

Dear Members of the Districting Commission,

My name is **Dr. Victor Frias** and I am writing in regards to the recently released maps for Council District 45, in which I work as a **Principal at It Takes A Village Academy**. Over the past **3 years**, I have seen how important our school is to the district in providing quality education to our neighboring families in this predominantly Caribbean immigrant community of East Flatbush and Remsen Village.

Working as a **Principal** for **12** years has taught me how important local schools and education institutions are to the foundation of a neighborhood. I've connected with numerous parents, neighbors, and wide ranges of families throughout their children's educational career. Moving our primary school outside of Council District 45 will tear the fabric of our children's futures because it will no longer guarantee that East Flatbush students will receive the same level of funding and education as their parents and neighbors have previously been afforded decades prior. The burden on parents and caregivers will increase two-fold. Siblings will be separated by this new map. Those in grade school will be in a different district from their older siblings.

According to Chapter 2-A, Section 52 of the New York City Charter, subparagraph (c), "District lines shall keep intact neighborhoods and communities with established ties of common interest and association, whether historical, economical, or other." The preliminary maps clearly show that an established common tie (e.g. Meyer Levin Junior High School, Brooklyn Science & Engineering Academy and Samuel J. Tilden High School) are drawn outside of the historical District 45 maps. This alone re-enforces the need for **Council Member Farah N. Louis'** presence in Council District 45, as we prepare the next generation of leaders and professionals.

Altering the district lines from its historical coordinates compromises the growth and development of Black and Brown communities that fought to keep this, and neighboring communities' whole over the years. The proposed map would mean Council District 45 loses staple educational institutions like *P.S. 244K*, *Meyer Levin Junior High School*, *Brooklyn Science & Engineering Academy* and *Samuel J. Tilden High School*—in which encompasses *Kurt Hahn*, *It Takes A Village* (ITAVA) and *Cultural Academy for the Arts and Sciences* (CAAS) which have been in the East Flatbush community for generations. Removing these schools drastically distorts educational opportunities and is detrimental to the development and growth of our youth and families that will provide us with future leaders that speak many different languages, multicultural, and enriched with diversity from each culture represented within the district.

Keeping our schools in Council District 45 allows us to be able to take advantage of keeping the neighborhood within its historical context intact as it has been for generations and will further our scholars potential and aide families from having to travel an inordinate distance to other schools to fight for their enrollment. The proposed map disregards these aspects of our needs, and we demand that the changes are revisited to bring back Meyer Levin Junior High School, Brooklyn Science & Engineering Academy and Samuel J. Tilden High School (*Kurt Hahn*, *It Takes A Village*, and *Cultural Academy for the Arts and Sciences* into Council District 45.

I hope this commission will take the time to revisit the maps to prevent the loss of a major institutions in Council District 45 that can also affect our funding.

Sincerely,



Victor Frias, DRE

Principal

It Takes A Village Academy High School

[REDACTED]

From: Jennifer Dougherty [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, September 2, 2022 10:21 AM
To: Public Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Plea to keep District 38 as is

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Hello,

I am a 17-year constituent of City Council District 38 who is asking you to please not split up our district as per the proposed map dated July 15, 2022. This map splits the neighborhood of Sunset Park - a neighborhood of a unique and cohesive character made up mostly of Latino and Chinese immigrants, and would split our important neighborhood groups like our Community Board and 5th Ave BID. The proposed district would include much of Bay Ridge which is a neighborhood made up of a completely different character and population. It would be very difficult for a council member to accurately represent both West Sunset Park and North Bay Ridge. I ask you to please reconsider keeping District 38 more intact to include as much of Sunset Park as possible.

Thank you for your time,
Jennifer Doughert
[REDACTED] 51st St, Brooklyn 11220

Good afternoon! My name is Kristen Sze-Tu and I am grateful to submit my testimony in support of the Unity Map as a resident of Sunset Park, Brooklyn.

I live on 48th street between 4th and 5th avenue. I am a lifelong New York resident and a second-generation Chinese American whose parents grew up in Queens and spent a lot of time in Manhattan's Chinatown. When I moved to Sunset Park, I was struck by the strong sense of community that feels unique to the neighborhood. I moved here in search of a Chinese American community that felt like communities I had once been a part of before moving back from college, but I was surprised that Sunset Park was not that. It's more: what I have witnessed and felt during my time here is a community bolstered by the meaningful relationship– the collaboration and cohabitation– between two seemingly disparate communities.

To separate these communities along 5th and 6th avenues is to separate what is, in essence, a singular, close-knit, thriving community. Rallies for local politicians are well-attended by members of multiple ethnic communities, with multi-lingual materials. Schools, faith-based institutions, and community-based organizations such as The Center for Family Life in Sunset Park, or Voces Ciudadanas serve both and multiple communities in Spanish, Mandarin, and English. I have seen Latinx and Chinese parents buying pastries for their children before school at a Chinese bakery on 4th avenue, and a Chinese-owned grocery store on 4th avenue that carries snacks and foods familiar to Chinese cultures and to Latin American cultures as well. I once went to get an article of clothing repaired at a dry cleaner near me, and was warmed to see the Chinese owner speaking to a customer in fluent Spanish, where they seemed to know each other well and have a longstanding relationship. I mean this to say that the community members here make an effort to build connections with others in their community. I mean this to say that when I walk to Sunset Park, the park that serves as the namesake of this neighborhood, I see children of a wider variety of ethnic backgrounds, who could live on either side of 5th or 6th avenue, playing together in the shared public space that serves as the heart of a shared neighborhood.

Sunset Park is one community. The residents here, who come from seemingly separate communities and have immigrated from a multitude of countries with different linguistic backgrounds, have deep and long-standing relationships and history with each other. This community is proof that even with our differences, we can find shared values and can thrive in building our lives together. It is with this belief that I oppose the Commission's preliminary draft map and offer my support for the Unity Map developed by AALDEF, Latino Justice, and the Center for Law and Social Justice at Medgar Evers College. Dividing the community with the currently proposed redistricting lines reinforces the idea that racial and ethnic divisions should be enforced, and supports the fallacy that it is in the best interest of our communities when the history and the lives of people in Sunset Park demonstrate otherwise– that we live more meaningful, more connected lives when we build community with others.

Buenas tardes: Gracias a la Comisión de Redistribución de la ciudad de New York x organizar esta 2 serie de audiencias públicas:

Soy María Bárbara López he vivido en esta Comunidad x 43 años, soy líder Comunitaria, trabajadora incansable de mi Cultura y tradiciones mexicanas, inmigrante de calidad venimos a aportar. Los distritos justos son la base de una Representación buena y justa. La oportunidad de rediseñar distritos justos solo es cada 10 años, Si no lo hacen de manera correcta, nuestra Comunidad tendrá que vivir con las consecuencias.

Esta vez el Censo no funcionó. Durante la Pandemia La Comunidad estaba enfocada 100x100 cierto en la situación de Covid-19, sacudió Fuertemente en todo, Salud, alimentos, servicios, los las Familias, adultos mayores, niños, Sunset Park fue también epicentro de la Pandemia, las Funerarias y Hospitales no dieron abasto la muerte ganó afuera de las funerarias habían 4 o 5 contenedores de cadáveres entre ellos mi Papá, no había apoyo suficiente de nada, Medicamentos, no encontrábamos, alimentos, escasos, algunos recibieron, los trabajadores inmigrantes, nada, ellos estaban enfocado en sus situaciones se acumuló Renta, servicios, comida el miedo al contagio de Covi19 era Peligroso aun así la gente salió a trabajar, los pocos trabajadores del Censo eran de otras nacionalidades, eran de color, asiáticos, europeos, no hablaban español, la tecnología apenas la manejan los estudiantes también el inglés, ellos no podían comunicarse en su español raro, no se entendía uno si era un peligro abrir la puerta, Esta Comunidad es Latina y en español, la mayoría trabaja para pagar renta, servicios comida y enviar a sus familiares a su lugar de origen por lo cual no fuimos contados a conciencia, entonces como es posible que tengan una base sin estar seguros de, Faltan trabajos locales la población tiene que viajar todos los días lejos, la transportación es pésima y peligrosa merecemos tiempo de Calidad por favor "Esta tierra es de quien la trabaja".

Agradezco a esta Comisión por Comprometerse con un proceso abierto y que la Comisión trate de difundir información sobre el proceso de Redistribución de distritos, las próximas reuniones y las presentaciones, En el futuro, pido a la Comisión tomar conciencia, trabajando con organizaciones comunitarias y medios étnicos en esta Ciudad.

Gracias de nuevo, Gracias a también a muchos compañeros que estamos en esta lucha x un lugar digno y una representación buena con Justicia Verdad y Calidad. Dignos de esta Ciudad, los ojos del mundo están aquí. Gracias Gracias Gracias.

María Bárbara López

Brooklyn, New York

11220

Good afternoon: thanks to the New York City Districting Commission for organizing this second series of public hearings.

I am María Bárbara López. I have lived in this community for 43 years, I am a community leader, tireless worker and defender of my Mexican culture and traditions. We are immigrants of quality, we come to contribute. Fair districts are the foundation of good and fair representation. The opportunity to draw fair districts come only every 10 years, if we don't do it right, our community will have to live with the consequences.

This time the census didn't work. During the pandemic, our community was focused 100% on the situation of covid-19. It shook everything: health, food, services, the families, older adults, and children. Sunset Park was also an epicenter of the pandemic. The funeral homes and hospitals could not handle the amount of death outside. At some, there were 4 or 5 containers of corpses, among them my father. There was not enough support for anything, medicines, we did not find. Food, few, some received. Immigrant workers got nothing. We were consumed by our circumstances: rent arrears, lack of services, lack of food, the fear of contagion of covid-19 was dangerous even though people went out to work. The few census workers were of other nationalities. They did not speak Spanish, they worked with clunky technology, and they could not communicate with their strange Spanish. It wasn't clear if it was a danger to open the door. This community is Latin and Spanish-speaking, most work to pay rent, food, services and send their relatives to their place of origin so we were not counted conscientiously. Then how is it possible to have a basis for these maps without being sure... The census lacked local hire, our population has to travel every day very far, and transportation is lousy and dangerous. We deserve quality time, please. "The land belongs to those who work for it."

I thank this commission for committing to an open process and for the commission trying to disseminate information about the district redistribution process, upcoming meetings and presentations. In the future, I ask the commission to raise awareness, working with community organizations and ethnic media in this city.

Thanks again, thanks also to many companions who are in this fight for a dignified place and a good representation with justice, truth and quality. We are worthy of this city, and the world is watching. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

María Bárbara López

Brooklyn, New York

11220

[REDACTED]

From: Rebecca Harshbarger [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, September 2, 2022 11:11 AM
To: Public Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Written testimony

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Thank you very much to the NYC Districting Commission for organizing this second series of public hearings.

I am Rebecca Harshbarger, and I am a city worker and resident of Sunset Park who lives near Greenwood Cemetery. I first moved to Sunset Park in 2008, and it is an incredible community. City Council District 38 should largely keep its boundaries so that they are generally aligned with the 51st Assembly District, including Sunset Park, South Slope, Red Hook, and southern Bay Ridge. The current boundaries work well with our community, and our elected officials are finally doing a great job at working together in alignment. This makes our community stronger.

Fair districts are so important for fair representation. The opportunity to draw fair districts only comes once every 10 years. If we don't get this right, our communities will have to live with the consequences

I thank the commission for committing to an open process and for maintaining a website with information on the redistricting process, upcoming meetings, and submissions.

Thank you again and thanks also to the many partners who are in this fight for fair maps and fair representation.

Best,
Rebecca Harshbarger

[REDACTED] 21st Street
Brooklyn, NY 11215
646-830-5414