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Flushing, Queensboro Hill, Hillcrest,
Fresh Meadows, Auburndale,
Oakland Gardens, Bayside, Douglaston

Testimony of New York State Assemblywoman Nily Rozic

July 22, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Nily Rozic and I represent the New York State Assembly 25th District. My district includes the communities of Flushing, Queensboro Hill, Hillcrest, Fresh Meadows, Auburndale, Oakland Gardens, Bayside Hills, and Douglaston. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony today.

Throughout the year I have met and heard from leading advocacy organizations working to raise awareness over the potential division in the 2020 redistricting cycle. As you know, our immigrant communities have been increasingly impacted by restrictive immigration policies, rising poverty, inefficient language access and more recently, an unfortunate uptick in violent hate crimes due to racism and misinformation surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic. These unique sets of challenges have given way to renewed activism bringing more voices to the forefront and it is critical that we continue making space for these communities to be involved in the political process. Many will be testifying through this process, and I commend them for their advocacy.

As such, I am urging the New York State Independent Redistricting Commission to give thoughtful consideration to keeping communities together allowing for fair and equitable representation. Specifically, 2010 Census Tract 797.01, which has a high concentration of South Asians living in Flushing, currently spans across my district and Assembly District 40. This area should be made whole bearing in mind that the majority of the temples, mosques, and other houses of worship are currently located in Assembly District 25 with the exception of BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir temple located on Bowne Street in Assembly District 40.

Following discussion with the APA VOICE Redistricting Task Force, we suggest that the lines be redrawn so that South Asian community living on the following three street blocks would be placed in the current Assembly District 25 boundaries: Cherry Avenue, Union Street, Kissena Blvd, and 45th Avenue; and Cherry Ave, Smart Street, Robinson Street and 45th Avenue.

Additionally, the communities in Bayside and Oakland Gardens are areas of interest and should be considered. The neighborhood of Oakland Gardens is one example as it is currently split between my district and Assembly District 24. One way to keep this neighborhood whole would be to extend Assembly District 25 lines out East to Springfield Blvd and South to 73rd Avenue.

Having represented Assembly District 25 for the last nine years building collaborative relationships with advocacy and non-profit organizations such as South Asian Council for Social Services, Korean Community Services, MinKwon Center for Community Action, Asian Americans for Equality, Chinese American Planning Council, and more, I know firsthand how committed these groups are to uplifting voices and protecting their right to be active participants in our democracy and civically engaged in our local communities.

The upcoming redistricting cycle offers a pivotal opportunity for us to foster an informative and inclusive redrawing process.

Thank you.