has been heard and responded to by government. The major factor in this remarkable success story is that no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage so that our local government was truly "of the people, by the people and for the people." The preliminary draft map if adopted would ensure that no group would be disenfranchised in the years ahead. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear for no good reason.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and two elected Democratic District Leaders are all Russian-Americans with electoral success in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan, that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest

opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Jerome Gross

Hearings

From: saveflatbush <saveflatbush@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 09, 2013 8:24 PM
To: Hearings
Subject: Brooklyn Hearing

For the past 10 years the 48th council District has been a model district of the American Dream where voices of diverse populations were living together and has been heard and responded to by government. We urge you to keep the continuity of our Orthodox Jewish residents of Midwood and cultural and ethnicity intact.

Jerry Schiffman
Sent from my Verizon Wireless BlackBerry

1/10/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Jia Liang Peter Chen and I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

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Sincerely,

Jia Liang Peter Chen

1/10/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Jian Zhang and I submit this testimony for the **January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing**. I am a proud business owner in the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. For the past 10 years, no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage, allowing for the needs of the entire district to be heard. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear.

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Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their

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Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

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Sincerely,

Jian Zhang

1/9/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Jimou Wu and I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

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Sincerely,

Jimou Wu

1/9/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Jin Ping Chen and I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

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Sincerely,

Jin Ping Chen

Hearings

From: saveflatbush <saveflatbush@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 10, 2013 3:04 PM
To: Hearings
Subject: Brooklyn Hearing

Dear Districting Commission my name is Jodi Reznik
I reside at [REDACTED] Please keep the 48th Council District intact, and not allow the
division and isolation of our community. For the past 10 years the 48th council District has been a
model district of the American Dream where voices of diverse populations were living together and has
been heard and responded to by government. We urge you to keep the continuity of our Orthodox
Jewish residents of Midwood and cultural and ethnicity intact. Thank you.

Hearings

From: saveflatbush <saveflatbush@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 09, 2013 8:55 PM
To: Hearings
Subject: Brooklyn Hearing

Dear Commission;

For the past 10 years the 48th council District has been a model district of the American Dream where voices of diverse populations were living together and has been heard and responded to by government. We urge you to keep the continuity of our Orthodox Jewish residents of Midwood and cultural and ethnicity intact.

Sincerely,

Joe Lasker

Hearings

From: saveflatbush <saveflatbush@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 09, 2013 8:59 PM
To: Hearings
Subject: Hearing in Brooklyn

For the past 10 years the 48th council District has been a model district of the American Dream where voices of diverse populations were living together and has been heard and responded to by government. We urge you to keep the continuity of our Orthodox Jewish residents of Midwood and cultural and ethnicity intact.

Joe Yurowitz – Brooklyn, NY

Hearings

From: saveflatbush <saveflatbush@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 09, 2013 9:04 PM
To: Hearings
Subject: Brooklyn Hearing

"For the past 10 years the 48th council District has been a model district of the American Dream where voices of diverse populations were living together and has been heard and responded to by government. We urge you to keep the continuity of our Orthodox Jewish residents of Midwood and cultural and ethnicity intact"

Joey Esses
[REDACTED]

1/9/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is John Chen and I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. For the past 10 years, no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage, allowing for the needs of the entire district to be heard. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and Democratic District Leaders Ari Kagan and Mark Davidovich are all Russian-Americans with electoral success stories in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their

own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

John Chen

1/10/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Johnny Wong and I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

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Sincerely,

Johnny Wong

Jonathan and Dina Leader
830 Park Ave
New York, New York 10021

January 7th 2013

Dear Sir or Madame,

We are private citizens, who have been involved in social service and charitable work in South Brooklyn for over twenty five years.

We are writing in connection with the redistricting proposals currently before the New York City Council. In particular, it is our hope that the Redistricting Committee will support the **currently proposed lines for District 48**, thus enhancing the chances of electing the first Russian-speaking Councilman.

There are, as you know, roughly 400,000 Russians in New York City, yet to this date, there has never been a Russian-American on the City Council. Many Russian-Americans do not participate in the American political process because to date there has been only one Russian-American elected to any public office in our whole country. By increasing the possibility of a member of their community representing them, the Russian-speaking community will **gain greater access and feel more involved in the affairs of New York City and of the country at large.**

The American system of political representation is based on the idea of **all groups having a voice in the decision-making process.** While Russians have been extremely successful in finance, law, and technology, their community is **lagging behind in its ability to influence the political agenda.** Part of this, of course, is a result of the stifling and uninviting nature of the Soviet political system from which they fled.

Finally, for years the American community has been complaining about the **lack of participation of the Russian-speaking community in our activities.** A Russian-speaking City Councilman would certainly jump-start this process.

Both of my grandfathers came to New York from Russia in the late 1880's as children and were able to establish themselves and their subsequent families as substantial participants in the New York community. Dina's father went from being a ten-year old forward scout for the Soviet Army in World War II to a founding member of the Brighton Business District. By maintaining the present boundaries of District 48 and enhancing the possibility of the first Russian Councilman being elected to office, **we will be giving a greater voice to the Russian-speaking community to be represented in this great city of ours.**

Thank you for your consideration and best regards,

Jonathan and Dina Leader


Hearings

From: saveflatbush <saveflatbush@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 09, 2013 8:09 PM
To: Hearings
Subject: districting Jan 10th

Dear Esteemed Commission:

Over the past decade, the 48th council District has been a model district where diverse populations are living together in harmony and are being heard and responded to together by our government. We urge you to keep the continuity of our Orthodox Jewish residents of Midwood and cultural and ethnic identity intact and ask for your continued support.

Regards,

Joseph Glaser, MD


Hearings

From: saveflatbush <saveflatbush@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 10, 2013 3:02 PM
To: Hearings
Subject: Brooklyn Hearing

Hello:

For the past 10 years the 48th council District has been a model district of the American Dream where voices of diverse populations were living together and has been heard and responded to by government. We urge you to keep the continuity of our Orthodox Jewish residents of Midwood and cultural and ethnicity intact.

Thanks.

Joseph Gruenfeld <[\[REDACTED\]](#)>

Hearings

From: Josh Mehlman <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, January 10, 2013 5:28 PM
To: Hearings; [REDACTED] Hum, Carl
Cc: saveflatbush@gmail.com
Subject: 48th District

Importance: High

Dear Honorable Members of the Districting Commission:

I am addressing you as resident and business owner in the 48th Council District, as well as a leader of the South Brooklyn Community Coalition.

As a former executive board member of Community Board #15 and involved with city government for over 30 years, I harbor deep concern regarding the commissions' proposal.

We represent many thousands of concerned residents, business leaders, community activists, Rabbis, Synagogues, Yeshivas and non-profit organizations, in both the Sephardic and Ashkenazi communities.

The new lines as proposed, will disenfranchise our wonderful community, be extremely divisive and disrupt a strong politically effective system that works well for our institutions. We are heavily invested in our homes, businesses, and community institutions and we will not sit back and allow it to be divided up for selfishly motivated political reasons. If this goes forward unchanged, it will certainly backfire on those behind it, who don't have the communities' best interests at heart.

The orthodox community has grown exponentially, and this attempt to divide us is unconstitutional, as it will serve to the detriment of our community.

By mixing our orthodox community with groups that do not share our interest, is wrong and counterproductive. Don't attempt to fix other communities concerns by harming ours. That was not the intent at the formation of your commission.

We implore you to do the right thing: do not change the 48th council lines by dividing us. We ask two things:

- 1- Leave us intact, do not divide and try to fix what's not broken.
- 2- We request you help our community by adding the east 30's portion of the 46th council district to the 48th Council district.

Thank you for your compassion and understanding.

Josh Mehlman
[REDACTED]
Brooklyn NY 11230

Josh Mehlman
President
Travelcell
josh@travelcell.com
www.travelcell.com
877.CELL PHONE
718-382-6500 Ext. 211

Hearings

From: saveflatbush <saveflatbush@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 09, 2013 8:55 PM
To: Hearings
Subject: Brooklyn Hearing

For the past 10 years, the 48th council District has been a model district of the American Dream, where voices of diverse populations were living together and have been heard and responded to by government. We urge you to keep the continuity and cultural and ethnic identity of our Orthodox Jewish residents of Midwood intact.

Judith Dinowitz

Hearings

From: saveflatbush <saveflatbush@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 10, 2013 12:59 PM
To: Hearings
Subject: Brooklyn Hearing

Please allow the 48th district to remain intact and not allow the the division and isolation of our Orthodox Jewish community.

Thank you.

Judith and Benjamin Metzger

January 9, 2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Julius Derdik. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a member of the Orthodox Jewish community. I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the Districting Commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. The Orthodox Jewish community, like other ethnic groups in the current 48th district, represents a significant population, but NOT A MAJORITY of the district. Our district serves as a model of the American dream where for the past 10 years each of the voices of diverse populations living together in our district has been heard and responded to by government. The major factor in this remarkable success story is that no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage so that our local government was truly "of the people, by the people and for the people." The preliminary draft map if adopted would ensure that no group would be disenfranchised in the years ahead. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear for no good reason.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and two elected Democratic District Leaders are all Russian-Americans with electoral success in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan, that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest

opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Julius Derdik

I would like to see the 48th District stay the way it was in the revised plan.

I am against the preliminary draft plan which makes a the 48th a District that is not ethnically diverse.

As I have taught my children early on that in diversity there is beauty and there is strength. This is how I would like to live.

Kelly Terrio

1/9/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Kelly Tse and I submit this testimony for the **January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing**. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

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Sincerely,

Kelly Tse

1/9/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Ken Lin and I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

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Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

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Ken Lin

1/9/2013

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Sincerely,

Ken Liu

1/9/2013

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Sincerely,

Kevin Yu

1/9/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Kim Jones and I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

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1/9/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

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Sincerely,

King Chun Yue

1/10/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Kuok Mi Louie and I submit this testimony for the **January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing**. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

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Sincerely,

Kuok Mi Louie

1/10/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Lan Mei Zhang and I submit this testimony for the **January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing**. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

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Sincerely,

Lan Mei Zhang

January 10, 2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Laura Weiss, and I am a lifelong resident of the 48th Council District. I am a native-born American, and I am proud to say that my paternal grandparents, both **Russian-language speaking immigrants**, not only have resided in Brighton Beach, but for more than 40 years they also owned and operated the well-known establishment, “Israel’s Take Home Food” on Brighton Beach Avenue.

I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission hearing to strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

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Sincerely,

Laura Weiss

1/10/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Lei Hom Lao and I submit this testimony for the **January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing**. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

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Sincerely,

Lei Hom Lao

Hearings

From: saveflatbush <saveflatbush@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 09, 2013 8:54 PM
To: Hearings
Subject: Brooklyn Hearing

Dear Districting Commission,

For the past 10 years the 48th council District has been a model district of the American Dream where voices of diverse populations were living together and has been heard and responded to by government. We urge you to keep the continuity of our Orthodox Jewish residents of Midwood and cultural and ethnicity intact.

Leo Zonenshein

My name is Leon Goldenberg. 

Preminger Draft

By way of introduction, I sit on the boards of various ^{NUMEROUS} community based organizations and have been a resident of the Midwood community for the past 23 years.

What brings me here: I am currently a resident of the 48th council district.

During the course of the redistricting process, I was moved to the 45th council district.

I would like to share with you my feelings, both as a community activist and more specifically, as a citizen who would be directly affected by the district lines that were proposed, and, thanks to Vito Lopez, have now been reopened.

Here in The Room

I feel, and many in the community feel, that we have been totally marginalized with the redistricting.

We have been carved up into small insignificant pieces, spread out over a number of districts.

We had expected that due to the tremendous growth of our community over the past decade, we would be able to increase our strength in several council districts.

Instead, we will now be small pieces of five different districts ranging from as little as 10% of one district to as much as 25% of a different district.

When we are carved up like that, our needs, several of which are unique to our religious community, can all too easily be ignored.

There are several issues involved here, including continuity of representation.

While until now we had one address to address our needs, this shall be no longer the case if the current lines are approved.

As a community, we have different needs than almost all of the other communities that surround us. We have different social needs, different housing needs, different education needs.

We by and large send our children to parochial school — not as a matter of choice. We have no option of sending to public school.

We are a religious group, with our own community organizations. These organizations are able to deal with us in a culturally sensitive manner. ^{Service} ~~deal with~~

For example, I recently spoke at two graduations where 40 men and 40 women received Bachelor of Science degrees and are now ready to sit for the CPA exam.

Their schooling was given to the men and to the women separately – as our cultural requirements deem necessary.

With these new districts, we will be isolated.

In the new 45th district, 21% will be white. With those numbers, my community, comprised of the largest concentration of Orthodox Jews outside of Israel, will be no more than 15% of the district.

I say unequivocally: The councilmember of District 45 is a culturally sensitive person and will do nothing against our interests.

But when 80% of his community makes demands for services, there will be mere crumbs left over for us.

We deserve a representative who understands our needs in the city council to deliver an equal share for my community.

Our neighborhood consists mostly of 1- and 2-family homes, with different needs than the rest of that district which consists of apartment complexes. This includes sanitation needs, policing, schools, and security for our institutions.

These needs cannot be served properly by someone whose base is the other 80% of the district.

I submit that we are incapable of asserting our needs in such a situation. The damage to our community organizations whom rely on funding from the different council members will be great.

I believe that according to the Voting Rights Act of 1965, we would be a protected minority class if we had been the same size in 1965 as we are today. We are a compact, like-minded and a community of interest. We can, and we

should, be given a district with a greater percentage of our community.

This can be done without impinging on the federally mandated minority representation.

I note that the 45th district is almost at the lowest limit of normal council district size at negative 4.09%.

I also note that almost all minority districts in the city are underrepresented between 4 and 4.99%.

This is done so that you can maintain minority districts. But it comes at the expense of our community.

I am convinced that an agreeable formula can be reached to satisfy both the minority community and my community.

I do have ideas how this can be maneuvered. I am ready to discuss them – either here, or, if you prefer, at a separate meeting.

I can show you how we can move people around and move us back into the 48th District where we belong.

Dear members of the New York City Districting Commission!

My name is Leonid Rosenberg and I am the President of the American Association of World War II Invalids and Veterans. Our Association is a non-for-profit citywide organization with more than 2,500 members who fought fascists and helped to defeat Nazi Germany and Nazi Japan. Our members are proud American citizens who actively participate in local and national elections.

We really appreciate the current lines that NYC Districting Commission approved after last Brooklyn public hearings in October. As Russian speaking Americans we feel very strongly about importance of creating a Council District where Russian speaking community has a fair chance to elect one of its members to the New York City Council. There are more than 350,000 Russian speaking New Yorkers today in our great city. But until now we don't have a single Russian speaking member in the New York City Council.

The best way to ensure that Russian Americans are represented in NYC Council in a fair and just way is to keep recently approved lines of 48 Council District intact. By including Brighton Beach, Manhattan Beach, most of Sheepshead Bay, Luna Park, Sea Breeze Avenue and part of Trump Village in one district, your Commission did a right thing and created a very good district for our community.

I want to personally thank you for your commitment to the Russian American community. Please, do not change the proposed lines of 48th district. They are very important for the future of our community in New York City.

Thank you.

Leonid Rosenberg

1/10/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Li Ming Li and I submit this testimony for the **January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing**. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. For the past 10 years, no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage, allowing for the needs of the entire district to be heard. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and Democratic District Leaders Ari Kagan and Mark Davidovich are all Russian-Americans with electoral success stories in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their

own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Li Ming Li

1/10/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Li Ting Lin and I submit this testimony for the **January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing**. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. For the past 10 years, no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage, allowing for the needs of the entire district to be heard. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and Democratic District Leaders Ari Kagan and Mark Davidovich are all Russian-Americans with electoral success stories in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their

own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Li Ting Lin

1/9/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Lina Chen and I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. For the past 10 years, no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage, allowing for the needs of the entire district to be heard. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and Democratic District Leaders Ari Kagan and Mark Davidovich are all Russian-Americans with electoral success stories in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their

own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Lina Chen

1/10/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Liu Hua and I submit this testimony for the **January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing**. I am a proud business owner in the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. For the past 10 years, no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage, allowing for the needs of the entire district to be heard. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and Democratic District Leaders Ari Kagan and Mark Davidovich are all Russian-Americans with electoral success stories in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their

own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Liu Hua

1/10/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Lixia Wu and I submit this testimony for the **January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing**. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

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Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their

own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Lixia Wu

1/9/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Lorraine Dahan and I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Community.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

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At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and Democratic District Leaders Ari Kagan and Mark Davidovich are all Russian-Americans with electoral success stories in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Lorraine Dahan

Hearings

From: saveflatbush <saveflatbush@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 10, 2013 1:12 PM
To: Hearings
Subject: Brooklyn Hearing

I am a long time homeowner and resident of Brooklyn, in the 48th district. I am married with 5 children. For the past 10 years the 48th council District has been a model district of the American Dream where voices of diverse populations were living together and has been heard and responded to by government. We urge you to keep the continuity of our Orthodox Jewish residents of Midwood and cultural and ethnicity intact.

Sincerely,

Marcelo Fischer

Marcelo Fischer [REDACTED]

Dear members of NYC Council Districting Commission!

My name is Margarita Kagan, and I am the President of the New American Association for Culture and Education.

NAACE is a non-partisan, non-for-profit organization that is working with Russian speaking immigrants to help them to become more integrated into American society. We started our activities in 2004. We specialize on organizing cultural events like festivals, concerts, forums and seminars, celebrations of Jewish and American holidays. The NAACE has dedicated volunteers who work tirelessly on behalf of our community.

As you know, Russian American Community became an integral part of New York City. Our community flourished in our great city. Russian speaking immigrants achieved tremendous success in business, culture, sports, arts, science, medicine and politics.

There are more than 350,000 Russian Americans in five boroughs. Brooklyn is a home of the largest Russian-speaking community in the United States. But, unfortunately, there are no Russian American members in the New York City Council. That is why it's so important that your commission will create a district in Southern Brooklyn where Russian speaking candidate will have a real chance to be elected to the City Council.

I strongly believe that currently proposed lines of the 48th District are best suited for these purposes. By uniting Brighton Beach, Manhattan Beach, most of Sheepshead Bay, Luna Park, Sea Breeze Avenue and part of Trump Village in one district, your Commission did a right thing and created a great District for our community.

I want to thank you for your commitment to the Russian speaking community. Please, do not change the currently proposed lines of 48th district. They are very important for the future of our community in New York City.

Thank you in advance,

Sincerely,

Margaritaita Kagan

Hearings

From: Mark Sapoznick [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, January 10, 2013 10:17 AM
To: Hearings
Subject: Request

To Whom it May Concern

We respectfully request that our 48th Council district stay intact, not allowing the division and isolation of our community. For the past 10 years the 48th council District has been a model district of the American Dream, where voices of diverse populations living together have been heard and responded to by government. We urge you to keep the continuity of the Orthodox Jewish residents of Midwood, and the culture and ethnicity of our community intact.

Thank you for your consideration.

Mark & Brocha Sapoznick
[REDACTED]

Brooklyn, NY 11210
[REDACTED]

--
[REDACTED]

January 9, 2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Mark Taub. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a member of the Orthodox Jewish community. I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the Districting Commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. The Orthodox Jewish community, like other ethnic groups in the current 48th district, represents a significant population, but NOT A MAJORITY of the district. Our district serves as a model of the American dream where for the past 10 years each of the voices of diverse populations living together in our district has been heard and responded to by government. The major factor in this remarkable success story is that no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage so that our local government was truly "of the people, by the people and for the people." The preliminary draft map if adopted would ensure that no group would be disenfranchised in the years ahead. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear for no good reason.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and two elected Democratic District Leaders are all Russian-Americans with electoral success in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan, that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest

opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Mark Taub

Hearings

From: saveflatbush <saveflatbush@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 09, 2013 8:22 PM
To: Hearings
Subject: Brooklyn Hearing

For the past 10 years the 48th council District has been a model district of the American Dream where voices of diverse populations were living together and has been heard and responded to by government. We urge you to keep the continuity of our Orthodox Jewish residents of Midwood and cultural and ethnicity intact.

Marvin Strauss

1/9/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Mei Chan and I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. For the past 10 years, no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage, allowing for the needs of the entire district to be heard. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and Democratic District Leaders Ari Kagan and Mark Davidovich are all Russian-Americans with electoral success stories in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their

own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Mei Chan

1/9/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Mei Jiao Chi and I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. For the past 10 years, no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage, allowing for the needs of the entire district to be heard. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and Democratic District Leaders Ari Kagan and Mark Davidovich are all Russian-Americans with electoral success stories in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their

own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Mei Jiao Chi

Hearings

From: saveflatbush <saveflatbush@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 10, 2013 3:06 PM
To: Hearings
Subject: Brooklyn Hearing

Dear Districting Commission my name is Melissa Reznik

I reside at [REDACTED] Please keep the 48th Council District intact, and not allow the division and isolation of our community. For the past 10 years the 48th council District has been a model district of the American Dream where voices of diverse populations were living together and has been heard and responded to by government. We urge you to keep the continuity of our Orthodox Jewish residents of Midwood and cultural and ethnicity intact. Thank you.

January 9, 2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Mendy Greenblatt. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a member of the Orthodox Jewish community. I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the Districting Commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. The Orthodox Jewish community, like other ethnic groups in the current 48th district, represents a significant population, but NOT A MAJORITY of the district. Our district serves as a model of the American dream where for the past 10 years each of the voices of diverse populations living together in our district has been heard and responded to by government. The major factor in this remarkable success story is that no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage so that our local government was truly "of the people, by the people and for the people." The preliminary draft map if adopted would ensure that no group would be disenfranchised in the years ahead. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear for no good reason.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and two elected Democratic District Leaders are all Russian-Americans with electoral success in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan, that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest

opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Mendy Greenblatt

Hearings

From: saveflatbush <saveflatbush@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 09, 2013 8:24 PM
To: Hearings
Subject: Brooklyn Hearing

Dear Commission:

Presumably, action is taken to accomplish a goal. Ordinarily, one does not take action, any action, without looking for and expecting a desired results. With that in mind, I wonder what the goal could be in redistricting this District? Is there community dissention that one hopes will be resolved? Perhaps those representing the District or speaking on its behalf are not doing a good job? Or maybe the District needs to be more diverse? To my knowledge, none of these are concerns. This District is diverse, ably represented, and cohesive—despite its diversity, which should highlight the importance of leaving it be. It also contains a community of Orthodox Jews that will be divided, something which serves no end for anyone acting in good faith.

I hope and trust that this is not politics as usual. I believe that our local elected officials understand that dividing communities without a compelling reason is not a good thing.

Thank you.

Respectfully,

Meyer Y. Silber

Hearings

From: saveflatbush <saveflatbush@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 09, 2013 8:04 PM
To: Hearings
Subject: Districting Commission

Dear Districting Commission,

We respectfully ask that the east 30's portion of the 46 council district be combined with the 48th Council district and not allow the division and isolation of our community.

For the past 10 years the 48th council District has been a model district of the American Dream where voices of diverse populations were living together and has been heard and responded to by government. We urge you to keep the continuity of our Orthodox Jewish residents of Midwood and cultural and ethnicity intact.

Respectfully,
Michael Bennett



Hearings

From: saveflatbush <saveflatbush@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 09, 2013 8:57 PM
To: Hearings
Subject: Hearing

Dear Commission,


For the past 10 years the 48th council District has been a model district of the American Dream.

Voices of diverse populations have lived together and have been heard, and responded to, by government.

I urge you to keep the continuity with the Midwood neighborhood and the cultural and ethnicity of our district intact and not split us into multiple districts.

We ask for so little on a daily basis - we don't cause crime or other trouble. Please help us retain our unified voice via our representation as a single district.

Sincerely,
Michael Sharf


Brooklyn, NY

Dear members of NYC Council Districting Commission!

My name is Mikhail Shats, MSW, MA, and I am Executive Director the Russian American community drug/alcohol abuse prevention & recovery nonprofit organization: 'SOS Foundation, Inc.'

SOS Foundation Inc. as a non-partisan, non-for-profit organization with over than 700 Russian-speaking members – families of drug/alcohol abusers who are registered voters. We provide objective information and education to Russian-Americans in order to encourage their civic participation and responsibility and to make them an indispensable part of the American electoral process.

During its 15 years long existence (registered in 10/37/1997), SOS Foundation, Inc. has not only successfully fulfilled all contract obligations, but has also created in the community an absolutely unique and effective prevention, after-treatment rehabilitation for recovery drug/alcohol addicts network. More than 20 community organizations and professional services under SOS Foundation, Inc. supervision have combined their expertise, experience and opportunities in order to decrease the spread of the drug epidemic among children in the community and to make treatment for needy people less expensive and more effective. This network includes various programs of community drug/alcohol abuse education, medical and psychological rehabilitation, vocational programs, social rehabilitation and programs for changing an old lifestyle with a dependence on drugs and alcohol to a new healthy lifestyle, one without narcotic substances. Network programs also focus on a very important issue: preventative steps against the recurrence of drug or alcohol abuse. Each independent member performs only his/her professional duty and service, but the combination of all network services provides a unique and effective chance to each client for full recovery and return to a normal life.

SOS Foundation Inc is not only the initiator and organizer of the unique drug/alcohol abuse project '**PITaR**' network, but is also the coordinator of all client cases that are in this Network's programs.

As you know, Russian American Community is an integral part of New York City. Our community flourished in our great city. Russian-speaking immigrants achieved tremendous success in business, culture, sports, arts, science, medicine and politics.

There are more than 350,000 Russian Americans in all five boroughs. Brooklyn is a home of the largest Russian-speaking community in the United States. But we

still don't have a single Russian American in New York City Council and we think it is a time to change this situation.

The best way to ensure that Russian Americans are represented in NYC Council in a fair and just way is to keep currently proposed lines of 48 Council District intact. By including Brighton Beach, Manhattan Beach, most of Sheepshead Bay, Luna Park, Sea Breeze Avenue and part of Trump Village in one district, your Commission did a right thing and created a very good district for our community.

I want to personally thank you for your commitment to the Russian American community. Please, do not change the proposed lines of 48th district. They are very important for the future of our community in New York City.

By implementing these actions you will ensure that Russian American community will have a fair chance to elect a first Russian American to the New York City Council. It will be a tremendous achievement for our community and for the whole New York City.

Sincerely,

Mikhail Shats, MSW, MA
Executive Director.

1/9/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Mo Jin Yao and I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. For the past 10 years, no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage, allowing for the needs of the entire district to be heard. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and Democratic District Leaders Ari Kagan and Mark Davidovich are all Russian-Americans with electoral success stories in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their

own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Mo Jin Yao

Hearings

From: saveflatbush <saveflatbush@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 10, 2013 1:28 PM
To: Hearings
Subject: Brooklyn Hearing

For the past 10 years the 48th council District has been a model district of the American Dream where voices of diverse populations were living together and has been heard and responded to by government. We urge you to keep the continuity of our Orthodox Jewish residents of Midwood and cultural and ethnicity intact.

[REDACTED]

Moshe Nussbaum

[REDACTED]

Brooklyn

1/9/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Mui Ying and I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. For the past 10 years, no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage, allowing for the needs of the entire district to be heard. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and Democratic District Leaders Ari Kagan and Mark Davidovich are all Russian-Americans with electoral success stories in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their

own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Mui Ying

1/10/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Nanseng Zhang and I submit this testimony for the **January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing**. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. For the past 10 years, no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage, allowing for the needs of the entire district to be heard. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and Democratic District Leaders Ari Kagan and Mark Davidovich are all Russian-Americans with electoral success stories in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their

own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Nanseng Zhang

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Natraj S. Bhushan. I am a resident of the 48th Council District and a public-interest attorney with the Community Legal Resource Network (CLRN). In this capacity, I helped aid many of the constituents with quality-of-life issues, specifically those that required legal counsel and/or advice.

The 48th Council District is home to many Asian-American families, and I am proud to say that that number continues to flourish, especially in my neighborhood of Brighton Beach.

I submit this testimony to strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. For the past 10 years, no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage, allowing for the needs of the entire district to be heard. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and Democratic District Leaders Ari Kagan and Mark Davidovich are all Russian-Americans with electoral success stories in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea- Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their

own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore, I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Natraj S. Bhushan

Hearings

From: Cohen, Nossou [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, January 10, 2013 3:47 PM
To: Hearings
Subject: potential redistricting

As a concerned citizen of the 48th council district in the Flatbush area of Brooklyn, I must share my angst over the proposal being floated to divide my district further. This will make it harder for the diverse population of the area-whose sole desire is to continue living in what is one of the most coveted parts of the city to reside in-to make their voices heard in the halls of government.

Please do not dilute our ability to influence our elected officials, and leave the 48th council district the way it is today.

Thank you.

Respectfully yours,

Nossou Cohen

[REDACTED] (voice)

[REDACTED] (fax)

< [REDACTED]

Dear members of New York City Districting Commission!

My name is Pavel Vishnevetsky and I am the President of the New York Association of Holocaust Survivors. Our Association is a non-for-profit organization with more than 800 members who survived the horrors of the Nazi genocide during the WWII. Most of our members are proud American citizens who are actively participating in local and national elections.

We really appreciate the current lines that NYC Districting Commission approved after last public hearings in October. As Russian speaking Americans we feel very strongly about importance of creating a Council District where Russian speaking community has a fair chance to elect one of its members to the New York City Council. There are more than 350,000 Russian speaking New Yorkers today in our great city. But until now we don't have a single Russian speaking member in the New York City Council.

The best way to ensure that Russian Americans are represented in NYC Council in a fair and just way is to keep recently approved lines of 48 Council District intact. By including Brighton Beach, Manhattan Beach, most of Sheepshead Bay, Luna Park, Sea Breeze Avenue and part of Trump Village in one District, your Commission did a right thing and created a very good district for our community.

I want to personally thank you for your commitment to the Russian American community. Please, do not change the proposed lines of 48th district. They are very important for the future of our community in New York City.

Thank you.

December 23, 2012

Dear members of the NYC redistricting Commission,

The purpose of this letter is to express the appreciation of hundreds Russian New Yorkers to the Commission members for taking into consideration my comments about the boundaries of the 48th Council district, submitted on October 11, 2012. Also I would like to request from the Commission to preserve the last proposed lines of the 48th district, do not change them anymore and make them final.

My name is Valeriy Savinkin. I represent two community organizations: Odessa Community of New York and September 11 Family Group.

Odessa Community of New York is a non-profit organization, which unites immigrant from the City of Odessa, Ukraine. There are tens of thousands New Yorkers who came to USA from Odessa as refugees during last few decades of the 20th century.

September 11 Family Group is a non-profit 501(C)(3) organization, which unites families, individuals, and organizations, who would like to participate in preserving the memory of innocent victims of the terrorist attack of September 11, 2001. The vast majority of our members are Russian-speaking Americans, who reside in the 48th Council District.

In my previous comments made nonpublic hearing on October 11, 2012 I pointed three major reasons, why 48th district should be enlarged on its South part and shorten on top North portion. Here are those reasons.

1. Historically, immigrants from the former Soviet Union settled along the Brooklyn's South ocean shore on Manhattan Beach, Brighton Beach and East part of Coney Island. No wonder now this area is called Little Odessa. Obviously, we are one ethnic community, with common language, historical background, and cultural interests. The border between 47 and 48 district should not divide our Russian speaking community in parts, diminishing its voting power.
2. Asser Levy Park is very popular place for the outside public events, organized by various organizations in Russian speaking community. That's why 9/11 Memorial was built here in 2005 by local Russian speaking residents and businesses. Since then they maintain the area year round and organize traditional public ceremonies every year. Asser Levy Park is the only Park in the area of 48th district and should be included in it.
3. Chapter 2-A, section 52-1-d of the City of New York Charter explicitly prohibits any district to be more than twice as long as it is wide. To avoid that violation the 48th district needs to be enlarged on its South-Western part.

I happily learned recently that all my reasons were taken into consideration of the Redistricting Commission and the boundaries of 48th district were moved up to the West-12 St on South-West part of the district and down to Ave M on its North part. As a result, the 48th district will become more compact and keep intact our community with established ties of common historical, ethnic, religious and cultural interests.

Please, do not change the last proposed lines of the 48th District.

Respectfully,

Valeriy Savinkin,
President of Odessa Community of New York
Executive Director of September 11 Family Group

1/10/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Pat Fong and I submit this testimony for the **January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing**. I am a business owner in the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. For the past 10 years, no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage, allowing for the needs of the entire district to be heard. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and Democratic District Leaders Ari Kagan and Mark Davidovich are all Russian-Americans with electoral success stories in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their

own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Pat Fong

1/9/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Paul Diaczok and I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Community.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

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Sincerely,

Paul Diaczok

1/9/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Pauline Cheng and I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

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Sincerely,

Pauline Cheng


Hearings

From: saveflatbush <saveflatbush@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 10, 2013 2:17 PM
To: Hearings
Subject: Brooklyn Hearing

For the past 10 years the 48th council District has been a model district of the American Dream where voices of diverse populations were living together and has been heard and responded to by government. We urge you to keep the continuity of our Orthodox Jewish residents of Midwood and cultural and ethnicity intact.

Sincerely,

Pauline and Mark Colton

Pauline Colton 

1/9/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Pei Lian Dong and I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

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Sincerely,

Pei Lian Dong

Hearings

From: saveflatbush <saveflatbush@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 10, 2013 3:04 PM
To: Hearings
Subject: Brooklyn Hearing

Dear Districting Commission my name is Perri Reznik

I reside at [REDACTED] Please keep the 48th Council District intact, and not allow the division and isolation of our community. For the past 10 years the 48th council District has been a model district of the American Dream where voices of diverse populations were living together and has been heard and responded to by government. We urge you to keep the continuity of our Orthodox Jewish residents of Midwood and cultural and ethnicity intact. Thank you.

1/9/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Perry Leong and I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

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Sincerely,

Perry Leong

Hearings

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Sent: Thursday, January 10, 2013 1:03 PM
To: Hearings
Subject: Brooklyn Hearing

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Peter Bentley

Brooklyn New York

Peter <peterbentley[REDACTED]>

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Peter Wong. I am a resident of the 48th Council District, own and operate a business in this district and am an active member of the Avenue U Asian American Merchants Group. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

I submit this testimony to strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

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Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Peter Wong

January 9, 2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Pincus Brown. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a member of the Orthodox Jewish community. I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the Districting Commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. The Orthodox Jewish community, like other ethnic groups in the current 48th district, represents a significant population, but NOT A MAJORITY of the district. Our district serves as a model of the American dream where for the past 10 years each of the voices of diverse populations living together in our district has been heard and responded to by government. The major factor in this remarkable success story is that no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage so that our local government was truly "of the people, by the people and for the people." The preliminary draft map if adopted would ensure that no group would be disenfranchised in the years ahead. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear for no good reason.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and two elected Democratic District Leaders are all Russian-Americans with electoral success in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan, that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest

opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Pincus Brown

Hearings

From: saveflatbush <saveflatbush@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 10, 2013 3:08 PM
To: Hearings
Subject: Brooklyn Hearing

Dear Districting Commission my name is Rachelle Deutsch

I reside at [REDACTED] Please keep the 48th Council District intact, and not allow the division and isolation of our community. For the past 10 years the 48th council District has been a model district of the American Dream where voices of diverse populations were living together and has been heard and responded to by government. We urge you to keep the continuity of our Orthodox Jewish residents of Midwood and cultural and ethnicity intact. Thank you.

January 9, 2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Raisa Chernina and I am an American citizen, living here for 34 years. The phrase “American Citizen” is prominently displayed on my passport, and I am extremely proud of this! I am a resident of Sheepshead Bay, am a member of Community Board 15, and am the Founder and Executive Director of the Be Proud Foundation. The Be Proud Foundation is a non-partisan, non-for-profit organization representing thousands of Russian-speaking individuals. Since its inception in 2003, the goal of the Be Proud Foundation has been to strengthen cultural and community ties and encourage civic participation amongst our members. Ranging from “Russian-American Heritage & Culture Day Celebration” held at City Hall, to “Celebrating Lives Events” on behalf of children suffering from leukemia, to “Toys for Tots” an endeavor aimed at raising donations and gifts for children from underprivileged families, and “Russian Night” bringing families together from local Russian cultural centers and other immigrant communities, we have helped to empower Russian-Americans to become more integrated in American life.

There are more than 350,000 Russian Americans in all five boroughs with Brooklyn being home to the largest Russian-speaking community in the United States.

I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission hearing to strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City’s diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within its borders. Furthermore, the 48th district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

I strongly oppose the district lines proposed for the 48th Council District included in the December 4th Draft Plan. Presently in the 48th District, no one group has a greater voice than any other. We are all in a position of balance and equality. Constructing a super-Russian district would not only hurt the multi-cultural groups within the 48th district but it would also negatively impact the Russian-Americans in the 47th district, whose voices would shrink in the process. Russian-Americans who have embraced the American dream have achieved tremendous success in business, culture, sports, arts science, medicine and politics. We have in government, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, two Democratic District Leaders and a Republican District Leader. I am especially proud that Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny is the first Russian-language speaking individual elected to office – who, by the way, was elected in a district which included Bay Ridge with many Italian-Americans, despite the fact that Alec does NOT speak Italian.

Russian-Americans have flourished in the 48th district due in no small part to its diversity. For the past 12 years, the current Councilman has gone above and beyond to make sure the special needs of EVERY group in the community has been generously met. So long as the 48th Council district is comprised of a variety of ethnic, religious and racial groups, we are in the unique position of having equal access to our policy makers.

The Be Proud Foundation is honored to have been the moving force, along with Councilman Michael Nelson, in having a street in the 48th District named to honor the

Heroes of Operation Iraqi Freedom. These heroes are from all ethnic backgrounds and walks of life. They bravely fought for America because they are AMERICANS. Some were killed not because of the language they spoke, but because of country they came from. **THEY WERE KILLED BECAUSE THEY WERE AMERICANS!**

The suggestion of creating a super-Russian district by adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway to the 48th district will severely diminish motivated, worthy Americans from seeking office here. It will guarantee only one thing – that a Russian-American will be elected to the Council in the 48th district, even if that person is unworthy of that office.

No group in the 48th Council District should be disenfranchised. We, as Americans should all have a fair and equal opportunity, so that only the best succeed. Anything less is an insult to the guarantees made under the equal protection clause of the United States Constitution. I urge you to adopt the Preliminary Draft Plan.

Sincerely,
Raisa Chernina

Hearings

From: Reno Dakota [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, January 10, 2013 1:20 PM
To: Hearings
Subject: Council district line 36th and 41st. Please move it east!

To whom it may concern,

As a resident of eastern Bedford-Stuyvesant, I would like to support a move that would place the City Council district boundary between the 36th and the 41st at Saratoga Avenue. It is currently at Malcolm X, 4 blocks to the west.

As the facilitator for the historic districting effort in the area and as an historic preservationist, I find that the natural, tangible transition to from Bed-Stuy into Ocean Hill happens not only topographically at Saratoga, but that the eastward sweep of late 19th century building development also made a stylistic and functional pivot at about that point. West of there (in Bed-Stuy), the housing stock is predominantly masonry rowhouses. Eastward, from the foot of Ocean Hill (Saratoga Ave), a new century dawned, multiple-family buildings came into demand for the area, as well as frame-construction housing. It is clear to anyone wandering in the area that things change at that point.

Furthermore, Saratoga Avenue is the eastern boundary of CB3. In terms of getting things done, making things happen for this community, it would be very beneficial to bring the 36th east to this point as well, thus removing the some of the hindrances of political tug-of-war which tend to happen in the area.

Our local efforts at obtaining historic district designation have only just begun, and we would like to receive the same government support as has benefitted the proposed districts in Bed-Stuy that lie across the current district border (in the 36th). Looking into the future, with a vision of all of the historic districts in the southern portion of Bed-Stuy eventually melded into one, I feel that having singular representation would solidify this effort and make the case for a unified Bedford-Stuyvesant in New York City Council.

Sincerely yours,
Reno Dakota

[REDACTED]
Brooklyn, New York

[REDACTED]

Hearings

From: saveflatbush <saveflatbush@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 09, 2013 8:26 PM
To: Hearings
Subject: Brooklyn Hearing

For the past 10 years the 48th council District has been a model district of the American Dream where voices of diverse populations were living together and has been heard and responded to by government. We urge you to keep the continuity of our Orthodox Jewish residents of Midwood and cultural and ethnicity intact.

Thank You,
Rich Kahan
Midwood Resident

1/10/13

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Richard Dweck and I submit this testimony for the purposes of the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Hearing. I am a resident of the 48th Council District and am an active member in my community of Midwood.

I submit this testimony to strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. For the past 10 years, no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage, allowing for the needs of the entire district to be heard. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and Democratic District Leaders Ari Kagan and Mark Davidovich are all Russian-Americans with electoral success stories in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Richard Dweck

NYC Districting Commission. January 10,2013 Brooklyn Public Hearing. St. Francis College. Testimony by Richard P. Kuo.

Good evening. My name is Richard P. Kuo. I am on the Board of Directors of Homecrest Community Services, Inc. and its founding Executive Director. I also served for four years, as an appointee of Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz, on Brooklyn Community Board 15. I have been interviewed by NY1 Television to comment on the demographic changes in Brooklyn's Sheepshead Bay and Bensonhurst areas as shown in the 2010 Census and the needs of Asian American seniors.

An analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau's 2005-2009 American Community Survey by the Asian Americans for Equality, Inc. showed that the Asian population in Brooklyn Community District 15 totaled 22,377 persons, or 15% of CD's 15 total 149,015 population. Further analysis of CD 15 Census data by the Asian American Federation showed a 18% growth in the Asian population, most of whom are Chinese. There is no doubt the two -decade influx of Asian families, children and seniors to Sheepshead Bay has helped to improve the local schools, increased property values, revived the local economy by creating new businesses and jobs and helped stabilize the neighborhood.

The Asian American community has been the fastest growing race group in the nation and New York City for the past two decades. There are over 1 million Asian New Yorkers, or more than 12 % of the City's total 8 million plus population, and growing. Brooklyn was the borough showing the fastest (38%)growth in the Asian population among all 5 boroughs in the 2010 Census and Asians now constitute 11 % of the Brooklyn's 2.5million total population.

Homecrest Community Services (HCS) is a non-profit, community-based, corporation which was established in 1997- 16 years ago- to meet the social service, economic and other basic quality of life needs of the rapidly growing number Chinese and other Asian-American seniors living in Sheepshead Bay. These seniors had no other senior centers in the area which could meet their linguistic, cultural, nutritional and other special needs. HCS has grown from its initial 200 members to over 2,000 members today. A growing number of Asian-Americans have registered to vote and have come out strongly in recent elections. I believe they have made a difference .

I am concerned about the latest revision to the 48th Council District map which would increase the percentage of Russian-Americans from the current 35% to an estimated 50% of the population. Asian-Americans are an estimated 15 to 20% of the total population now, but if the District is expanded to increase the Russian –American population, the percentage of Asian-Americans will be reduced and significantly watered down. In spite of the extraordinary growth in the Asian population in Brooklyn and New York City, Asians are significantly under- represented in the City and State legislatures. There are Asian elected officials in Queens , Manhattan and Citywide, but there is not one elected Asian in any of Brooklyn's City Council, State Senate or State Assembly districts. I am hopeful that one day soon this will change, perhaps in Council District 48 and other Council Districts, and encourage this Commission to retain a level playing field for all potential electoral candidates regardless of race, ethnicity, color or national origin.

I recommend the Districting Commission approve the preliminary draft map of Council District 48 which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson and who has represented the District since 1999. Thank you.

January 9, 2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Richard Taylor. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a member of the Orthodox Jewish community. I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the Districting Commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. The Orthodox Jewish community, like other ethnic groups in the current 48th district, represents a significant population, but NOT A MAJORITY of the district. Our district serves as a model of the American dream where for the past 10 years each of the voices of diverse populations living together in our district has been heard and responded to by government. The major factor in this remarkable success story is that no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage so that our local government was truly "of the people, by the people and for the people." The preliminary draft map if adopted would ensure that no group would be disenfranchised in the years ahead. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear for no good reason.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and two elected Democratic District Leaders are all Russian-Americans with electoral success in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan, that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest

opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Richard Taylor

Hearings

From: saveflatbush <saveflatbush@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 10, 2013 1:11 PM
To: Hearings
Subject: Brooklyn Hearing

For the past 10 years the 48th council District has been a model district of the American Dream where voices of diverse populations were living together and has been heard and responded to by government. We urge you to keep the continuity of our Orthodox Jewish residents of Midwood and cultural and ethnicity intact.

Rochel Brodt <[REDACTED]>

January 10, 2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Rosalind Weiss, and I am a lifelong resident of the 48th Council District. I am a native-born American, and I am proud to say that my paternal grandparents, both **Russian-language speaking immigrants**, not only have resided in Brighton Beach, but for more than 40 years they also owned and operated the well-known establishment, "Israel's Take Home Food" on Brighton Beach Avenue.

I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission hearing to strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

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While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their

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Sincerely,

Rosalind Weiss

1/10/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Ruen Hong Li and I submit this testimony for the **January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing**. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

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Sincerely,

Ruen Hong Li

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is **Russell Shern**. I own and operate a business in the 48th Council District, and am an active member of the Russian-American community. I am proud to say that when I had an issue in the district that needed to be addressed by my local representative, my Council Member, Michael C. Nelson was there for me.

I submit this testimony to strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

I strongly oppose the district lines proposed for the 48th Council District included in the December 4th Draft Plan. The adoption of this plan would be a terrible step backwards for the Russian-American Community and would undermine much of the great progress in the political process which my community has achieved in a relatively short time period. The fundamental defect in the December 4th plan is that by concentrating most of the Russian-American voters in a single district -- the proposed 48th -- **by adding buildings along Sea- Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway seriously diminishes the overall influence of the Russian-American community** for no good reasons. While the few members of the community in the "inner circle" assured that one of their own will be elected to the Council, will reap the benefits, the overwhelming majority of my community will be left out in the cold. Members of my community will not be alone in being disenfranchised from a political process which is no longer responsive to our needs, but in addition many of the remaining groups in the newly constructed 48th District who formerly constituted an important presence in the political process will also be reduced to an insignificant minority easily to be ignored.

I would strongly urge that what is in the best interest of **ALL THE MEMBERS OF THE RUSSIAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITY** is that as many districts as possible be created with a significant Russian American presence. Specifically, in Southern Brooklyn the large Russian-American population west of Ocean Parkway presently in the 47th Council District should **NOT BE COMBINED** with the Russian-American Community in the existing 48th District. It is much more important for **ALL THE MEMBERS OF MY COMMUNITY** that we have influence in as many Districts as possible rather than to have 1 Council Member of Russian-American descent among the 51 Council Members.

Russian-Americans have flourished in the 48th district due in no small part to its diversity. For the past 12 years, the current Councilmember has gone above and beyond to make sure the special needs of every group in my community has been generously met. This is not in spite of the multi-cultural composition of the 48th Council District – but because of it. So long as the 48th Council district is comprised of a variety of ethnic, religious and racial groups, we, as a community not only work together to address our common needs and diverse goals – but we are also in the unique position of having equal

access to our policy makers. No one group has a greater voice than any other, and so we are all in a position of balance and equality. Consequently as selfish as I could be to support a super-Russian district, it would, for no compelling reason, hurt the multi-cultural groups within the 48th district and also negatively impact the Russian-Americans in the 47th district, whose voices would shrink in the process.

Those members of my community who have submitted testimony in support of the December 4th plan recognize the tremendous accomplishments of the Russian American Community. As was stated by Dmitry Margulis in testimony submitted for this January 10th Hearing and reiterated in the same or similar words by others in their testimony:

*“As you know, [the] Russian-American Community became an integral part of New York City. Our community flourished in our great city. Russian-speaking immigrants achieved tremendous success in business, culture, sports, arts science, medicine and **POLITICS (emphasis supplied)**....We have in government: NYS Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, Democratic District Leaders Ari Kagan and Mark Davidovich, Republican District Leader Boris Pincus...”*

While I strongly agree with these sentiments, I STRONGLY DISAGREE with the conclusion that this is an argument in support of creating a district with enough Russian-Americans to insure the election of a Russian-American Council Member. We have already elected many Russian-Americans to public office. Ethnic pride no longer demands this. Having become an integral part of the electoral process, it is important that the redistricting process reflect this by maximizing our influence in as many Council Districts as possible by providing a significant Russian American presence in as many Districts as possible. Based on the success of other Russian-Americans seeking elective office in districts which had a significant number of Russian Americans, BUT LESS THAN A MAJORITY, it is likely that a Russian American will be elected to the Council in the near future. What is certain however is that all the members of the Russian-American community, as well as all members of all other groups will have a voice in government that will be heard by whoever is elected to the Council. I urge you to adopt the Preliminary Draft Plan.

Sincerely,
Russell Shern

Dear members of NYC Council Districting Commission!

My name is Zinaida Konovalova and I am Chairwoman of the Russian American Community Coalition (RACC).

RACC as a non-partisan, non-for-profit organization with over than 2,000 Russian-speaking members who are registered voters. We provide objective information and education to Russian-Americans in order to encourage their civic participation and responsibility and to make them an indispensable part of the American electoral process. We provide social and psychological help, organize seminars and forums with business professionals and social workers. We defend rights of shareholders in co-op buildings and assist working people who are preparing for retirement.

As you know, Russian American Community is an integral part of New York City. Our community flourished in our great city. Russian-speaking immigrants achieved tremendous success in business, culture, sports, arts, science, medicine and politics.

There are more than 350,000 Russian Americans in all five boroughs. Brooklyn is a home of the largest Russian-speaking community in the United States. But we still don't have a single Russian American in New York City Council and we think it is a time to change this situation.

The best way to ensure that Russian Americans are represented in NYC Council in a fair and just way is to keep currently proposed lines of 48 Council District intact. By including Brighton Beach, Manhattan Beach, most of Sheepshead Bay, Luna Park, Sea Breeze Avenue and part of Trump Village in one district, your Commission did a right thing and created a very good district for our community.

I want to personally thank you for your commitment to the Russian American community. Please, do not change the proposed lines of 48th district. They are very important for the future of our community in New York City.

By implementing these actions you will ensure that Russian American community will have a fair chance to elect a first Russian American to the New York City Council. It will be a tremendous achievement for our community and for the whole New York City.

Thank you.

RUSSIAN – AMERICAN VOTERS EDUCATIONAL LEAGUE, INC.

8405 108th Street, #C4

Tel. 718-415-5912

Richmond Hill, NY 11418

Fax. 718-849-1210

Rusamvlad@yahoo.com

Dear members of the NYC Council Districting Commission!

My name is Vladimir Epshteyn and I am the President of Russian- American Voters Educational League (RAVEL).

RAVEL was incorporated in 1997 as a non-partisan, non-profit organization and at this time consists of more than 25,000 Russian-speaking members who are registered voters.

RAVEL provides objective information and education to Russian-Americans in order to encourage their civic participation, to obtain the feeling of responsibility and to make them an indispensable part of the American electoral process.

Russian-American Community is an integral part of New York City and has flourished greatly. As it is nationally recognized, Russian-speaking immigrants achieved tremendous success in business, culture, sports, arts, science, medicine, and politics.

There are more than 350,000 Russian-Americans in all five boroughs of New York. Brooklyn is home to the largest Russian-speaking community in the United States but we still don't have any Russian- American representatives in the New York City Council.

In October 2012, I sent a letter to the NYC Districting Commission asking for the creation of an electoral district in Southern Brooklyn which will give the Russian-American population a fair chance to try to elect its very first representative to the New York City Council. In this letter I mentioned that your positive decisions would become a tremendous milestone not only for our community but for the whole of New York, to whom we owe so much.

Now, I want to use my chance to thank you - members of the Commission, for doing the right thing. The proposed lines of the 48th Council District are fair, just, and logical. They unite communities and neighborhoods of common interests and at the same time give a real chance for Russian-Americans to elect their first representative to the New York City Council.

I truly appreciate your commitment to our vibrant community. So I ask you dearly, please do not change the already proposed lines of the 48th District.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Vladimir Epshteyn - RAVEL President.

1/9/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Sally Wong and I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. For the past 10 years, no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage, allowing for the needs of the entire district to be heard. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and Democratic District Leaders Ari Kagan and Mark Davidovich are all Russian-Americans with electoral success stories in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their

own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Sally Wong

1/9/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Sam Lam Cheung and I submit this testimony for the **January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing**. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. For the past 10 years, no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage, allowing for the needs of the entire district to be heard. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and Democratic District Leaders Ari Kagan and Mark Davidovich are all Russian-Americans with electoral success stories in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their

own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Sam Lam Cheung

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Sam Tsang. I am a resident of the 48th Council District and an active member of the Avenue U Asian American Merchants Group, the 61st Precinct Community Council, and a member of Community Board 15. I have served as a liaison between my community and elected officials for over 10 years. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise more than 17% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

I submit this testimony to strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. For the past 10 years, no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage, allowing for the needs of the entire district to be heard. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and Democratic District Leaders Ari Kagan and Mark Davidovich are all Russian-Americans with electoral success stories in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their

own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Sam Tsang

1/9/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Sammy Kim and I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. For the past 10 years, no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage, allowing for the needs of the entire district to be heard. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and Democratic District Leaders Ari Kagan and Mark Davidovich are all Russian-Americans with electoral success stories in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their

own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Sammy Kim

January 9, 2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Sandy Wong and I respectfully submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission hearing. I believe Councilman Michael C. Nelson has already submitted testimonies for my parents, but the formality and stiffness of those letters convinced me to write my own, and to represent my own ideas and dissent against these organizations.

Though I may seem young and inexperienced as a college student, I strongly oppose the proposed redrawing of district lines. I have read through their [the Russian-American based organizations] testimonies and pleas on the Commission's website. I feel that their concerns of being unable to elect a Russian-American council member, solely based on the ethnic population in the district are inappropriate in a democratic government such as ours. If I would like, I could make the same claim on behalf of the growing Asian-American community. But I digress, the important role of representing our 48th Council District in the City Council should be elected based on ability and not on ethnicity, as these proposals imply.

As seen by previous 48th Council District electoral successes of Russian-Americans: NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and Democratic District Leaders Ari Kagan and Mark Davidovich; claims of "no real opportunity" for a Russian-American to be elected are unsupported. Rather, it seems these organizations are trying to gain an unfair advantage and representation in the district elections. Gerrymandering the district lines to over represent an ethnic population on such a subjective basis is the opposite of what this country stands for.

District lines should be drawn according to the written rules and be objectively explained by the census data. The concrete data provided by the census is representative of the district population and should be the basis for district drawing. As American citizens, we should have all contributed to the census data collection, leaving no room for question. I myself filled out the survey for my household, in addition to the surveys for my English-impaired and senior citizen neighbors.

Being in a racially-mixed graduate program at Brooklyn College that advocates diversity and having many Russian-American friends from Midwood High School, I fully respect and love the Russian-American community. I understand that these organizations do not represent the ideas of the entire Russian-American population in our beloved district. But as an Asian-American, I have no issues voting for a Russian-American candidate over an Asian-American candidate if their beliefs and ideals are similar to mine; this is what democracy is.

Granted that I may be a young and inexperienced graduate college student and this seemingly unprofessional letter is my first appeal towards the government, my education in the United States has shown me that this new proposal is not representative of our democratic ideals. These procedures and rules by which districts are drawn were created for fair and just reasons. If they are so easily swayed by these organizations, what's not to say that another racial group will follow these footsteps? In that case, would it be better to have a City Council representative for each race? These may be controversial, but very legitimate questions in this situation.

As a member of the 48th Council District I implore you, honorable members of the NYC Council Districting Commission, to hear my dissent and accept the preliminary draft map originally designed by yourselves and is supported by my Councilman Michael C. Nelson. The equal representation you provided was fair, just, and the ideal of our national beliefs. With this current proposal, I feel a revocation of equality and of my voice in governmental proceedings. I am disappointed by this regression of equality that my role models, such as Rosa Parks and Oliver L. Brown, fought so desperately for. I hope you will consider my voice, along with many other dissenting voices of my community, in an attempt to protect our diversity in America's melting pot of cultures, New York City.

Thank you for your time and consideration; I believe that the Commission will make a fair decision for us all in the 48th Council District.

Sincerely,
Sandy Wong

Good evening.

My name is Avi Spitzer. I serve as the Executive Director of the Sephardic Community Federation (SCF). SCF is the umbrella public policy organization representing the Sephardic Jewish community of greater New York. The bulk of the Sephardic community's population is located in Brooklyn and I am here today to testify specifically about areas of concern to the Brooklyn Sephardic community.

I would like to thank the commission for listening to the concerns of the community during the previous hearing and specifically for the lines they submitted to the City Council for the 44th Council District. The Sephardic community initially was very concerned because it appeared that their community was to be divided up. Thankfully, the Sephardic Community is now united in the 44th council district and we are grateful for that. Please try and ensure that the 44th council district lines remain the same as the ones that were submitted so that Boro Park can have two members of the City Council representing it, as opposed to just one. Once again, I thank you for that.

Finally, we share concerns about the Jewish population in the 45th, 46th and 48th districts. The Jewish population has been dispersed in those districts and we encourage the commission to take a second look.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

January 9, 2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Shalom Yeger. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a member of the Orthodox Jewish community. I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the Districting Commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. The Orthodox Jewish community, like other ethnic groups in the current 48th district, represents a significant population, but NOT A MAJORITY of the district. Our district serves as a model of the American dream where for the past 10 years each of the voices of diverse populations living together in our district has been heard and responded to by government. The major factor in this remarkable success story is that no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage so that our local government was truly "of the people, by the people and for the people." The preliminary draft map if adopted would ensure that no group would be disenfranchised in the years ahead. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear for no good reason.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and two elected Democratic District Leaders are all Russian-Americans with electoral success in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan, that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest

opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Shalom Yeger

1/9/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Shao Dong and I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. For the past 10 years, no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage, allowing for the needs of the entire district to be heard. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and Democratic District Leaders Ari Kagan and Mark Davidovich are all Russian-Americans with electoral success stories in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their

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Sincerely,

Shao Dong

1/10/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Shao Quan Ng and I submit this testimony for the **January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing**. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

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Sincerely,

Shao Quan Ng

1/10/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Shei Cheng and I submit this testimony for the **January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing**. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

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Sincerely,

Shei Cheng

1/10/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Shi Ping Ou and I submit this testimony for the **January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing**. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

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Sincerely,

Shi Ping Ou

January 9, 2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Shimon Lefkowitz. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a member of the Orthodox Jewish community. I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the Districting Commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. The Orthodox Jewish community, like other ethnic groups in the current 48th district, represents a significant population, but NOT A MAJORITY of the district. Our district serves as a model of the American dream where for the past 10 years each of the voices of diverse populations living together in our district has been heard and responded to by government. The major factor in this remarkable success story is that no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage so that our local government was truly "of the people, by the people and for the people." The preliminary draft map if adopted would ensure that no group would be disenfranchised in the years ahead. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear for no good reason.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and two elected Democratic District Leaders are all Russian-Americans with electoral success in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan, that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest

opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Shimon Lefkowitz

1/8/13

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Shimon Rinkovsky. I am a resident of the 48th Council District, am an active member of the Russian-American community in Brighton Beach, was the founder of the "Save Brighton Beach" movement that led to the withdrawal of the City's proposed rezoning plan, and am a member of Community Board 13. I have served as a liaison between my community and elected officials for the past 6 years.

I submit this testimony to strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

I strongly oppose the district lines proposed for the 48th Council District included in the December 4th Draft Plan. The adoption of this plan would be a terrible step backwards for the Russian-American Community and would undermine much of the great progress in the political process which my community has achieved in a relatively short time period. The fundamental defect in the December 4th plan is that by concentrating most of the Russian-American voters in a single district -- the proposed 48th -- **by adding buildings along Sea- Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway seriously diminishes the overall influence of the Russian-American community** for no good reasons. While the few members of the community in the "inner circle" assured that one of their own will be elected to the Council, will reap the benefits, the overwhelming majority of my community will be left out in the cold. Members of my community will not be alone in being disenfranchised from a political process which is no longer responsive to our needs, but in addition many of the remaining groups in the newly constructed 48th District who formerly constituted an important presence in the political process will also be reduced to an insignificant minority easily to be ignored.

I would strongly urge that what is in the best interest of **ALL THE MEMBERS OF THE RUSSIAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITY** is that as many districts as possible be created with a significant Russian American presence. Specifically, in Southern Brooklyn the large Russian-American population west of Ocean Parkway presently in the 47th Council District should **NOT BE COMBINED** with the Russian-American Community in the existing 48th District. It is much more important for **ALL THE MEMBERS OF MY COMMUNITY** that we have influence in as many Districts as possible rather than to have 1 Council Member of Russian-American descent among the 51 Council Members.

Russian-Americans have flourished in the 48th district due in no small part to its diversity. For the past 12 years, the current Councilmember has gone above and beyond to make sure the special needs of every group in my community has been generously met. This is not in spite of the multi-cultural composition of the 48th Council District – but because of it. So long as the 48th Council district is comprised of a variety of ethnic,

religious and racial groups, we, as a community not only work together to address our common needs and diverse goals – but we are also in the unique position of having equal access to our policy makers. No one group has a greater voice than any other, and so we are all in a position of balance and equality. Consequently as selfish as I could be to support a super-Russian district, it would, for no compelling reason, hurt the multi-cultural groups within the 48th district and also negatively impact the Russian-Americans in the 47th district, whose voices would shrink in the process.

Those members of my community who have submitted testimony in support of the December 4th plan recognize the tremendous accomplishments of the Russian American Community. As was stated by Dmitry Margulis in testimony submitted for this January 10th Hearing and reiterated in the same or similar words by others in their testimony:

*“As you know, [the] Russian-American Community became an integral part of New York City. Our community flourished in our great city. Russian-speaking immigrants achieved tremendous success in business, culture, sports, arts science, medicine and **POLITICS (emphasis supplied)**...We have in government: NYS Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, Democratic District Leaders Ari Kagan and Mark Davidovich, Republican District Leader Boris Pincus...”*

While I strongly agree with these sentiments, I STRONGLY DISAGREE with the conclusion that this is an argument in support of creating a district with enough Russian-Americans to insure the election of a Russian-American Council Member. We have already elected many Russian-Americans to public office. Ethnic pride no longer demands this. Having become an integral part of the electoral process, it is important that the redistricting process reflect this by maximizing our influence in as many Council Districts as possible by providing a significant Russian American presence in as many Districts as possible. Based on the success of other Russian-Americans seeking elective office in districts which had a significant number of Russian Americans, BUT LESS THAN A MAJORITY, it is likely that a Russian American will be elected to the Council in the near future. What is certain however is that all the members of the Russian-American community, as well as all members of all other groups will have a voice in government that will be heard by whoever is elected to the Council. I urge you to adopt the Preliminary Draft Plan.

Sincerely,
Shimon Rinkovsky
2957 Brighton 8th Street
Brooklyn, NY 11235
917 744 6919

Hearings

From: saveflatbush <saveflatbush@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 10, 2013 3:10 PM
To: Hearings
Subject: Brooklyn Hearing

Dear Districting Commission my name is Shloimy

I reside at [REDACTED] Please keep the 48th Council District intact, and not allow the division and isolation of our community. For the past 10 years the 48th council District has been a model district of the American Dream where voices of diverse populations were living together and has been heard and responded to by government. We urge you to keep the continuity of our Orthodox Jewish residents of Midwood and cultural and ethnicity intact. Thank you.

January 9, 2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Shlomie Brociner. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a member of the Orthodox Jewish community. I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the Districting Commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

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Sincerely,

Shlomie Brociner

1/10/2013

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At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and Democratic District Leaders Ari Kagan and Mark Davidovich are all Russian-Americans with electoral success stories in the existing 48th Council District.

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While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their

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Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

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Sincerely,

Shu Chen Li

1/9/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Simon Chan and I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

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Sincerely,

Simon Chan

1/10/13

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Sophie Dweck and I submit this testimony for the purposes of the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Hearing. I am a resident of the 48th Council District and am an active member in my community of Midwood.

I submit this testimony to strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

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Sincerely,

Sophie Dweck

Statement of Steve Chung

United Chinese Association of Brooklyn
To the
New York City Districting Commission
Public Hearing, January 10th, 2013
Brooklyn, New York

My name is Steve Chung, president of United Chinese Association of Brooklyn, aka UCA. UCA was founded in 2002 and its goal is to improve the well being of the Chinese immigrants and families in Bensonhurst. UCA is a member of The Asian American Community Coalition On Redistricting and Democracy (ACCORD). Today, we would like to express our opinion regarding the Brooklyn Asian neighborhood relating to the redistricting.

Current Districts in Bensonhurst

Bensonhurst is an Asian American community of interest that consists of over 200,000 people and it constitutes one of the fastest growing Asian populations in the city. The recent commission redistricting draft map divides Bensonhurst Asian neighborhood into four districts – 38, 43, 44 and 47. It severely dilutes the Asian community voting strength in electing a legislator of their choice.

As the Asian community leaders in Brooklyn, our purpose in the redistrict process is to propose to - keep the current districts which support and represent the Asian community interest and value and adjust those which are not.

Comment Brooklyn Districts

We agree with the commission draft map of district38, which ties the Sunset Park's Asian population with the Latino community since both groups share many of the immigrant commonality and value. district38's councilwoman, Sara Gonzalez is also a strong advocate for Asian community. Finally, both groups are categorized as minority and are protected by the Voting Right Act.

Regarding district44, which is represented by Councilman Greenfield; since he was elected in 2010, Councilman Greenfield has continually provided major source of discretionary grants to support the Bensonhurst's Asian community youth and senior programs. In addition, he has also appointed two Asians into Community Board 11 to have a fair Asian representative. We sincerely ask the commission to minimize change in district44.


UCA supports ACCORD and OCA-NY's concept of keeping Bensonhurst neighborhood boundaries together into one district, which the commission office can also look into Unity Map's district47 as reference. The Unity Map's district47 adequately reflects the Bensonhurst neighborhood's Asian population which is about 33%. In year 2013, district47 will be opened for a new council position due to the current incumbent term expiration. With an Asian

population of 35% in district47, it will increase its chance to select a new councilman who can represent and voice for the Asian community.


Conclusion

In Bensonhurst and Sunset Park, the Asian Americans new comers continue to inject new economic liveliness in turning many of the empty warehouses into supermarkets and restaurants. They pump in new businesses and bring in millions of tax revenues into our city. Their economic contribution cannot be denied, but their political engagement needs to be encouraged. The commission can help the Asian community by minimizing change to those districts, such as 38 & 44, which strongly advocate for Asians community and maximizing the protection of Asian neighborhood boundary in those opened district, like district47.

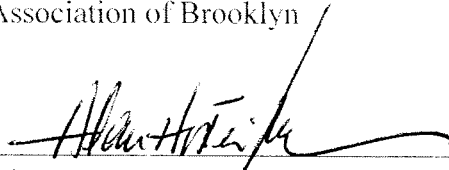
The following signees support the above testimony:




Steve Chung
President of United Chinese
Association of Brooklyn



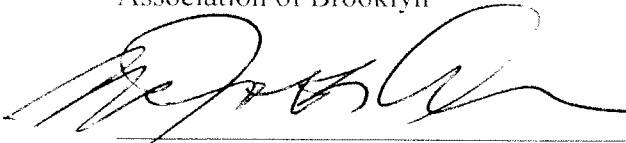
Rosita Pie
Chairwoman of Brooklyn Community
Improvement Association




Alan Mok
Founder of United Chinese
Association of Brooklyn



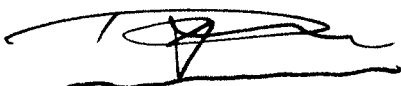
Ray Chen
President of Brooklyn Community
Improvement Association




Tim Law PhD.
Member of
Community Education Council 21



Louis Liu
V. President of Brooklyn Community
Improvement Association



Denny Chen
Community Board 7 (member)



Shin Kwan Leung
V.P. Chinese Businessman Ass.

Wei Xiang Chen

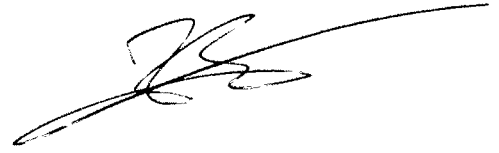
WEI XIANG CHEN
owner of Howlong Restaurant.

May Heng
Chenatrust USA BANK.

Chung Yuan Corp
Hung Shuai Liu

STEPHEN WU
Stephen Wu


TING GUANG MAI
Ting Guang Mai



Joe Shue
Secretary General
American Chinese
Commerce Association

SUNNY MUI
SUNNY MUI
WING SING SUPER NOKE

GARY CHEN, M.D
Gary Chen
UCA medical advisor


(TONY CHAN)
Vicepresident, UCA

January 9, 2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Steven Weill. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a member of the Orthodox Jewish community. I also am the Coordinator of the Flatbush Shomrim Safety Patrol, a patrol organized to improve the quality of life of individuals in the community. I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the Districting Commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. The Orthodox Jewish community, like other ethnic groups in the current 48th district, represents a significant population, but NOT A MAJORITY of the district. Our district serves as a model of the American dream where for the past 10 years each of the voices of diverse populations living together in our district has been heard and responded to by government. The major factor in this remarkable success story is that no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage so that our local government was truly "of the people, by the people and for the people." The preliminary draft map if adopted would ensure that no group would be disenfranchised in the years ahead. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear for no good reason.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and two elected Democratic District Leaders are all Russian-Americans with electoral success in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

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any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Steven Weill

1/9/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Taik Lee and I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

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Taik Lee

1/9/2013

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Tak Kam Wan

1/9/2013

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Sincerely,

Tian Ye

1/9/2013

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My name is Tong Lin and I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

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For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

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Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

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Sincerely,

Tong Lin

1/10/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Tracy Lai and I submit this testimony for the **January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing**. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

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Sincerely,

Tracy Lai

Hearings

From: saveflatbush <saveflatbush@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 09, 2013 9:00 PM
To: Hearings
Subject: Brooklyn Hearing

Dear Commission

I want to register my opposition to the Redistricting of Flatbush For the past 10 years the 48th council district has been a model of the American dream.

Voices of a diverse population live together and interacted in government,

We urge you to preserve the continuity of our orthodox Jewish residents of Midwood and culture and ethnicity intact.

Most sincerely
Victor J. Grazi

Hearings

From: Victor Shine [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, January 09, 2013 3:34 PM
To: Hearings
Subject: No! to redistricting Flatbush

NYC Districting Commission
BROOKLYN

Saint Francis College
Founders Hall Auditorium
180 Remsen St
Brooklyn, NY 11201

Honorable Members of the NYC Districting Commission,

In 1992 my family moved into Marine Park, Brooklyn. In 1998, we moved a few blocks away from there. Regardless, I have continued to pray every day in the same synagogue since my initial arrival. I even walk there on my Sabbath. Our greater community enjoys a flavor and a culture all its own. We are one cohesive community with a strong voice, as currently represented in the New York City Council.

By redrawing the lines of our district, you effectively divide and dilute our representation in City government. This would be a blow to the representation we currently enjoy - a privilege for which we pay taxes. By redistricting out a small percentage of us here, and another small percentage of us there, you effectively weaken our voice. That is unfair, and that cannot be allowed to happen.

You now have a tremendous responsibility to protect the rights of all of the constituents of Brooklyn, including those who would be most affected by this revision. I encourage you in the strongest possible terms to reject this unfair plan.

Sincerely,

Victor J. Shine
[REDACTED]
Brooklyn, NY 11229
[REDACTED]

1/9/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Wendy Yuen and I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

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Sincerely,

Wendy Yuen

1/10/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

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Sincerely,

Xiao Cai Liu

1/10/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Xiao Chun Yan and I submit this testimony for the **January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing**. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

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Xiao Chun Yan

1/10/2013

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Sincerely,

XiaoJuan Li

1/9/2013

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Sincerely,

Xiaodan Xu

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Xiu Ping Zhang. I am a resident of the 48th Council District, own and operate a business in this district and am an active member of the Avenue U Asian American Merchants Group. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

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Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Xiu Ping Zhang

1/9/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Xu Fen Liu Huang and I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. For the past 10 years, no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage, allowing for the needs of the entire district to be heard. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and Democratic District Leaders Ari Kagan and Mark Davidovich are all Russian-Americans with electoral success stories in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their

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Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Xu Fen Liu Huang

1/10/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Xue Yu Li and I submit this testimony for the **January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing**. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. For the past 10 years, no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage, allowing for the needs of the entire district to be heard. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and Democratic District Leaders Ari Kagan and Mark Davidovich are all Russian-Americans with electoral success stories in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their

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Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Xue Yu Li

1/9/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Ya Ying Liu and I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Community.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. For the past 10 years, no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage, allowing for the needs of the entire district to be heard. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and Democratic District Leaders Ari Kagan and Mark Davidovich are all Russian-Americans with electoral success stories in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

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Sincerely,

Ya Ying Liu

1/9/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Yamy Fu and I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

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Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

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Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

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Sincerely,

Yamy Fu

1/9/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Yanling Liang and I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. For the past 10 years, no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage, allowing for the needs of the entire district to be heard. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear.

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Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

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own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Yanling Liang

1/10/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Ye Yan and I submit this testimony for the **January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing**. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. For the past 10 years, no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage, allowing for the needs of the entire district to be heard. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and Democratic District Leaders Ari Kagan and Mark Davidovich are all Russian-Americans with electoral success stories in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their

own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Ye Yan

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Yelena Kormova . I own and operate a business in the 48th Council District, and am an active member of the Russian-American community. I am proud to say that when I had an issue in the district that needed to be addressed by my local representative, my Council Member, Michael C. Nelson was there for me.

I submit this testimony to strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

I strongly oppose the district lines proposed for the 48th Council District included in the December 4th Draft Plan. The adoption of this plan would be a terrible step backwards for the Russian-American Community and would undermine much of the great progress in the political process which my community has achieved in a relatively short time period. The fundamental defect in the December 4th plan is that by concentrating most of the Russian-American voters in a single district -- the proposed 48th -- **by adding buildings along Sea- Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway seriously diminishes the overall influence of the Russian-American community** for no good reasons. While the few members of the community in the "inner circle" assured that one of their own will be elected to the Council, will reap the benefits, the overwhelming majority of my community will be left out in the cold. Members of my community will not be alone in being disenfranchised from a political process which is no longer responsive to our needs, but in addition many of the remaining groups in the newly constructed 48th District who formerly constituted an important presence in the political process will also be reduced to an insignificant minority easily to be ignored.

I would strongly urge that what is in the best interest of **ALL THE MEMBERS OF THE RUSSIAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITY** is that as many districts as possible be created with a significant Russian American presence. Specifically, in Southern Brooklyn the large Russian-American population west of Ocean Parkway presently in the 47th Council District should **NOT BE COMBINED** with the Russian-American Community in the existing 48th District. It is much more important for **ALL THE MEMBERS OF MY COMMUNITY** that we have influence in as many Districts as possible rather than to have 1 Council Member of Russian-American descent among the 51 Council Members.

Russian-Americans have flourished in the 48th district due in no small part to its diversity. For the past 12 years, the current Councilmember has gone above and beyond to make sure the special needs of every group in my community has been generously met. This is not in spite of the multi-cultural composition of the 48th Council District – but because of it. So long as the 48th Council district is comprised of a variety of ethnic, religious and racial groups, we, as a community not only work together to address our common needs and diverse goals – but we are also in the unique position of having equal

access to our policy makers. No one group has a greater voice than any other, and so we are all in a position of balance and equality. Consequently as selfish as I could be to support a super-Russian district, it would, for no compelling reason, hurt the multi-cultural groups within the 48th district and also negatively impact the Russian-Americans in the 47th district, whose voices would shrink in the process.

Those members of my community who have submitted testimony in support of the December 4th plan recognize the tremendous accomplishments of the Russian American Community. As was stated by Dmitry Margulis in testimony submitted for this January 10th Hearing and reiterated in the same or similar words by others in their testimony:

*“As you know, [the] Russian-American Community became an integral part of New York City. Our community flourished in our great city. Russian-speaking immigrants achieved tremendous success in business, culture, sports, arts science, medicine and **POLITICS (emphasis supplied)**....We have in government: NYS Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, Democratic District Leaders Ari Kagan and Mark Davidovich, Republican District Leader Boris Pincus...”*

While I strongly agree with these sentiments, I STRONGLY DISAGREE with the conclusion that this is an argument in support of creating a district with enough Russian-Americans to insure the election of a Russian-American Council Member. We have already elected many Russian-Americans to public office. Ethnic pride no longer demands this. Having become an integral part of the electoral process, it is important that the redistricting process reflect this by maximizing our influence in as many Council Districts as possible by providing a significant Russian American presence in as many Districts as possible. Based on the success of other Russian-Americans seeking elective office in districts which had a significant number of Russian Americans, BUT LESS THAN A MAJORITY, it is likely that a Russian American will be elected to the Council in the near future. What is certain however is that all the members of the Russian-American community, as well as all members of all other groups will have a voice in government that will be heard by whoever is elected to the Council. I urge you to adopt the Preliminary Draft Plan.

Sincerely,
Yelena Kormova

January 9, 2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Yitzchok Klug. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a member of the Orthodox Jewish community. I am also a member of Hatzolah. I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the Districting Commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. The Orthodox Jewish community, like other ethnic groups in the current 48th district, represents a significant population, but NOT A MAJORITY of the district. Our district serves as a model of the American dream where for the past 10 years each of the voices of diverse populations living together in our district has been heard and responded to by government. The major factor in this remarkable success story is that no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage so that our local government was truly "of the people, by the people and for the people." The preliminary draft map if adopted would ensure that no group would be disenfranchised in the years ahead. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear for no good reason.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and two elected Democratic District Leaders are all Russian-Americans with electoral success in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan, that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest

opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Yitzchok Klug

Hearings

From: saveflatbush <saveflatbush@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 09, 2013 8:35 PM
To: Hearings
Subject: Hearing in Brooklyn

NYC Districting Commisiion

Please keep our 48th Council district intact, and do not allow the division and isolation of our community. For the past 10 years the 48th council District has been a model district of the American Dream where voices of diverse populations were living together and has been heard and responded to by government. We urge you to keep the continuity of our Orthodox Jewish residents of Midwood and cultural and ethnicity intact.

Thanks
Yitzie Pretter

1/10/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Yong Tao and I submit this testimony for the **January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing**. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. For the past 10 years, no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage, allowing for the needs of the entire district to be heard. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and Democratic District Leaders Ari Kagan and Mark Davidovich are all Russian-Americans with electoral success stories in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their

own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.


Sincerely,

Yong Tao

Hearings

From: saveflatbush <saveflatbush@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 09, 2013 8:19 PM
To: Hearings
Subject: Jan 10th Hearing

For the past 10 years the 48th council District has been a model district of the American Dream where voices of diverse populations were living together and has been heard and responded to by government. We urge you to keep the continuity of our Orthodox Jewish residents of Midwood and cultural and ethnicity intact

Yosef Gindoff


Hearings

From: saveflatbush <saveflatbush@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 09, 2013 8:34 PM
To: Hearings
Subject: Jan 10 Hearing

Dear Commission,

For the past 10 years the 48th council District has been a model district of the American Dream where voices of diverse populations were living together and has been heard and responded to by government. We urge you to keep the continuity of our Orthodox Jewish residents of Midwood and cultural and ethnicity intact.

Thank you,
Yosef Terebelo

January 9, 2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Yossi Joseph Brown. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a member of the Orthodox Jewish community. I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the Districting Commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. The Orthodox Jewish community, like other ethnic groups in the current 48th district, represents a significant population, but NOT A MAJORITY of the district. Our district serves as a model of the American dream where for the past 10 years each of the voices of diverse populations living together in our district has been heard and responded to by government. The major factor in this remarkable success story is that no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage so that our local government was truly "of the people, by the people and for the people." The preliminary draft map if adopted would ensure that no group would be disenfranchised in the years ahead. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear for no good reason.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and two elected Democratic District Leaders are all Russian-Americans with electoral success in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan, that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest

opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Yossi Joseph Brown

1/9/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Youn Kim and I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. For the past 10 years, no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage, allowing for the needs of the entire district to be heard. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear.

At the October 11th commission hearing, the Russian-American representatives attempted to make the argument that the preliminary lines for the 48th district, which removed Manhattan Beach and added parts of Midwood, "diluted" their voice and gave "no real opportunity" for Russian-Americans to win an election in the district. This claim is a great overstatement as both Manhattan Beach and Midwood are home to equally modest Russian-American communities. They also make this claim of dilution, despite the fact NY State Senator David Storobin, Assemblyman Alec Brook-Krasny, and Democratic District Leaders Ari Kagan and Mark Davidovich are all Russian-Americans with electoral success stories in the existing 48th Council District.

Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

While the Russian-Americans continue to argue that adding buildings along Sea-Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway is "fair and just" for their community, they completely ignore what is "fair and just" for everyone else. At 25%, a number used by Ari Kagan that is probably much higher, Russian-Americans already make up the largest plurality of any one group in the 48th district, are sufficiently represented and also have the greatest opportunity of any ethnic base to elect one of their

own. Any shifts favoring the comparatively large Russian-American community, is a shift away from everyone else in this highly diverse district.

Let me be clear. I would have **no problem whatsoever** if a Russian-American were elected to the City Council. Still, any and all elected officials should be elected based on merit, and not just because the election was guaranteed by the numerical superiority of a particular group. And while I understand how eager their community is to elect a 1st Russian-American Councilmember, they should not be given this unreasonable and unjustified special treatment at the expense of everyone else.

On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Youn Kim

1/9/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Yul Zhao Li and I submit this testimony for the January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

For many years, the 48th district has embodied New York City's diversity, with countless different ethnic and religious communities living and doing business within our borders. These groups include individuals of varying income levels, native-born Americans as well as members of diverse immigrant communities from the former Soviet Union, China, Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico and many other places around the world. Furthermore our district is home to the largest concentration of senior citizens in the City. In short, we are no strangers to new cultures.

Diversity is not only something members of the 48th district embrace but is also absolutely necessary to ensure the fairness of our government. For the past 10 years, no single community has had an overwhelming population advantage, allowing for the needs of the entire district to be heard. I fear that with the newly proposed lines, which were drawn only to serve the interest of the Russian-American community, according to the express words of the districting commission, true equality would disappear.

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Their solution was not simply to reclaim Manhattan Beach for the 48th district but to completely transform the multi-cultural flavor of the 48th district by creating a Super-Russian district. This was achieved first by petitioning for, and then being granted their request to add predominantly Russian-American buildings along Sea-Breeze Breeze Avenue and on the West Side of Ocean Parkway.

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Sincerely,

Yul Zhao Li


Hearings

From: saveflatbush <saveflatbush@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 09, 2013 9:02 PM
To: Hearings
Subject: Brooklyn Hearing

Council Districting Commission:

For the past 10 years the 48th council District has been a model district of the American Dream where voices of diverse populations were living together and has been heard and responded to by government. We urge you to keep the continuity of our Orthodox Jewish residents of Midwood and cultural and ethnicity intact"

Thanking you in advance for your consideration..

Zev Bienenstock


1/10/2013

Dear Members of the NYC Council Districting Commission,

My name is Zhao Sheng Wu and I submit this testimony for the **January 10th Brooklyn Districting Commission Hearing**. I am an active resident of the 48th Council District and a proud member of the Asian American Community. The 48th Council District is home to many Asian Americans, and I am proud to say that Asian Americans comprise almost 18% of the population in Sheepshead Bay alone.

I strongly urge this Commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was designed by the districting commission, and which is fully supported by Councilman Michael C. Nelson, who has represented the 48th Council District since 1999.

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On the national level, gerrymandering occurs when districts are drawn to minimize an opposition political party's voice. On the local level, it looks like the same is happening only with ethnicity as the catalyst. What is the real purpose of making a super-Russian district, or any super-ethnic district for that matter anyway? We must do whatever it takes to keep our districts as diverse as possible to ensure parity and fairness in our elections. Therefore I strongly urge this commission to accept the preliminary draft map that was submitted. Rather than heed the advice of the few that try to high tail their way to power, I hope the Commission sees the importance of diversity not only in the 48th district but also in the most diverse City in the world. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Zhao Sheng Wu