

**JOSEPH P. ADDABBO, JR.**

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May 18, 2022

Hon. Patrick F. McAllister  
Steuben County Supreme and County Court  
3 East Pulteney Square  
Bath, NY 14810

Dr. Jonathan Cervas, Special Master  
Poster Hall 386, 5000 Forbes Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15213

Re: Proposed NYS Senate District 15, Queens (Index No. E2022-0116CV)

Dear Judge McAllister and Dr. Cervas,

I hope this letter finds you well and thank you for your efforts with regards to the redistricting process. I would like to take this opportunity to respectfully request consideration to include the entire Howard Beach 11414 zip code in Queens, NY within the proposed 15<sup>th</sup> NYS Senatorial District for the following reasons:

- In 2012, Superstorm Sandy devastated the vast majority of the 11414 zip code. Thousands of residential homes, local businesses, schools and places of worship throughout Howard Beach were destroyed by the storm. In the hours and ultimately years that followed Sandy, my Senate office located in Howard Beach worked with every level of government to restore the 11414 area and is still working on related resiliency projects there. Due to its geographical uniqueness, the communities within 11414, and many of the roughly 27,000 residents, are susceptible to storm flooding, due to the fact that the 11414 areas are surrounded by water bodies to the east, west and south. Most recently, 11414 was victimized by Hurricane Ida. As a result, the entire 11414 shares the concern of flooding and water damage from storms and high tides. Because of this shared concern and interest, dividing the 11414 communities in to multiple senate districts would be detrimental to the people there.
- Currently, there are ongoing and pending resiliency projects in multiple areas of 11414, which the various community groups and elected officials are working on. I am concerned that dividing such 11414 communities into 3 senate districts will interfere with the progress being made to address the flooding issues, impede the existing positive working relationships and the timeframe for related projects. The continuity and institutional knowledge of said projects, issues and tidal flood timeframes is a benefit to the resident and businesses within the communities of Howard Beach.
- Keeping local school districts in Queens whole, instead of splitting the educational issues of students into separate senate districts and different county boroughs seems detrimental to the children within the 11414 zip code. In the 11414 zip code there are 3 public schools, 2 Catholic parishes, a private school, 3 Jewish congregations, and 2 Protestant places of worship. According to the latest Census, there is an increasing population of Muslim residents, being linked to the current proposed 15<sup>th</sup> Senate District to the north, as those residents attend Mosques in Ozone Park.

- There is one major roadway, Cross Bay Boulevard, which connects 11414 and serves as its main business district. Said boulevard also links 11414 with the northern communities of the proposed 15<sup>th</sup> Senate District. The businesses along Cross Bay Boulevard share the negative economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The entire stretch of Cross Bay Boulevard shares multiple MTA public transportation bus lines and to displace the 11414 communities into 3 senate districts would be a disservice to the residents as those communities are currently going through an MTA Redesign project, which with community input proposes to reroute many bus lines. The 11414 communities share and are linked with northern communities by the MTA "A" train service as well.
- The 11414 areas are not only linked by bus and train service with the northern communities of the proposed 15<sup>th</sup> Senate District, but also share the NYPD 106<sup>th</sup> Police Precinct, School District #27, Community Board 10 and other common community groups. Zip codes 11414, 11416, 11417 and 11421 are all within School District #27. Zip codes 11414 and 11417 are within the same NYS Assembly and NYC Council Districts. Separating the common interests of the people living within the 11414 zip code from those other zip codes and placing the Howard Beach residents into 3 different senate districts could have a negative impact on them advocating for improved public safety and educational resources, as well as create voter confusion and possible voter alienation and disenfranchisement.
- While it is conceivable that larger populations of Congressional district lines necessitate the need to expand said lines beyond different county boundaries, smaller NYS Senate districts do not have to cross county boundaries. To keep the tightknit, diverse working-class families of the 11414 communities wholly within Queens County would better serve the residents due to the historical ties and common interests within itself and shared with the communities to the north in the proposed 15<sup>th</sup> Senate District, as opposed to being placed in the 19<sup>th</sup> Senate District in Brooklyn County. It would be prudent to keep the 31 Census Tracts in Queens County within the 15<sup>th</sup> Senate District as they currently exist.

Including the Howard Beach 11414 zip code within the 15<sup>th</sup> Senate District can be implemented while utilizing natural boundaries to reduce the population from other areas of the proposed 15<sup>th</sup> district lines. I have spoken to my colleague, NYS Senator Roxane Persaud, who has agreed to relinquish the 11414 zip code from her 19<sup>th</sup> Senate District in Brooklyn, as she is hopeful to gain back the areas of Bergen Beach and Mill Basin to her district. Senator Persaud also agrees that the unique natural boundaries and common interests within Howard Beach dictate that it should remain in Queens County and be part of the 15<sup>th</sup> Senate District.

Once again, I ask respectfully that the decisions made regarding the district lines for the people of the 15<sup>th</sup> Senate District are not done to divide the 11414 communities into 3 separate Senate districts as currently proposed, but to have their shared unique geographical interests and concerns remain whole for the benefit of those residents. I am hopeful that the above-mentioned points, in part relating to Superstorm Sandy, Hurricane Ida, flooding and related mitigating resiliency projects, the single major roadway and business district, as well as the mutual Police Precinct and School District demonstrate the unique community of shared interest the Howard Beach communities of 11414 truly are.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Very truly yours,

Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr.