

[REDACTED]

From: Carmelo [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, August 18, 2022 7:33 PM
To: Public Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Statement

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I missed this email so I am going to submit a statement . This current district , makes sense , contiguously, culturally , and to people of faith . We share services , houses of worship , and families . Please don't break up this district .

Carmelo DiBartolo
11209

Sent from my iPhone

Frank Morano



The New York City Districting Commission

Staten Island Borough Hall, 10 Richmond Terrace Rm 125

Support for keeping Staten Island's three City Council Districts substantively similar to the draft proposal

TO: Chairman Walcott and the members of the Redistricting Commission

FROM: Frank Morano

August 18th, 2022

Thank you for the opportunity to be heard this evening. I realize that being on a commission like this is often a thankless job and your reward for having people like me complain to you in all five boroughs is that you don't get paid and get to work more. I hope you realize that even though you generally hear a lot of complaints about what you're not doing. Many New Yorkers, including me, really appreciate your public service. I'm hear today to speak strongly in support of adopting the recommendations put forth in the initial draft that you came up with.

Since 1898, one constant in city government has been that Staten Island has generally gotten screwed. As Commissioner Schnall can certainly tell you, there's no shortage of areas where Staten Island gets the short end of the stick. For example,

- Staten Island is the only borough without a public hospital
- Staten Island is the only borough without a subway linking it to the rest of the city and has a mass transit system, which is so woefully inadequate that's led to Staten Islanders having one of the longest commutes in the entire country.
- We're the only borough without regular street cleaning, even though our residents pay just as much in taxes as everyone else does.
- We've become accustomed to seeing zoning and traffic regulations, opposed by the local communities, forced upon them by City Hall bureaucrats, who have no appreciation for the unique character and culture of Staten Island neighborhoods.
- Most egregiously, Staten Island was the literal dumping ground for the rest of the city's trash for the better part of a century.

Why does this happen? Quite simply, it happens because Staten Island's population gives us little meaningful voice in steering the ship of city government. We have very little power when it comes to controlling our own destiny. There was a time where there were key aspects of city government where Staten Island had an equal say to the other boroughs e.g. the days of the Board of Estimate or having Councilmembers-at-Large. Those days are over and we've felt the

sting of those changes on Staten Island. We're now in a position where even if every single Staten Islander votes a certain way for a candidate or on a certain issue, our votes are dwarfed by the will of the rest of the city.

It's for these reasons that our elected officials have to fight much harder and much smarter than the rest of the city's elected officials, just to have a seat at the table.

As is evidenced by the fact that you have testimony from both Republican and Democratic elected officials urging you to keep SI's three Council Districts intact, we really don't have parties in SI, at least not when it comes to fighting for SI's fair share. Our elected officials are and have been warriors and to diminish their constituency or attempt to erode the power of the people they represent by forcing voters to pay a toll to meet with their elected official or forcing a council member to divide their attention from SI's unique needs and concerns, would be a tremendous injustice. If you look at Staten Island over the last 30 years, since we've had three Councilmembers, they've all put aside their partisan, ethnic or gender differences to fight as a single unit for Staten Island.

This was true in the days when the island was represented by:

- Stephen Fiala, John Fusco and Jerome X. O'Donovan
- Andrew Lanza, James Oddo and Michael McMahon
- Vincent Ignizio, Stephen Matteo and Debi Rose
- Joseph Borelli, David Michael Carr and Kamillah Hanks, as it is currently.

I implore you on behalf of all Staten Islanders from coast to coast and shore to shore, let Staten Island's council delegation keep fighting together.

It may seem like, because of the population differential raised by Speaker Adams, that we're getting special treatment, we're not. Just as the SI Ferry was made free 25 years ago, because there was a recognition that Staten Island wasn't being adequately provided for in terms of transportation. The powers that be at the time decided to throw us a bone because of that recognition. We're also not being adequately provided for in terms of having a governmental voice, so throw us a bone on this one.

Additionally, if Staten Island districts are merged with communities in Brooklyn or another borough, that would also be a tremendous injustice to the residents of that borough. After all, if a Councilmember's district is 75-80% Staten Island, where do you think their focus is going to be? Is it fair to the residents of that other borough to be an afterthought in the minds of the Councilmember or their staff? I don't think so.

Lastly, if the Commission ignores the preliminary recommendations that you came up with, even though every single person, who has testified tonight has asked you to preserve our districts, it sends such a terrible message to the public at large. Firstly, it sends the message that the public testimony doesn't matter and these hearings are nothing more than a dog and pony show. Secondly, it sends the message to future elected officials that shaming one borough and

attempting to embarrass a community's elected officials passes for effective governance. Either way, that's not the message that I think you'd want to be sending.

Do the right thing! Let Staten Island's elected officials continue to fight as a unit for Staten Island!

Sincerely,

Frank Morano

New York City Council Redistricting Commission

Public Hearing August 18, 2022

Borough Hall

Staten Island, New York

In order to save the commissioners' time and to afford others more time to appear publicly I am submitting this testimony in writing.

I urge the commission to maintain three council districts entirely within Staten Island. I am certain arguments for commonality of interests will continue to be made by others and I hope the Commission can mathematically achieve that goal within the parameters required.

My argument for doing so is based on a different reason: by attaching a relatively small part of Brooklyn to a predominantly Staten Island district would be a disservice to the Brooklyn residents of such a district.

Many years ago when the Council was comprised of 35 districts (and two at large members from each borough) I resided with my parents in Grant City on Staten Island.

We lived in a Council district that had a rectangularly shaped section that began at the water's edge of the Lower New York Bay and extended to Richmond Road or perhaps the Staten Island Railway right of way.

Our contact with our councilmember was never in person and rarely occurred in any form.

Even with the advent of email and an increased allocation of Council funding for communicating with constituents since that long ago time, a Council district drawn with a distinct smaller out of borough appendage puts those residents at a distinct disadvantage and in effect causes them to be under represented.

Accordingly, I am requesting the Commission to keep the plan for three districts wholly on Staten Island and to work to resolve the issues Speaker Adrienne Adams has legitimately raised within the borders of Brooklyn.

[REDACTED]

From: Michael Howald [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, August 19, 2022 6:26 PM
To: Public Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Opposition to Redistricting of Staten Island's North Shore

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To Whom It May Concern:

I am a resident of City council district 49 and I strongly oppose the efforts to realign the district with either Brooklyn or lower Manhattan. I have lived in the district for more than 12 years, after living on the Upper East Side, and it is clear to me that the issues faced by residents of the North Shore of Staten Island are distinctly different than those of Bay Ridge or lower Manhattan. Our area has suffered for years from a lower level of services and a sustained lack of interest by politicians in the other 5 boroughs. When I tell people in Brooklyn or Manhattan I live on Staten Island, moreover, they usually respond by saying "I'm sorry!," reflecting the typical sentiment in both these boroughs in particular that Staten Island is, and Staten Islanders are, somehow qualitatively different than other boroughs and their residents and not in a good way. We need a representative on the city council who can speak to the distinct needs of Staten Islanders, particularly in our majority non-white district that is different, not only from the other boroughs in terms of its needs but also from the other districts on Staten Island. Our interests will dramatically suffer if our representative has to divide their attention and time between two different boroughs with different demographics and challenges than the North Shore. For these reasons, I add my voices to those who oppose any realignment of our district with either Brooklyn or Manhattan.

Respectfully submitted,
Rabbi Michael Howald
[REDACTED] Bay Street Landing
Staten Island, New York

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[REDACTED]

From: Rich F [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, August 19, 2022 5:37 PM
To: Public Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Staten Island and South Brooklyn Districts

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Dear Commissioners,

I write in support of the preliminary plan that gives Staten Island three council districts. I watched some of the public testimony from Staten Island this week online and I agree with the commonly expressed view that the borough's interests are distinct enough to merit self-contained districts that do not spill over into Manhattan and Brooklyn.

As a political scientist who has taught at the College of Staten Island for twenty-three years, and as an occasional writer about the borough's politics, I endorse the view that there are a distinct set of concerns related to transportation, relations with city agencies, and rates of homeownership that merit Staten Island's consideration as a distinct community of interest for reasons of geography.

I would also add as a resident of Brooklyn on Bay Ridge's Shore Road, I do not want to reside in a Staten Island spillover district. Places like Battery City, Red Hook, Coney Island, and parts of Bay Ridge are better served by representation centered in their home borough. No resident of Manhattan or Brooklyn wants to be an appendage to a larger district across the bay if it can be avoided.

In addition, I also endorse the creation of the district that runs along the R train through the neighborhoods of Bay Ridge and Sunset Park that I see in the preliminary plan. Both communities face climate change challenges and issues related to land use management. It makes sense to link them in one district.

Sincerely,
Richard Flanagan
[REDACTED] Shore Road, Apt. 2C
Brooklyn, NY 11220

Roy Moskowitz/ Redistricting Testimony 7/7/22

This is my second redistricting submission. Despite my previous testimony, the latest draft of Staten Island's mid-Island 50th district still leaves New Springville/Heartland Village, the neighborhood that most associate with mid-Island out and keeps it in the South Shore 51st district. I know of no one who lives in that neighborhood that considers themselves a South Shore resident.

I live in Castleton Corners, which is in the 50th Council district. The 50th is allegedly the Mid-Island district. I say allegedly because it does not contain where I lived from 94-06, New Springville, Heartland Village and the mall area, which are the neighborhoods most Islanders associate with Mid-Island. These neighborhoods are in the Mid-Island 63rd Assembly district, but inexplicably are part of the South Shore Council.

50th district components Willowbrook and Manor Heights and the 51st's New Springville and Heartland village have Richmond County's largest Jewish populations. Despite Willowbrook and New Springville having shared borders as well as demographics, these neighborhoods instead share districts with less Jewish areas.

I'm not great at map creation, so I asked a friend to add New Springville/Heartland Village to the mid-Island district using the redistricting committees mapping utility. I also asked him to keep Grassmere in the district because our current Councilman lives in that neighborhood and creating districts that would pit current Councilmembers against each other in a primary or general election would mean my suggestion would automatically receive zero consideration.

He made different decisions than I would have made, but I'm including the map with my testimony. Ultimately, he switched Oakwood/New Dorp Beach with New Springville/Heartland Village.

<https://districtr.org/plan/138105>

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