

Testimony of Gail Muhammad
New York City Districting Commission
Dennis M. Walcott, Chair New York City Technical College
(285 Jay Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201)
June 29, 2022, 4pm

My name is Gail Muhammad and I am a longtime resident of Crown Heights who currently lives in Crown Heights North. I am the Vice President of Crown Heights North Association, Inc., 1st Vice Chair of Community Board 8 and President of the 1200 Dean Street Block Association Inc.

Thank you to Chair Walcott, Executive Director Flateau and the New York City Districting Commission for the opportunity to provide testimony regarding the commission's upcoming work to draft a new districting plan for the city's Council Districts. My testimony represents the Crown Heights North community, bordered between the southside of Atlantic Avenue, the north side of Eastern Parkway, west to Washington Avenue and east to Troy Avenue.

Crown Heights has been my home for over 50 years. I am a prime voter who has voted in every election since 1968. I have a strong commitment to my community and take advantage of every opportunity to encourage my neighbors to be civic minded and participate in the political process. The strength of my community is its diversity and we must work to ensure that the 35th District maintains the current status. Over the past decade, I have seen our district gentrified and we have lost one in five Black residents and there is a plurality of white residents for the first time in generations. Although we can not make the 35th CD predominately Black again, we can make an effort to retain the diversity.

Several months ago, I provided testimony in the redistricting for the state assembly hearings. My ask at that time was the same as today's request. Crown Heights North has two Congressional districts and four Assembly districts and it is split between the 35th and 36th Council districts. Clearly, this split has a negative impact on our community. In order to get any community issue resolved within the Northern section of Crown Heights we must be in talks with legislators from both Council districts. I urge the Commission to ensure that our neighborhood is not "cracked." Neighbors who live across the street from one another may have different electeds representing them. I respectfully request that the boundaries of the 35th Council maintain the integrity of the current district lines without splitting neighborhoods.