

UNIFICATION OF BAISLEY HOUSES

Testimony of: ROBERT HOGAN
BAISLEY HOUSES RESIDENT ASSOCIATION
PARK

Good evening. My name is ROBERT HOGAN.

I currently reside in District 28.

I am the _____.

I am here to support the redrawing of Council District 28:

To incorporate the portion of Baisley Houses East of Guy Brewer Boulevard. In the interest of promoting fiscal responsibility and ensuring that resources are allocated fairly, it is important that Baisley Houses no longer be separated into two Councilmanic districts. Just like South Jamaica houses, which are governed by one Council Member, Baisley Houses should also be under the jurisdiction of a single Council Member. An amalgamation eliminates the unfortunate situation of the perceived inequitable distribution of funding, resources and city services presently occurring among the houses. The resources I speak of include but are not limited to NYCHA security cameras, city services and recreational amenities (i.e. basketball courts). In addition, such a union will aid in the better management of maintenance issues that undoubtedly plague these housing facilities. Under the supervision of one Council Member, tenant complaints,

lodging disputes and matters, will be better controlled and overseen. Along with the aforementioned, the unification of the Bailey Houses will help the community to unite behind violence prevention and offer a safer future for its residents and businesses. This proposition comes at a critical time as community centers in Councilmanic District 28 have been closed, which resulted in the growth of violence in the area. The employment of a single Council Member, charged with addressing the multitude of violence problems in the area, would be advantageous. The Council Member would be unhindered in his efforts to foster a partnership with law enforcement agencies and the Police Athletic League building, housed jointly with the H.S. of Law and Government situated directly across the street in Councilmanic District 27.

Moreover, the purported position of unification endorses impartiality, and removes any view of one-sidedness. It is important that the residents of the Baisley Houses perceive that they are being treated as a whole, as it relates to the receipt of city services and support. This understanding will only be realized if unification is accomplished. Ultimately, unifying the Baisley Houses will provide the community with a “one- stop” model of service, aiming to provide resources that will result in a mutually beneficial circumstance.

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The unification of the Baisley Houses is essential to the efficient and effective handling of constituent complaints. Such facilitation will dispel disorganization and off-putting perceptions that housing resources are not being allocated justly.

As it relates to the dispersal of monetary support, the project would be better served if a single Council Member were to be empowered with the allocation of such funding. For instance, in the recent fiscal year, \$360,000 capital dollars were funded to the Baisley Houses east of Guy Brewer Boulevard to install security upgrades and various recreational services; while the other houses received funding for recreational amenities (i.e. basketball court). This circumstance shows a difference in priorities and encourages the perception of partiality and preference—a situation that should not and cannot be tolerated. Additionally, the majority of students presently residing in the Baisley Houses are zoned to attend P.S. 140. These students are not afforded

the opportunity to make use of relevant academic programs that are presently made available to secondary schools. Such programs include the Distance Learning Program, which is implemented within the curriculum of twelve schools and the Junior Knicks Program, presently used by all other elementary schools. I believe we can all agree that it is of utmost importance that our youths are given all opportunities to excel in the classroom, and a unification of the Baisley Houses will work towards the fulfillment of this goal.

CONTINUITY OF EDUCATION

Testimony of: _____

Good evening. My name is _____.

I currently reside in District 28.

I am the _____.

I am here to support the redrawing of Council District 28:

This testimony affects P.S. 140, P.S. 30, and P.S. 80. All aforementioned schools serve as feeder schools for other secondary institutions (i.e. M.S.226, M.S 72) majorly located in Councilmanic District 28. In addition, P.S. 140, 30, and 80, are presently funded by the Council Member, due in part to the large amount of attendees who reside within Councilmanic District 28. A portion of the funding has been dedicated to the Distance Learning program.

The Distance Learning program is an agenda that intends to interconnect all the schools in Councilmanic District 28 with unlimited outside resources. With the Distance Learning Program, students are able to interact with other students across the district, with the possibility of a global educational environment. Utilizing different technologies like video conferencing and smart boards, students are

able to learn together with expanded learning environments and compete in educational activities like science fairs. The Distance Learning Program also creates a global learning platform. Schools with the distance learning program are privileged with the ability to communicate to Foreign Diplomats, NASA, and other schools equipped with this technology around the globe.

This technology is presently in schools located in Councilmanic District 28 and not P.S. 140 (a school zoned for Councilmanic District 28 residents), which creates a major education disparity amongst the children. It is important to note that capital funding was allocated this fiscal year to P.S. 140 because of the advocacy of residents from the Baisley Houses and surrounding areas, which had not happened in fiscal year of 2012 when the Distance Learning Program was funded. This promoted a stigma of inferiority among children not privileged with experiencing the technology. This technology is found in the elementary and middle schools.

In view of the above-mentioned and the fact that these secondary schools share similar teaching methodologies, it is within reason for P.S 140 to join P.S 30, and 80 to fall within the purview of the Councilmanic District 28 jurisdiction. Such action will ensure the continuity of education among the schools and most importantly the

students.

CONTINUITY OF EDUCATION

Testimony of: _____

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I currently reside in District 28.

I am the _____.

I am here to support the redrawing of Councilmanic District 28:

On the subject of education, P.S. 140 was overlooked with regard to the distance learning program. It is important to note that while P.S. 140 is not housed in Councilmanic District 28, but in District 27, many of P.S. 140's students reside in the Councilmanic District 28. This is unacceptable, as this institution should have been included in the list of schools being given access to such academic resources. However, this is through no fault of any one Council Member but instead a result of the skewed positioning of Council district lines. But for the exclusion of P.S. 140, students residing in the surrounding south Jamaica area would have been fortunate enough to have been a host for the Distance Learning Program.

It is important to note that P.S. 30, 354, and 80 because of their physical location within Councilmanic District 28 were able to utilize the Distance Learning Program; whereas P.S. 140, due to its location

directly across the street, was unable to take part in the program. Moreover, the students residing within the geographic area for the Baisley Houses are zoned to attend P.S. 140 and the H.S. for Law and Government. Thus, it is only fitting that these schools are afforded equal academic resources as similar schools within the community. As shocking as this circumstance is, it is the stark reality, and such disenfranchisement will only be rectified with a unification of communities with common interests.

DRAWING OF LINES

Testimony of: _____

Good evening. My name is _____.

I currently reside in District 28.

I am the _____.

I am here to support the redrawing of Councilmanic District 28:

The state lines were redrawn with the intent to keep communities of common interests together. When communities of common interests are unified, elected leaders can better advocate for the constituents of that community.

We live in a community that is diverse with many common interests including but are not limited to the delivery of city services, flooding due to deteriorating sewer infrastructures, transportation and education amenities. We are also a community which share common interests concerning economic development which is largely attributed to the growth of our small businesses. However, with the current lines which are used to divide Councilmanic Districts 27 and 28, they have grown to a point where they are perceived counterproductive to the aforementioned interests. For instance, if we review the dividing lines of Guy R. Brewer Boulevard, the predominant eastern boundary of Councilmanic District 28, we will see

a significant change in pattern. For approximately twelve blocks between Foch Boulevard and 130th avenue, the dividing border is no longer Guy R. Brewer Boulevard; instead it is an uneven border consisting of Lakeview Boulevard, 160th street and Baisley Boulevard. This lends to issues such as voter confusion, which would exist in the predominant voting site of August Martin High School, and also creates confusion of Councilmanic confines affecting various small businesses (i.e. Walgreens, The Door). We firmly believe that if we used Guy R. Brewer Boulevard, a naturally occurring border, it would reduce the issues of voter confusion matters, and economic development concerns.

DRAWING OF LINES

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Good evening. My name is _____.

I currently reside in District 28.

I am the _____.

I am here to support the redrawing of Council District 28:

Redrawing the Council lines to mirror the Southern boundaries of the 32nd Assembly lines that utilize the N. Conduit—a major boulevard which is a natural occurring boulevard—would help minimize or eliminate voter confusion at the polls. For example, I live on 137th avenue. Currently, that is a dividing line between Councilmanic Districts 28 and 31. However, district lines are generally drawn along major boulevards. 137th avenue is a secondary road, not a major boulevard, and most of my neighbors become confused when they learn that they are represented by entirely different Council Members. This circumstance can also be applied to the Sidewalk and Trees Program. This was a capital project organized through the Parks Department, and funded by Council Member Ruben Wills. The project paid for damages done to sidewalks as a result of city trees. Due to the physical location of many homes that were situated outside of

Councilmanic District 28, many residents were not able to benefit from this program, such as my neighbor that lived directly across the street from me.

Because of this confusion, voters are deterred from exercising their right to vote, resulting in a low turnout. For instance, many voters who were assigned to polling sites housed at P.S. 80 and August Martin High School inadvertently voted for different representative. This indirectly results in the constraint of the fundamental right to participate in the electoral process. Such unfairness cannot and should not be allowed to persist. If the Council lines were drawn to divide districts along main roads and boulevards, as they are generally drawn, constituents would be much more aware of their representatives, thus lowering voter confusion and low turnout rates. The legislature redrew the new Assembly District boundaries, to adeptly respond to the evolving population within our communities. It is in our best interest to align with the state's concern and goal of combining communities of common interests.

COMMUNITY BOARDS

Testimony of: _____

Good evening. My name is _____.

I currently reside in District 28.

I am the _____.

I am here to support the redrawing of Council District 28:

As it relates to the effective representation of community boards we are here to testify that these community boards represent communities of common interest. Community boards serve as conduits to assist the community and its constituents in the delivery of city services. However, it is difficult to assert and see major change in significant issues when those afflicted make up a minority. For the purposes of this testimony we will concentrate on community boards 9, 10, and 12. Within Councilmanic District 28 the majority community boards are community boards 10 and 12 making up 68.5% of representation. When reviewing Councilmanic District 31, the representation for community board 12 is only 5% making Councilmanic District 31 a minority stake holder of community board 12. If we take this into account and in tandem with the new state lines, which have included geographic areas taking into account naturally occurring borders of Farmers Boulevard and the N. Conduit, we can

logically surmise that following the same patterns of Councilmanic District 28, will employ the full power of community board 12. Thus, this increases the majority representation of 68.5% to 73.5% majority representation of community boards 10 and 12. If we continue down this path of reasoning, looking at community board 9 Councilmanic District 28 only represents 11.6%; while Councilmanic District 32 represents 37.2%. If we combine Councilmanic Districts 28 and 32, it raises the majority representation of community board 9 within the confines of Councilmanic District 32 to above 47%, which not only allows for more favorable advocacy when dealing with communities of common interests, but fits along the natural occurring borders of Lefferts Avenue and 101st avenue.