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Testimony on District #8 Council Lines in Manhattan @ Schomburg Center

These proposed district #8 Council lines are not an attack on an elected official. This is an attack on a community, East Harlem, El Barrio, CPB#11, is a community that is recognized and acknowledged overlong period of time, with distinct history, identity and tradition.

The eighth council district lines, as they are currently proposed, are designed to minimize and practically eliminate our voice as a community.

It's like dividing up a family into different households. Telling your son you're going to go live with your uncle, telling your daughter you're going to live with your cousin and we're going to go live with some friends. I think we could all acknowledge this doesn't make sense.

In particular this neighborhood has traditionally had a strong Hispanic presence and at a time where the Latino numbers are growing and we finally have an opportunity for fair representation, a plan like this appears to be designed to strategically divide and conquer.

This is devastating to us as a community, it's unfair and it's unjust and it doesn't have to be this way. There are alternatives.

It is my understanding that there are sufficient numbers in El Barrio with the assistance from an adjacent area to keep East Harlem, El Barrio, and CPB#11, together as a community. This needs to be done and it must be done.

Thank you.