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OSWALD FELIZ
COUNCIL MEMBER, 15TH DISTRICT, BRONX

August 29, 2022
Dennis M. Walcott, Chair
New York City Districting Commission
253 Broadway, 4th Floor, NY, NY 10007

Re: Redistricting Preliminary Plan #1 for District 15 in the Bronx

Dear Chair Walcott:

I'm Oswald Feliz, and I am the NYC Council member for District 15 in the Bronx. I'd like to thank you and members of the Commission for the opportunity to testify.

District 15 in the Bronx is an incredibly diverse district, filled with hard-working New Yorkers and vibrant communities. It is also a district with vulnerable neighborhoods that face complex needs and challenges. To ensure these communities are fairly and adequately represented, it is crucial that Section 52 of the NYC Charter criteria for drafting these lines be strictly followed. To achieve this, the Commission should amend the district lines to address the following concerns:

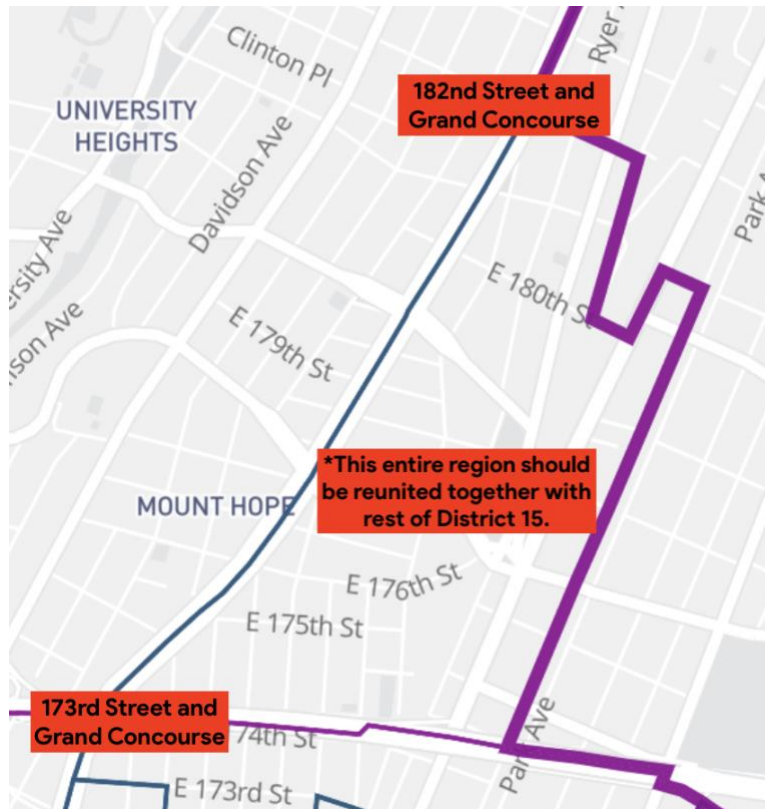
Neighborhoods East of Grand Concourse, between 173rd to 182nd Street, should returned to boundaries of District 15 (Burnside, East Tremont, and Mount Hope).

Neighborhoods East of Grand Concourse, between 173rd and 182nd Street (Burnside, East Tremont, and Mount Hope) should returned to boundaries of District 15 - to ensure communities with common interests are kept intact, districts are contiguous, and the district shape is not oddly shaped. For decades, the street of Grand Concourse has been the long, dividing line between Council Districts 14 and 15; and District 15 has covered neighborhoods East of Grand Concourse.

- a. Communities East of Grand Concourse, between 173rd and 182nd Street (Mount Hope/East Tremont/Burnside) are communities of common interests. These communities face challenges specifically related to the Eastern side of Grand Concourse – including economic, transportation, language, educational, and housing challenges. These neighborhoods of common interests should be kept contiguous, as they've been for decades, to ensure fair and adequate representation.
- b. Neighborhoods East of Grand Concourse include *the entire* Twin Parks housing development, which is home to thousands and thousands of vulnerable families – including developments of Twin Parks East, Twin Parks West, Twin Parks Northwest, Twin Parks Southwest, Twin Parks Southeast, and more. These communities of common interests face unique housing and economic challenges, and should be united in one council district to ensure fair and adequate representation of these vulnerable communities. The proposed map will separate these communities, which would be detrimental to some of the most vulnerable residents of the Bronx.

To ensure vulnerable communities are kept intact, district lines contiguous, district shapes are not oddly shaped, and communities are fairly and adequately represented, the neighborhoods East of Grand Concourse, between 173rd and 182nd Street should be reunited and returned to the boundaries of District 15, as they've been for decades.

Map of region:



City Council District 15 should be kept entirely intact.

District 15 is home to some of the most vulnerable Bronx residents. As Council member, I have worked with members of the many neighborhoods of the district, to provide services – including constituent services, community organizing, and delivered millions of dollars to transform schools and parks. The district should be kept entirely intact with the previous boundaries and neighborhoods, to ensure the successful community-building initiatives that were started in this vulnerable community won't have to be started from the beginning again.

Regards,

Oswald Feliz
NYC Council Member, District 15 (Bronx)