

BRAD LANDER
COUNCIL MEMBER, 39TH DISTRICT

DISTRICT OFFICE
456 5TH AVE, 3RD FLOOR
BROOKLYN, NY 11215
(718) 499-1090
FAX: (718) 499-1997

CITY HALL OFFICE
250 BROADWAY, 17TH FLOOR
NEW YORK, NY 10007
(212) 788-6969
FAX: (212) 788-8967

lander@council.nyc.gov



**THE COUNCIL
OF
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

COMMITTEES

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
GENERAL WELFARE
LAND USE
HOUSING & BUILDINGS
WATERFRONTS

**Testimony to the New York City Districting Commission
August 13, 2012**

Chair Romano and distinguished members of the Districting Commission, Executive Director Hum, thank you for holding this first public hearing in Brooklyn, and for the opportunity to present testimony. I am New York City Council Member Brad Lander and I am honored to represent the 39th District in the City Council.

To begin with, I want to thank you for your service, and express appreciation that New York City's redistricting process is rightly considered a model process, with goals of democratic representation, equal justice under law, and good government. I am proud that New York City's process is undertaken by an independent commission, which I am very confident will review the demographic data, listen to public input, and produce proposed redistricting maps in accord with these goals.

Within that context, I would like to make two very modest recommendations. In general, I believe that the 39th is a great district, covering a number of wonderful neighborhoods. Two of those neighborhoods – the Columbia Street Waterfront and Gowanus Canal area — contain significant manufacturing and industrial areas. The current district lines carve up these industrial areas and separate the industrial areas from nearby residential areas.

The residential portion of the Columbia Street Waterfront neighborhood is in a separate district (39th) from the portion that contains the active freight terminal along the waterfront (33rd). I believe that the Port (controlled by the Port Authority, with some of it leased to NYCEDC) and the adjacent neighborhood should be in the same district. The need to mediate between residential and industrial uses has come up quite often in my tenure and unified representation of the Port and the neighborhood would help in addressing such issues in the future.

Similarly, the Gowanus Canal neighborhood is currently equally divided into three Council Districts (33rd, 38th and 39th). This area faces many planning and policy issues in the coming years: the EPA/Superfund cleanup of the sediment in the canal, much-needed action to improve water quality, as well as land use, zoning, and infrastructure decisions. The interdependent nature of these issues, many of which are deeply linked with City policy decisions, would be easier to grapple with if the industrial areas around the Gowanus were primarily in one Council district. I hope you will consider uniting more the Gowanus Canal area under one district.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.