

My name is Diana Ayala and I am the Deputy Speaker of the New York City Council. I appreciate the commission's recommendations and attempts to keep the districts whole in comparison to the previously released preliminary maps. We feel there are missed opportunities both in East Harlem and the South Bronx that can be rectified with changes to the current proposed lines.

In East Harlem to ensure no dilution of communities of shared Interest:

- 1) Adding back our East 116<sup>th</sup> Street district office which was moved outside the borders of our district.
- 2) The current map removes 125<sup>th</sup> from our district where we have been working progressively over the years on the many challenges including the opioid crisis. We have gradually been able to secure some of the vital resources needed to ensure the most urgent needs are being met. An interruption in service would only be a disservice to this community.
- 3) Removing 125<sup>th</sup> Street from our district would also remove important capital projects, specific to East Harlem, which my office has been working on for many years, dedicating a lot of time and effort.
- 4) We removed the blocks from 106<sup>th</sup> to East 115<sup>th</sup> along 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue which has been served by district 9 and would dilute the shared interest of the East Harlem community.

In the South Bronx we have proposed minor changes that would better serve the needs of the constituents:

- 1) In District 17 we have proposed keeping the northern section of Longwood with Councilmember Salamanca so that there is consistency of service to his constituents as our involvement has been limited to the northeast of our district.
- 2) Highbridge is a community that has long been disenfranchised. During the pandemic my office and many community members worked tirelessly to address the many challenges caused by COVID-19. We would like to continue working with the Highbridge community as we have deep ties there, a good understanding of the challenges they face and would like to continue to build on the foundation we started.

I want to thank the commission for considering this request and understanding the importance of deep ties in a community and the importance of continuity of service. We have worked tirelessly in East Harlem and the South Bronx to give a voice to a marginalized community that unfortunately, oftentimes suffers greatly from lack of city wide representation. Because of this we strongly urge you to consider our recommendations for the preliminary maps.