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THE CITY OF NEW YORK

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August 18, 2022

Chair Walcott and Commissioners of the New York City Districting Commission:

My name is David Carr, and I am the Council Member for the 50th Council District.

I want to applaud you for listening to the many Staten Islanders who came out and demanded that our borough's unique voice not be compromised by being shared with another borough. Staten Islanders taken together represent a distinct community of interest and the latest proposed draft reflects that truth.

I am pleased that in these draft maps, several changes internal to Staten Island have appropriately consolidated neighborhoods that were previously divided into single districts - New Springville, Richmondtown, Rosebank/Shore Acres, Willowbrook, and Westerleigh.

Additionally, I would like to push back on what has become a common thread in the hearings on these draft maps so far - that somehow, they violate the principle of "one person, one vote" or state or city law. That is absolutely untrue. The proposed map follow the criteria laid out in the City Charter and the state law to a "t." The population of every Council district in these proposed maps is within the five percent variance that was recently imposed by state law. On Staten Island in particular, the map follow the guidelines to keep Council districts geographically compact, without crossing county boundaries, while at the same time they preserve historical, racial, ethnic and economic communities of interest. Most importantly, this proposed map does not diminish the power of Staten Island voters.

I understand it is convenient and easy for people to blame Staten Island for everything they do not like about the proposed boundaries in their respective districts. But we are not responsible for the city's rapidly growing population and changing demographics, nor the misguided state law that has placed such tight restraints on each district's population.

Once again, I want to express my appreciation to the commissioners for their hard work and the attention to detail given to these maps. I believe they achieve the nonpartisan goals of the Commission to draw fair maps that keep communities of interest intact.

Thank you.