



**March 16, 2002**

**Co Chairman Wisniewski, Co Chairman Webber, Professor Rosenthal and members of the Commission:**

**On behalf of the Latino Leadership Alliance of New Jersey, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to address the Commission.**

**Today I would like to use this opportunity to advocate for proven mapping strategies that are fair to the Latino community and to ask the Commission to abandon the failed strategies used in the 2001 map. But let us be clear: the growth of New Jersey's Latino community to almost 18% shows that while Latinos are still concentrated in urban and rural areas where they have historically been found, they have also dispersed into suburban areas. Fairness to the state's largest minority group requires that the Commission take that reality into account.**

**Latinos have maintained their historic concentration, in areas of Hudson, Essex, Union and Passaic Counties. We endorse the strategy of the creation of additional majority-Latino districts like the 33<sup>rd</sup> District in Hudson County. Any mapping strategy must build on the one that created the 33<sup>rd</sup> district by creating additional majority Latino districts.**

**The 33<sup>rd</sup> Legislative District in Hudson County presents the best example of this strategy. It is the only district in New Jersey to reliably and consistently provide a Latino presence in the New Jersey State Legislature. It has also served as the only springboard district for Latinos seeking to reach higher office.**

- The only Latino US Senator from the State of New Jersey has come from the 33<sup>rd</sup>.**
- The only two Latino Congressmen from the State of New Jersey have come from the 33<sup>rd</sup>. One of them having served in both the Assembly and Senate before going on to Congress.**
- The only Latino Speaker of the Assembly has come from the 33<sup>rd</sup>**
- The only Latino County Chairmen of both the Democratic or Republican party have come from the 33<sup>rd</sup>.**

**Further, in all of New Jersey's history, 40% of all Latino state legislators have come from the 33<sup>rd</sup> District. There have been 19 Latinos elected to the state legislature in the history of New Jersey, 7 of them from the 33<sup>rd</sup> District.**

**The 33<sup>rd</sup> is the only district where Latinos consistently have the opportunity to elect candidates of their choice. It is also the only district where Latinos have**

**been able to overcome opposition from political machines and the unfairness of a multimember districting scheme for electing members of the Assembly.**

**In this round of redistricting we ask the Commission to build on the successful model of the 33<sup>rd</sup>. We ask the commission to look for other opportunities to create majority-Latino districts.**

**The Latino Leadership Alliance has been preparing legislative maps in anticipation of litigation and we can demonstrate several opportunities to create majority-Latino districts that would establish a case under Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act.**

**There are a number of examples we can demonstrate. In Hudson County there are multiple scenarios that preserve a majority-Latino district. There is the combination of Elizabeth with the southern half of Newark – communities that share an international airport, a large retail shopping area and thriving Latino communities. Further, there are a viable scenarios involving municipalities of Passaic County.**

**The creation of more competitive and responsive districts, where either Democrats or Republicans can carry the day is yet another very important objective. Competition an important tool to encourage both parties to engage the Latino community in a way that increases voter participation. Where there is a lack of competitiveness, officeholders grow indifferent, and indifference is a breeding ground for arrogance and corruption. It is hard to ignore the fact that the overwhelming majority of officeholders who are arrested for corruption, tend to be very long time officeholders who come out of uncompetitive districts. To read the papers in New Jersey is to know there is truth in the adage: absolute power corrupts absolutely.**

**As the redistricting process has unfolded, we in the Latino Leadership Alliance have grown concerned by the rhetoric used by incumbents and political party leaders when faced with the legitimate grievances of the Latino community. Charged terms like “packing” and “segregation” have been thrown at us, as we seek the creation of a fair and equitable system where Latinos can realize full participation in the political process. As we prepared for litigation we realized something in the mapping process. It is impossible to create a district where Latinos are packed.**

**The limits imposed by the New Jersey Constitution, which require the maintenance of municipal integrity, is a bar to the creation of a district that is more than 60% Latino. There is no possible way to create a “packed” Latino district within the acceptable variance from 219,000, while maintaining municipal integrity, contiguity and compactness. We must end**



the needless distraction regarding the perceived threat of “packing” the Latino community into legislative districts.

It would be unfortunate if this Commission missed the opportunity it has to claim the creation of a fair and Constitutional map, because it bought into the orchestrated disinformation campaign about an evil that does not exist, or because it prioritizes incumbent protection over the opportunity to integrate the state legislature. A fair and Constitutional map will provide Latinos with the opportunity to realize political equity with the creation of an additional majority minority district and competitive and responsive districts.

3x

ADVOCACY | LEADERSHIP | EMPOWERMENT

**RECOMMENDATIONS  
TO THE  
NEW JERSEY APPORTIONMENT COMMISSION**

**Wednesday, March 16, 2011**

**Passaic Hall Council Chambers, Passaic City Hall**

**330 Passaic St., Passaic, NJ 07055**

Submitted by the **Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF),  
Asian Pacific American Lawyers Association – New Jersey (APALA), Korean  
American Voters' Council (KAVC), South Asian Americans Leading Together  
(SAALT) and South Asian Bar Association (SABA)**

on behalf of the Residents of New Jersey

**GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1) The Asian Pacific American (APA) community is one of the fastest growing in New Jersey from the period 2000 to 2010 now comprising of 725,726 people or 8.3% of the total state population. Within the diverse APA population, South Asian Americans, Chinese Americans, Filipino Americans and Korean Americans are the largest groups.

Despite the rapid growth in population, APAs are vastly underrepresented in the New Jersey State Legislature. There is only one South Asian American (The Honorable Upendra Chivukula, 17th Legislative District or LD) in the State Assembly and one Korean American (The Honorable Kevin O'Toole, 40<sup>th</sup> LD) in the State Senate or just 1.7% of the State Legislature.

We highly recommend that legislative districts are redrawn to reflect the fair proportion of APAs in the state, to reflect the growing electoral viability of APA State Legislators and to eliminate the potential for disenfranchisement of a growing population of the state's residents, and to keep "communities of interest" together.

4x

- 2) The APA community is mindful that fellow minority populations have also been underrepresented in the State Legislature. As such, we fully support the efforts of the African American, Latino American and Native American communities as they strive to reach equal representation in the State Legislature that reflects the rich diversity of our great State. We recommend that the Commission create LDs that keep "communities of interest" together and to advocate for districts that promote responsive representation by elected officials whether they are APA or not. Therefore, we recommend the redrawing of LDs that protect against the fracturing of our communities so they can elect representatives of choice and have greater influence as a community.
- 3) We recommend at least three (3) LDs be redrawn to increase the opportunity for APA candidates seeking state office. Three (3) LDs would improve the opportunities for three (3) to nine (9) APA State Legislative candidates. If nine (9) APAs were elected to the State Legislature, APA representation would increase to 7.5%.
- 4) We recommend that the three (3) LDs are redrawn so that each district's APA population is approximately 25% or greater. There is historical precedent, both in New Jersey and nationwide, that strongly suggests a minority group gains a significant voice in the democratic process when their population meets or exceeds this population threshold. African Americans are a model for minority representation because of their long history and level of activism in the United States. When examining the current representation of African Americans in the New Jersey State Legislature, there is a threshold of approximately 23.5% to 27.8% African American population where at least one of the three Legislators in the district are African American (See Table 1).

Table 1

African American Representation in the New Jersey State Legislature

	Legislator	Percent African American
District 5	<i>Gilbert Wilson</i>	24.6%
District 7	<i>Herb Conaway</i>	26.5%
District 15	Shirley Turner	29.2%
	Bonnie Watson Coleman	
District 22	<i>Jerry Green</i>	24.8%

District 27	Mila Jasey	30.4%
District 28	Ron Rice	53.7% (Maximum Outlier)
	Cleopatra Tucker	
District 29	Grace Spencer	42.4%
District 31	<b><i>Sandra Cunningham</i></b>	<b>27.8%</b>
	<b><i>Charles Mainor</i></b>	
District 34	Nia Gill	35.1%
	Sheila Oliver	
District 35	<b><i>Elease Evans</i></b>	<b>23.5%</b>
District 37	Gordon Johnson	16.1% (Minimum Outlier)

Only one Legislator (The Honorable Gordon Johnson, 37<sup>th</sup> LD) out of 15 African American Legislators represents a district that is significantly below the 25% threshold for a minority population.

- 5) **We recommend one (1) or more LD(s) be drawn to include a "cross-over community" and high minority population municipality.** A cross-over community is a municipality or district which is majority Caucasian American and does not have a substantial minority population, but is nonetheless less likely to elect an African American, Latino American, Asian American or other minority candidate. As an example, we consider the City of Hoboken to be a cross-over municipality based on its election of the first and only APA elected official in Hudson County (Councilman Ravi Bhalla) despite the fact the APA population is only 7.1%. Princeton Township and Borough are other examples of cross-over communities. We recommend the Commission consider merging cross-over municipalities with high minority populations to increase the likelihood of electing a minority in that district.

## SPECIFIC LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6) **Bergen County** represents one of the fastest growing areas of the state for the APA community. Currently, the 37<sup>th</sup> LD represents 18.6% APAs while the 38<sup>th</sup> LD represents 19.0% APAs in population. Yet, this highly concentrated "community of interest" of mostly recent immigrant Korean Americans with similar interests and aspirations to live the American dream has largely been divided between two legislative districts. In particular, the municipalities of Fort Lee, Edgewater, Palisades Park and Leonia should be combined into a single legislative district to achieve an APA population of over 40,000 (or approx. 20%+). These neighborhoods are a thriving community of new immigrants, entrepreneurs and small business owners.

	Total Population	Percent APA
Palisades Park	19,622	57.8%
Fort Lee	35,345	38.4%
Edgewater	11,513	35.5%
Leonia	8,937	35.1%

**We recommend these four municipalities should be included in the 37<sup>th</sup> LD.**

- 7) **Middlesex County** represents the largest concentration of APAs in New Jersey. In the long term, this county presents the greatest opportunity to elect APA elected officials throughout the state. Edison Township elected the first APA mayor of a large New Jersey municipality (Fmr Mayor Jun Choi) and two councilmembers of APA descent (Councilman Dr. Sudhanshu Prasad and Fmr Councilman Parag Patel). However, only one APA State Legislator (17<sup>th</sup> LD) who represents a part of Middlesex and Somerset Counties has been able to get elected from this region of the State. **We recommend the continuity of representation for the 17<sup>th</sup> LD (20.4% APA) and the consideration of changes so that Middlesex County LDs could increase their APA population.**
- 8) The highest percentage of APAs in **Hudson County** is in Jersey City. **We recommend creating a cross-over district, including the City of Hoboken, or a majority minority LD including African Americans, Asian Americans and Latino Americans in the Jersey City area.**

- 9) The following districts and municipalities are additional areas of concern for the APA community because they have large and/or growing populations of APAs, maintain a community of interest, and represent cohesive communities of APAs. Accordingly, we recommend that the Commission take particular caution in ensuring that these communities are appropriately represented and not disenfranchised.

**14<sup>th</sup> LD:** We recommend Plainsboro, South Brunswick and West Windsor stay in the same legislative district.

	Total Population	Percent APA
Plainsboro	22,999	46.2%
South Brunswick	43,417	35.9%
West Windsor	27,165	37.7%

**Camden County**

Cherry Hill	71,045	11.7%
Vorhees	29,131	16.1%

**Essex County**

Livingston	29,366	19.2%
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**Monmouth County**

Holmdel	16,773	19.2%
Marlboro	40,191	17.3%

**Morris County**

Parsippany-Troy Hills	53,238	29.1%
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Montville	21,528	18.1%
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**Somerset County**

Montgomery	22,254	25.6%
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## TESTIMONY BEFORE THE NEW JERSEY APPORTIONMENT COMMISSION

March 16, 2011 Passaic City Hall

*Presented by Chejin Park, Korean American Voters' Council*

Good Afternoon! Thank you for the opportunity to propose Korean American community's opinion pertaining to apportionment of NJ Legislative Districts.

On behalf of the Asian Americans in Bergen County, New Jersey, Korean American Voters' Council urge the Apportionment Commission to recognize Palisades Park, Fort Lee, Edgewater and Leonia as a "community of interest" and keep the four municipalities in one legislative district by including Edgewater and Fort Lee into the 37<sup>th</sup> Legislative District.

The Asian American community is one of the fastest growing ethnic communities in the State of New Jersey for last 30 years. The Asian immigrants, especially Korean Americans, settled in the eastern part of Bergen County and formed a large Asian American community. Soon it became a highly concentrated community of interest. When the legislative district maps were drawn 10 years ago, most parts of the Asian American community were included in the 37th Legislative District. However, Fort Lee and Edgewater, which comprise the core of the Asian American community along with Palisades Park and Leonia, were separated from the rest of the Asian American community and included into the 38th Legislative District. For last ten years, one community of interest was divided into two different districts and their interests were not properly represented in the NJ Legislature. Therefore, we are strongly asking the Apportionment Commission to keep the Asian/Korean American community of interest together by including Fort Lee and Edgewater into the 37th Legislative District.

### Community of Interest

Keeping a "community of interest" together is one of traditional districting criteria. A community of interest is where residents have "actual shared interests" or some "common thread of social, economic or

political interests.” Under this definition, the four municipalities (Palisades Park, Leonia, Fort Lee, and Edgewater) are a community of interest sharing characteristics of racial composition, ethnicity, language, high limited English proficiency, immigration experience, settlement pattern, voter registration, health and social services, health care, schools, and dependence on bilingual services.

### **Palisades Park, Leonia, Fort Lee, and Edgewater**

#### **Racial/Ethnic Composition**

Palisades Park, Leonia, Fort Lee, and Edgewater are the core of the Korean American community in Bergen County in their racial and ethnic composition. The four municipalities have high concentration of Asian American population. 57% of Palisades Park, 38% of Fort Lee, 35.5% of Edgewater, and 35.1% of Leonia residents are Asian Americans. Specific ethnicity information of Census 2010 is not available yet. However, we strongly believe most of the Asian Americans in the municipalities are Korean Americans.

	Total Population	Percent of APA
Palisades Park	19,622	57.8%
Fort Lee	35,345	38.4%
Edgewater	11,513	35.3%
Leonia	8,937	35.1%

2010 Census Redistricting Data

#### **Immigration Pattern**

Due to the proximity to New York City and convenient public transportation, Fort Lee, Leonia, Palisades Park and Edgewater have been major destinations for new immigrants. The Korean American population in the four municipalities has been rapidly increasing since the late 1980s. Fort Lee was the epicenter of the Korean American small businesses in the 1980s. Then the Korean American business started to expand to Palisades Park in the 1990s. Now those two municipalities are forming the back born of the Korean American economic activities and residence. While the Asian American community in Palisades Park and Fort Lee was expanding, Leonia and Edgewater provided the Asian immigrants with affordable housing with accessibility to Palisades Park and Fort Lee. Therefore, the four municipalities are sharing the same immigration and development experience.

*HP*

### **Language / High Limited English Proficiency**

Since Korean Americans' immigration history is relatively short, most Korean Americans in the four municipalities speak Korean as their first language at home and business. According to Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund's 2008 exit poll report, which was conducted in Palisades Park and Fort Lee, 62% of Korean voters were limited English proficient and 22% of them used interpreters at the poll. High limited English proficiency rate among Korean Americans made the Korean American community dependent on social and health services in Korean.

### **Bilingual Health/Social Services**

Many organizations located in Legislative District 37 are serving Korean Americans in Fort Lee and Edgewater. And the Korean Americans in the two municipalities are also relying on the bilingual services provided by the facilities in District 37:

**Holy Name Medical Center**, which is located in Teaneck (LD 37), is acclaimed for its Korean Medical Program. The Korean Medical Program offers Korean-speaking customer representatives who greet patients as well as translate and coordinate with physician offices. It offers Korean menu selections, television channels, newspapers and magazines for inpatients, and a free community shuttle van service. The program also actively provides community outreach initiatives such as health fairs, education programs and physical lectures. Significant numbers of patients of the program are Korean Americans from Fort Lee and Edgewater.

**Friends of Grace Seniors Korean Community Center(FGS)**, which is originally established in Fort Lee and moved to Englewood (LD 37), provides Korean Americans in Bergen County with over 70 different cultural, educational, and wellness classes in Korean. Especially, it specialized in health care, screening tests, diabetes education for senior Korean Americans. Many senior Korean Americans in Fort Lee and Edgewater are recipients of the FGS programs.

### **Main Shopping Destination for Asian Americans Creating Jobs for Asian Americans**

Main Street in Fort Lee and Broad Avenue and Grand Avenue in Palisades Park are highly concentrated with Korean small businesses. There are two major Asian groceries located in Fort Lee and one in Edgewater. Those stores are the major shopping destinations not only for Asian Americans but also for the residents in the neighborhood. The Asian small businesses are providing most of the job opportunities for the Asian Americans in the neighborhood including the four municipalities.

### **Korean Cultural Event**

**Korean Thanksgiving Festival** which is the largest Korean cultural event in New Jersey is held at Overpeck Park in Leonia (LD 37) every year. The festival is organized by the Korean American Association of New Jersey. Most of the organizers and volunteers are residents of Fort Lee, Palisades Park, Leonia, and Edgewater.

### **Education: Edgewater and Leonia share Middle School and High School**

The Edgewater Public Schools (LD 38) has only one school in its district, Eleanor Van Gelder School which serves only K through 6<sup>th</sup> grade. For grades 7 - 12, Edgewater public school students are sent to the Leonia Public Schools (LD 37) as part of a sending/receiving relationship. Students attend Leonia Middle School for grades 7 and 8 (a school with grades 6 - 8), and Leonia High School for grades 9 - 12.

### **Korean Registered Voters**

According to Korean American Voters' Council's analysis on Korean American voter registration data (November 2010), there are 9,142 registered Korean voters in Bergen County.

#### **Korean Registered Voters in Bergen County (Top 10 Towns)**

Municipalities	Korean Registered Voters
FORT LEE	1,442
PALISADES PARK	1,417
PARAMUS	435
LEONIA	338
CLIFFSIDE PARK	335
ENGLEWOOD CLIFFS	304
EDGEWATER	299
CLOSTER	295
TENAFLY	287
RIDGEFIELD	279
CRESSKILL	244

38% (3,496) of total Korean registered voters are residing in Fort Lee, Palisades Park, Leonia, and Edgewater. Please consider that Fort Lee and Palisades Park are the top two towns with Korean voters. In the two towns there are 2,859 Korean Voters, which comprise 31% of total Korean voters in Bergen County. By splitting those two towns into two different legislative districts, Korean Americans' voice in the NJ Legislature was significantly limited. Based on KAVC's exit poll and phone banking, approximately 70% of Korean Americans voted in 2008 elections.

### **Palisades Park, Leonia, Fort Lee & Edgewater: a Community of Interest**

There are many more characteristics that are shared among the four municipalities. By simply taking into account the characteristics we have been discussed above, the Apportionment Commission may be able to recognize the municipalities as a community of interest.

On behalf of the Asian Americans in the four municipalities, the Korean American Voters Council strongly urges the Apportionment Commission to recognize the four municipalities as a community of interest and keep them together in the 37<sup>th</sup> Legislative District.

Should you need more information or have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 201-488-4201 or [kavcny@gmail.com](mailto:kavcny@gmail.com).

Thank you again for this opportunity to deliver Korean Americans' opinion.

Chejin Park

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## 5<sup>th</sup> Ward Councilman, City of Paterson

Hearing of the NJ Redistricting Commission  
City of Passaic, NJ  
Wednesday, March 16, 2011

Members of the Redistricting Commission, Good afternoon.

My name is Julio Tavaréz. I am Councilman of the 5<sup>th</sup> Ward of the City of Paterson. I am here today to ask this Commission to pay close attention to the significant increase in the population of Latinos in the 35<sup>th</sup> Legislative District and towns adjacent to this district.

For instance, In Paterson the percentage of Latinos has increased while the total population has decreased. In 2010 the population decrease by 3,023, while Latinos increased by 9,494. Now, Latinos represent a 57.6% of the city – up from 50.1% in 2000. While in Prospect Park the Latino population stands at 52%.

And let's not forget communities that are not usually considered as quote and quote "Latino" like Elmwood Park where the Latino population is now 21%; the borough of Haledon where the Latino population stands now at 42%; and the City of Garfield stands at 32% Latino.

I believe that these communities now share strong commonalities. Thus, this commission should consider creating a Legislative District that unifies these municipalities since they have matured into communities of interest.

For instance, residents of the Cities of Paterson, Prospect Park and Garfield share commonalities; such as language, socio-economic status, religion, sources of information, political interest, and cultural expression, among other factors. And so do, North Haledon, Haledon and Elmwood Park.

I like to reaffirm that these municipalities together form what is called a "community of interest."

I have noticed that some folks have been using words like "packing and bleaching"; as well as "cracking and padding" all over the state when it comes to the Latino community. And I think some of these actions might have taken place during the last reapportionment process. I believe so because I cannot figure out how the City of Paterson was placed in the same district with a town like Glenn Rock. I tried to find commonalities between these two municipalities

provide you with is that in the city of Paterson, 83% of households have a median income of under \$75,000; while in the town of Glen Rock more than 87% of households have a median income over \$75,000.

These are not communities of similar interest; they are two worlds apart and do not belong in the same district.

This fragmentation has diluted the strength of our community of interest's voting capability and harms the ability of voters in the 35<sup>th</sup> legislative district of electing a candidate of our choice.

I request that this commission create a district that truly assembles communities of interest together while keeping in mind the Latino community in the 35<sup>th</sup> legislative district; and our need for legislators that will represent the best interest of our community.

When doing this, I ask that you not only look at registered voters, but all members of the community. As an elected official, I not only represent those that have the ability to vote, but every resident of my ward because every resident, registered to vote or not, deserves representation.

Finally, I would like to ask this Commission to take into consideration the Voting Rights Act of 1965. This federal law offers this Community of Interest an opportunity to achieve the goal of having a Legislative District where they could elect a candidate of their choosing.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

**Hon. Julio Tavarez, MPA**  
5th Ward Councilman  
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MY NAME IS RAFAEL TORRES. I AM A HISPANIC. SOME PEOPLE WOULD NOT SEE THAT FIRST HAND, BUT BELIEVE ME, I AM HISPANIC. SOME WOULD ALSO SAY – WELL IT DOESN'T MAKE A DIFFERENCE. WELL THEN – I AM HERE TO TELL YOU THAT IT DOES MAKE A DIFFERENCE WHEN YOUR SURROUNDED BY THE NEW DATA FRESH OUT OF OUR 2010 UNITED STATES CENSUS THAT WOULD SAY: HEY! WE MAY ALL BE ~~HISPANICS~~...ONE DAY.  
LATINOS

BUT LET ME BACK UP A LITTLE. – AND WITH ALL KIDDING ASIDE.

ALTHOUGH I AM A PROUD HISPANIC, BORN AND RAISED IN JERSEY CITY, I AM ALSO DEDICATED TO MY SURROUNDINGS AS A RELIABLE CITIZEN, THEREFORE, CONTINUING THE STANDARDS FOR GENERATIONS AHEAD, ON THE VERY LAND THAT HAS ACCEPTED US WITH OPEN ARMS. WE DID NOT FORGET THAT THE AMERICAN DREAMS ARE ROOTED IN CULTURE, WITH A SMILE, THAT IS INSTILLED IN US THROUGH OUR NATIVE AND AFRICAN HERITAGE. WE ARE THE LAND, LIKE THE IRISH AND ITALIANS BEFORE US, WE ARE ALL HERE TO STAY.

YET, THE 2010 CENSUS SEALS OUR FATE, AND DURING ELECTIONS, IF MOTIVATED, IT MAY SEAL THE FATE OF ANY POLITICAN THAT WILL IGNORE US.

HERE, MOTIVATION IS THE KEY. UNMOTIVATED TECHNIQUES HAVE BEEN OUR POLITICAL BAGGAGE THAT HAS SENT THE HISPANIC COMMUNITIES IN DIS-ARREY. THANKS IN PART BY 24-HOUR NEWS BROADCASTS, AND A CAMERA ON EVERY PHONE, WE HAVE SLOWLY BACKED AWAY FROM ANYONE THAT WOULD SELFISHLY USE THE SYSTEM. WE WILL STAY CLOSE TO HOME WHERE WE ARE STILL STRUGGLING WITH IGNORANCE BY PEOPLE WHO HAVE PUSHED US TO LIVE IN AREAS FURTHER SOUTH OR NORTH. THE AMERICAN DREAM IS STILL OUR OWN AMERICAN DREAM. AND NO ONE CAN TELLS US WITH THE MANY DIALECS WE HOLD, THAT OUR LEADERSHIP HAS DWINDLED, OR IS RESTRICTED, OR OBSOLETE.

I AM A VETERAN JERSEY CITY FIREFIGHTER. FOR OVER 24 YEARS I HAVE SERVED MY COMMUNITY AS A PUBLIC SERVANT, AFTER SERVING SIX YEARS IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE. MY COMMITMENT WILL ALWAYS REFLECT MY PROFESSION WITH THE VERY TOOLS THAT I LEARNED WHILE LIVING IN THE CITY WHERE I WORK.

IN FACT, 2010 CENUSE DATA WILL SHOW THAT MINIORITES TEND TO STAY CLOSE TO THEIR NEW HOMES, LIKE MY FATHER WHEN HE CAME HERE IN THE 1950'S, HE QUICKLY GOT INVOLVED AND EVENTUALLY BECAME ONE OF THE FIRST HISPANIC DEACONS INSTALLED BY THE ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK, NEW JERSEY,

THANKS TO OUR COMMITMENT IN SERVICE WE HAVE ESTABLISHED A WALL THAT IS GROWING DUE TO OUR RACE THAT CAN NEVER BE KNOCKED DOWN. IT'S THE WALL OF HATE AND IGNORANCE THAT THREATENS US, FROM WEST OF ARIZONA, TO TIMES LIKE THIS, WHERE WE ARE STILL STRUGGLING TO HOLD THE LITTLE BIT OF THE POPULATED POSITIONS IN GOVERNMENT THAT MAY WANT US TO ALL GO AWAY.

PLEASE SHOW US YOUR LEADERSHIP TO ADJUST ANY REDISTRICTING OF OUR HEAVLY POPULATED ARES TO A REPRESENTATIVE THAT REFLECTS US, IF NOT BY DEFAULT, THEN BY OUR COMMITMENT. GIVE THIS TIME TO RE-ESTABLISHED NEW LEADERSHIP WITHIN A THEATER THAT NEVER IGNORED THE PEOPLE.

SUPPORT US ON PROVIDING NEW AND EXCITING LATINO LEADERS THAT WILL NO DOUBT REPRESENT THE PUBLIC SERVICE THAT IS REQUIRED.

THANK YOU, AND GOD BLESS THE AMERICAS.

HERE BY SUBMITTED  
on 3/16/11

X Rafael Tames

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TESTIMONY TO THE NEW JERSEY APPORTIONMENT COMMISSION

JOINING ELIZABETH OR SURROUNDING UNION COUNTY MUNICIPALITIES WITH THE  
HUDSON COUNTY MUNICIPALITY OF BAYONNE WOULD  
VIOLATE TRADITIONAL DISTRICTING PRINCIPLES

By

Flavio L. Komuves, Esq. and  
J. Frank Vespa-Papaleo, Esq.

March 18, 2011<sup>1</sup>

Members of the Apportionment Commission, good afternoon. My name is Flavio Komuves, and I am an attorney with extensive experience in both election law and constitutional law. I am currently in private practice, after working on a myriad of election and voting rights issues for the State Department of the Public Advocate and the American Civil Liberties Union of New Jersey. I have been working on redistricting issues with Mr. Frank Vespa-Papaleo, who is himself an experienced civil rights attorney, and former director of the state Division on Civil Rights. We conducted an analysis of the proposal to create a legislative district out of the towns of Elizabeth, Linden and Bayonne, and why that proposal, in our judgment, is fundamentally flawed. Our testimony focuses specifically on why it would be flawed to join Bayonne in Hudson County with municipalities in Union County such as Elizabeth or Linden, in the same legislative district.

Simply stated, the inclusion of these three towns in a single district would be inconsistent with traditional redistricting principles, in particular, contiguity and keeping "communities of interest" in the same legislative district. Bayonne is not reasonably contiguous to the Elizabeth or Linden part of the district, as it simply shares a water boundary without any bridges or connecting ferry or boat service.

As a straight-line, as-the-crow-flies distance, only about 8.7 miles separate the westernmost point of this proposed district in Linden from its easternmost point in Bayonne. But legislative constituents are not crows, they are people, who must use roadways.

For travel between Linden and Bayonne, the two most direct routes both involve toll roads. Under one option, a motorist would have to travel up the New Jersey Turnpike, cross the Newark Bay Bridge and go through Newark and Jersey City, to ultimately reach Bayonne. This is a travel distance of 17 miles, and would incur about \$3.90 in tolls. Another alternative would send motorists through Staten Island, and while a shorter

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<sup>1</sup> This testimony is an extended version of the oral testimony offered by Mr. Komuves at the March 16, 2011 hearing of the apportionment commission in Passaic, NJ.

distance, that would entail \$16.00 in tolls for a round trip because the trip involves travel on two Port Authority bridges.

Regardless of whether it might, under some circumstances, be technically appropriate to use water contiguity alone to make a district contiguous, it is not appropriate here. No marine or ferry service connects the two parts of the district, and the most direct road travel involves either (1) using bridges that go through no less than two other municipalities that are not part of the district; or (2) using bridges and going through an entirely different State – New York.

So it's not convenient to travel between the two parts of the district using a private vehicle. It's far less convenient when using public transportation. A review of New Jersey Transit's website reveals that it would take at least 1.5 hours to travel from the Elizabeth or Linden downtowns, to Bayonne's downtown, and that it would take 2 transfers, from a NJ Transit train, to a PATH train, to a local bus. It would take even longer to travel between areas that are not served by a regular bus route. This public transportation analysis is especially important because according to the 2000 Census, Elizabeth ranks among the highest cities in the country in the percentage of households without a car: 25.2 percent of Elizabeth's households do not have a vehicle.<sup>2</sup>

It is also apparent that Bayonne does not form part of a community of interest with Elizabeth and Linden. A community of interest exists when "residents share substantial cultural, economic, political, and social ties."<sup>3</sup> Communities of interest are also characterized by shared media outlets, public transport infrastructure, and institutions such as schools and churches.<sup>4</sup>

First, Elizabeth and Bayonne are located within Union County while Bayonne is located within Hudson County. County governments continue to play a large role in government in New Jersey. As such, preserving county boundaries is a legitimate factor to be used in redistricting, if it can be done without breaching other redistricting principles such as population equality and nondiscrimination against ethnic and language minorities.<sup>5</sup> Since at least the 1980 reapportionment if not earlier, Elizabeth and Bayonne have never been joined in a single legislative district, and given that the existing 20th district is a majority-minority district, breaching the county boundary to create a new district embracing Elizabeth and is inadvisable.

Second, the physical separation of Bayonne from Elizabeth and Linden also suggests that these three municipalities are not communities of interest. As I explained above, it

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<sup>2</sup> See <http://www.bikesatwork.com/carfree/carfree-census-database.html>

<sup>3</sup> REDISTRICTING AND THE NEW DEMOGRAPHICS: DEFINING "COMMUNITIES OF INTEREST" IN NEW YORK CITY, available at <http://www.nyu.edu/apa/coi/pdf/redistricting.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> *Bush v. Vera*, 517 U.S. 952 (1996).

<sup>5</sup> See, e.g., *Karcher v. Daggett*, 462 U.S. 725, 740 (1983).

could take 40 minutes in a private vehicle each way -- with tolls up to \$8.00 each way -- to travel from Linden to Elizabeth and back, and the use of public transportation would require 1.5 hours or more each way, with three different modes of transportation, just to get to the downtown of Bayonne from the downtowns of Elizabeth or Linden.

Third, the social services network for residents of Union County and Bayonne in Hudson County is entirely different. For example, PROCEED, Inc., is a community based organization based in Elizabeth that serves Union County residents, especially those in the Latino community, but not those from Bayonne or Hudson County.<sup>6</sup> In fact, when PROCEED has attempted to expand its agency and serve other geographic areas, it was met with significant obstacles. The United Way of Hudson County -- with headquarters in Jersey City -- expressly states that its mission is to help "the poor, the sick, the elderly, the disabled and the homeless people of Hudson County."<sup>7</sup> Conversely, the United Way of Union County has a focus within that county, focusing on "Union County families" and "children in Union County."<sup>8</sup> In addition, the state Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS) maintains separate offices in both Elizabeth and Bayonne,<sup>9</sup> which further suggests a lack of commonality in rendering social services.

In short, we did not find evidence of a common social service infrastructure that helps people in both the Union and Hudson parts of the proposed district.

Fourth, we observe a similar division of the communities regarding hospitals. Elizabeth is served by the Trinitas Regional Medical Center. Its focus on Union County is apparent from its own promotional materials, which describe it as a "full-service healthcare facility serving those who live and work in Eastern and Central Union County."<sup>10</sup> It does not have any facilities in Hudson County or Bayonne. Conversely, the Bayonne Medical Center is Bayonne-focused, with a stated mission of providing for "the health care needs of the residents of Bayonne and neighboring communities."<sup>11</sup> It has no facilities in Union County or indeed anywhere outside Hudson County.

Lastly, we did not find evidence of a common media presence covering local issues in both Elizabeth and Bayonne. The *Star-Ledger* is a daily newspaper that covers Elizabeth, but the *Jersey Journal* has a much stronger Hudson County focus. There is a presence of weekly newspapers that cover portions of Union County, including Elizabeth, but they do not typically cover Bayonne news.

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<sup>6</sup> See <http://www.proceedinc.com/?p=description-of-services>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.unitedwayhudson.org/>

<sup>8</sup> [http://www.uwguc.org/Our\\_Focus\\_Areas.php](http://www.uwguc.org/Our_Focus_Areas.php)

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.state.nj.us/dcf/contact/local.html>

<sup>10</sup> [http://www.trinitashospital.org/about\\_us.htm](http://www.trinitashospital.org/about_us.htm)

<sup>11</sup> [http://www.bayonnemedicalcenter.org/about\\_bmc.html](http://www.bayonnemedicalcenter.org/about_bmc.html)

Based on the evidence we reviewed, it is clear to us that Elizabeth and Bayonne have discrete and separate interests that would not be well-served by joining them into a single legislative district. In our opinion, the two municipalities are not "communities of interest" as such term is used in redistricting, that would justify placing them in the same legislative district. The county boundary creates a different political culture in the Hudson and Union County portions of the proposed district. They are not unified through a single hospital system, social service network, media that covers matters of interest to both municipalities, or a transportation network that can unify all aspects of the proposed districts. Finally, the claim that these areas are contiguous is based on extremely weak evidence -- a mere water boundary without any bridges or ferries directly connecting the two areas. As such, any proposal to merge Elizabeth and Linden into a single district embracing Bayonne would violate long-standing principles of redistricting.

**Statement of Maria Teresa Feliciano  
President of The Dominican American National Roundtable**

Hearing of the NJ Redistricting Commission  
City of Passaic, NJ  
Wednesday, March 16 2011

Co Chairman Wisniewski, Co Chairman Webber, Professor Alan Rosenthal and members of the Commission:

On behalf of the Dominican American National Roundtable, and The New Jersey Conference on Dominican Affairs, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to address the Commission regarding the redistricting of New Jersey's 40 Legislative Districts.

The Dominican American National Roundtable is a national organization founded in 1997 with the mission of representing and advocating for the educational, economic and civil rights of the over 2 million Dominicans in the United States. The New Jersey Conference on Dominican Affairs is the state organization representing the over 250,000 Dominicans in New Jersey.

We understand that the issue before this Commission is the redistricting of New Jersey's 40 legislative districts, and would like the commission to consider the following, in their quest to design maps that would lead to accurate representation of all of New Jersey's communities. A map that would reflect the will of the electorate, provides minorities with appropriate representation, and keeps communities of interest together.

*Coincidentally*  
Confidentially, this week in 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson went before an extraordinary joint session of Congress to urge speedy passage of an effective voting rights bill.

"I speak tonight for the dignity of man and the destiny of democracy," Johnson began. "I urge every member of both parties, Americans of all religions and of all colors, from every section of this country, to join me in that cause."

"Their cause must be our cause, too," Johnson said. Subsequently, the White House drafted legislation that banned literacy tests, named federal vote

registrars and imposed federal penalties on anyone who interfered with voting in local, state or federal elections. On Aug. 6, Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act into law.

In a democracy, the principle of one person, one vote is a sacred concept. If the principle is to apply in New Jersey, then ensuring a greater voice for Latinos in the halls of power is the greatest test facing the legislative redistricting commission as it enters the next phase of its deliberations.

The new legislative map must reflect the state's changing demographics.

The emergence of Latinos as the largest minority in the state, as per the 2010 Census, requires the creation of Majority Latino Districts or Latino Opportunity Districts that will allow us to elect candidates of our choice in numbers commensurate with our population. Currently, there are only eight members of the Hispanic caucus in the state Legislature, one state senator and seven Assembly members. We are 12 short of the 20 that would reflect the state's 18% Latino population of New Jersey.

Neither the much discussed "Packing" – which creates a few districts that are heavily Latino, and might result in a few legislators responsive to Latino community issues, but will leave the majority of legislators with little incentive to work with the Latino community; nor "cracking" – which spreads the Latino community into several legislative districts, and thus have little power in any one of them – are the solution.

The Apportionment Commission should understand that communities are not enclosed into city lines; they overflow them. The lives and residences of most New Jerseyans circulate, not inside of city boundaries, but around commercial districts, services institutions, such as hospitals, community agencies, houses of prayer, routes of transportation, etc. Thus the concept of "communities of interest" should be key to effective redistricting; making sure communities that actually function as one are not divided.

We propose Legislative Districts that will have cities with a high concentration of Latinos, such as Passaic and Paterson as its center.

Currently, legislators from three different legislative districts represent, Paterson, Passaic and Clifton. District 35 covers the city of Paterson; District 34 covers the city of Clifton; District 36 covers the City of Passaic. This



multiple representation hinders the ability of these Communities of Interest to elect a candidate of their choice. The increase of Latino population in these three districts can not be ignored.

Passaic has moved from 62 % of Latinos in 2000 to 71% of Latinos in 2010. In Clifton, Latinos increased from 20% to 32% in ten years. Paterson Latino population has increased while the total population has decreased. Now, Paterson Latinos represent a 57.6% of the city – up from 50.1% in 2000.

*Passaic should have Latino representation - any Latin any Party*  
Monmouth County, another example, has seen strong growth in the Latino community since 2000. In Freehold Borough, the percentage of Latinos rose from 28 to 43 percent, while Red Bank's grew from 17 to 34 percent.

Freehold, Red Bank, Long Branch and Asbury Park are four key centers of the Latino community in Monmouth County - they share a common heritage, common community institutions. However, the Latino community in these towns is split into two districts, the 11th and 12th. As such, there is insufficient ability in either of these districts for the community to even influence the election of a candidate of choice.

The NJ Redistricting Commission should consider creating Legislative Districts in these areas, as the Voting Rights Act provides for keeping together the votes of minority groups in districts that they may elect candidates of their choice.

In a democracy, the principle of one person, one vote is a sacred concept. It should apply in New Jersey, ensuring a greater voice for Latinos in the halls of power.

We look forward to working with the Commission to contribute in your effort to make sure that New Jersey achieves a fair and constitutional redistricting.

Thank you,

Maria Teresa Feliciano, President  
Dominican American National Roundtable

About DANR

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE NEW JERSEY LEGISLATIVE  
REDISTRICTING COMMISSION**

My name is Sharon L. Weiner, I am a past President and currently the Political Resources Director of the Women's Political Caucus of New Jersey. The Women's Political Caucus of New Jersey led by President Lisa Mizrahi Kaado is dedicated to increasing women's participation in the political process, increasing the number of progressive women in elected and appointed office and creating a women's political powerbase to achieve equality for ALL women.

Every ten years when the new census data becomes available, there is a great debate over representation -- to make sure that every New Jersey resident is represented and to recognize those communities that have grown in population with fair representation. We are here today to make sure that our voices are heard and that when the new map is drawn, all New Jerseyans will be represented. We understand that existing case law addresses the issues of minority representation, but we feel that women deserve fair representation too.

We are guided by our life experiences and more than anything else, gender is the greatest factor that determines that life experience. Women public officials have difference priorities and perceptions than their male colleagues. These differences were confirmed by a study conducted by the Center for the American Women Politics at Rutgers University. The study found that women legislators of both parties more likely than male legislators of either party to work on legislation specifically intended to benefit women and their families.

In 2010, New Jersey made significant strides. We elected the first woman to the office of Lieutenant Governor, the first woman Senate Majority Leader, and the first African American

Woman Assembly Speaker. While these are significant accomplishments, we cannot allow ourselves to be complacent.

Today women make up over 50% of the population but only 28% of the New Jersey Legislature, with 40 State Senators only 10 are women and of the 80 member State Assembly only 24 members are women and there are no women in our 15 member congressional delegation. While we may have made some progress over the last few years, we clearly have to do more.

The Women's Political Caucus of New Jersey is paying close attention. We are concerned that we are losing ground with regard to the number of women in the state legislature and we see this as a two-pronged approach. First, we are concerned that women currently in the legislature not be placed in a situation where two women currently serving in the legislature would have to face each other for reelection in a newly formed district resulting in one being eliminated. Second, we are looking at the commission for creating opportunities for more women to run for elective office.

We also need to be mindful that it is not only in the general election but also in the replacement appointments that women have not been fairly represented. Not that long ago women made great strides being appointed to replace men legislators who had been removed for unlawful activities but the past four replacement appointments in the New Jersey Assembly have all been males. The most recent appointment replaced a female assembly member with a male.

### ***Conclusion***

While the goal of redistrict in New Jersey legislative election districts is to rebalance those districts to remain the "one person one vote proportion" and satisfying the Federal Rights Act, the end result should not leave behind an under-represented group – women. Women

electd officials. We urge the Commission not to put obstacles in their path as the residents of New Jersey will benefit if more women are elected to the New Jersey Legislature. Thank you

Apportionment Committee Hearing

March 16, 2011

Finda Frances, Certified Nursing Assistant and Member of

1199 United Healthcare Workers East

Service Employees International Union (SEIU)

555 US Highway South, Iselin NJ 08830

Phone: (732) 287-8113/ Fax: (732) 287-8117

Hi my name is Finda Frances and I am a certified Nursing assistant at Cranbury nursing home in Cranbury New Jersey and a member of 1199 United Healthcare workers East Service Employees International Union which represents over 7,200 healthcare workers statewide. I want to thank you for holding this hearing and allowing me to have my voice heard on this important issue.

I am here today to ask that the new map be drawn on the concept of one person one vote. It is not only wrong but unconstitutional to try and create a map that would disregard the very foundation

of representation. I strongly support the allocation of legislative seats on an equal population basis. This should take into account each individual regardless of voter turnout, voter registration status at the time, racial or ethnic background or any other form of disfranchisement.

I am also very glad to see that there have been and continue to be public hearings regarding redistricting.

Thank you again for your time and for allowing me to speak.

Testimony by Emiliano Lemos

NEW JERSEY STATE APPORTIONMENT COMMISSION

March 16, 2011

**DELIVERED AND SUBMITTED BY:**

Emiliano Lemos

48 Second Street | Dover, NJ 07801

T. 973-518-8707

social4@@hotmail.com

My name is Emiliano Lemos, member of the Latino Action Network; a proud member of the Morris County Chapter of the NAACP and a citizen of this country.

More than an honor is a necessity, a moral obligation to present my testimony for the Commission.

Some people are trying to say that only people who voted in the past should be counted in determining whether districts are fairly drawn. They say that the counties with higher past voter turnout should get more weight in the map, instead of giving equal weight to all districts in all parts of the state.

More than twenty years ago I was obligated to leave my natal country and I came to live in a small population of Morris County called Dover, at that time I didn't have the opportunity to choose and be chosen, to elect the ones that will develop policies in favor of the community or be detrimental to it. Last year I become a citizen, and I immediately registered myself to vote and I was the campaign manager for a minority aspirant to be a council member in my town. I have rights, we have rights, our opinions and voices need to be heard. The new Maps should be looking forward, not backward.

There should not be an assumption that everyone who didn't vote before - the young, the recent immigrants, or those just not engaged in politics for whatever reasons — will be disengaged for a decade to come. That's unfair, undemocratic, unethical and un-American.

Communities of interest are connected so closely, in New Jersey, almost 80% of the roughly 24,000 people in state prison are African-American or Latino, minorities are the most affected by unemployment, poverty, and health disparities, our ties are more than geographic, cultural or economic, we are connected by social injustice.

Don't you believe that is necessary and morally correct to let us, the communities of interest, elect from our grassroots, the ones that will bring our concerns and points of view?

Therefore I propose that communities of interest in the new map of the 25<sup>th</sup> Legislative District be an essential part, I ask that towns such as Netcong, Mount Olive and the Chester's (Borough and Township) be added and Boonton, Boonton Township, Denville, Mendham Township and Mountain Lakes, be removed.

Morris County has seen strong growth in the Latino community since 1990 - some of the higher rates of growth in the state. For example, Dover grows to 70% in Hispanics in the town and 78% percentage of Latinos in the school district. Until today no council member has represented Latinos or minorities are underrepresented at the school system.

The right thing to do is that communities of interest prevail in these maps for the next decade. And it's what the law requires - looking at communities of interest as a key factor in redistricting.

I will submit this oral testimony to the Commission including charts for the proposed district for your consideration and further review.

I would like to thank you for this opportunity to speak here tonight!

Respectfully submitted by Emiliano Lemos.





# LATINO ACTION NETWORK

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TESTIMONY BY  
THE LATINO ACTION NETWORK  
BEFORE THE NEW JERSEY STATE APPORTIONMENT COMMISSION  
MARCH 16, 2011

DELIVERED AND SUBMITTED BY:

Christian Estevez, Executive Vice President  
Latino Action Network  
P.O. Box 943  
Freehold, NJ 07728  
Phone: 973-418-7012  
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My name is Christian Estevez and I am the Executive Vice-President of the Latino Action Network, a broad, statewide coalition of Latino organizations dedicated to political empowerment, the promotion of civil rights, and the elimination of disparities in the areas of education, health, and employment.

We testified extensively at the earlier hearings about the dangers of both packing - concentrating large numbers of people of color in a small number of districts in a way that dilutes overall political power of our communities - and cracking - dividing communities of interest

over multiple districts to the point that we have little or no influence in any district. We also testified about the need to look beyond simple numbers and look at the real communities of interest on the ground — that while you might be choosing between two districts that on paper are the same percentage Latino, that's not the right standard. The right standard is what defines a real community of interest, and you have been hearing testimony on many of those communities.

My testimony today focuses on two points. First, some further discussion of the community of interest standard, with a particular example. Second, the basic issue of one person one vote.

Again, you can't go by numbers alone. We previously used the absurd example of a district that combines part of Newark with part of Jersey City to create a majority-minority district. More recently, we have heard of an equally absurd proposal that is actually being, from what we hear, proposed. Including the City of Passaic, where I am testifying today, in a district stretching all the way to North



Bergen from Hudson County would run counter to the communities of interest principle, even though the Latino numbers may be above 50%. The numbers look good on paper, but the communities do not actually connect with one another. Those considerations must be central to the final map.

Let me give you an example of what you should do. You heard last time from Atlantic City Councilman Moisse Delgado about a district from Atlantic City to Vineland. We strongly endorse that district today because it meets our principles of community of interest. Though there may be other ways to draw districts in that area that might look similar in terms of the numbers, there is a particular community of interest that needs to be united, not split as in the current map. There are a series of links between the Latino community in that area – between Vineland and Buena, Buena and Hamilton, Hamilton and Egg Harbor Township, Egg Harbor Township and Atlantic City – that need to be preserved. These links



make one community blend into another. And the communities also all tie together in a critical way – they all are connected not only by the Latino community but also by the casino industry.

It is very troubling that the current map “cracks” Vineland from Buena and Hamilton despite their historic ties to one other and the strong links between the communities. These communities should all be part of a district along the Black Horse Pike to stop the communities from being split.

Closer to where we are today, we believe Nutley would be more appropriately placed in an Essex County legislative district as it shares little in common with Passaic which has led to difficulties for the Latino community in Passaic electing candidates of choice. We also believe a town like Ridgefield Park should be added to the current 37<sup>th</sup> District. We believe this is an area where there should be Latino representation and we think that should be a priority in redrawing the districts in this region.

And we would be remiss if we did not mention, here in Passaic County, that the 35<sup>th</sup> District does include most, but not all, of the towns that form a strong community of interest for the Paterson area Latino community, with Haledon, Prospect Park, and North Haledon correctly included, but Elmwood Park and Woodland Park being omitted. We hope that this will be the decade where we see a Latina state senator from the 35<sup>th</sup> District.

So these are a few good examples of communities of interest. Let me move on to the key issue of one person one vote. I served for three years on the Board of Education in the City of Plainfield. I remember when I was on the board, we had events with other board members throughout the state. And there was an 18 year old elected from Holmdel to the school board, another 18 year old from South Brunswick, and a 19 year old in Paramus.



They reminded me of a 20 year old elected to the school board in New Jersey back in 1974 while he was still in college. He worked hard in that position and became the mayor of his town. Then he was elected to the New Jersey Assembly, then to the New Jersey Senate, and then to the U.S. House of Representatives. And today he is New Jersey's first Latino U.S. Senator, Bob Menendez.

Why do I tell these stories and what do they have to do with one person one vote? There are people that have been testifying who argue that only people that have voted in the past should be counted in determining what is fair in redistricting. And every one of those young people who ran for office — not to mention people becoming citizens or people who were not involved politically but now want to get involved — would not have been counted, even though in the next decade they ended up not only being eligible to vote, but also holding elected office.

That shows the problem with the proposal – it is backward looking in a process that is supposed to be forward looking. And it counts some people more than others — particularly undercounting the Latino community — in a process that is supposed to be equally open to all Americans. It's un-American, unprecedented in New Jersey or elsewhere, and just wrong. So I ask you to reject that proposal for only counting certain people.

I thank you for having these public hearings. And I ask you, as you go into the final deliberations, to consider what you have heard and the realities of our communities — to not just look raw percentages and numbers, or set arbitrary goals based on numbers alone. We want increased representation in the next map — but we only will get it if in drawing the map you understand our communities, and not just the numbers.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

Good Afternoon Everone, I am Rosa Rodriguez, Resident of Garfield, NJ and candidate for the Garfield School Board of Education.

- I am the first Latina running for any elected position in the city. I am not a political person, I only care about serving our children.
- Today I am speaking as a Latino with hopes to being an elected official. In our work, we found that most political people believe a Latino cannot win in our city, because only 300 Latinos "vote"
- With 32% of the population, up from 20% in 2001, it is finally the time that someone tries and we have identified at least 700 people ready to vote for me. We need 1300.
- In our case, we need non-Latinos to vote for Latinos as well. Elected Office is for all the people and although its important as a Latina to represent my ethnicity, the position serves all people, voters and non voters.
- Latinos should not be segregated into their own district because our political voice would only be limited to majority Latino areas like Paterson and Passaic. Also, the map should not be drafted based on voter turn out.
- Garfield is a small town of 29,000 across the river with still a minority group of Latinos. What would happen if we get separated from Passaic? Our base would be left alone with "packed" white municipalities, making it more difficult for Latinos to think about running beyond my humble position of School Board.
- Would a Latino need to move to the appointed Latino District to have a chance at being a voice of their community? What if they love their town? What if they wish to serve all the people of all ethnicities in their community?
- Redistricting should be fair, and take into consideration that Latinos in office still represent all ethnicities, and creating the map based on voter turn out AND "packed" Latino populations would affect our voice for Latinos and the opportunity to represent all people under the constitution.
- I appreciate the opportunity to speak my position on the matter. I know I am only running for School Board in a small city and all of you are talking about The State Legislature, but my one voice, whether I speak it or not, does count! Thank you.

Rosa Rodriguez  
93 Grand Street  
Garfield, NJ 07026  
40x



Apportionment Commission,

The right to full and fair representation is foundational; it is a right that makes all else possible. As new census data comes to light it falls on you to make sure that every New Jersey resident is represented. The Constitution requires that legislative districts are crafted on a per population basis, without wide variations in density. That requirement stems from the fundamental one person one vote. Any map this commission puts forth must adhere to that principle. Some have suggested that greater weight should be given to areas of the state with higher voter turnout. I urge you to reject that approach. It is undemocratic to devalue the votes of some residents and add value to the votes of other residents.

*Scott N. Russell*

*8 Sunset Court, Montville NJ*

Apportionment Commission,

One person One vote. Do not devalue my vote by averaging me in with people who choose not to vote. Do the right thing.

*Christine M. Russell*  
8 Sunset Court, Montville, NJ

From: Christie Pagano <dmpcap11@aol.com>  
Subject:  
Date: March 15, 2011 11:27:56 PM EDT  
To: Chris Pagano <crpagano@me.com>

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Dear Committee,

I am very concerned as long time tax paying citizen that there is serious consideration to diminish the impact of my vote.

Please do not de-value my vote in order to make someone elses' more valuable. This is Un-American and unconstitutional.

It is just one way to pander to those who don't care enough to get out there and do the right thing.

It is a privilege in this country to vote for our leaders and those of us who take the time to be informed, go to the polls, and vote in person, should not be short changed by giving any part of the integrity of that vote to another.

As representatives who adhere to constitutional principles, I believe the choice is CLEAR. Whatever way districts are created or re-created, ONE PERSON ONE VOTE seems to be a non-negotiable.

Heather Smith  
53 Stoneybrook Road  
Montville, NJ 07045