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For Immediate Release

May 21, 2013

**THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE APPROVES THE
DISTRICTING COMMISSION'S FINAL CITYWIDE DISTRICTING PLAN**

New Council lines will go into effect immediately for the 2013 City elections

New York, NY – The United States Department of Justice (DOJ) yesterday granted pre-clearance to the New York City Districting Commission's plan to divide the City into 51 Council districts. This plan was submitted to the Department of Justice on March 22, 2013 to be reviewed by DOJ for compliance with Section 5 of the Federal Voting Rights Act. The Department of Justice's determination will allow the new Council district lines to be implemented for the upcoming 2013 citywide elections.

"Public participation and transparency have been our main goal throughout this process," said **Benito Romano, Chair of the New York City Districting Commission**. "I believe the determination by the Department of Justice validates that. On behalf of the Commission, it has been a pleasure and honor to be part of this very important process that forms the cornerstone of our democracy."

"With over two-thirds of the City's council districts composing an overall majority of protected racial and language groups, the district plan clearly reflects and accommodates the City's demographic growth over the past decade," said **Carl Hum, Executive Director**. "The new Council district map will serve New York City and its citizens well for the upcoming decade."

To reflect New York City's changing demographics, the approved final plan contains 35 plurality districts in which protected racial and language minority groups represent an overall majority of the total population in the district. By comparison, the 2003 districting plan had a total of 31 such districts.

Since July 2012, the Commission held three rounds of public hearings where over 1,750 people attended and nearly 500 people testified. The Commission also received 1,500 comments from individuals who submitted statements via e-mail or letter and over 20 alternative maps that were submitted on-line and/or created by members of the public at the Commission's Resource Room with the assistance of Commission staff. The Commission's Community Outreach team also spoke at over 50 community and advocacy groups throughout the five boroughs to educate the public about the districting process.

The Commission's [website](#), has been constantly updated to add testimony, proposed plan submissions and video links to the public meetings and hearings. Since August 1st, the Commission's website has received nearly 55,000 hits - averaging about 360 hits per day.

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