



August 11, 2022

Dennis M. Walcott
Chair
New York City Districting Commission
253 Broadway, 3rd Floor
New York, NY 10007

Re: Commentary on Preliminary Plan #1

Commissioner Walcott:

We would first like to thank you, Executive Director Dr. Flateau, and the New York City Districting Commission for granting us another opportunity to provide input on the City's redistricting process. We appreciate how accessible and transparent you all have been to date, and we look forward to continuing this productive relationship as the redistricting process continues.

We support the proposed boundaries for the 35th and 36th Councilmanic Districts in Preliminary Plan #1 and do not believe any amendments are needed in upcoming drafts. While we are sad to lose crucial parts of our districts (including Lafayette Gardens for District 35 and Crispus Attucks Playground for District 36), we are optimistic that these portions will receive excellent representation from their new Council Members given the numerous benefits this new map provides.

As mentioned in previous testimony, we believe it is crucial to ensure neighborhoods remain whole in their local representation, especially since some of our neighborhoods are split among multiple districts at the federal and state level (especially Prospect Heights). The Preliminary Plan, as drafted, does an excellent job of ensuring unified representation for the historically marginalized Black communities in the neighborhoods of Fort Greene, Clinton Hill, Bedford-Stuyvesant, and Prospect Heights while splitting Crown Heights largely among the 35th and 36th Districts. By moving the small portion of Bedford-Stuyvesant from the 35th District to the 36th District, this map ensures the neighborhood has unified representation and that the vast majority of Community District 3 is located in Council District 36.

Additionally, these maps ensure the 36th District retains its near-majority of Black residents (49.2% as proposed compared to 49.6% currently) while the 35th District does not see its dwindling Black population further eroded (35.1% as proposed compared to 35.2% currently). And these maps ensure the districts retain the diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds they have for generations. The 35th District still includes both the Lubavitch and Caribbean communities, who have considered the 35th their district for decades. And the 36th District retains almost the entirety of Bedford-Stuyvesant and much of North Crown Heights — all of which is vitally important to us as Black representatives, and also to the historic communities we serve.



We know the task of the Districting Commission isn't an easy one; satisfying mandates of the New York City Charter, needs of the diverse communities across the City, and ensuring compliance with the federal Voting Rights Act can be elusive. For our two districts in Central Brooklyn, you have achieved this balance. As such, we are asking that the Districting Commission maintains the proposed boundaries for the 35th and 36th Councilmanic Districts in future drafts.

If you have questions or would like to discuss our proposal further, you may reach out to Andrew Wright, Director of Policy & Budget Initiatives for Council Member Hudson, at anwright@council.nyc.gov or 718-260-9191. Thank you in advance for your work and consideration of our proposal.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Crystal Hudson in black ink.

Crystal Hudson
Council Member, District 35

Handwritten signature of Chi Ossé in black ink.

Chi Ossé
New York City Council Member, District 36