

Map Explanation

Wilson Prieve

Dear Honorary Patrick McAllister and Johnathan Cervas,

This is a follow up to my earlier congressional map submission which can be found at:

<https://iapps.courts.state.ny.us/nyscef/ViewDocument?docIndex=2wY8zlFuKz5/f4O5fDNHFA>

Or

<https://davesredistricting.org/join/91607142-d7fc-4f27-ae7d-38e0e8d786bb>

In this brief I go more into depth on a district by district basis of what decisions were made and why, as well as pointing out areas where I may disagree with maps submitted by other parties.

Disclaimer: I have great respect for all parties who submitted maps and have been engaged in the process and no part of this is meant to come off as condescending. Also I am by no means a lawyer, I am a high school student, so my writing may come off as less formal than some by other parties but I hope the substance is there.

District 1:

Most of the submitted maps thus far agree on a general configuration for district 1 as the outermost Long Island district. My map takes in the entirety of Smithfield along with all existing CD-1 municipalities to create a district of nearly ideal population size. The remaining precincts chosen to balance population are on the North Side of Islip as is the case in the current map. Many of the submitted maps chose to split both Islip and Smithtown when it was unnecessary to do so.

District 2:

This district retains the core of the existing district 2 but is pushed slightly upwards due to underpopulation and allowing district 4 to be entirely nested within Hempstead and Long Beach. The proposed map by Mr. Dunn stretches district 2 across the entire width of Long Island when the North and South shores of the Island are culturally distinct and should be kept in separate districts as is the case in the current configuration. The Long Island Expressway is a good dividing line for this split being one of the major arteries of Long Island.

District 3:

This district succeeds the current district 3, but ups the Asian population to 24% of the district by reaching further into Queens (while still keeping district 6 as a functional Asian seat). This shift further into New York City was necessary due to the underpopulation of Long Island districts. Mr. Dunn, the Democrats, and Common Cause all have maps whose district 3 which crosses the Long Island Sound into Westchester. In my view, crossing the Long Island Sound should be avoided as Northern and Eastern NY suburbs are very distinct, and furthermore, crossing the sound further splits apart the Asian communities in Nassau County, Glen Oaks and Douglaston.

District 4:

This district retains the core of the existing district 4, but is redrawn to be based entirely within Hampstead and Long Beach. As this is slightly more than 1 district, the precincts chosen to be omitted from the district were many of the same African American precincts currently omitted to both, make district 4 more competitive and boost the black population in district 5. The Empire and Common Cause proposals needlessly butcher up district 4 into a less compact district that reaches into other communities outside of Hampstead when a Hampstead based seat is very compact and clear in terms of COI.

District 5:

This district succeeds the current district 5, and retains 50% black, with changes being made only for population reasons. To account for this, the district takes in some diverse areas around Morris and Ozone Parks. The remedial map proposed by the Republican Plaintiffs would split the black community based around Springfield Gardens and instead connect to distinct Black and Hispanic communities in Hempstead in an attempt to boost the black population of the district, when there is no need to do so with a proper configuration in New York City.

District 6:

This district succeeds the current district 6 and continues to function as an Asian seat. To account for district 3 picking up some of the Asian communities in its outermost communities, district 6 picks up heavily Asian communities around Woodside and Sunnyside in Queens. This better distributes Queen and Nassau County's Asian population between districts 3 and 6 than other submitted maps because district 3 would have greater Asian influence without affecting district 6. It's also a logical district to pull in towards the city given the underpopulation of Long Island districts. This district would also more clearly follow Queens Boulevard (the road and Subway) which is a major corridor in Queens that the Asian community has historically been based around in Queens.

District 7:

While the core of district 7 is retained, the district is dramatically reconfigured. Nevertheless, the district keeps a Hispanic majority. The previous district 7 had an arm which reached down into Sunset Park to include its Hispanic population to increase the district's overall Hispanic influence. However, this arm was quite messy and long for how little Hispanic population it actually added, and the new 10th district in my map forces the arm to be eliminated. This makes the district more clearly based along the L train corridor in Queens. One consequence of this configuration that is necessary to create the new 10th is the 7th taking in heavily white neighborhoods of Greenpoint and Long Island City which may weaken Hispanic influence over the primary, however, this was a necessary trade to help boost minority access elsewhere.

District 8:

While this district succeeds the current 8th and remains a black seat, the district is pretty dramatically reconfigured to account for the new 10th. The lack of the 7th district in Brooklyn means that the 8th district must take in communities along the waterfront, however, these communities have scattered African American populations that help add to the district's black %. The way I decided to split the black community itself between the 8th and 9th district was largely along socioeconomic lines as well as that the black communities taken in by the 8th are slightly more diverse and integrated with the immediate city than the 9th which takes in much more absolute black communities further out from downtown which are less integrated with the city.

District 9:

This district complements the 8th district as listed above, and continues to be a functionally black district. This district also takes in a significant portion of the Jewish community in Brooklyn that district 10 was unable to take in purely by constraints of population. While some of the maps keep the 8th and 9th districts in similar configurations to their current ones, they are able to do so because they are keeping the current configuration in south Brooklyn which splits the Asian community. It is because 8th and 9th districts are reconfigured in this way.

District 10:

This district dramatically changes the current district which stretches all the way up to 122nd street in Manhattan. The district is condensed to be based in the South district primarily around growing Asian communities in Dyker Heights and Bensonhurst. This new district is 32% Asian. This district also would consolidate more of the Jewish/Orthodox communities into a single district where they would have more political influence. While this is a dramatic change from the old map, it's one that is necessary and dramatically improves the map and gets rid of the messiness between the old 7, 10, and 11th districts which collectively split these communities. Furthermore, this new district 10 would likely be highly competitive; according to DRA Joe Biden won it by just 0.6% in the 2020 election. Many of the current maps keep the current 10th district as is, which is fine from a least changed perspective, however, the current map denies these communities a voice and I believe these communities deserve their own dedicated district. Furthermore, it helps to clean up the map overall. Additionally, some of the maps such as Mr. Dunn's or the Plaintiff's create a South Brooklyn district that is oriented more around an Orthodox seat than an Asian seat. While the Orthodox community is a clear community in South Brooklyn, ultimately the Asian community takes precedence as they are actually their own census group and are protected under the VRA hence why my NY-10 predominately revolves around the Asian community.

District 11:

This district remains the Staten Island base but instead of being attached to Brooklyn is now attached to Manhattan. My map is in fact the only submission thus far to make this decision. The reason I made this decision was to make way for the new 10th district as well as to avoid the chain reaction some of the maps that created a New South Brooklyn seat had when they still tried to keep Staten Island attached to South Brooklyn - one that leads to the NY-03 which crosses the sound. Furthermore, even though Staten Island isn't land or road contiguous with Manhattan, roughly 90k people a day use the ferry daily largely to get to and from work entering Lower Manhattan, in fact this is the US's busiest passenger only ferry. Staten Island and Lower Manhattan are also 2 of the highest income communities in the city, and are predominately white. It also doesn't impact any of the VRA protected districts in the map and allows district 12 to very nicely fit into central Manhattan. No matter where Staten Island is attached to the rest of the city, a creation of a South Brooklyn Asian/Jewish opportunity seat is going to make it a strange pairing as State Island is significantly more conservative than the rest of the city. I would be open to seeing if there's a way to preserve NY-11's competitiveness while also keeping NY-10 as an Asian opportunity seat.

District 12:

This district becomes entirely based within Manhattan due to the changes with the 10th district, taking in mostly affluent white communities around Midtown and on the Upper East and West sides. Manhattan has over double the population of a district and yet currently has no district entirely embedded within it. Yet proposals such as the Democrats keep the split of Midtown down the middle, splitting the city's central business district under the guise of "least change", and having NY-10 reach down into Asian communities in South Brooklyn it doesn't have much in common with. Many of the other submitted maps create a district based within Midtown and Lower Manhattan; in my map this is not possible due to how NY-10 is configured and Lower Manhattan and Midtown Manhattan are quite distinct as they are essentially 2 smaller central business districts within one, however, this is still a step in the right direction nonetheless.

District 13:

District 13 succeeds the current 13th district and continues to be majority Hispanic. The district trades the communities of Norwood up North for communities in the Southern Bronx being defined as below the Cross Bronx Expressway. This decision was made to increase compactness as well as allow district 15 to access Yonkers's Hispanic population as populations force the district northwards. The split between districts 13 and 14 can be refined but is based on who lives closer to communities based around the 6 train vs the 2 and 5 trains. When this change in district 13 is not made, we see maps such as those submitted by Democrats or the Unity Coalition where district 15 becomes uncompact stretching Northwards and trying to grab Riverdale despite being based around the Southeast Bronx. In Mr. Dunn's map, we see the outright elimination of a majority Hispanic seat in part because of this, forcing district 14 to be a Hispanic "pack".

District 14:

District 14 succeeds the current district 14, though once again population changes force some dramatic changes. The big change in my map is that district 14 picks up Astoria which is lost by the 12th in order to become entirely based in Manhattan and that it exchanges the community of Morris Park in the Bronx for communities like Port Morris and Hunts Point. This helps to improve the overall compactness of the map, but again uses the 6 train in the Bronx as a guiding corridor. This configuration is what ultimately allows district 15 to go northwards and get Hispanic population in Yonkers. Some of the proposals such as the Plaintiffs create a messy 14th district that reaches into Asian communities in outer Queens such as Glen Oaks that have nothing to do with the rest of the 14th district and in turn hurt those Asian communities. VRA districts should always remain focused on the community they intend to give a voice to.

District 15:

District 15 is shifted northwards to account for population changes and the loss of a seat, hence pretty dramatically alternating the current seat. Nonetheless, it ensures there are still 3 Hispanic majority districts in the Bronx. When deciding how to go North, Yonkers seemed to be the best decision as it has a relatively high Hispanic population while Eastchester and Wakefield remain entirely within district 16 to give those communities black populations a chance to influence politics in the 16th district and not be drowned out by Hispanic votes.

District 16:

This district is based on the current 16th district, though once again is forced to shift northwards due to population. Despite this, the district remains majority Non-White and is in fact only 38% White by VAP in 2020. This should give both the Black and Hispanic a strong voice in the district's politics, especially in a primary. The Democratic Proposal stretches this district out all the way up to Putnam County which is very unrelated to the core of the district and very uncompact.

District 17:

This district also shifts northwards due to population, becoming more competitive in the process. As is the case with the current NY-17, this district takes in all of Rockland County as well as all of the remainder of Westchester County. Ultimately, to try and keep the Orthodox Community whole, the remaining population is taken from Orange County including Kiyas Joel as Michael G Sterthous and Robert S. Rosborough IV requested in their letter to the court on April 29, 2022.

District 18:

This district remains just North of district 17 and shifts northwards for population reasons. This district aims to take in NYC's outermost suburbs and exurbs and is guided by many of the East-West roads we see in this region of the state. This district would likely be highly competitive politically. However, some of the proposed maps dramatically alter this region of the state to create an East - West divide between districts 18 and 19, which in turn makes one Democratic leaning and the other Republican leaning based on FiveThirtyEight's PVI in their redistricting tracker. This ultimately reduces competitiveness and not for VRA reasons and also dramatically alters the current map, plus makes district 18 quite "long". My proposed map tries to ensure both districts 18 and 19 are politically competitive while also acknowledging COIs.

District 19:

This is an exurban/rural district in upstate NY that shifts northwards due to population changes. The district also takes in much of what was formerly district 22. An effort was also made to keep the district compact. This new iteration of NY-19 adds the entirety of Chenango County, Madison County, and some of Oneida to account for its Northwards shifts. In Oneida County, the district takes in Utica to try and help create a true rural northern New York district while NY-19 retains some elements of urban and suburban influence throughout. Once again, this district remains highly competitive politically.

District 20:

District 20 also shifts slightly northwards due to population changes, but still remains based around the Albany metro. With the exception of the Democratic Plaintiffs, all other submitted proposals exclude Glens Falls from the district, instead putting them in district 21. One principle that was followed upstate on my map was trying to keep urban with urban, and rural with rural to the extent practicable. The Adirondack Northway is a clear urban corridor that should be made into a district rather than including exurban and rural areas to the south and west of Albany as many maps do.

District 21:

This district retains much of the former NY-21. Every map submitted has a clear northern New York district that resembles the current NY-21. However, what makes my NY-21 different is that an effort was made to make it exclusively rural rather than include runoff from Albany. Adirondack State Park has a huge presence in the district, so by shifting more of the population over into the Watertown area and away from exurban Albany, it makes the district more compact when you look at where population lives. Generally though, all the maps seem to roughly agree as to what this district should look like.

District 22:

The former district 22 is outright eliminated due to population loss, and instead, the NY-22 in my map is really a successor to the current NY-24, which all other maps seem to dramatically reconfigure, many shedding Wayne County for Oneida County. Not only is the current configuration of NY-24 relatively compact, it is also highly competitive politically. Yet we see the Democrat's proposals reconfigure the district in such a way to make it D + 13 according to 538 by snaking to also add Ithaca and Utica.

District 23:

This district succeeds the current district 23. In my map, district 23 is drawn to be more competitive, becoming based around many college towns such as Ithaca, Binghamton, and Geneva and of course the finger lakes! Many of the proposed maps, such as those proposed by the Empire Center, Plaintiffs, and Democrats, continue a North-South configuration between what were formerly districts 23 and 27. While it may have worked at the time, underpopulation of these districts forced one of the districts to bend around Rochester creating quite an uncompact configuration that dilutes the voices of West New Yorkers or makes NY-23 very long stretching from Erie Lake to Broome County.

District 24:

This NY-24 succeeds the old NY-25, being centered around Rochester. In my map, this district takes in the entirety of Monroe County which is almost enough for one district. All the other submitted maps have some form of a metro Rochester district that takes in all of Monroe County, hence there's not much debate over how this district should be drawn.

District 25:

This is my West New York district. As stated before, I decided to opt for an East - West configuration rather than a North South configuration for this region of the state to better represent COIs and increase competitiveness. My district 25 is meant as a successor to CD-27 and represents rural working class communities upstate. Many of the proposed maps, including Mr. Dunn's and Common Cause share a similar configuration for this district.

District 26:

This district succeeds the current 26th district as a metro Buffalo district which all submitted maps have a nearly identical form of. Again, a district like this should be in any final map produced by the special master.

Overall, I made an effort to balance the criteria for drawing congressional districts and thought about what each congressional district's role was in a larger map. All of the proposed maps come at redrawing the state from a unique perspective and offer something to the table, even if I may disagree with their line drawing in places. Overall, I have faith this court will look at all the proposals as well as other letters and testimonials to produce a map that best serves New York, and am thankful for the very transparent process.

Once again, if anyone has any concerns, they may email me at wprieve@gmail.com or wilsonprieve@mac.com