



STATEMENT OF OCA-NY
Before the New York City Council Redistricting Commission
Given by Susan Wong
October 10, 2012

Good evening. My name is Susan Wong. I have been a Queens resident for more than 10 years and live at 63-84 Saunders St, Rego Park. I am a counselor at Baruch College. I am testifying as a 10-year member of OCA-NY. OCA-NY, formerly known as Organization of Chinese Americans, is a non-profit, non-partisan organization dedicated to protecting and advancing the political, economic, social, and cultural rights of Asian Americans. OCA-NY is a founding member of ACCORD-Asian American Community Coalition on Redistricting and Democracy.

OCA-NY covers the five boroughs of New York City. In Queens, OCA-NY held a naturalization training in downtown Flushing that attracted over 100 people. We participate in the Flushing Lunar New Year Parade, conduct voter registration drives, and organize community education forums, including meetings with the Queens District Attorney involving crimes against Asian Americans. We co-sponsored candidate forums for former State Senate Districts 11 and 16, current City Council District 20, and newly drawn State Assembly District 40 and Congressional District 6 at Flushing Public Library. We participate in the International Dragon Boat Races in Flushing Meadows. OCA-NY works with MinKwon Center for Community Action, Chinatown Planning Council-Queens division, Korean Community Services, and Flushing Chinese Business Association. Our joint projects include language access, voter empowerment, and immigration reform.

The 2010 Census shows 500,000 Asians living in Queens alone. OCA-NY's position is based on its community involvement, input from its Queens members, and the 2010 Census.

Proposed District 25

Proposed District 25 divides Elmhurst primarily at the district's southwestern boundary. This boundary excludes an active part of Elmhurst that stretches all the way to the LI Expressway.

Elmhurst residents in District 25 shop in at least 3 of the major ethnic grocery stores on Broadway, off of Queens Blvd, and at 51st Ave and Queens Blvd. These establishments are all in the area that is not in District 25, but drawn into the northern section of proposed District 29. The significant Asian populations in Elmhurst who are in proposed District 25 frequently dine at the restaurants along Broadway and shop at the Queens Center Mall, which are both in proposed District 29. The majority-Asian churches at Broadway & Corona Ave and Queens Blvd & Corona Ave are also drawn into the northern section of proposed District 29. Given that this northern section is still what most residents consider Elmhurst, it is very different from other parts of proposed district 29. While Elmhurst residents use subway and bus lines on a daily basis, those who live further south of the LI Expressway use the Long Island Railroad more often. Those in the Forest Hills and Rego Park area of District 29 shop at Trader Joe's and other mainstream grocery stores. Everything in this section is more expensive: nail salons, boutiques, restaurants, and the rent is at least \$300-\$500 higher.

Please look at the proposed Districts in the Unity Map, which naturally lowers the southern boundary of District 25 to the LI Expressway to encompass all of Elmhurst into one district.