



Asian American Community Coalition on Redistricting and Democracy | accord.newyork@gmail.com | 718-460-5600

**Statement by the
Asian American Community Coalition on Redistricting and Democracy to the
New York City 2012-2013 Districting Commission
for the Brooklyn Borough's 2nd Round Public Hearing
Delivered by Kim Wong**

October 11, 2012

Medgar Evers College, Founder's Auditorium
1650 Bedford Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11225

Good afternoon Districting Commission members, staff and concerned citizens of Brooklyn. My name is Kim Wong and I am speaking on behalf of ACCORD, or the Asian American Community Coalition on Redistricting and Democracy.

ACCORD is a non-partisan, pan-Asian coalition of organizations and individuals committed to advancing the opportunity of Asian Americans and minority communities to meaningfully participate in the political process.

The growth of the Asian American population in New York City has dramatically outpaced all other racial groups as well as the population at large. And now, in 2012, it is imperative that the city council districts be re-drawn so that Asian American voters are no longer being disenfranchised, and their collective voices made ineffective in their elections.

In Brooklyn, the growth of the Asian American population is astounding: a **40%** overall increase, and a **46%** increase among the voting age population. There are now over a quarter million Asian Americans in Brooklyn alone. This means around 1 out of 4 Asian Americans in New York City is a resident of Brooklyn. Many of these Asian Americans live in an area that spans from parts of Sunset Park over into much of Bensonhurst.

As in other boroughs, being divided among multiple districts – the fracturing or “cracking” of minority populations – is today the greatest problem New York City’s Asian Americans are facing in our current district lines and in the preliminary map released last month.

That map divides and dilutes the Asian American population of Southwest Brooklyn. Instead of being divided into five districts, we are now divided into four – which is still, simply, unacceptable to our community.

- Consider the southern boundary for District 38. While 65th street is a main thoroughfare for Bensonhurst, the district’s southern boundary runs parallel to this on 66th Street, just one block south.
- Also, Districts 43, 44 and 47 converge in the very middle of Bensonhurst as defined by our community.

- As done in the Unity Map, we recommend a configuration whereby Sunset Park and the core of Bensonhurst are contained in just two districts.

We again express our coalition's support for the Unity Map drawn in collaboration with the African American, Latino and Asian American communities. ACCORD also supports and recommends the testimony of its member groups, especially those such as OCA-NY and the United Chinese Association of Brooklyn, that have constituencies and a history in these areas.

We look forward to a district plan that brings an equal voice to the Asian American residents and voters of Brooklyn and all of New York City.

ACCORD's members include the following organizations: Asian American Bar Association of New York, Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund, Asian Pacific Americans for Progress New York, Chhaya CDC, Chinese Progressive Association, Indo-Caribbean Alliance, Korean Americans for Political Advancement, Korean Community Services of Metropolitan New York, MinKwon Center for Community Action, OCA-NY, Taking Our Seat, United Chinese Association of Brooklyn, YWCA of Queens and Dr. Carol Huang of Queens, New York.