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THE KOREAN COMMUNITY
SERVICES OF METROPOLITAN
NEW YORK, INC.

뉴욕한인봉사센터

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KCS Statement for Queens Public Hearing, 1/14/13

Statement of Linda Lee, Executive Director
Korean Community Services of Metropolitan New York, Inc.
To the Districting Commission of New York City
January 14, 2013, 6:00 p.m.
LaGuardia Community College, Little Theater
31-10 Thomson Ave. Long Island City, NY 11101

Good afternoon, members of the districting commission. My name is Linda Lee, and I am the Executive Director of the Korean Community Services of Metropolitan New York, Inc. (KCS), a multi-social service agency founded in 1973. Our mission is to support and assist members of the Korean community to improve the quality of their lives to be healthy and productive individuals through a broad range of professional social service programs in the areas of Aging, Community and Public Health. Currently, KCS provides professional social services programs to over 1,100 individuals daily from five different project sites in the New York Metropolitan area.

As an organization whose mission is the well-being of the community, we feel that it is our responsibility to represent the voices and concerns of the community we serve and be an advocate for those who have no voice. Redistricting and the drawing of district lines is an issue that will impact our communities and in many ways is the foundation of democracy.

KCS mainly serves the Asian community in Queens, more specifically Northern Queens, and is a member of ACCORD, the Asian American Community Coalition on Redistricting and Democracy.

We and other ACCORD organizations came numerous times as a coalition to the LATFOR hearings and voiced our concerns regarding the redistricting process. Now, looking at the city council district maps, we are hoping that the commission will keep communities of interest in tact as much as possible when drawing the new district lines, especially for the Flushing and Bayside neighborhoods. The members of the community that live in these neighborhoods share similar values and resources and would benefit by remaining whole. Breaking up parts of Flushing and Bayside and putting them into neighboring districts that do not necessarily share similar characteristics does not make sense.

We basically agree with the community boundaries of the Unity Map and believe that Bayside should be kept whole because of similarities in transportation, socio-economic status, language, and use of public facilities. I am personally a resident of Oakland Gardens, and I have noticed that many of us in the neighborhood often identify themselves as living in Bayside. Even for myself, when I give out my address to folks, I often write "Bayside, NY" as opposed to "Oakland Gardens, NY." Also, when asking community members of Oakland Gardens where they live, people often say "Bayside" because it is a more recognized city name. People identify more with Bayside as opposed to any nearby neighborhoods that are in the current District 23. We ask that you adhere to the proposed boundaries of Bayside that are in the Unity Map.

Thank you.

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Korean Mutual Aid Society
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