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Dear Honorable Judge McAllister:

The Long Island Business Council encompasses two counties representing over 3 million residents and over 65k small businesses. In addition, we work with both the Nassau County Chambers of Commerce and the Suffolk County Alliance of Chambers. Both County chambers work together regionally on issues that cross over County lines.

One of the issues that will affect small businesses is how the congressional lines in CD#2 have been redrawn to span the width of Long Island, from Fire Island to Eaton's Neck. The horizontal slice of the top to middle of Long Island will not be efficient and will add layers of bureaucracy as we would now have to include additional regional issues from both the North and South shores

While both LIBC chairs represent their respective counties will again have to cut this congressional pie yet again. Historically the district was well established on the South Shore and the residents on that shore had to deal with many of the same issues of congestion, weather patterns, summer destination, and economic factors which are much different on the North Shore. To span this district to the North Shore would dissipate the effective energies of any member of Congress regardless of political affiliation.

We as LIBC chairpersons know that putting aside political labels and banners and working together as regional business leaders that we will be successful and help pave the way for other business organizations and downtown brick and mortar stores to survive.

Any Civic, Community, Chamber of Commerce of Governmental Leader will agree that the South Shore of Long Island has unique issues and challenges that makes it imperative that these communities not be annexed through redistricting. From water quality, transportation issues, protecting barrier beaches and the southern bays, the issues facing these communities make them unique and united in their efforts to protect their quality of life. Federal matters such as efforts by the Army Corp. of Engineers to preserve barrier beaches are concerns that Non-South Shore residents just can't and don't understand. Putting Eaton's Neck in the same district as Fire Island would seem nonsensical.

Due to Long Island's topography, the way natural disasters affect the South Shore communities differ from their North Shore counterparts. In Super Storm Sandy and Hurricane Irene, the South Shore communities suffered uniquely from coastal flooding, while North Shore communities dealt more with downed power lines and tree damage. In fact, the bulk of reconstruction dollars were spent on the South Shore communities devastated by Super Storm Sandy and more than a decade later residents still grapple with the aftermath of the storm. Having a Representative in Congress who fully understands these facts and is not divided in the best interests of different communities enables that person to quickly advocate for the correct FEMA response to disaster.

All of these issues have an enormous economic impact on the region as well. Restoring power and transportation quickly obviously is key to avoiding ruinous financial losses to our local businesses and companies. That's just one reason why local Chambers of Commerce and business groups understand and appreciate the unique nature of the South Shore communities. Even retail patterns differ from North Shore to South Shore. You're not likely to find a surf shop on the North Shore as you will on both Babylon and Sayville's Main Streets.

We are confident that if you are able to reset the congressional map in the 2nd Congressional District back to the South Shore our ability to make more positive changes for our members, stakeholders and residents in both Nassau and Suffolk counties will help restore the balance for cohesive efficient and partnerships within the private public partnerships. This will be a win-win-win for all concerned.

Sincerely,

Richard M. Bivone

Richard M. Bivone,
Nassau Chairman

Robert Fonti

Robert Fonti,
Suffolk Chairman