



CENTRAL QUEENS REDISTRICTING COALITION

May 3, 2022

By E-Filing and E-Mail (cervas@cmu.edu)

Jonathan Cervas, Ph.D., Special Master
Carnegie Mellon University
5000 Forbes Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15213

Re: Harkenrider et al. v. Hochul et al., Index No. E2022-0116CV

Dear Special Master Cervas:

The Central Queens Redistricting Coalition was established to provide a voice to the diverse center of the New York City Borough of Queens County, to obtain fair representation for all. Our work initially was focused on the central Queens neighborhoods of Elmhurst, Rego Park, Forest Hills, Kew Gardens, Richmond Hill, Briarwood, and Jamaica Hills. However, following a request from the Commissioners of the New York Independent Redistricting Commission after we made our initial submissions, we drafted complete New York State Assembly and State Senate Maps for the borough of Queens. In the hopes of assisting you in your assignment we now submit the New York State Senate Map we developed for Queens County for your consideration.

APPROACH

We believe strongly that civic engagement in our neighborhoods is central to a vibrant and thriving community. When a singular area has multiple representatives for the same level of government, it creates an unnecessary barrier to engagement. Recent challenges like the flooding following Hurricane Ida demanded robust and immediate engagement with our elected officials. Currently that means, for instance, Rego Park and Forest Hills need to engage with two City Council Members, four State Assembly Members, three State Senators, and one Congress Member. This is a reality that repeats in neighborhoods throughout the City of New York. Simplifying the representation for these communities broadens civic engagement, makes representatives more accessible and accountable, and helps neighbors organize in a streamlined fashion. It also makes it easier for elected representatives at different levels of government to organize coordinated responses to crisis or everyday community needs.

Other counties and cities throughout the state outside of New York City do not experience a similar fragmentation of representation. The maps that have thus far been proposed, be

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they from the NYSIRC, the State Legislature or the parties to the above captioned matter, continue the pattern of fracturing identifiable and distinguishable communities between multiple representatives. We ask that the final district maps for the New York State Senate be drawn to streamline and simplify representation in any given community. Streamlined representation simply makes it easier for our neighborhoods to get the help they need when they need it.

Our approach, therefore, has been to identify discrete communities, often capable of being delineated by the “natural” boundaries of our urban environment - highways, major through streets, parks, community board districts and county lines. We have designed district maps that are consistent with the requirements of the New York State Elections Law, while keeping cohesive and discrete communities together as much as possible.

CQRC NY STATE SENATE MAP (QUEENS ONLY)

Given the population apportionment requirements, we had to venture into nearby Kings County to accommodate the correct apportionment. The design of the Senate map attached below utilizes major waterways and through streets to determine most boundaries. For instance:

- Newtown Creek - Senate Districts 2 & 9
- Van Wyck Expressway - Senate Districts 3 & 5/Senate Districts 4 & 6
- Long Island Expressway - Senate Districts 5 & 6

DEMOGRAPHICS

CQRC NY STATE SENATE MAP (QUEENS ONLY)

The table below is only for the 7 districts entirely in Queens County. We lose one Black-majority district that is replaced with a no majority district. This reflects the changing demographics in Queens (see at bottom).

Senate	CQRC Proposal	2010 Map	Difference
Hispanic	1	1	0
Black	1	2	-1
Asian	1	1	0
White	0	0	0
No majority	4	3	1
Total	7	7	0

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We will have a small portion of NE Queens (Douglaston and Little Neck, labeled as District 10) that will go into Northern Nassau County (25,355 people). It will make up 7.9% of whichever district to which it is added. Despite the differences between Queens and Nassau Counties, this portion of New York state shares much in common when you consider factors such as commerce, transportation infrastructure, placement on the north shore of Long Island along the Long Island Sound, etc. Given the population criterion, this was unavoidable.

Our map has two Queens-Brooklyn districts:

- District 8 puts Howard Beach and the Western Rockaways with Brooklyn. In terms of population that is 55,256 from Queens (17.2%) and 266,134 from Brooklyn (82.8%). It is a majority White district (66.4%). This would create a presumed Republican-majority district. The area shares the Jamaica Bay shoreline that leads into the Lower Bay and the particular challenges presented there, for instance the effects of climate change, severe storms and related flooding that has dramatically impacted this specific region.
- District 9 puts Ridgewood with Brooklyn. In terms of population that is 65,157 from Queens (20.2%) and 256,907 from Brooklyn (79.8%). It has no racial/ethnic majority.

In total, Queens has a population of 2,405,464, and we give away 145,768 to other boroughs (6.1% of our population). Given our total population, we are entitled to 7.5 senate districts. Our maps give Queens 7 senate districts within the borough's borders. We give away 0.38 of a senate district to Brooklyn, 0.08 to Nassau, and keep 0.05 in Queens with our deviations.

OVERALL DEMOGRAPHICS (QUEENS ONLY)

Here is the change in racial/ethnic demographics.

Demographic Change	2010	2020	Difference
Hispanic	27.5%	27.8%	0.3%
Black	17.7%	15.9%	-1.8%
Asian	22.8%	27.3%	4.5%
White	27.6%	22.8%	-4.8%
Other	4.4%	6.2%	1.8%

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LEGISLATURE'S PROPOSED SENATE DISTRICT 17

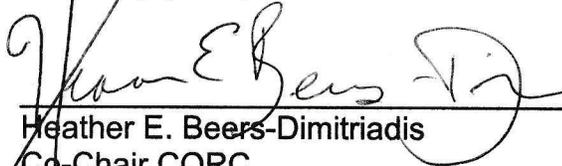
Although we draw our maps differently for the area along the Western Queens/North Brooklyn border, we recognize that the Legislature's proposed new Senate District 17 is one of the few proposed districts that we feel match our approach and priorities. It creates a plurality Hispanic district that keeps together neighborhoods like Ridgewood and Woodhaven, which have long been divided. In the event our maps are not fully incorporated into the final map, we would encourage the Special Master to make every effort to keep as much of the newly proposed Senate District 17 as possible.

* * *

We hope this approach and the district maps we have developed will assist you in drawing the final maps that will govern who represents us for at least the next 10 years. It is a critical task that we firmly believe needs to be focused on the needs of the communities contained within each district and not on the desires of the electeds to retain their seats.

Thank you for your consideration of our proposal.

Very truly yours,



Heather E. Beers-Dimitriadis
Co-Chair CQRC



Raj Korpan
Co-Chair CQRC

pwb/HDRK

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FINAL MAP

CQRC NY STATE SENATE MAP (QUEENS MOSTLY)

LINK: <https://davesredistricting.org/join/9cd85f82-a720-4471-99c2-232c9e2e833f>

