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THE COUNCIL OF  
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**Testimony of Council Member Daniel J. Halloran before the  
New York City Districting Commission on January 14, 2013.**

Commissioners,

I must reiterate my strongest objection to the proposal presented by the New York City Districting Commission and support the concerns of the local civic organizations. Since the release of this plan I have been contacted by many civic leaders, residents and other community leaders in Northeast Queens. This proposal ignores traditional neighborhood boundaries and dilutes zoning. Further, it changes district boundaries in areas that were never discussed or requested by any party submitting public testimony to the Commission. These concerns have been expressed in correspondence sent to the Commission by the Broadway-Flushing Homeowners Association, Mitchell Linden Civic Association, North Flushing Civic Association, Auburndale Improvement Association, at least 16 individual persons, a state senator and both myself and Council Member Peter Koo, not to mention the dozens of people present at this hearing to testify about the boundaries of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Council districts.

At the December 4, 2012 meeting, the Commission took a significant step to remove most of the Mitchell Gardens housing complex from the 19<sup>th</sup> District and restore it into the 20<sup>th</sup> Council District, however two square blocks which are zoned R4 remain in the low density 19<sup>th</sup> Council District. Those blocks, bounded by Parsons Boulevard, Willets Point Boulevard, 146<sup>th</sup> Street and 25<sup>th</sup> Drive should be united with the rest of the Mitchell Gardens in the 20<sup>th</sup> Council District.

More significant is the Commission's proposal that would divide the Broadway-Flushing community in half along 33<sup>rd</sup> Avenue. I attended both public hearings that were held in Queens, and reviewed the public testimony published on the Commission's website and there was absolutely no impetus behind this change.

The Broadway-Flushing and North Flushing communities which would be seriously adversely affected by the proposed council districts. The neighborhood north of Northern Boulevard between 150<sup>th</sup> Street and Utopia Parkway, the current proposed council district lines would divide this community in half between Council District 19 and Council District 20. This area has a single civic association, the Broadway-Flushing Homeowners Association, which is one of the largest and strongest civic associations in Northeast Queens. The Broadway-Flushing Homeowners Association has been a vocal and very strong proponent of protecting the character of their community by preventing up-zoning and enforcing building covenants. Dividing this neighborhood would be detrimental to this community and its ability to continue protecting the historic nature of this area. Reuniting this community within the 19<sup>th</sup>

Council District would offset the removal of the aforementioned Mitchell Linden neighborhood.

In order to keep this neighborhood intact without creating gerrymandered district boundaries could easily be accomplished by extending boundary line south along 153<sup>rd</sup> Street from 33<sup>rd</sup> Avenue where the proposed boundary is to Northern Boulevard. The boundary should then follow Northern Boulevard east to 166<sup>th</sup> Street, then south on 166<sup>th</sup> Street to 46<sup>th</sup> Avenue where it would then intersect with the Commission's proposed line.

Not only would the communities of Mitchell Linden, North Flushing, Auburndale, and Broadway-Flushing be united in single council districts represented by a single council member, their civic associations would be able to continue to represent the neighborhoods in the best way possible. This proposal was developed working closely with the effected civic associations as well as considering the several other public proposals. This boundary takes into account population figures in both Council District 19 and 20, prior representation, the continuity of communities and zoning.

Additionally, contrary to some public submissions which call for the creation of a "Asian" or other ethnic district, I cannot help but to recall the words of the great New Yorker and president, Teddy Roosevelt when he said that "There is no room in this country for hyphenated Americanism". Registered voters are American citizens and are entitled to equal representation by their duly elected representative. We do not have proposals to create an Irish district, an Italian district, a Greek district, a district of green eyed people or a district of left handed people. We are creating districts of New Yorkers and that is all the Commission should consider.

The Commission's current proposal would be detrimental to these neighborhoods. I have no doubt that the Commission has heard from community leaders and elected officials from across the City about the proposed boundary lines in different neighborhoods, but there is no other case where a clearly defined neighborhood was divided in half along an arbitrary line with absolutely no public input to support the change. I ask that the Commission take steps to immediately unite these communities within 19<sup>th</sup> District where they have historically been and where their zoning is similar to the remainder of the district.